

Questions Raised by the President

The President's plan, as announced by the press, to lay before the voters his reasons for recommending a large increase in the appropriation for the navy, a material addition to the size of the standing army and the creation of a continental reserve of a half million men is to be commended. The people are the source of power in a republic and are entitled to all the light possible in order that they may intelligently advise their public servants. They have heard from the manufacturers of munitions, to whom preparedness is a sort of "system of outdoor relief"; they have heard from the big corporations which want a large army to overawe their employees; and they have also heard from the army and navy experts who, magnifying their calling, plan to meet every imaginable danger instead of those which are within the range of probability—experts who, as Lord Salisbury once expressed it, "would, if they had their way, fortify Mars against an invasion from the moon." Having heard quite fully from these biased sources, the public will appreciate a statement from the President setting forth the reasons which led him to urge so radical a departure from the historic policy of his party and from the traditions of the nation. If he can convince the people, he will be entitled to their support; if his reasons fail to convince, he will have no excuse for going further with his program.

If he proposes this increased preparedness in anticipation of war, the people will be interested to know what change, if any, has taken place in the situation since he declared, in his Manhattan club speech, that we were "not threatened from any quarter." If he advocates increased preparedness on the theory of the militarists, namely, that nations are insured against war in proportion as they are prepared, how does he explain the failure of the most elaborate preparedness—one side being prepared on the land and the other side on the sea—to prevent the present war? And how does he reconcile the European doctrine that peace must be supported by bayonets, with the Christian doctrine that love and the spirit of brotherhood are the only foundation upon which a permanent peace can be built?

The sum which the President asks for the army and navy would absorb almost the entire net crop income of all the farmers of the United States, if their income is estimated at eight per cent of the less than six billions received for their crops last year. The tax-payers, therefore, will be interested in knowing from what source, or sources, this enormous sum is to come. But, as the adoption of the President's program would work a complete revolution in our national ideals, in our governmental methods and in the character of the influence which we are to exert upon the world, there is even more interest in knowing whether the proposed adoption of old world theories and practices will promise deeper friendships, brighter days and better things or arouse international hatreds which will breed bloodshed and invite barbarism.

The question is not whether we could or would defend ourselves if attacked. We not only could and would, but our preparedness is increasing relatively more rapidly than ever before as the belligerent nations exhaust themselves. We are now spending two hundred and fifty millions a year on preparedness and have back of the government unlimited resources and a patriotic people.

A large part of the democratic party and a considerable portion of the republican party are satisfied with our nation as it is, and prefer to continue the present scale of preparedness, with any risks that it may involve, rather than risk a change to the European plan with its oppressive taxes and its menace to peace and to international friendships.

W. J. BRYAN.

WHICH HAD IT FIRST?

The testimony of General Wood in favor of a big standing army sounded like Colonel Roosevelt's views that, remembering their intimate association together in the Spanish war (and the general's promotion at the hands of the colonel) one wonders which caught militaritis from the other.

WHAT A DAY MAY BRING FORTH

The jingo papers are printing in large type a statement made by the President which they, in their ignorance of the Scriptures, have accepted as a new discovery.

The President said in one of his speeches that he could not guarantee the future—that he did not know what a day might bring forth. If the jingoes were as familiar with the Bible as they are with the pages of the subsidized press, they would know what the President, by this disclaimer, meant to modestly suggest that he did not know any more than Solomon.

Twenty-six hundred years ago the wise man (you will find it in the first verse and the twenty-seventh chapter of Proverbs) said:

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

This was good advice then; it is good advice now. But instead of stirring the people to unnecessary preparation for imaginary wars, it ought to lead the country to adopt the same common sense rule in the matter of preparedness that is employed in other matters.

If we tried to prepare for every IMAGINABLE contingency, we would accomplish nothing of value. But by adopting the sane philosophy of preparing only for PROBABILITIES, the race has made headway.

W. J. BRYAN.

DOES HE MEAN PROTECTION?

Republican house leader, Congressman Mann, in his speech pledging support to the President's preparedness program, said:

"I think, further, that we ought to provide in some way for the building up and the strengthening of our home industries, so that if we shall become involved in war we may be able to live within ourselves. And I think, as far as possible, that question should be considered entirely apart from former partisan opinion, in the hope that in some way we may get together in the interest of our country, if we should become involved in a struggle with a foreign power."

Will Mr. Mann please explain just what he means by "strengthening home industries." The only way he has ever proposed the "strengthening of home industries" was by turning over the taxing power to the beneficiaries of protection. Are we now to be asked to allow the tariff barons to collect funds for the munition manufacturers?

COMMENDABLE CO-OPERATION

The clergy of Louisville have set the country an excellent example by their co-operation against commercialized vice in that city. Four hundred representative citizens assembled at a banquet as a testimonial to the mayor and vice commission which has commanded the immediate suppression and the ultimate annihilation of commercialized vice in Louisville.

Addresses were made by Protestant, Catholic and Jewish clergymen. This is as it should be. All of the churches ought to stand for morality as against immorality, and church lines ought not to divide those who have a common purpose; they should by co-operation multiply the effectiveness of their attacks upon wrong-doing and wrong-doers.

Hasten the day when this union of the moral forces of the country may be possible everywhere.

BOTH SIDES PREPARED

The advocates of preparedness are in the habit of pointing to the "unpreparedness" of Great Britain as a warning to the United States. But was Great Britain unprepared? On the WATER her preparation was much greater than Germany's—twice as great, in fact, while on LAND Germany was better prepared.

To illustrate it, suppose two men fight a duel; and suppose one is an expert with the sword and the other with a pistol. It all depends upon who has the choice of the weapons. One is prepared if swords are chosen—the other if pistols are chosen. So Great Britain was prepared on sea and Germany on land. Both were prepared and their preparedness led them to rely on force—each felt confident of its strength.

THE BRANDIES NOMINATION

The President has made no mistake in the appointment of Louis Brandies to the supreme bench. The fact that Wall street is against him is in itself proof that he is a good man for the place. A knock from Wall street is a boost.

Secretary Garrison's Resignation

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

A Washington Associated Press dispatch, dated Feb. 11, says: When Mr. Garrison decided that resignation from the cabinet was his only course he wrote:

"February 10, 1916.

"My dear Mr. President: I am just in receipt of yours of February 10 in reply to mine of February 9. It is evident that we hopelessly disagree on what I believe to be fundamental principles. This makes manifest the impropriety of my longer remaining your seeming representative with respect to these matters.

"I hereby tender my resignation as secretary of war, to take effect at your convenience.

"Sincerely yours,

"LINDLEY M. GARRISON."

PRESIDENT'S ACCEPTANCE

The President replied:

"February 10, 1916.

"My dear Mr. Secretary: I must confess to feeling a very great surprise at your letter of today offering your resignation as secretary of war. There has been no definite action taken yet in either of the matters to which your letter of yesterday referred. The whole matter is under debate and all the influences that work for clarity and judgment ought to be available at this time.

"But since you have felt obliged to take this action and since it is evident that your feeling in the matter is very great indeed, I feel that it would be only imposing a burden upon you should I urge you to retain the secretaryship of war while I am endeavoring to find a successor. I ought to relieve you at once and do hereby accept your resignation because it is so evidently your desire that I should do so.

"I can not take this important step, however, without expressing to you my very warm appreciation of the distinguished service you have rendered as secretary of war, and I am sure that in expressing this appreciation I am only putting into words the judgment of our fellow citizens far and wide.

"With sincere regret at the action you have felt constrained to take.

"Sincerely yours,

"WOODROW WILSON."

STATEMENT BY MR. BRYAN

Mr. Bryan gave out the following interview in regard to Secretary Garrison's resignation:

"I am very fond of Secretary Garrison. He is a high-minded, conscientious man, and has the courage to follow his convictions.

"I think, however, that the President is right in his desire to co-operate with congress in legislative matters. Congress shares the responsibility with the President, and must be consulted. I do not agree with either the President or Mr. Garrison in their opposition to the state militia. I favor the state militia as against the continental army plan. It is, I believe, more democratic.

"W. J. BRYAN."

THE SUN HUMILIATED AGAIN

The Baltimore Sun is very much disgusted because the democrats of the house allowed Congressman Mann to defend the President's program against democratic attack. This is not the first time the Sun has been humiliated by democratic action; in fact, it has been in the valley of humiliation most of the time for 20 years. Its sadness is only relieved by psalms of praise of republicans who come much nearer than democrats to giving expression to what the Sun thinks and feels.

Perhaps some day someone may be able to come forward and explain why it is deemed necessary and desirable for every candidate to declare himself on all vital issues with the exception of where he stands upon prohibition.

No jingo will suggest that it was unpatriotic of Secretary Garrison to resign at such a time as this. It was quite different when Mr. Bryan resigned.