

Congressman Shallenberger's Speech

[The House of Representatives in committee of the whole on the state of the union had under consideration on February 16, 1917, the army appropriation bill. Below is printed part of the debate in which Congressman Shallenberger of Nebraska participated.—Ed.]

Mr. Shallenberger. Mr. Chairman, on yesterday the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Gardner) made a reference to Mr. Bryan and his action in the face of conditions that confront the country now, and I endeavored to interrupt him to ask him a question, but he declined to yield. Later I asked two minutes in which to address the house on the same question and again that opportunity was denied me. So I take the opportunity now before I begin my address upon the bill before the committee to ask again the gentleman from Massachusetts, who I see is here, whether or not he voted for the navy appropriation bill which lately passed the house?

Mr. Gardner. No. I was in New York, and I telephoned over to Mr. Roberts of Massachusetts, or made inquiries through the telephone clerk, of Mr. Roberts, and he said he had a great quantity of votes and it was absolutely unnecessary for me to come over. Whereupon I asked to be paired in its favor. I asked them to get me a general pair, which they did.

Mr. Shallenberger. I will call attention to the fact that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Mann) introduced an amendment on that bill, as follows:

"On page 60, after line 23, insert: 'It is hereby reaffirmed to be the policy of the United States to adjust and settle its international disputes through mediation or arbitration, to the end that war may be honorably avoided.'"

I would like to ask the gentleman from Massachusetts if he agrees to that amendment?

Mr. Gardner. I will say to the gentleman that I should have raised a point of order against that, and it would have gone out. It is absolutely and historically untrue. We never had such a policy.

Mr. Mann. Is the gentleman aware that that was inserted without controversy?

Mr. Gardner. Absolutely without controversy, because people did not know what was being said.

Mr. Stafford. I want to call the gentleman's attention

Mr. Gardner. It is absolutely of no consequence, anyway.

Mr. Stafford. The gentleman may think it is of no consequence.

Mr. Mann. It was inserted in the naval bill of last year.

Mr. Shallenberger. I was in the house when it was adopted without a dissenting vote, and there was no objection.

Mr. Gardner. And we have never used arbitration in order to prevent war.

Mr. Mann. Will the gentleman yield the floor long enough

Mr. Gardner. That is for the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. Shallenberger) to say.

Mr. Shallenberger. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Mann).

Mr. Mann. The gentleman knows that the same thing was inserted in the naval bill last year, the current law, without any opposition from anybody at that time.

Mr. Shallenberger. I am aware of that fact, and therefore I wanted to be sure that the gentleman from Massachusetts opposes that amendment. Mr. Bryan has devoted his whole life to this thing at issue right now in this dispute—to the sentiment and idea contained in the Mann amendment.

Mr. Gardner. The issue with the President, who is not advocating mediation and arbitration. Is that what you meant?

Mr. Shallenberger. That is not what I meant, and that is not the question at issue here. I would like to say that those of us who know Mr. Bryan in Nebraska know that one of the chief reasons that induced him to take a position in the cabinet, and he stated it often, was the hope that he might have the honor of bringing about arbitration treaties between this nation and the rest of the world. The charge of the gentleman from Massachusetts in his speech on yesterday was that Mr. Bryan was "trying to tear

the nation asunder." Mr. Bryan has stated both publicly and privately that he considered it as perhaps the greatest honor ever permitted him in his life when he was permitted to prepare and negotiate 30 arbitration treaties whereby we would be enabled to settle international disputes in accordance with the precepts of this particular amendment rather than on the battle field.

Mr. Gardner. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield there?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Gardner. Was Mr. Bryan able to make one of those treaties with Germany?

Mr. Shallenberger. He was not.

Now, I want to call the attention of the house to the fact that if the gentleman from Massachusetts disagrees with this amendment, he is in disagreement with his house and in disagreement with his own party, as shown by the roll call on that bill. The naval bill is the most important measure of national defense to be passed in the American congress; and the gentleman from Massachusetts, the most ardent advocate, and I will say an able one, of a policy of preparedness on the part of the nation, was not here to do his duty when the bill was voted upon. The house by a vote of 340 to 22 voted to carry that proposition. The arbitration amendment was in the bill and that is the thing that Mr. Bryan has stood for during all these years.

Mr. Gardner. Does the gentleman think the house is 340 to 22 against the proposition of the President on this question of submarine warfare?

Mr. Shallenberger. I know the house is with the President, but I also know that arbitration is the policy this house voted for.

Mr. Madden. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Madden. Does the gentleman believe with the Washington Times that this amendment was inserted in the bill surreptitiously?

Mr. Shallenberger. No. On the contrary, I believe that this amendment was inserted in the bill openly and with the full knowledge of the membership of the house here. I can not consider it as having been done in any other way.

Now, I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that I have been somewhat maligned myself on some of these matters, and I believe that a great injustice has been done to Mr. Mann, one of the ablest citizens of the United States, one of the truest patriots of this country; and also an injustice has been done to this house when such an editorial as that was published in the paper mentioned. Such slanders of public men are a disgrace to the newspaper profession, and to American civilization as well.

Mr. Madden. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield for one more question?

The Chairman. Does the gentleman from Nebraska yield to the gentleman from Illinois?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Madden. Then the gentleman does not believe it would be possible to sneak such an amendment into the bill without the house understanding what it was?

Mr. Shallenberger. No, sir. I do not believe it for a moment.

Mr. Gardner. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Gardner. Can the gentleman explain how this important amendment could be passed without our having any information on it beforehand?

Mr. Shallenberger. That was because it was the opinion of the house it should be adopted.

Mr. Gardner. Does the house usually remain silent when a matter is brought up in which the house is vitally interested?

Mr. Shallenberger. It is, when the matter, in the opinion of the whole house, ought to go in the bill.

Mr. Mann. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Mann. The same proposition was contained in the naval bill which was passed a year ago. It is the current law. I offered my amendment in about the same place in the bill when

we reached about the same place in the naval bill this year.

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes; the same as it was before.

Mr. Mann. Anybody watching the proceedings with respect to the naval bill and attending to business and knowing about the matter would have been informed.

Mr. Shallenberger. Mr. Chairman, I have referred to this matter because Mr. Bryan is not here to speak for himself. If he were here, he would not need me as a feeble advocate for Mr. Tillson.

Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Tilson. Is it not a fact that this amendment spoken of was subject to a point of order, and one objection would have put it out?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes; certainly.

Mr. Sherley. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will permit, the rule and custom of the house is that the man in charge of a bill shall protect that bill from extraneous matter. There are many of us who are required to be almost constantly in committee, and therefore do not have the opportunity to make the objections that they would make if they were on the floor, and we must go on the assumption that extraneous matters will not be introduced into a bill.

Mr. Shallenberger. I do not think that extraneous matters should be introduced into a bill.

Mr. Gordon. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. Shallenberger. Yes.

Mr. Gordon. When that amendment was offered by the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. Mann) I went to Mr. Padgett, the chairman of the committee on naval affairs, and suggested that he make a point of order against it, and he said, "I do not care anything about it."

Mr. Shallenberger. He accepted it.

The point is, Mr. Chairman, that the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Gardner) charged that Mr. Bryan was "tearing the nation asunder" by advising arbitration rather than war as a settlement of international disputes. I do not myself subscribe wholly to that doctrine. There are things I would not arbitrate. If Germany deliberately sinks our ships upon the high seas, with loss of American lives, in the face of the President's solemn warning, then there is nothing but the arbitration of arms left to us in honor. But the charge is implied that Mr. Bryan is not standing by the President. I believe he is and will continue to stand by him in peace or in war. He has stood by him when he needed support in times past, and he will do so as a patriot in the future. He will not fall him in the hour of war, if war must come, any more than he has failed him in time of peace.

Now, there is a sharp division of opinion between Mr. Bryan and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Gardner) at this time as to what should be our national policy. Mr. Bryan is a man of great personal magnetism and courage, and I believe the gentleman from Massachusetts is the same. They both responded to the call to arms in the Spanish-American war and were willing to go forth and die for their country; and although I believe they are passed military age now, their patriotism and courage are such that they would do so again if their country called. Mr. Bryan, with his great personal influence throughout the country, is doing the best he can to keep our country out of war, whereas the gentleman from Massachusetts seems to be doing the best he can do to lead this country into war, and I am willing to abide by the verdict of the country as to which of these two gentlemen is serving his country the best in this time of peril. Mr. Bryan went into this struggle to keep the country out of war. He may meet defeat here, as he has met defeat many times before. But defeat does not destroy a great man. It takes a real man to suffer de-

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WANTED—THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF ALL DEMOCRATIC AND INDEPENDENT VOTERS WHO ARE WILLING TO ASSIST MR. BRYAN IN DRIVING THE LIQUOR INTERESTS OUT OF THE NATION.