

The Commoner

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FOR NATION-WIDE PROHIBITION

Text of Joint Resolution Adopted by the United States Senate, August 1, 1917

As adopted, the resolution, which was submitted by Senator Sheppard of Texas, democrat, would add the following article to the federal constitution:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled (two-thirds of each house concurring therein) that the following amendment to the constitution be and hereby is proposed to the states, to become valid as a part of the constitution when ratified by the legislatures of the several states as provided by the constitution:

Article—Section 1. The manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from, the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes, is prohibited.

Section 2. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the constitution by the legislatures of the several states as provided in the constitution within six years from the date of the submission thereof to the states by the congress.

Section 3. The congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Resisting the Draft

The number of those resisting the draft is, fortunately, very few: there should be none. Some are conscientiously opposed to war—any war—and may prefer to submit to any punishment the government sees fit to inflict rather than to take up arms, but even such can not justify resistance or the giving of encouragement to those who do resist. Still less can tolerance be shown to those who, while opposing conscription, attempt to DRAFT others to join them in opposing conscription. War is a last resort—it is a reflection upon civilization that it still reddens the earth—but so long as nations go to war the citizen can not escape a citizen's duty. If his conscience forbids him to do what his government demands he must submit without complaint, to any punishment inflicted, whether the punishment be imprisonment or death.

This is the best government on earth—the one most responsive to the will of the people, but it is a government of the people—not of one or a few men. If a few are permitted to resist a law—any law—because they do not like it, government becomes a farce. The law must be enforced—resistance is anarchy.

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China has successfully resisted the attempt to carry her back to monarchial forms and Russia seems determined to continue her progress toward constitutional government. Now if the people of Germany will only awaken to their opportunity.

THE FOOD LAW

Congress has by an overwhelming majority enacted a food conservation law. It gives large powers to the executive, but not too large. The conditions are extraordinary, and the remedies must fit the conditions. The President ought to have power to protect all the people from the greed of any unpatriotic few.

And the cloture rule ought to be so changed as to give the majority the right to close debate. This right should exist in the majority at all times, but it is especially necessary during the war, when immediate action may become necessary at any time.

If the war keeps up much longer Germany will run completely out of nations to anger to the point of declaring war upon her.

Abusing Free Speech

Before our nation enters a war it is perfectly proper to discuss the wisdom of going to war, but the discussion is closed when congress acts. After that, no one should be permitted to cloak attacks upon his government or aid to the enemy under the claim that he is exercising freedom of speech. No sympathy, therefore, will be wasted upon those who have been arrested for unpatriotic utterances. They abuse free speech. And this applies to attacks on the Allies as well as to attacks upon the United States. We can no more allow our allies to be crushed than we can afford to be crushed ourselves. The defeat of our allies would throw the whole burden of the war upon us. We must stand together and fight it through. There are only two sides to a war—every American must be on the side of the United States.

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THE OVERSHADOWING FACT

Do not try to guess how long the war is going to last—guesses are of no value. Here is a FACT which is more valuable than any guess, prediction or prophecy—namely, that WE MUST STAND TOGETHER AND FIGHT it through, no matter whether the war be long or short.

CRUEL TO SEPARATE THEM

Separate the brewery and the distillery? No, it would be cruel. They have been partners in crime for a generation—they have been co-conspirators against all that is high and holy. Let them die together and be buried in the same grave.

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