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THE PRESIDENT NEEDS HELP

Municipal and State Governments Should Co-operate With Federal Government

Former Mayor Bryan Says That Legislative Action Should be Taken to Protect the Producers and the Consumers Against Profiteering

Former Mayor Charles W. Bryan gave to the press today a statement in which he outlines his views on what he terms the duty of municipal and state governments to take the lead and initiate legislation to supplement federal legislation and to co-operate with federal officials in protecting the producers and consumers of the country against profiteering.

Mr. Bryan says that it is not only the people's duty to support every plan, principle and suggestion of the federal government to win the war, but that it is also their duty to make a practical application of these plans, principles and suggestions through municipal and state legislation that will protect the producers and the consumers and thus allay the growing unrest among the farmers and laboring classes and the wage-earners and unite them in one great patriotic plan of co-operating to the fullest extent in bringing the war to a successful and permanent victory. Said legislation he claims to be necessary in order that the producers, the laboring classes and the masses in general will feel that their own patriotism is not to be taken advantage of by those persons who deal with what others produce and who, in a number of instances, have seemed to feel that it is their duty to make a profit out of the sacrifices of the rest of the people. Mr. Bryan's statement follows:

"To the People of Nebraska:

"As we are rapidly approaching a time when a campaign will be under way for the nomination and election of state officials, members of the state legislature and of representatives and senators to the national congress, and as it is apparent that some men and certain interests are engaged in an effort to bring about the nomination of men for the various offices and positions who may or may not be interested in questions and issues that are important to the welfare of the nation and of the people as a whole, I feel that it is not out of place—in fact, I think it advisable—at this time for the people to consider publicly the questions that are agitating the minds of all classes of the people.

"I believe that such public consideration is necessary to secure a consensus of opinion as to what legislation—municipal, state and national—is in the interest of the great majority of the people of the state and what candidates best represent such public sentiment and are best qualified to organize and lead the people in their unswerving loyalty and support of the plans of the federal government, and to utilize the municipal and state governmental machinery to supplement the federal machinery and promote the welfare of the people of the state.

"Our country is engaged in war with a foreign foe. The President of the United States is commander-in-chief of the army, and as such, the conduct of the war is placed in his hands. There should not be, and must not be, any division among the people of the United States on the question of loyalty and co-operation in giving the President the united and unqualified support of every citizen of the United States. The life of the American republic is in jeopardy, and the first duty of every American is to support the government in every effort, plan or suggestion

until the war has been brought to a successful close.

"President Wilson has also emphasized the importance of the duty that we owe to loyal Americans by protecting them against mob rule, unjust attacks or criticisms of erratic or irresponsible persons who lose their poise through nervous excitement brought on by the terrible struggle that the world is engaged in. The President and congress are engaged in the herculean task of raising a large army and navy, of providing arms and ammunition, airplanes and ordnance, increasing the food production of this country to the highest possible point and conserving certain parts of it that are needed to supply the allied armies and the world's peoples, who would otherwise die of starvation.

"In organizing and directing the efforts of the producers and laborers of the country to the highest state of efficiency, and at the same time endeavoring to protect the consumers of the country against the conscienceless and unpatriotic profiteer, the President, through his cabinet and their commissions, has been doing wonderful work by laying the heavy hand of the government upon various lines of business that were exploiting the public patriotism for private gain. It is, in my judgment, time that the state governments and municipal governments were taking steps to co-operate with the federal government in preventing certain organized business interests from taking advantage of the producer, the wage-earners and the consumer in distributing and marketing the necessities of life. The federal government has fixed the price of wheat at a reasonable figure, but the state government has made no effort to break up the combine that has raised the price of farm machinery to almost prohibitive prices. The federal government has taken over the railroads to prevent discrimination in the interest of other lines of business that the railroads are also engaged in, but the state government is making no effort to protect the grain-producers against the grain-buyers, elevator men and millers, who control the grading, the dockage, the drying, the storage, the grinding and the selling of the grain and grain products.

"The federal government is fixing the price of coal and endeavoring to distribute it to protect the comfort and needs of the people. The state government has been making no effort to protect the people against the cornering of the produce market that has resulted in the selling of potatoes as high as \$4.00 a bushel that were bought from the producer at \$1.00 or less per bushel.

"It is not pleasant to point out the unpatriotic and unscrupulous profiteering that can be noticed in nearly all lines of business by the constant marking up of prices, but a comparison of the effect on prices of articles and commodities that the federal government has taken hold of and those it has not taken hold of, as noticed by the price of flour and price of meal and other substitutes for wheat, will largely explain what is causing the unrest among the producers and consumers of the country.

"The federal government has fixed the price of sugar but the state government has taken no action to protect cattle and hog-raisers against the packers' combine when they market their livestock, and the state has made no effort to protect the stockfeeders against a cornered market when they buy stock to ship back to the farm to feed their corn and alfalfa to. The

federal government has fixed the size of the baker's loaf of bread and the price at which it sells, but the municipal authorities do not pass ordinances to help the federal government enforce their law and protect the people against short-weight loaves.

"The municipal authorities have failed to establish public markets that will enable the producer to sell direct to the consumer and restore competition and reduce the cost of living by cutting out the monopoly of the middle men. The farmer-owned elevators and the farmers' co-operative buying have been a great benefit to those who are members of such organizations, but the benefits are not general enough and do not reach to the great laboring and consuming masses whose wages and incomes have not increased in proportion to the advances marked up on their products and wares by the factories, mills, mines, stores and shops.

"The efforts being made to organize farmers and the wage-earners to secure legislation by state and municipal governments, to supplement the work of the federal government, is an indication of the study that is given to these questions, and the need of some immediate action being taken so that the state and municipal governments will function properly. State officials of other states have taken up these questions and are co-operating with the federal government for the relief and protection of the people against unnecessary, unjust and illegal efforts to secure unreasonable profits.

"The fire insurance combine has recently arbitrarily raised its rates, and will collect from the people of Nebraska this year \$748,000 more than was collected on the same buildings and property last year, and the state government has made no effort to prevent this extortion. Other states have taken action against the insurance combine to protect their people. Why do our state officials show no concern?

"State and municipal governments in almost every country throughout the civilized world have established public markets, municipal slaughter-houses, municipal coal yards, municipal produce and grocery stores where necessary to protect their people and are now conducting all these institutions as war measures to alleviate the suffering among the masses of the people as much as possible while the nations are bending their energy to conduct the war efficiently and economically. States in foreign countries have bonded grain commissioners who protect the farmers in selling their grain. They have bonded livestock commissioners to protect the farmer and stock-raiser when they are selling their livestock and when they are buying feeders and stockers on the livestock market.

"As a farmer and as a breeder and a feeder of livestock, I have a personal knowledge of the losses a farmer suffers through the unrestrained activities of the packing house, elevator, milling and farm machinery combines, and as the father of an only son who is serving as a volunteer in the infantry branch of the army in response to President Wilson's first call for men, I can appreciate the feeling of farmers, laboring men and the middle classes of people who have sons and relatives in the army, and who have their own patriotism questioned because they suggest legislative remedies to supplement federal legislation to protect them against the avarice of men who deal in what other men produce.

"When a business or industry becomes so large and so thoroughly organized on a national scale that it is impossible for individuals to cope with it, it is time for the federal and state governments to step in and assume control in order to protect the public. The federal government has found this necessary in handling the railroads. The national governments of other countries and the state governments of other countries have found it necessary to establish state fire and life insurance companies, state-owned grain elevators, state and municipal warehouses, docks, terminals, etc.

"These are some of the questions that are agitating the minds of the producers and consumers in this state who feel the need of such state and municipal institutions to enable them to restore competition and cope with the great business organizations that have grown too large and too powerful for individuals and small business men to cope with or protect themselves against. Our federal government has undertaken a splendid, humane and a necessary work in insuring our soldiers lives and to protect the families against want, of those who have gone forth to battle to preserve our democratic institutions. Our laboring people are being