

SUBSIDIES.

The defeat of the populist presidential nominee is apparently construed by the republicans in congress to be a vote of confidence in republican leadership upon all questions and permission to enact into law any sort of scheme their fertile and resourceful intellects may now devise. During the campaign there was but one subject discussed by republican orators and newspapers, and that was the necessity of maintaining the gold standard and it was the position the party took upon this question which made its success possible.

Now republicans in the United States senate are determinedly advocating the passing of a shipping subsidy bill, which proposes to take from the people \$9,000,000 per year for thirty years and give to already reasonably prosperous ship-owners. The friends of this measure urge its enactment into law upon the plea that it is to encourage the building of an American merchant marine. If this be the object of the bill, why pay the bulk of the subsidy to ships already built and this to rapid trans-Atlantic liners rather than to the vessels which really carry a freight cargo? Then too, if it is right and lawful to use public money to aid private individuals to build ships, is it not just as legitimate to use money raised by taxation from all the people to aid private enterprise to build wagons, lawn mowers or automobiles? If we once admit the principle is there any end to the application that may be made of it? Did any republican orator or candidate, in any speech, declare that republican success meant shipping subsidies or other forms of special privileges to favored interests? If not, are they now acting in good faith?

The subsidy bill is not the only piece of legislation favorable to special interests. The

Oleomargarine.

lower house of congress has already acted favorably upon the Grout bill, which places a tax of ten cents per pound upon oleomargarine. The tax is so excessive that it means the crushing out of this industry if the bill passes the senate and is permitted by the president to become a law. The power of taxation, contrary to the constitution, is being used for the avowed purpose of destroying an industry. It is an attempt to enrich the buttermakers at the expense of the makers of oleomargarine, a rival food product. Scientific investigation has established the fact that oleomargarine is a healthful and wholesome food product. It is therefore entitled to the protection of the law the same as any other legitimate business. If it is being dishonestly sold by retailers the law should be amended to prevent such deception. Enact stringent laws requiring that oleomargarine be sold under proper nomenclature, but laws practically suppressing its manufacture should not be passed under the guise of attempting to prevent fraud in its sale.

TREATY AMENDED.

The senate, by a vote of 65 to 17, amended the Hay-Pauncefote treaty by adopting the Davis resolution, which, its friends allege, permits the United States to fortify the Nicaragua canal. This resolution was introduced last spring by the late Senator Davis, the chairman of the committee on foreign affairs. The essential provisions of the treaty as amended are as follows, with amendment in italics:

"Article 1. It is agreed that the canal may be constructed under the auspices of the government of the United States, either directly at its own cost, or by gift, or loan of money to individuals or corporations or through subscription to or purchase of stock or shares, and that, subject to the provisions of the present convention, the said government shall have and enjoy all the rights incident to such construction, as well as the exclusive right of providing for the regulation and management of the canal.

"Article 2. The high contracting parties desiring to preserve and maintain the general principle of neutralization established in article 8 of the Clayton-Bulwer convention, adopt, as the basis of such neutralization, the following rules, substantially as embodied in the conventions between Great Britain and certain other powers, signed at Constantinople, Oct. 29, 1888, for the free navigation of the Suez maritime canal, that is to say:

"1. The canal shall be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to the vessels of commerce and of war of all nations, on terms of entire equality, so that there shall be no discrimination against any nation or its citizens or subjects in respect of the conditions or charges of traffic, or otherwise.

"2. The canal shall never be blockaded, nor shall any right of war be exercised nor any act of hostility committed within it.

"3. Vessels of war of a belligerent shall not revictual nor take any stores in the canal, except so far as may be strictly necessary, and the transit of such vessels through the canal shall be effected with the least possible delay, in accordance with the regulations in force, and with only such intermission as may result from the necessities of the service. Prizes shall be in all respects subject to the same rules as vessels of war of the belligerents.

"4. No belligerent shall embark or disembark troops, munitions of war or warlike materials in the canal except in case of accidental hindrance of the transit, and in such case the transit shall be resumed with all possible dispatch.

"5. The provisions of this article shall apply to waters adjacent to the canal within three marine miles of either end. Vessels of war of a belligerent

shall not remain in such waters longer than twenty-four hours at any one time, except in case of distress, and in such case shall depart as soon as possible; a vessel of war of a belligerent shall not depart within twenty-four hours from the departure of a vessel of war of the other belligerent.

"It is agreed, however, that none of the immediate foregoing conditions and stipulations in sections numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 of this article, shall apply to measures which the United States may find it necessary to take for securing, by its own forces, the defense of the United States and the maintenance of public order.

"6. The plant, establishments, buildings and all works necessary to the construction, maintenance and operation of the canal shall be deemed to be part thereof, for the purposes of this convention, and in time of war as in time of peace, shall enjoy complete immunity from attack or injury by belligerents and from acts calculated to impair their usefulness as part of the canal.

"7. No fortifications shall be erected commanding the canal or the waters adjacent. The United States, however, shall be at liberty to maintain such military police along the canal as may be necessary to protect it against lawlessness and disorder."

The action of the senate in amending the treaty is a great disappointment to the administration

Delays Canal.

for the reason that the treaty as it was written was an administration measure and for the additional reason that it is feared the treaty in its present form will prove objectionable to Great Britain, and thus delay for many months, if not indefinitely, the construction of the canal. At any rate it is not probable that Great Britain will be able to act upon the amendment before the expiration of this session of congress so that the definite consideration of the matter will go over until next session.

As it now stands the treaty is rather inconsistent with itself. The main objection urged

Inconsistent.

against it by those seeking to amend related to section 7 of article 2, which prohibits the "erection of fortifications commanding the canal or the waters adjacent." This objection is not overcome by the adoption of the amendment for the reason that the amendment precedes section 7, thereby leaving the objectionable feature still in force. It is possible that our government may, under the terms of the amendment, be permitted, in time of war, to use its fleet at the entrance of the canal or mine the bed of it and use its military force to guard the entire course of the channel. There is a question, however, whether all of this would be permissible under section 7. The present form of the treaty suggests the suspicion that those who sought to amend are not so much opposed to the prohibition of fortifications as they are to the construction of the canal, and sought to postpone the matter by delaying the diplomatic arrangements which are considered necessary for its consummation.