

# The New REPUBLIC

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**W**ANTED: Executive head of a large concern about to enter field of world competition; previous experience undesirable. Must have magnetic presence and investigation-proof past; must be able to put over blend of safe progressivism and sane reaction; should be agitator who can whip up surface without stirring depths; will need ability to soothe business with high tariff and the people with his charm; must never have antagonized Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Mormon, Orthodox Jewish, Reformed Jewish, Mason, Odd Fellows, or Elks vote; must not drink, but not be hostile to liquor vote; must have lived a spotless life yet be known as a man; must favor Allies but not against Germans; must talk well about honor but preserve the peace; must be for preparedness and a reduction of taxes; must guarantee prosperity; must preach economy but remember his friends; must fear no precedent but revere the Constitution. In words of former incumbent, applicant must be like Caesar's wife—that is to say, all things to all men.

Apply Secretary Republican National Committee.

**T**HE contest for the honor of leading the Republican party is distinguished from other contests in that no contest is taking place. There are many candidates, but they are all playing safe and are scrupulously careful not to submit their claims to any large body of Republican voters. Each candidate must of course be equipped with the delegates from his own state, but in only a few negligible instances are they trying to secure delegates outside their states. There is a general disposition to avoid contention even with the Democrats. There is an abject fear of arousing too much popular interest in these preliminaries to the national convention. It is as if the disembodied spirit of the Republican party were saying to itself: "Four years ago I allowed my house to be divided by encouraging a contest among the bigger brethren for power, and by submitting the controversy to the decision of the smaller brethren. But this year, whatever else I do, I am going to repair the schism. The big chiefs must not fight; they must only pretend to do so. The smaller fry must not have a chance to express their preferences, because they might reopen old wounds. In every respect I must behave differently than I did in 1912. There must be no commotion, no consultation with the people, no antecedent discussion of issues and programs, no enmities created or loyalties aroused. The real decision will be made at the last moment by the wiser brothers. They will announce it to the foolish brothers, who will accept it on faith and raise their voices in glad acquiescence."

**P**RECISE terms of the Lusitania arrangement will not be announced until next week, but enough has leaked out to justify the suspicion that the proposed settlement settles nothing. There is only one act by which the legitimate American grievance over the sinking of the Lusitania and the killing of one hundred inoffensive American citizens could have been really settled—by the unequivocal and unreserved admission on the part of the German government that it had deliberately planned a criminal

act which it now regrets. That was the admission which the President proposed to extort, and which the Germans have inevitably refused to grant. "I have been willing," says von Bethmann-Hollweg, "to concede to America everything that Germany can concede within the principles of justice and honor; but I cannot concede a humiliation of Germany and the German people." To this President Wilson has apparently consented. The German government is to be permitted to save its face. The United States will submit to a humiliation in order to save the German government from one. The only consolation is that the plight of the German nation is really more humiliating than that of the American nation. Twenty years from now both nations will, we hope, be thoroughly ashamed of the incident—Germany because she committed a hideous wrong; the United States because she encouraged wrongdoing by failing to penalize it. But the shame of Germany will be the harder to bear. No self-respecting nation can, with utmost premeditation, perform an act obnoxious to "the principles of honor and justice" without suffering humiliation far deeper than that which would be implied by a public admission of the wrongdoing.

**P**RESIDENT WILSON will be bitterly criticised for refusing at the last moment to insist upon an explicit disavowal from Germany, but the responsibility is less personal than national. At no time in the course of the controversy could he have counted on the assistance of the whole country in the adoption of drastic penal measures. The American people did not want to be drawn into a war the issues of which they did not understand, in the objects of which they were not vitally interested, and the cost of which so far exceeded the possible benefits. In particular they did not understand the questions which the sinking of the Lusitania itself involved—the extent to which it brought out the dependence of the United States on British sea power and the British merchant marine, the extent to which it raised the fundamental problem of what the freedom of the seas really means. A method might have been devised to make Germany realize that the deliberate killing of inoffensive American citizens brought with it costly penalties, without involving the injured nation in the enormous liability of full participation in the war; but if the administration ever considered such a novel kind of statesmanship no intimation was allowed to transpire. The only alternatives considered by the people and their official leaders were peace at any price and war at any price. They preferred the former. Under the circumstances there is something to be said for the preference, but when we say it, let us be frank with ourselves. The country has made a bargain

with Germany in which both countries sacrifice in different ways their self-respect; they both do so in the interest of something on which they place a higher value. That appears to be the unadorned and inglorious truth about the Lusitania "settlement."

**W**E cannot drop the Lusitania matter without a word of warning. Germany has succeeded in escaping the penalty for an act of deliberate maleficence. The American government, which connived at her escape, should be particularly careful not to let the escape of a malefactor be converted into a triumph of German policy. The German government ordered the Lusitania to be torpedoed for the purpose of calling the attention of the United States to what it believed to be the injustice of the British maritime policy. It only succeeded in throwing into clear relief the dependence of the United States upon British sea power, and the joint responsibility of the two Powers to associate the freedom of the seas with their adequate control. The Lusitania "settlement" should not change in the least bit the existing attitude of the United States towards Great Britain. It does not license our government to bring any additional pressure on Great Britain either to lift or to legalize the embargo. If it is interpreted in that way Mr. Wilson's administration will commit the most irreparable and grievous mistake of its career. How and how much the United States protests against the British treatment of neutral commerce is a matter which the American government must settle for itself according to its own interests, and quite without reference to any jointly humiliating bargain with Germany.

**W**HATEVER the merits of their case, the anthracite coal operators deserve commendation for the openness of the methods by which they set their views before the public. Twenty-five years ago men in a similar situation would have fallen back upon their natural right to manage their property as they pleased, and would have repelled indignantly any suggestion that the general public should be consulted at all in the controversy. Twelve years ago they would have placed chief reliance upon the news story in friendly publications. To-day they employ the method of paid advertising, distributed apparently not with a view to controlling newspaper opinion, but according to the usual canons of commercial publicity. The public—such is the implication—is neither to be flouted nor to be hoodwinked, but to be treated as a competent judge who listens to the pleadings of paid advocates without undue suspicion and without excessive credulity.

**F**RANK publicity in labor disputes represents an advance in social morality. It does not, however, insure equality before the bar of public opinion to the contending parties in a labor dispute. The anthracite coal operators can afford to pay lavishly for advertising space in which to present their claims to the public good will. The cost is a trifling item compared with the profits they reap from their business, or with the expenses they will incur if the demands of the miners are not defeated. The miners have inadequate funds to conduct the prospective struggle, and cannot afford to enter upon a similar campaign of publicity. On a vaster scale, it is the case of the rich man with a good lawyer against the poor man with only such legal service as the court may assign to him, or indeed no legal service at all. And in the case of the anthracite controversy the appeal of the paid advocate is to an interested court. "We stand for justice and cheap coal." "Gentlemen of the jury," plead the ancient Greek lawyer in his arraignment of the corn dealers, "if you vote for the execution of these men you will vindicate justice, and buy your bread cheaper in future."

**I**F advocates of a larger and more effective army cannot agree upon a practicable plan for improving the national military establishment, they should at least be able to agree in their opposition to vicious and abortive measures. The increasing danger is that Congress will seek to satisfy the sentiment in favor of a larger army and increase the local political capital of its members by specious "federalization" of the militia. There is only one way properly to "federalize" the state militia, which is for the regiments in the various states to reenlist as national or continental troops. A recent letter to the *New York Times* from Mr. Henry L. Stimson adds to the mass of testimony to the truth of this contention. Mr. Stimson has pointed out more clearly than anyone else the real and permanent reason why the National Guard cannot become a dependable and a sufficiently popular body of national troops. The states have used it for police purposes. They have failed to organize any professional force for the protection of life and property, and have dignified local riots into insurrections by calling out the soldiers to do ordinary police duty. As long as the National Guard owes its allegiance primarily to the state it will be constantly summoned to suppress the disorders incidental to strikes; and as long as it is liable to such summons, enlistment will be avoided by the wage-earners, upon whom a national militia needs to depend for a large part of its recruits. No matter how attractive membership in the National Guard is made, and no matter what improvements are contrived in

its equipment and training, it can never become a really national military force. It is regarded with suspicion and dislike by a section of the community whose coöperation is essential to obtaining a sufficient volume of volunteers.

**E**X-SECRETARY STIMSON is himself cordially in favor of the administration's plan of a national militia. He prefers it because he believes that a force of 500,000 trained men is necessary as a safeguard against invasion, and because such a force cannot, in his opinion, be obtained so cheaply in any other way. We agree with him that the plan of a continental army deserves to be tried. If the advocates of military preparedness would devote their time and ingenuity to the perfection of Secretary Garrison's plan and the consequent improvement of its prospects of success, instead of basing an argument for conscription on a dubious prediction of its failure, their agitation would stand a much better chance of being fruitful. But no matter whether the continental army is or is not authorized and is or is not successful, the experiment should not stand in the way of a substantial increase in the regular army. Until 100,000 mobile troops, perfectly equipped and abundantly munitioned, can be concentrated at any threatened point, the regular army will not form any safeguard against invasion. This would mean a standing army of about 200,000 men, which if enlisted for only a short term would soon automatically create a reserve of trained soldiers of an equal or greater size. They could be recruited by paying them enough to make the service attractive. Authorization of such an army is the immediate business of Congress.

**A**N economic general staff for Germany, proposed to handle the problems of business reconstruction after the war, is no mere paper project like some of our plans of "mobilization of economic resources." Our industrial mobilizers have to work upon a foundation of governmental aloofness to business affairs, while the Germans have the advantages of a long tradition of co-operation between the government and private business. We are still engaged in trying to kill the trusts; the Germans long ago succeeded in domesticating them. We are just beginning to organize our banking in such a way as to insure stability in the banking organization itself; the Germans have succeeded in working out a system that affords the essential credit facilities to every enterprise, big or little, and thus insures universal stability even in the midst of crushing calamity. All the units to be organized are already catalogued by the German government, and the principles of organization have



been tried out on a scale sufficiently large to make their wider application feasible. The staff is likely to be strongly efficient in international competition.

## Mr. Wilson on the Stump

**W**E are warned not to make too much of the crowds that greeted the President on his recent tour. There is no doubt that an enthusiastic minority cheering at railroad stations, lining the streets, packing itself into halls, can create the illusion of a popular upheaval. There is no really objective test of public opinion. Even skilled political observers who travelled with Mr. Wilson can only judge by the audience they happen to see and the fifty or sixty men and women they happen to talk with. So, failing a more exact means of judging, the President's critics are driven back on their own intuitions.

The President established his inner conviction that the nation must prepare. Whatever may have been his opinions or prejudices a year, six months, or even three months ago, the man who pleaded with the Middle West spoke from his heart. There was much in his extemporized speeches which reads like watery rhetoric, but in all of them there were short passages of self-revelation which were peculiarly effective and winning. He made it very clear what his central motives have been in the long dispute with Germany: a realization that the sentiment of the country was against war, coupled with the fact that there might be no way out of the impasse except by war. He spoke as a man who has been through an awful experience, as indeed he has. And he showed that the experience has changed him, and given him a new sense of the mechanics of world affairs. When he asked the frank question, "Do you want the situation to be such that all the President can do is to write messages and utter words of protest?" he talked as one who knew. He is not a Bryan, impervious to experience.

That confession, because it was so perfectly sincere, was a great stroke. It explained to the reasonable pacifist why Mr. Wilson had been converted to preparedness, and it at least quieted the critics who are out of patience with him. He has been writing notes because he has been trying to obey the will of the American people, and because he has no force at his command to do more than write notes. To admit all this does not imply, of course, that Mr. Wilson could not have handled the situation with a better technique. A more realistically educated diplomat might have done a better job. But the confession does admit us to the human atmosphere which determined his decisions.

This authentic personal quality was the strength

of his plea. "I have come to tell you that from my own knowledge . . ." and although he told nothing that was specific, his words had behind them the prestige of his office, and the fact in everyone's mind that here was the man who had been in the midst of the storm. He squeezed every bit of advantage out of the drama in which he is the chief actor.

In the sense that it was an educative mission, the President accomplished something by his tour. He drove home the fact that he at least does not think that diplomatic victories are to be won by persuasion alone. There was none of that illusion in his speeches, and it is an illusion peculiarly dangerous to America. Then, too, he did fine service in not holding up the bogey of invasion. In this matter he was at once more honest and more enlightening than most of the defence societies. Mr. Wilson did not say: you may have to fight to preserve your isolation. He said: you may have to fight to enforce ideals that you believe in. There were a few careless lapses into jingo panic, especially when he talked about a supreme navy. But the main insistence was that we are arming to defend not our territory, but certain policies and ideals.

What policies and what ideals was left rather vague. The guarantee to Pan-America was emphasized, but Mr. Wilson did not explain against whom and for what we are to protect this hemisphere. He made it clear that he is in favor of abandoning the Philippines, taking the high ground that we have promised to abandon them, and avoiding scrupulously any allusion to Japan and the Far East and California. He made a rather conventional and in our opinion thoughtless reference to "entangling alliances," for it is clear that his promises to Pan-America cannot be fulfilled by the United States alone. In regard to the controversy with England he said nothing which emerged from the limbo of "rights," or which may not be construed as foreshadowing anything from a mere legal argument to an unlimited assertion of the American case. His whole attitude towards the British Empire was uninspired by any constructive vision of the Anglo-American future.

There are many things one may wish the President had said, a few that he had left unsaid, but the success and value of his tour cannot be denied. It has disappointed his bitterest critics. Mr. Wilson emerged from his seclusion, spoke with much frankness about himself, and cleared the air a good deal. He showed no unexpected grasp either of foreign policy or of diplomatic method. He remained the somewhat confused though entirely well-meaning amateur. He poured forth an unusual amount of banal spread-eagles. His strength came from his humility and his instinct for the traditional sentiment of America.