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THE ISSUE PUZZLE.

The republicans are progressing nicely with their program of party realignment. What is troubling them is the important matter of issues for next year. The present complaint is that they can't leave a perfectly good issue lying around loose anywhere but that man Wilson picks it up and lugs it home for incorporation in his 1916 platform. Bryan used to raise his voice frequently in eloquent protest over the way Roosevelt made away with most of the democratic leader's political habiliments. Evening up for Bryan's grievances probably does not enter into the president's calculations, but he certainly seems to be making notable progress in that direction.

From the day the democrats put over their guesswork tariff revision the republicans have been counting confidently on reaping much profit from the tariff issue in 1916. Things seemed to be coming their way when the war broke out and mixed everything up, giving the democrats a lovely opportunity to contend that the war alone was responsible for existing revenue and business complications. There remained, however, a chance to point out some obvious weak points in the prevailing tariff schedules. For instance, it was easy to carry favor with the sugar and the wool interests by promising to restore the protective duty on these commodities. But along come President Wilson and Secretary McAdoo and declare that the revenue needs of the government are such that a duty—which will be protective in its effect—must remain on sugar. Thus at a stroke is stilled the clamor in the cane sugar districts of the south and the beet sugar districts of the west.

Other foxy democrats are suggesting that the revenue produced by a moderate duty on wool also could be used to advantage in the government coffers. Still other hard thinking democratic leaders are suggesting that the emergency disclosed by the war might warrant a departure from democratic usage in the imposition of new duties on chemicals, frankly for the purpose of building up a permanent chemical industry that would render the United States independent of any other country in case of war. With sugar and wool and chemicals looked after, the three best republican tariff guns would be spiked. And if the republicans should turn to the tariff commission for an issue, they must climb over President Wilson's contention that the new trade commission has full power to investigate tariff needs.

Since early in the war the republicans have been assembling building material for the construction of an elaborate preparedness issue. While Mr. Bryan was at the head of the cabinet they were visibly successful in committing the administration to a Chinese policy. In the matter of national defense. But Mr. Bryan dropped out of the cabinet in ample time to let President Wilson sow some preparedness seed in the soil which the republicans had so kindly prepared for the planting. The present talk is that the administration will offer an extensive preparedness program covering a period of five years and comprising about all the expenditures for army and navy expansion that the public may be expected to approve. If the \$400,000,000 annual army and navy budget now contemplated fails to meet popular expectations, the discouraged republicans expect to see it jacked up to \$500,000,000 or \$600,000,000 before midwinter

dates to impel us to begin such action now. The republican nomination for next year is not going begging. Nor are we, like the democrats, forced to take one only as our standard bearer. More than a dozen men, now favorite sons of their own communities, will enter the convention. One of them will emerge as the favorite son of a united and triumphant party. He will be worthy of the honor. And when we have nominated him and elected him—as we shall—we shall have the satisfaction of knowing that we have not impoverished the courts in order to enrich the white house.

\$240,000,000 REVENUE SHORTAGE.

The secretary of the treasury announces that he will recommend to congress that the emergency revenue act, which expires by statutory limitation on Dec. 31, 1915, be extended until peace is restored in Europe, and that the present duty on sugar, which the Underwood tariff act provided should be removed on May 1, 1916, be retained until "normal customs conditions are restored." With these two sources of revenue in operation the government at the present time is spending at the rate of \$100,000,000 a year more than it receives, so that if congress adopts Mr. McAdoo's recommendation, as it must inevitably, it will make no step of progress towards meeting the deficit. With the present ratio of income to expenditures maintained congress must provide some means for raising another \$100,000,000 a year to bring the government out even. This, of course, does not take into account the money that undoubtedly will have to be appropriated for the national defense, which has been estimated at anywhere from \$300,000,000 to \$700,000,000, and for which separate provision will be made, probably by an issue of bonds.

Secretary McAdoo's recommendations could easily have been anticipated; he has taken the only course open to him, though it necessarily involves a confession of the total failure of the Underwood act as a revenue producer. Summed up the country's present financial condition proves that the tariff law falls short of yielding the revenue its framers and supporters calculated on by about \$240,000,000 since the sugar duty, which the Underwood act provided should be removed on May 1, 1916, yields about \$50,000,000, the special revenue act or war tax about \$90,000,000, while the annual deficit amounts to about \$100,000,000.

All the blame for this \$240,000,000 shortage the administration leaders place upon the war. Speaker Champ Clark says there is a "difficulty with the revenue" due to the war, and Secretary McAdoo wants the sugar duty retained until "normal customs conditions are restored." And yet the statistics of the department of commerce show that in the first year of the war there was a falling off in the value of our imports of only 12 per cent or \$230,000,000. Plainly this decrease does not explain a "difficulty with the revenue" that leaves the country \$240,000,000 short of what the lawmakers had figured on.

The people will go on paying the special war tax in time of peace and they will contribute the \$100,000,000 this is still needed to make ends meet, in whatever way congress may dictate, but when the 1916 campaign rolls around the administration's financing will call for explanation, and that means that the operation of the new tariff will be subjected to deep scrutiny. There is no reason to doubt that this will be the big issue.—Washington Herald.

The Political Situation.

Not many elections are to be held next November, but those that will take place are of vital importance. They will profoundly influence the national contest of 1916. All who have friends in the states that are voting might well urge them to go to the polls and show how they stand on the great pending issues.

The most vital and immediate need is a policy of dealing with business questions that shall give courage and confidence to the business community. Good laws regulating corporations are necessary for prosperity, but the spirit of enterprise, the willingness to risk money is even more vital. A group of laws may be perfectly just and fair theoretically. But if they are passed all at once, or are administered in a way to alarm the men who have money to invest, the too rapid changes slow down enterprise, and lead capitalists to hoard their money. Contrarywise the laws may be

unsatisfactory and many injustices may exist. But if the business men of the country have courage to go ahead and take chances and start new enterprises, there will be general prosperity and people will have money to save and money to spend.

Every effort should be made to remedy existing wrongs, but in the case of over hasty legislation the remedy is usually ten times worse than the disease.

The great fault of the democratic administration is that it has tried to reform everything all at once. It set out to pass a lot of laws which had both good and bad features in spots. It began by frightening and alarming the business community. It was not merely the bad mistakes actually made in the laws, but the constant spirit of hostility to business men. This made people with money sit down on their boards and refuse to risk it in employing labor. Hence widespread unemployment and industrial distress.

The only possible way to accomplish economic reform is to do it in harmonious co-operation with the business community. A law that frightens the working man far more than even an unjust law. The present administration has been unwilling to consult with practical business men and get the judgment of experience on its experiments. As a consequence it has brought ruin to many enterprises and suffering to millions of work people.

Town Topics.

St. Louis astronomers report seeing new sun spots. Since when have they had a chance to get a good look at the sun?—Detroit Free Press.

Professional pride in New York is evoked by a rogues' gallery that is called the finest in the world. It could hardly be made so without material.—New York World.

"Chicago tells the truth about herself," declared the ad. men in convention assembled. How does Chicago manage to do that and get it through the mails?—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Reading insists that unescorted young women must not be on the streets after 10 o'clock at night. This should be no trouble in a town where all the girls are so pretty that they can have as many escorts as they like.—Philadelphia Press.

PITH AND POINT.

Remember the longer you live the older you get.

The polite term "casualties" covers a multitude of horrors.

Tomorrow is the date of things that are never accomplished.

In Mexico bullets are regarded as a necessity and bread as a luxury.

A new affliction has been discovered—the automobile eye. Keep it peeled.

PAUL DESCHANEL.

President of the French Chamber of Deputies.



To the Public and Our Many Patrons

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