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PRESIDENT WILSON

NOT THE ISSUE

Since the editor of The Tribune has taken upon himself to indulge in a little friendly sarcasm relative to the writer's expressed disapproval of the attitude of congress toward warning Americans to keep off of belligerent ships, permit me to say that I do not consider that congress approved or disapproved President Wilson. In fact, to thinking people President Wilson was not the issue. The real issue was whether or not the law which the president was sworn to enforce should be sustained or repealed. Congress had a right to warn American citizens that they would take passage on belligerent ships at their own risk. Should this question be submitted to the voters it is probable that August body would find itself with the majority. The plain people are not so much interested in precedent as they are that common horse sense should prevail in governmental affairs the same as in individual matters. In other words, the average voter is rapidly learning to "see things" for himself and act accordingly, notwithstanding a few semmi jingo-statesmen editors to the contrary.

E. C. Peery.

The Tribune cannot agree with Mr. Peery's conclusion. It thinks President Wilson, as the directing head of our government and who with his secretary of state is all of the American end of the issue and that congress should do nothing to embarrass his delicate diplomatic dealings with the German empire, is the only issue. Should congress have passed the "Give warning" resolutions, it would have been tantamount to acknowledging Germany's right to change the international law or rules of war to suit her convenience. President Wilson wants Germany to live up to The Hague convention to which she was a signatory power.

When all of the then leading powers of the world made and established certain rules and regulations guaranteeing to neutral nations certain rights and attached their names thereto, such action had all the solemnity and force of a treaty between nations. It had more, because it was the establishment of a common law to govern all nations. It was an endeavor on the part of the signatory powers to place war on a sort of civilized basis.

One of those rules gave people of neutral nations the right to travel on belligerent merchant vessels and, while such belligerent vessels were subject to search and capture, the safety of crew and passengers must be provided for.

At this same convention, the right of merchant vessels to carry arms for defensive purposes was recognized and such vessels were not to be

regarded as war vessels for offensive purposes.

These rules of war were established before the invention of the submarine and airship and were in full force and effect when the war began.

While the submarine is a dangerous implement of war for any vessel to come in contact with, whether battleship or merchant ship when submerged, it is not capable of defending itself when on the surface. A merchant vessel armed with a couple of cannon is a dangerous enemy.

To use submarines effectively, the attack must be made without giving warning. Of course such attacks involve great danger and the loss of life to noncombatants and Germany has used her submarine and airships against noncombatants most unmercifully.

President Wilson has and is insisting strenuously that Germany shall live up to the provisions of The Hague convention and Germany cannot use her submarines effectively without violating her plighted word with other nations, made at The Hague.

For some reason Germany has concluded that congress and the people would not sustain the president in his diplomatic contentions and has been dominating and arrogant in her acts and demands because of this fact.

Hence a vote of confidence by congress in the wisdom of the president was highly important. It added a force to the American contentions which Germany will hardly neglect to consider.

Of course President Wilson, congress nor the people want war with Germany and the surest way to prevent such war is to manifest the spirit that America is not impotent, but has the will and power to compel the respect, not only of Germany but of other nations.

America is slow in her wrath and will suffer almost humiliation before letting loose the dogs of war. But when she does undertake to maintain her rights and dignity any and all nations sit up and take notice, nevertheless some of our little Americans would have us submit to insult as well as injury. Nor has congress the right to forbid Americans to travel on belligerent merchant ships. Congress has not the right to forbid citizens of the United States from doing a lawful thing and this thing which Mr. Peery would have congress forbid, is a lawful privilege, so declared by all of the signatory powers at The Hague. Congress can no more change these international laws in time of war than can the Kaiser. It would be unneutral to do so.

Forebearance Overtaxed

President Wilson, in dealing with the Mexican problem, has manifested a great degree of forbearance; so great that his political enemies and some of his political friends have condemned him bitterly therefor. His "watchful waiting" policy has been both caricatured and ridiculed. But at last Villa has added the final straw and forbearance is displaced by vigorous action.

While the president states that the sending of Federal troops into Mexico is purely punitive and not with the purpose of intervention, the prejudice among the Mexican people against the Gringos is such that this invasion will be resented by the defacto forces as well as by the Villa bandits, the objective of the expedition now under way.

The Tribune stated that intervention by the United States, in an editorial article more than two years ago, would be but a matter of time; for Mexico within herself would never become pacified. The jealousy and greed on the part of

the upper classes and absolute ignorance, destitution and love of pillage of the Peon class, make a pacified stable government, under present conditions impossible. Revolution has become a trade with the Mexican people. Whenever a so-called leader can secure arms and ammunition sufficient, it is no trouble to organize a revolutionary force, to rob and pillage the country. It is easier for the Peon to get a living in this way, meager as it is, than by manual labor. In fact there is no incentive to labor in that country for a revolutionary force is sure to arise and forcibly absorb the fruits thereof.

The Mexican character is peculiar. There is no reason in his makeup. He can be ruled by fear only. President Diaz found this to be true and he ruled his subjects with an iron hand. His methods were those of an absolute monarch. His frequent executions of his subjects inspired a terror among the people which kept them in a state of pacification. If he had undertaken to educate the Peon and to develop reason, he could have relinquished the iron hand and led his people into prosperity and happiness.

Now only a strong nation can restore a condition of peace down there. It must take charge of this unhappy country, establish schools, maintain the rights of property and in time, enable Mexico to become capable of self government.

Now that for the second time the United States has invaded Mexico, let us hope that we make a good job of it. No doubt Carranza will make serious objections and may be foolish enough to attempt resistance. In this later case, intervention in earnest is sure to follow.

As a duty to humanity, the United States should take charge of the Mexican government, restore order and give her a start towards peace and prosperity. Mexico, if developed along the lines of peace and modern civilization, is one of the richest countries in the world. In point of mineral resources she is not, probably, surpassed by any other country and her agricultural possibilities are beyond computation because they are yet untouched by modern methods.

It is unjust to the world civilization to allow a lot of red-handed murderers to denominate a country which should be filled with modern, comfortable and prosperous homes. Our much talked of Monroe Doctrine demands, in the interests of European nations as well as for ourselves that we stop these people from destroying themselves and the obligations due to foreign lands. By establishing a stable government and restoring the earning power to Mexico, we may avoid war with an European power, if we continue to regard our Monroe doctrine as a rule of action in our political dealings with foreign nations.

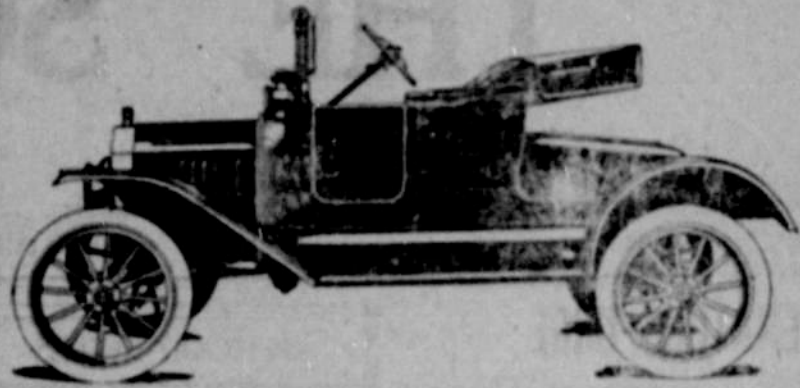
Hence The Tribune expects to see not only 7000 American troops on Mexican territory, but several times that number, within a few weeks. President Wilson has evidently become convinced that Mexican promises and intentions cannot be relied upon. He has gone the limit in forbearance. He withdrew American troops from Vera Cruz on the promise that Carranza would speedily pacify his country and still, two years have elapsed, and the same unhappy condition exists.

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