

JUG HANDLED POLITICS AT WASHINGTON.

The debate in the United States Senate on the Panama Canal question shows the American view of diplomatic obligations in a very peculiar light. Most of the senators who take part in the discussion speak of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty with the utmost contempt, and many of them seem to regard the idea that the United States should be bound by any international agreement to which it is a party, as a joke. Incidentally it indicates how much a Peace Treaty with the United States is worth.

Senator Massey declared the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901 might be ignored by the United States, so far as the Panama Canal was concerned. The operation of that waterway had become a domestic problem, he said, and one not properly reviewable by any international court.

Senator Bradley held that even under the treaty the United States had simply made the rules of equality which were to apply to all other nations. As the maker of those rules, and the nation at whose expense the canal has been built, he declared the United States was not bound by the regulations of the treaty, so far as it requires "equal treatment" to all ships.

He declared the people of the United States would not have sanctioned the spending of \$400,000,000 to

build the canal had they believed they were to have no rights there that were not enjoyed by all other nations. He contended that the United States had the right under the treaty to protect its own interests and its own shipping, and claimed that since the United States had purchased the canal zone, the operation of the canal became a domestic question, and one which should not be submitted to an international court.

The pledge of "equality" to all nations, Senator Bradley said, meant that the United States would give equal treatment to all nations in the use of the canal, while reserving the right to protect itself. The United States adopted the rules of the treaty, he said, to apply to all other nations, but not to itself.

Senator McCumber threw in a word of warning. He said:

"If we should publish to the world that we had fortified it as a war measure and not for police protection," he said, "it would cost us ten times as much to protect it in time of war as we would derive in benefit from it. It would become a source of weakness, not of strength."

All nations would combine against the United States, he insisted, if it should attempt to close the canal in time of war to any foreign ships. The canal would then face the danger of destruction, he said, from "the surreptitious bomb of some foreign power."

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