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I have always been a peace advocate. I believe in peace and in the proper enforcement of the laws of peace—by force, if necessary

NEWTON D. BAKER
SECRETARY OF WAR

BAKER: TRAINED ADMINISTRATOR

BY FREDERIC C. HOWE

COMMISSIONER OF IMMIGRATION AT THE PORT OF NEW YORK

FEW men in public life more completely refute the opinion commonly held that democracy involves the commonplace and will not tolerate the expert trained official than Newton D. Baker, the new appointee to the portfolio of war. For few men in America are more thoroughly prepared for public life, and few men have had a longer, more progressive and more fruitful career, measured by achievement, than the most recently appointed member of President Wilson's Cabinet. Probably the increasing number of trained men who are finding their way into municipal, state and Federal service is the best evidence of the changing character of our politics.

Mr. Baker has been in the public service almost continuously since his graduation from Johns Hopkins University in 1892, where he took his Bachelor degree, and Washington and Lee, where he completed his law studies. Trained for the law and really interested in the profession, he has been called from it repeatedly from the moment he returned to his native town of Martinsburg, West Virginia, down to the present. He was first appointed private secretary for Postmaster-General Wilson, the author of the Wilson Tariff Bill. Leaving that position, he was induced to go to Cleveland, Ohio, as a larger field for professional work. Almost immediately after arriving there he was appointed assistant solicitor in the City Law Department, and upon the election of Tom L. Johnson as Mayor in 1901 he was appointed city solicitor. This position he filled for eight years. It was an experience that would train any man in the most difficult legal problems, in the most complex administrative difficulties, for these were years of strenuous city building in Cleveland, in which the old traditions of spoils politics and corrupt control by public service corporations were being shattered, and the foundations of a new type of city government were being laid.

Mr. Baker was not only the city solicitor, he was the close confidential adviser of Mayor Johnson in his struggle to free the city from the public utility interests controlled by Hanna and other politicians. The street railway franchises were expiring. The companies desired their renewal. They refused to grant satisfactory terms. Mayor Johnson insisted that his experience had demonstrated that three cents was a rea-

sonable charge for carrying passengers. And this was his rallying political cry. The issue was as to whether Cleveland really owned its streets. It seems a simple one, yet all the entrenched privileges of the state were bent on denial of this right. Year after year the struggle waged. Probably twenty elections turned around that issue.

At the end of eight years of struggle the street railways finally capitulated. They were driven to accept a three-cent fare. This fare has continued, with only occasional interruptions when it has been necessary to add one cent for a transfer to tide over periods of hard times which were reflected in the companies' earnings. Thru this reduction in fares the car riders of Cleveland have been saved from \$2,500,000 to \$3,000,000 every year.

On the death of Mayor Johnson, Mr. Baker was recognized as his logical successor. He was elected mayor by a majority of 15,000, a large part of his support coming from districts which had been most antagonistic to Mayor Johnson and his program. The program of municipal ownership had been freed from many obstacles, and Mayor Baker was first elected on an issue of municipal ownership of the electric lighting plant. A \$2,000,000 plant was approved by the voters. It was subsequently erected. Electric lighting rates were immediately reduced to a maximum of three cents and a minimum of one-half cent per kilowatt hour. Even on these charges the municipal plant has proven a great success; it has not only earned all operating and fixed charges, but a substantial surplus as well.

These dominating issues being out of the way, Mayor Baker turned to other lines of municipal activity. Under the provisions of the Constitution the cities of Ohio were authorized to draft their own charters. A charter commission was appointed of fifteen men. It was a really representative and distinguished commission. It sat for several months, and finally reported back a model democratic charter, which was subsequently approved by the people. Under this charter Mr. Baker was elected mayor for a second term, which expired January 1, 1916.

During the years of his administration Cleveland took rank as probably the best governed city in America. A splendid project of grouping all the public buildings was adopted. Similar plans were carried thru in

the surrounding territory, so that Cleveland has now provided wonderful suburban developments capable of accommodating probably half a million people. Other great projects were the completion of the water works system, the building of splendid bridges over the Cuyahoga River, the completion of the park system, and negotiations for the acquisition of a large part of its lake front to be used for municipal docks and terminals.

This is but indicative of the big visioned development which it has fallen to Mr. Baker's lot to carry thru. It has trained him in the handling of big projects; it has familiarized him with men and methods, and the interests which menace the nation no less than the city and the state. It has been a training involving just such large administrative and legislative measures as the administration of the portfolio of war presents.

At the expiration of his second term as mayor, Mr. Baker declined to be a candidate for reelection. He desired to return to the law. He is recognized as a great orator and he is an orator of the scholarly type. At the Baltimore convention which placed Mr. Wilson in nomination he delivered an address recognized as one of the most brilliant of the convention, and his activities on behalf of Mr. Wilson contributed greatly to his nomination.

Mr. Baker is one of the few men in politics who keeps all of his academic enthusiasms alive. He is a constant reader and has a remarkable memory. He is interested in many social activities. For several years he was president of the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, which he joined at Johns Hopkins when he was a student under Woodrow Wilson. He has recently been elected national president of the National Consumers' League. While mayor he gave a great deal of attention to many social activities for the amelioration of housing, living and recreational conditions in the city.

According to the press Mr. Baker, who at forty-four is the youngest member of the Cabinet, is said to be profoundly interested in peace. He has, however, express approval of the President's preparedness program, and if the news accounts may be accepted as correct, we may assume that he is for preparedness for defense and the conduct of the War Department as an aid to the preservation of peace, rather than an instrumentality for easy war.

Ellis Island, New York