

## Swapping the LaFollettes for the Walshes

Although Senator LaFollette's action with respect to the railway rate bill appears to have found favor with the American people, the Wisconsin senator does not stand well with the republican politicians. Newspaper dispatches say that Senator LaFollette is openly insulted by his republican colleagues while republican newspapers are reading LaFollette out of the republican party. For instance, the Washington correspondent for the Springfield, Mass., Republican, referring to one day's proceedings while the rate bill was under discussion, says:

"Anything and everything that LaFollette offered during the day was even more quickly marked for slaughter by the republicans than if it had come from the democrats. One of his defeated amendments was designed to strike at the past practice of the railroads in offering only partial testimony before the interstate commerce commission and full testimony before the courts, thereby aiming to discredit the commission by reversals of its decisions. Senator Spooner had offered such an amendment last night, but withdrew it—apparently when he found it was contaminated by LaFollette's approval. In petty ways the republicans are showing unnecessary discourtesy toward the Wisconsin radical, but they are helping instead of hurting him."

"Where will LaFollette land?" is the question generally discussed at the national capitol, and the question seems to be disturbing a large number of republican politicians. It can not be denied that many of the republican leaders are really anxious that Senator LaFollette should withdraw from their party. The position of these is perhaps well described in a dispatch written by Frank J. Stillman, the Washington correspondent for the Sioux City (Iowa) Journal. Mr. Stillman says:

"The statement has come from close personal friends of Senator LaFollette, of Wisconsin, that he is an aspirant for the presidential nomination and may fairly be considered in the race. If this be true, the methods employed by the senator in the senate may be regarded as peculiar, unless he has worked out a new system of political procedure. As a matter of fact, a close observer of the senator during the last few weeks would have formed the conclusion that he has been seeking to line up democratic support in the senate. Senator LaFollette will doubtless claim that he can get no consideration at the hands of the republican members of the senate. If this be true it is due primarily to the fact that he has deliberately insulted the senate. He has not only disregarded the unwritten rules of that body, but he has gone out of his way to repeatedly slam the senate and its membership. Custom has established the precedent that a brand new senator, before he breaks out in a set speech, shall sit in the chamber long enough to become familiar with procedure and the methods of the senate. It is customary for a new senator to listen and vote during the first session of his membership, although it is regarded as perfectly in order for him to ask questions and occasionally inject remarks of a pertinent sort upon pending legislation. In the case of Senator LaFollette it was expected that he would enter the forum of debate at once, and considering the nature of the legislation in hand and the experience of Senator LaFollette in this line there was a disposition to accord him respectful hearing, provided he saw fit to conduct himself in harmony with the spirit of the senate. In the course of his three days' speech on the rate question Senator LaFollette took occasion to roast the senate and senators a number of times. After he had spoken a couple of hours the first day and there appeared a large array of vacant seats on both sides of the chamber, the senator stopped in the midst of a remark and administered a rebuke to the senate because senators were not present, declaring that the people would see to it that senators were sent who would remain in their seats, or words to that effect. This roast occurred just as Senator Allison had arisen to leave the chamber to attend a session of the committee on appropriations, of which he is chairman. Senator Allison and Senator Dooliver were two senators who remained in the chamber each day during the LaFollette speech as long as they could leave other duties. Senator Allison was leaving his seat when Senator LaFollette paused, and, with great dramatic effect, shaking his head until his pompadour trembled, and in a fine frenzy, delivered himself of the foregoing roast. It seemed to be directed principally at Senator Allison, who, in fact, was

one of the few senators during the three days' speech who did listen for any length of time to Senator LaFollette.

"At other times Senator LaFollette has roasted the senate and slapped the members in the face. He has seemed to take the view from the beginning that the card for him to play was that of martyr; to make it appear that he had been turned down by the senate in the hope that this would popularize him in the minds of the people. Failing in this, he has taken the course of jumping on the senate. As for the senate, it has made no reply to the warnings and frenzy of the statesman from the Badger state. It has gone right along about its business just as though Senator LaFollette had not appeared.

"Latterly Senator LaFollette has taken a new tack. He is now in close communion with the democrats. Last week, during the final debate under the fifteen minute rule on the rate bill, he voted with the democrats and was in constant conference with Senators Bailey, Money, Culberson, Overman and others. When a situation would arise permitting action, one of the democrats mentioned or others immediately went to Senator LaFollette and a whispered consultation followed. At the first opportunity Senator LaFollette took the floor, presumably along the line suggested by Senator Bailey or others. At all events, he seemed to be striving to embarrass the friends of the administration in the conduct of the rate bill.

"It has been suggested that Senator LaFollette may be laying his plans to capture the nomination for president on the democratic ticket with the expectation of being able to carry a sufficient number of republican votes in Wisconsin to secure the electoral vote of that state and other close states. At any rate, nobody here seems to be able to figure out how he hopes to win republican support in the light of the tactics he has followed during the last two months. He has not been directing his efforts against his colleague, Senator Spooner, or against the group in the senate who have been opposed to the president in his effort to obtain an effective railway rate bill. His policy, on the contrary, appears to have been to get into a row with the republican side of the chamber in the hope that it would give him an opportunity to claim that he was being persecuted and appeal to the people on that ground."

The Chicago Chronicle, which once pretended to be democratic, and which, controlled by motives similar to those actuating the patriots of old, left its party for its party's good, whips Senator LaFollette from the republican party, saying:

"Senator LaFollette, of Wisconsin, has been for years constantly veering away from the recognized principles and policy of the party to which he assumes to belong and more and more identifying himself with the socialistically inclined malcontents of the democratic party, to the leadership of whom William Randolph Hearst aspires. So zealous an advocate of the fads and fancies of these visionaries as the degenerated litterateur Julian Hawthorne has proclaimed that he can discern no virtue or good sense in all that has been said in congress during the pending memorable consideration of the railroad rate bill, save in something that was offered by Hearst and the flamboyant declamation by LaFollette. If anyone ever doubted the Wisconsin senator's affiliations the doubts must be dispelled by the record of his voting on sundry proposed amendments to the rate bill in the senate on Friday last. On several of these the votes of the republican senators, or of every one of those who claim to be republicans, were cast solidly together, with the one exception of LaFollette, who voted every time, without exception, with the democratic senators. Even on two or three occasions, when one or two of the democratic senators for stated, specific reasons, broke away from their party and voted with the republicans, Mr. LaFollette stuck to his new allies and voted with the democratic opposition for any and every radical measure which irresponsibility might suggest.

"While LaFollette was thus fraternizing with democrats in Washington his supporters at home were demanding of candidates for the state legislature, in a return for LaFollette support, written pledges that if elected they will oppose and vote against the re-election to the senate of John C. Spooner, the present senior senator from Wisconsin. Mr. Spooner is a republican and it is but a plain statement of fact that no other public man in the United States is held in higher regard for statesmanship, for wide and deep legal and political learning or for high personal and political character. No senator has reflected more honor

on his state from every point of view and none is more distinguished for devotion to sound, statesmanlike, conservative republican principles and practice. Yet this republican, one of the foremost of the senators from all the states, Mr. LaFollette and his friends are openly and covertly plotting and intriguing to defeat. Certainly LaFollette's pretense to republicanism is as impudent as it is hollow. He belongs to Hearst and Bryan."

Robert M. LaFollette will be given a cordial welcome to the democratic fold, but what shall it profit the republican party if it gains all the John R. Walshes in America and loses its LaFollettes?

### CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS ARE APPROACHING

The primary pledge is designed to awaken the interest of the rank and file of voters in the primaries of their party. As a result of the campaign waged on these lines thousands of democrats have signed a pledge promising to lose no opportunity to participate in the primaries of their party, and to see to it that the party makes a clean, honest and straightforward declaration on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

The congressional elections are now approaching, and The Commoner desires to arouse new interest in the primary pledge plan of organization. To this end Commoner readers everywhere are requested to participate in the effort to obtain by June 1, 25,000 signatures to the primary pledge.

If you do not have a primary pledge form, you will find one on page 14. This may be clipped or copied, as you prefer and signatures attached thereto.

Send signatures to The Commoner office as rapidly as possible.

Extracts from letters received at The Commoner office follow:

Otto Wieck, Omaha, Nebr.—Enclosed find the required pledge. I am ready to do for the party what little I can, though you must consider that I am nearly eighty years of age.

Wm. Bouck, Franklin, N. Y.—Find enclosed fifty signatures to primary pledge. Success.

D. C. Shaffer, White Cloud, Ind.—You will find enclosed thirty-four of primary pledge signers who are for a free vote and a fair count.

Bernard J. Sachs, St. Paul, Minn.—Enclosed find twelve signatures to primary pledge.

Norris E. Hoover, Hustontown, Pa.—Enclosed find five names for primary pledge. This represents the fruits of five minutes' work.

H. W. Frazier, Kimballton, Va.—In response to your thirty day campaign call I herewith enclose you the names of twenty true Bryan democrats who have enlisted to fight until the sun goes down on the sixth day of next November, for the democratic principles. May the American people, regardless of past party affiliations, arise and break the chain of might, strike down corruption and once more come again unto their own. Hoping that pledges may increase to fifty thousand by the 1st of June, I am yours to serve.

J. M. Cawby, Fontana, Kans.—I have a few names that have signed the primary pledge and I will send them in so you can enter their names on record. I heartily approve the primary pledge and think it will be a great success if followed.

O. L. Murray, Mont, Ky.—Enclosed find two primary pledges signed and also application for subscription cards. My precinct is small, but democratic three to one.

W. H. Tisch, Grass Lake, Mich.—Enclosed find six signatures to the primary pledge.

H. B. King, Dadeville, Mo.—I enclose, herewith, eleven signatures to the primary pledge.

J. W. Dulworth, Jadwin, Mo.—Enclosed herewith are fourteen signatures to the primary pledge. My pledge has already been sent in.

### THERE ARE OTHERS

The Seattle, Wash., Times (Republican) says: "Those former trusted employes of Standard Oil who are testifying as to the wickedness of old John D. Rockefeller's pet company, tell some pretty bad tales, but, as they belong to the independents now isn't it just likely that they are a wee mite prejudiced?"

To what particular independent company do Theodore Roosevelt and James R. Garfield belong? If there was nothing to conceal in Standard Oil affairs, why did John D. Rockefeller take refuge in flight when Missouri officials sought to serve upon him a subpoena, commanding him to appear in a court of justice and tell the truth?