

that would dismember the road for interstate purposes.

Mr. Bryan. Not at all.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. How would it operate?

Mr. Bryan. The board that had control of the roads in Illinois would act in conjunction with the board that had control in Indiana, if it was a Government road, or, if a privately owned road, with the manager, and they would arrange for their joint operations. You would have to assume that a road would not look out for its own interests in order to take any other position.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Would you prevent any railroad company from engaging in interstate commerce?

Mr. Bryan. No; and I think you can safely leave that matter to the United States. The Federal Government will really set the price and terms of interstate commerce.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. What would be your estimate of the number of years that it would take to put that plan into effect?

Mr. Bryan. I would not attempt to guess, because it would be merely a guess, and my experience has led me to be a little cautious about fixing a time. It is easier to tell the direction of the wind than to measure its velocity; it is easier to tell the trend of events than it is to tell how soon a thing will be accomplished.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Would you release any of the Federal control after that plan had been adopted, or would you continue Federal control until it had been completely adopted?

Mr. Bryan. I think that would have to be determined by the conditions as they arose. There is this general proposition that I have always gone on; namely, that the people will have as much sense to-morrow as they have to-day, and probably more light. Therefore you can safely leave until to-morrow the decision of questions that can not be decided to-day.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. But in formulating a plan we have to decide on something, and I was wondering whether in your plan it was your purpose to continue Federal control until all the States had adopted your plan or whether it was your purpose that when Illinois, say, had adopted the plan Federal control would be withdrawn.

Mr. Bryan. If the Federal Government's trunk line reached out into every State its control over interstate commerce would, I think, be more effective than under any commission or board.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Then would you release Federal control?

Mr. Bryan. It might be possible to release it, but I do not think it is necessary to decide that question until we reach it.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Of course, in framing this bill you would have to extend Federal control to a certain time.

Mr. Bryan. My own opinion is that the Federal ownership and operation of a trunk-line system would not only be much more effective than any law or regulation, but would make the other regulation unnecessary.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Would not general Federal control on part of the lines and State control on other lines leave the railroad situation in somewhat of a jumble?

Mr. Bryan. I do not think so. My opinion is that when you have eliminated the selfish interests you have eliminated the real difficulties; when you have only the public interest to serve it will not be difficult for the people to agree as to what ought to be done.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. What is your opinion about the same general plan for the coal industry?

Mr. Bryan. Well, I do not think the same principle is necessarily involved.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Do you favor Government ownership of coal mines?

Mr. Bryan. I would want to hear the question discussed before I attempted to attach it to any other question.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Do you favor Government ownership of the traction lines?

Mr. Bryan. I believe in municipal ownership.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. How about the State owning the traction lines?

Mr. Bryan. My preference would be to have the States own the interurban lines that were in the city, and I see no objection to putting this whole thing together, because, you see, if the State owned the railroad lines it would simply be adding the intercity traction lines to them. They would hardly be embraced in the Federal trunk-line system.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. And since the traction lines also control the power, would you

have the power companies controlled in the same way?

Mr. Bryan. Well, if you will pardon me, I think I have presented a subject big enough without bringing in any others. I think the one subject I have presented is going to demand your attention.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. I was wondering whether the plan you suggested would be necessarily lead to the Government ownership of all public utilities.

Mr. Bryan. I am in favor of every natural opportunity being owned by the Government. Whenever competition is impossible and a monopoly necessary, it should be a Government monopoly. That I have stated as a universal proposition.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. That proposition has never been in the platform of either party?

Mr. Bryan. No.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. Although it has always been in the platform of the Socialist party, has it not?

Mr. Bryan. Well, I am not familiar with all the planks in the platform of the Socialist Party, but if you say so I will take your word for it.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. And was it not in the Populist platform of 1892?

Mr. Bryan. I could not say; it may have been. I think we have taken nearly everything out of the Populist platform and made it into law.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. And this the first step?

Mr. Bryan. If you make that reference with the idea of casting reflection on it, you will have to reflect on the people who voted for the election of Senators by the people and for an income tax.

Mr. Sanders of Indiana. I did not intend to cast any reflections at all.

Mr. Bryan. Well, I am willing to begin with the assumption that the people have not yet begun to consider this question as a practical question on which they will have to act, and it is because I desire to have them consider this plan, with other plans, that I am here to-day.

Mr. Hamilton. You have covered the ground very fully and I will not detain you more than a moment.

Mr. Bryan. I am at your service.

Mr. Hamilton. I would like to get a little information. Under your plan I take it the Government would control the strong roads, the paying roads, whereas the State roads would pay much less, I mean as revenue producers; would that be the fact?

Mr. Bryan. No; if you will pardon me—

Mr. Hamilton. I am asking for your views on that.

Mr. Bryan. I supposed you stopped for the answer. No; it is not at all necessary that the trunk line shall be the only paying line. For instance, as you go south from here you will find three great railway lines—the Southern, the Seaboard, and the Atlantic Coast Line. It would not be necessary for the Government to take more than one of those lines; in fact, it would not be necessary for the Government to take any of them, because I would want the law drawn in such a way that the Government could either construct or buy; if it were privileged to construct it would have less difficulty in buying. But I would want the power of the Government complete, so that it could either build or buy. Now, if it bought one of those lines it would not be necessary for it to buy the best paying line. All it would want to do would be to get the line that would best suit its purpose as a national artery, and it might not be the best paying line. So it does not follow—

Mr. Hamilton. I was speaking of the State lines tapping the trunk line, not thinking so much of interstate transportation.

Mr. Bryan. Well, you see there would be many of these lines that would be merely parts of an interstate line, and there would be no reason why the traffic on these should be less than it is to-day, but it would have to conform to government rates and government conditions. I see the point you are driving at, and I am prepared to answer it. I take it for granted that, if the government owned and operated a trunk line reaching into every State, the Government, because of the quantity of business it could do, could make a lower rate on the trunk line than it would be possible for the State to make on the State lines. That is the point you have in mind. But here is the answer to that. If the Government brings a piece of merchandise into the State at a lower interstate rate, because of its large traffic, then the branch line that carries it to the point where it is to be used could charge a high-

er rate than the present rate, and yet the total rate might be less than the present total rate; that is, the reduction on the through rate might be so great that the addition to the local rate would not bring it up to what the total rate is now.

Mr. Hamilton. Per mile, yes, but in the aggregate, the State line would be, perhaps—of course, it would differ in the different States, the State haulage would not be very great.

Mr. Bryan. On the contrary, it would be very much greater than is now estimated. At present they figure that about 80 per cent of it is interstate commerce.

Mr. Sims. Eighty-five per cent.

Mr. Bryan. I heard it estimated at 80 per cent.

Now how do they get that? They take every item that goes out of a State into another State. But when you have these other lines, joint lines, and only one trunk line, the amount carried over the Government line might be very much less than 85 per cent., because traffic on these other lines that are part in one State and part in another would then be counted as State traffic.

Mr. Hamilton. It would be local traffic?

Mr. Bryan. It would be local traffic, so that the local traffic might be very much larger under this system of a trunk line, with the State owning the rest.

Mr. Watson. I was a little surprised at a statement you made, when you said that railroads under private control would not be governed by politics as they would under Government control.

Mr. Bryan. I beg pardon. Are you stating what you mean?

Mr. Watson. I was stating what I thought you said. I understood you to say that there were more politics under private control than under Government control.

Mr. Bryan. Oh, yes. I thought you reversed it—your question.

Mr. Watson. Take Canada, for instance. There politics control the railroads. It is not so much a question of efficiency as it is a question of how many votes an employe can control at the election. Australia also. The Government controls 90 per cent of the railroads, or has controlled that percentage. Under pure Government management politics entered into the question to such an extent that Government ownership was a failure there, and the laws were changed. Therefore, from my observation and what I have learned, there is more politics under Government control than under private management.

Mr. Bryan. Well, of course, men differ in opinion on that, possibly, as on other questions, but I am glad you asked the question, for this reason: I only answered with one suggestion, and I am glad to add a thought that is brought out by your question and which I ought to have added, but did not recall it at the time. I have simply given my reason for believing that there will be more politics with the private managers in control than with the Government in control; but I want to say this: That when the Government is in control I believe the people would insist upon rules and regulations that would make it impossible for the employe to be used in politics. Not only do I think that, as a general proposition, based upon the belief that the people will always do that which they think is necessary for their welfare; but I think there is a way in which that can be done. I would change our civil service system in such a way as to eliminate the possibility of political control, and I think it could be done by a very small change in the system. The plan would be this, to have the examinations continue so that the man must show he is qualified before he is placed on the eligible list, but when he is on the eligible list, instead of concealing his politics, I would have him state his politics, and then I would have the appointments made from the eligible list in proportion to the voting strength of the parties, so that each party would have in the classified service its proportionate representation, if it could furnish eligible candidates, as shown by examinations.

Under that plan, if politics of the people in the service being the same as outside, the being divided in the same proportion they could have no effect on politics. Instead of saying to a man, "You must keep out of politics," which I think is rather an offense against American ideas, we can tell the man in the Government service that has the same right to his convictions as anybody outside, that his citizenship is not restricted or limited by the fact that he is in the service.

Mr. Watson. Perhaps your ideas are founded