

The Heart of the Trust Question

President Roosevelt and his friends dwell hopefully upon the good results that are to come from publicity applied by the government to the affairs of trusts. Candidate Parker and others who represent the democratic party urge that tariff duties be removed when they can be shown to serve as shelters for harmful monopolies. Both suggestions have value. But it is strange that the point of greatest importance with regard to trust evils is completely ignored by both parties and both candidates.

The injurious trust is the product of special privilege of one kind or another. Deny to it the special privilege which it uses for such ill purposes and the trust loses its power for harm. One form of such privilege is the high tariff duty. But obviously some of the most offensive combinations, like the oil trust and the beef trust, would suffer little, if at all, should tariff protection be withdrawn from them. These two trusts and many others are buttressed upon special privilege of another kind—the discriminating railway freight rate, a most powerful weapon with which to crush competition. There can be no dispute about the peculiar benefits which the Standard Oil company and the big packing firms enjoy from the railways. The latter are coerced into doing the bidding of these trusts, even to the point of infamy.

The question of greatest importance in American politics today is the railway question. It is the heart of the trust question. The failure of both the leading political parties and their respective candidates for president to grasp this vital issue must stand as a lasting reproach to them. It accounts for much of the apathy manifested by the masses in the present campaign. Governor LaFollette of Wisconsin is one of the few men now prominent in political life who give proof that they appreciate the bearing of the railway question upon other national problems. He is waging his present fight upon one phase of the railway question. It is worthy of note that there is no apathy in Wisconsin politics this year. When LaFollette and his followers were turned out of the republican national convention last June one of those followers said defiantly that the issues represented by Wisconsin's governor would yet be the dominant issues in national politics. He spoke the truth.

The question of lawlessness by railways and their fellow conspirators, the criminal trusts, will not down. The interstate commerce commission is now a sort of Little Red Riding Hood, which, while it can catch glimpses of the long teeth and slaving tongue of a vast evil, is powerless to kill or cripple it. That commission must be transformed by congress into a powerful agent to rescue the people from the wrongs inflicted upon them by the robber trusts and their pals, the transportation companies.—Chicago Daily News.

Time Saved

"This," began the agent, "is a great time-saving device—"

"You've come to the wrong house," interrupted the snappy woman at the door. "Try that woman next door."

"Ah! You think it would interest her?"

"Wouldn't be surprised. She's a crank on saving time; to my certain knowledge she was 25 years old ten years ago, but she's been so saving of her time that she claims to be only 27 now."—Catholic Standard and Times.

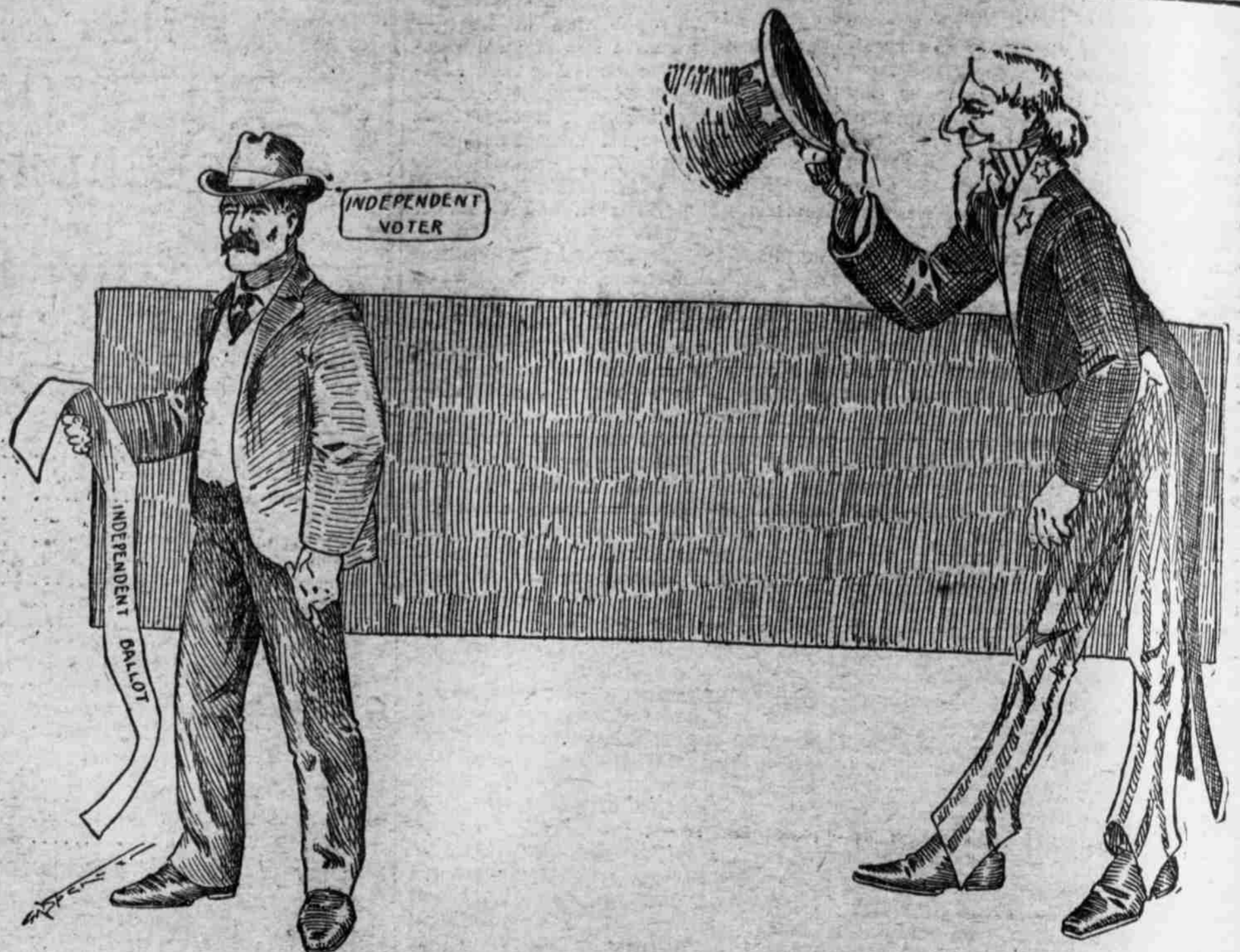
A Patriotic Declaration

The declaration by President Roosevelt that he will not seek another

presidential term is most timely and patriotic, and will be applauded and commended by the American people. President Washington, in the beginning of our national life, established the safe and sound precedent that no president shall have more than two terms of office. Whether this principle would apply in Mr. Roosevelt's case is a question open for discussion and a difference of opinion. At the expiration of the term beginning on the 4th day of next March, for which he will be elected, Mr. Roosevelt will not have served two full terms, his present term having begun nearly six months after Mr. McKinley's inauguration. Then, too, the fact that Mr. Roosevelt had been elected to the presidency only once, and not twice, would have given room for the contention that a second election four years hence would not be a violation of Washington's precedent, which is now the unwritten law of the land. But the president has brushed all these questions and quibbles aside and has publicly declared that he will not accept another nomination nor seek another election. This declaration was withheld until the election was over, so that it could not be construed as a campaign utterance made with any insincerity. In his speech in New York during the campaign ex-President Cleveland denounced in severe terms the political activity of federal office-holders. The temptation to use the enormous machinery of the government to re-elect himself is the reason why the constitution of the confederate states fixed the presidential term as six years and prohibited a re-election, and there are many thoughtful people who believe the constitution of the United States should be amended so as to adopt that policy. Mr. Roosevelt's declaration removes a great danger—the danger of even a partial disregard of Washington's precedent and of the disquiet which would be occasioned by any expectation of, even in a small degree, the shaping of the policy of the next

administration for a re-election. The enormous popular majority received by Mr. Roosevelt seems to show that he has a stronger personal hold upon the people than any president has enjoyed since the days of Mr. Lincoln. It might have occasioned some fear

that an ambitious man would be tempted to presume upon his popularity to make a new precedent by perpetuating his rule and so become the only president in the long line to fill the office more than eight years.—Baltimore Sun.



UNCLE SAM—"You sometimes make mistakes, but you mean well."

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