

TAKING THE PARTY "BACK TO THE PEOPLE"

gone too far to retreat, so with silent chagrin it received his famous gold standard telegram. The rank and file of democracy became disgusted at the temerity of this self-constituted apostle of such unknown quantities of democracy. To accept this anomalous situation was more than many of our ablest supporters could do. More than two million democrats refused to lay down their manhood and self-respect to support Judge Parker, as his infamous telegram was a direct indiscreet flaunt, if not an open insult to the intelligence of the party. It would have been better for the party if the St. Louis convention had pulled down its nominee and adjourned without nominating rather than to have gone before the people with a candidate whose first act was to repudiate the principles which have always been recognized as fundamental and reaffirmed in our national platform in 1896 and 1900. If the democratic party intends to command self-respect, it must not choose for its standard bearers men whose garments are musty with the cess pools of special interest, but it must produce a candidate in full sympathy with the people, who will dictate a platform to him that will be so clean that we will be sure of reform if we succeed in electing our candidate. But the hand writing is on the wall and its interpretation is that the masses of democracy will not tolerate another 1904 convention. It will have no dallying. But it is ready and anxious to do battle for principle.

Ben A. Bouldin, Millsville, Okla.—With all the patriotic ardor and devotion to my country's cause, that a boy, southern in principle, habits and education, yet, national in the broader spirit of democratic institutions and popular government, I pledge my fidelity and ardent support to the great democratic party, whose shattered columns are to be reorganized for the next great national conflict. We feel that justice is the one great cause for which we battle, that right between man and man is the principle we wish for and hope to establish. In this great democracy, we know no north, no south, but only native land. We still march, not under a southern banner, but under the banner of common interest to the common people.

W. P. Lowe, Sr., Falling Springs, W. Va.—Please find enclosed my primary pledge. Salt it down for keeps.

J. Polk Hughes, Carlinville, Ill.—I was always belonged to the democratic party. I want a change—I want to join a party of democrats with emphasis on the word; a party that will meet in primary elections and conventions and select a ticket of democrats of good sound democratic principles.

F. W. McComas, Concord, Fla.—Enclosed find my primary pledge signed. I believe 6-cent cotton has caused the gold democrats and republicans to forget who is president of the United States or who has control of our government. Anyway, I can't get a talk out of them on politics. But as they walk away I take great pleasure in telling them it is good old republican times, 6-cent cotton and their votes that gave us those good things. I think Roosevelt needs some good trust-made bumpers to wear when he goes to purchase material for the Panama canal, as he will come in contact with pointed facts—that it is much worse for the masses to be compelled to purchase their supplies at home under a high protective tariff, at high prices all the time than it is for the present administration to go to a foreign market to purchase canal supplies that could be manufactured by home industries and sold by home merchants under a lower tariff, thereby giving more business to industries, merchants and laborers. I would say that it would be good of President Roosevelt if he would invite his cabinet officials and all tariff barons that would accept an invitation to go with him shopping. Now that the tariff barons have their business "jammed" by the howl of their pet to purchase canal supplies in foreign markets to avoid high prices imposed by sheltered monopolies, what will they say in vindication of the fact that it is the republican party that has sheltered and built them up, until even our president sees the advisability of a purchase elsewhere. If this is the land of the free, why are a few allowed to enslave the many?

Skidmore Munsy, Lashmeet, W. Va.—I want you to know that I am as true a democrat as you are. I never scratch my ticket. I like your paper and expect to take it as long as I can

raise a dollar. It has so much sense in it. I am almost eighty-two years old. Put me on the primary list. I will do all I can for you and the democratic party. I think the party has a great work before it.

A. W. Miller, Hartland, Maine—I herewith send primary pledge. This has been my life-long custom and meets with my sincere approval. I would suggest that the young men just approaching the voting age, be induced to attend primary meetings and conventions so that the principles of democracy will be fully understood and impressed upon their minds while young and honest. My father used to take me to conventions when I was a boy and the democratic knowledge acquired and the impression thus formed has enabled me to resist all the influences to waver or be unfaithful which in our state are very strong. Yours for the safety of our country.

Rev. W. T. Spencer, Drew, Mo.—Enclosed you will find my primary pledge properly signed. I think every democrat ought to wake up and help to marshal the democratic hosts under the flag of equal rights to all and special privileges to none.

Henry Trainers, Woodstock, Wis.—Please find enclosed list of fourteen signatures to the primary pledge. These are all good, square democrats.

H. C. Cowarden, Martin, Tenn.—Enclosed find thirty pledges. I sent in a list a month ago with about twenty names. My business is such that I haven't the time I would like to devote to this, for I feel there is a vital importance to the rank and file of democracy in this move. I will do all I can to further the cause.

J. W. Fassett, Flat Creek, Ky.—With this you find thirty-five signatures to your primary pledge. Not one showed any reluctance about signing, and all seemed to think it a move in the right direction. I was born in Montgomery, August 10, 1829, therefore am an old man. I am a farmer, nine miles from town, and spend most of my time at home, therefore have been slow in gathering the names of these good democrats. I heartily approve of your plan of improving and purifying the party.

Jonas McClintock, Harnedsville, Pa.—I send you primary pledge. I heartily approve of the plan of the primary pledge. If the people had attended the primaries, traitors like Hill, Belmont, Cleveland, and the editors of papers like the Brooklyn Eagle and New York World would not have been able to dictate the platform and choose the candidate against the will of the people, as they did last fall. If the democratic party ever expects to win it must be democratic. I walked fifty miles in 1896 in order to get a chance to cast my vote for William J. Bryan. I am one of those democrats who believe that the ills which afflict our industrial and commercial life are attributable to the unnatural distribution of earnings, growing out of undue concentration of capital and monopoly; that the unnatural distribution results in periodic "over production"

with the ever present accompaniment of industrial depression and "hard times;" that the natural distribution of the products of industry are to be secured by such remodeling of the taxing system as will prevent undue concentration of industrial interests, and the fostering of monopoly; that the natural law of competition is the true and only medium in which success may be achieved in the various departments of industrial life. I am in favor of a graduated property tax.

Charles Townsend, Weedsport, N. Y.—I enclose primary pledge. Every democrat should sign and keep this pledge. We must start at the source—the primary—if we are to win out. There is no doubt that the present infallible will bob up as the "logical" candidate in 1908. The Wall Street Journal calls him an "idol," and if Wall street wants its idol to run, that ends it. And there is good salt in Wall street's hail. Mr. Roosevelt has taken good care of plutocracy and greed. The Merger case was a cheap fizzle. None of the Merger criminals wear stripes. Mr. Knox plainly said that they should not, and his reward was a purchased seat in the senate. Mr. Root, the Merger lawyer, is now the infallible's chief adviser. In the Panama humbug Mr. Roosevelt again proved his love for plutocracy. The railroads opposed the canal for years. When they saw that the people were bound to have one they declared loudly for the Panama route, because they knew it could never be built. And behold! Mr. Roosevelt's melodious voice joined in the cry; and the cowardly crime against a sister republic followed. And so Mr. Roosevelt is the idol of the railroads. A Panama employe left his job for a better one, and Mr. Taft abused him for so doing. Paul Morton left his cabinet job to become president of the corrupt and rotten Equitable company. Was he abused? Never. Mr. Roosevelt not only praised him in a fulsome letter, but refused justice a chance to punish Paul. Moreover his act prevented any of Paul's fellow law-violators from being jailed. And so Mr. Roosevelt is the idol of the big law-violators. If a man lets slip a government report or steals a few dollars, then Mr. Roosevelt gets busy. Eyes flash, the big stick is flourished and a rancous voice demands a "square deal." His henchmen shriek in their papers, and there is a great how-d'-do. And he is the idol of the set, backed or controlled as it is by Wall street. Mr. Roosevelt talks and talks and talks; but not one big criminal, not one of the scoundrels in oil, coal, railroads, not one member of the tariff-bolstered trusts is behind the bars—and Mr. Roosevelt will take care that none ever get there. And so he is the idol of these people. Roosevelt's big talk is merely much wind. This fact must be kept in mind. His words and his deeds must be closely compared. For, barring accidents, this man will be the republican candidate in 1908, despite his strenuous declaration to the contrary. So let us be up and doing. And this primary pledge is a long step in the right direction.

THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

I promise to attend all the primaries of my party to be held between now and the next Democratic National Convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use my influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

Signed _____

Street _____ Postoffice _____ State _____

County _____ Voting precinct or ward _____

Fill out Blanks and mail to Commoner Office, Lincoln, Nebraska.