

PUSHING THE WORK FOR THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

Recent appeals by The Commoner in behalf of the primary pledge plan have resulted in new demonstrations of interest in that plan by Commoner readers. Every day the mails bring to The Commoner office a large number of primary pledges, and the work is progressing at a gratifying rate. The Commoner receives many letters from readers complaining that their references to the primary pledge plan have not been noted in this department. For many issues The Commoner devoted two pages to the primary pledge department, but recently the demands upon its space have been so large that it has been found necessary to devote only one page to this department. Consequently the publication of many letters relating to the primary pledge has been delayed. Every one will appear in time. A few words of encouragement from men who appreciate the importance of this plan are desirable, and it is The Commoner's intention to give publication to some expression from every participant.

Right here, however, may be a good place to say that Commoner readers co-operating on the lines of the primary pledge plan will do well to make their communications brief. The Commoner would be glad to print every one of these letters in full, but such a course is, manifestly, impossible and because of the large number of responses to the primary pledge plan it is not possible to print even brief extracts from the many letters received as promptly as might be desired. It is to be hoped that this reminder will not deter any one who appreciates the importance of the primary pledge plan from writing a few words of encouragement, or, if he deems best, a few words of comment on current political topics. In order, however, that these communications may be printed with any degree of promptness it will be necessary for those writing letters on this subject to make their communications comparatively brief. That course adopted by Commoner readers generally will greatly help in the preparation of this undoubtedly interesting department.

As this copy of The Commoner may be read by some one not familiar with the details of the primary pledge plan, it is necessary to say that, according to the terms of this plan every democrat is asked to pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to secure a clear, honest and straight-forward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to The Commoner approving the object of the organization and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank pledge, which is printed on this page.

Extracts from letters received at The Commoner office follow:

Edward Pridal, Taunton, Minn.—I send primary pledge with seven signatures.

C. H. Moore, Long Beach, Washington—Enclosed find primary pledge with five signatures.

M. Barman, San Francisco, Calif.—I send you thirty-five signatures to the primary pledge.

F. A. Sorrell, Peoria Heights, Ill.—Enclosed find primary pledge, with twenty-seven signatures.

C. D. Wolfe, Lewisburg, Pa.—Enclosed find primary pledge with seven signatures.

H. Hugh Noel, Portsmouth, Ohio—Enclosed find my primary pledge, signed. Also the names of fifteen others.

Tomy Brauza, Oklahoma City, Okla.—Enclosed find primary pledge with forty-seven signatures.

Watson Kitchen and Zachariah Miller, Covington, Ind.—Please enroll the undersigned names on your list, as we agree to attend all the democratic primaries in the future, when it is possible to do so. We firmly endorse the views of Mr. Bryan, and all the arguments produced in The Commoner. And we firmly believe that democracy only can eventually win, when advocating such principles. We are just as ready as we were in 1896 and 1900 to fight for democratic principles in the presidential campaign of 1908.

F. D. Green, Freeport, Ohio—I take pleasure in sending the enclosed list of names to the primary pledge. I commend most heartily The Commoner's efforts in this direction. If the rank and file of all parties would regularly attend their party primaries, political corruption would soon disappear, and we would indeed

realize the ideal of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

E. E. Seyle, Ford City, Pa.—Please send me three primary pledge blanks. I don't intend to leave a stone unturned this fall to smash the Philadelphia gang.

E. Gash, Windsor, Mo.—You will find enclosed a few names. I am highly pleased that I have been able to do what I have. Send me a few more blanks.

A. Wesson, Osmond, Neb.—I herewith enclose a list of democrats who signed the primary pledge at our caucus held in Thompson precinct, Pierce county.

J. M. Lowry, Bellefontaine, O.—Please find enclosed primary pledge signed by 70 democrats. All are enthusiastic for the cause, and think the primary pledge is the best plan to get democrats in line. The democratic party was pretty badly demoralized until this plan was suggested. We held our county convention last Saturday and had a better turnout than we have had since Grover Cleveland sold the democratic party out to Wall Street. There was great enthusiasm. We have the best ticket in the field we have ever had. Hurrah for John M. Pattison and the entire democratic ticket!

W. A. McCauley, Auburn, Kan.—Enclosed find my primary pledge. I supported Mr. Bryan in 1896 and 1900, but last fall voted for Debs rather than the Cleveland-Hill combination. I hope the good work will go on.

J. I. Jervis, Weston, W. Va.—Enclosed find a copy of the primary pledge signed by myself and 35 others. When all the real believers in democracy attend the primaries no such evidence of general dissatisfaction with the party nominee and platform will be possible as was the case last year. Nothing has given us, the democrats, so much hope as the promulgation of this pledge. Send me more of the pledge blanks; want to send 100 more names.

J. J. McCarthy, Keystone, Neb.—Enclosed please find 19 names of Keith county democrats; some will not sign as they say it is not necessary to sign a pledge to keep the faith. In regard to the primary pledge for some time past I have been evolving an idea, but it would require a small fund to carry it out. The play is an old one. I remember my father in Ireland wearing a medal, a simple copper one that he received when he signed the pledge of total abstinence for Father Mathews. Should each and all of The Commoner pledge signers have a badge button or medal it would be an inspiration for the pledge signers for greater effort and induce others to enroll themselves in "The Commoner's army of democratic democracy." Was on my way to the convention via South Omaha with some cattle and Monday's rain stalled me within twenty miles. Am here today one day behind time. The splendid convention platform I am highly pleased with. It is all right.

Edwin L. Martin, Brooklyn, N. Y.—I enclose 16 signatures to the primary pledge. General indifference and General Graft are in command of the democratic party here, and many democrats when asked to sign the primary pledge, said that they always attended the primaries and they did not think it was necessary to sign the pledge and I could not induce them to sign. A young demo-

crat, James Garrahan, whose name is at the head of this list, secured four of the signatures.

Charles Kislig, New Martinsville, W. Va.—Enclosed find application for subscription cards; also primary pledge duly signed. It is in the primaries that the voters should take an active interest to secure an honest platform. The woods are full of good, honest, straightforward democrats who want a good platform to stand upon. Give us a good platform and old Wetzel county will roll up her old time majority. We want no more of Cleveland-Hill-Parker safe and sane democracy.

R. L. Ready, dentist, Junction City, Kan.—Please send me about 75 primary pledges for a starter. I am starting my work on a complete set of poll books, and this will also give me the opportunity to get the pledges desired. I am acting chairman of Geary county central committee and chairman of the senatorial committee of this district, and any help I can give you in the next two years in the way of pledges, perfecting an organization etc., will be most cheerfully given. If every county would properly organize we would win in 1908.

"Cap" Mitchell, editor Monitor, Shattuck, Okla.—Please send us a number of the primary pledges. The plan is a good one and strikes me as being truly democratic and the principle reverts to the people that which rightfully belongs. With the people in control in Oklahoma the present system of carpetbagging would be at an end.

Joseph Jewett, San Antonio, Texas.—I am an old soldier, was born in Maine, served in the Nineteenth Maine Volunteers. Lost my left arm at the battle of Gettysburg. I moved to Texas in 1890; am 70 years of age. My people were whigs. I cast my first vote for Fremont—voted for Lincoln in 1860. As a soldier, I became an admirer of McClellan. I believed then as now that he was grossly wronged by Stanton, through sordid partisan motives. I voted for McClellan while in the army in the field. I voted for Seymour, and Greeley. Poor old Greeley! His nomination was a foolish absurdity—a sacrifice to hunger for "the loaves and fishes." I voted for Tilden, for Hancock, for Cleveland three times. These votes for Cleveland were cast under misrepresentation. In the light of his subsequent subserviency to plutocracy I would have preferred Blaine and Harrison. I voted for Parker—I regret the vote. Had he voiced before election day his sentiments regarding democrats and their principles, I would have voted for Roosevelt. Knowing Parker now, I rejoice in his defeat. With my record of service, have I a right to speak for the democratic party? The trouble with the democratic party lies in the traitors within its ranks. Every measure of which democrats complain, every act of the republican party—the demonetization of silver, the McKinley bill, the Dingley bill, all measures concerning the Philippines—all received votes of so-called democrats. The rank and file have lost confidence. We must purge the party of its traitors. If we are to have a sincere campaign in 1908, with a true democrat as leader, I shall vote again for the democratic ticket. If we are to have more sham and pretense, more advocacy of republican principles with democratic labels, more leadership from the selfish foes of the people, I shall find affiliation with some other political party.

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.