

The Sullivan Case

Mr. Bryan delivered two addresses at Chicago Tuesday, September 4. In the afternoon he addressed the Ironquois club at luncheon and in the evening he addressed the Jefferson club at a banquet. Following are extracts from Mr. Bryan's evening address:

"The trust issue is at present the paramount issue, and unless more is done in the next two years than has been done in the last two to apply remedies on this subject, it is likely to be more prominent as an issue two years hence than now. There has not been a time since the trust question began to be discussed when anything like a majority of the people could be counted as defenders of the trust system. The trust has lived and thrived and fattened upon the public because of the ability of the trust magnates to control politics through party machinery and through candidates selected by them for office or corrupted by them in office. The democratic party has the opportunity of its life, and upon it rests a responsibility such as it has seldom borne. The president has awakened the public to a realization of the dangers involved in trust supremacy, but his party is powerless to apply a remedy because of the control which the great monopolistic corporations exercise over the party, and the democratic party cannot hope to win the confidence of the people and secure a victory at the polls so long as its honesty of purpose can be doubted.

"The honesty of a party's purpose is shown, not merely by its platform or the speeches of its candidates and supporters, but by the character of the men who are entrusted with the party management.

"Illinois presents a case in point, and I take this opportunity to state my position in regard to the national committeeman from this state, Mr. Roger Sullivan. As you all know, I wrote him a letter, asking him to resign from the national committee in the interest of the democratic party. I explained to him that his corporate connections made it impossible for him to help the party so long as he was in official position, but stated that were that the only objection the matter might be dealt with at the state convention two years hence. I pointed out to him that as he held his seat by fraud, there could be no harmony in the democratic party in the state until he, by resigning, showed his respect for the wishes of the majority of the delegates of the last state convention. Had he resigned he would have been given credit for a desire to advance the interests of the party, but instead of doing so he asked for an endorsement from the state convention. He charged that I was deceived by Mr. Dunlap. The charge was so obviously untrue that it ought not to have deceived anyone. I examined into the conduct of the Springfield convention, before I took part in the attempt to unseat him, and at the St.

Louis convention I had in writing a request for his repudiation signed by more than half of the delegates to the convention. Had Mr. Sullivan any of the instincts of a democrat; had he the first conception of what democracy means, he would not have consented to hold his place against the wishes of the convention. The most fundamental of all democratic principles is the right of the majority to rule, and the man who consciously and purposely ignores it, has no claim to the name of democrat. At the recent state convention the delegates, although they did not vote directly on the question to ask his resignation, voted to table the resolution and that may be accepted as a vote of endorsement. This gives him his position for two years more. It must be remembered, however, that the issue against Mr. Sullivan was not raised in time to have it settled at the primaries, and his endorsement must be accepted not as an endorsement by the voters, but as an endorsement by the convention, and anyone acquainted with politics will recognize that there is often a wide distinction between these two kinds of endorsement.

"The question now is, what can the democracy of Illinois do to register its protest against the kind of politics for which Mr. Sullivan stands? That is the question in which I as a democrat, am interested, for the question which arises in Illinois will arise in all the other states where the corporations attempt to obtain control of the party organization, and the position which democrats take on this Illinois controversy must be consistent with the position that they take on similar questions in other states.

"What is the objection to Mr. Sullivan?"

"He is a high official in a franchise holding corporation, which is constantly seeking favors at the hands of the government. He is familiar with all the methods employed by such corporations to gain from local and state governments special favors and privileges. I hold that no man who is officially connected with a corporation that is seeking privileges ought to act as a member of a political organization, because he cannot represent his corporation and the people at the same time. He cannot serve the public while he is seeking to promote the financial interests of the corporation with which he is connected. The national committeeman is usually consulted by the administration in the making of appointments and a man like Mr. Sullivan would not be a fair judge as to the merits of different democratic applicants. I do not know how you feel about it, but I am opposed to allowing a man situated as he is to use the public treasury to pay the debts that he owes to those who help his corporation to take advantage of the public, and therefore I insist that the fight should be commenced to-day to prevent his re-election to the

national committee. And what I say of him, I say of aspirants for positions in the party organization in other states. If the democratic party has not virtue enough to spew out those who traffic in politics for the advantage of the corporations to which they belong, it does not deserve victory nor can it hope for it.

"Mark the distinctions between the legitimate corporations organized for business purposes only, and the corporations which secure special privileges and grow rich out of favors secured not from the people themselves but from representatives of the people.

"If you say that I have no right to interfere in the politics of this state, I reply that I am simply applying to the politics of Illinois a principle which I believe ought to be applied universally, and I am too much interested in the success of the democratic party and in the success of the principles for which it stands, to allow those who are friendly to me to be deceived by the resolution that was adopted at the last state convention. I do not regard it as a compliment to be endorsed for the presidency by a convention which endorsed Mr. Sullivan. I told them in advance that I did not want an endorsement under such circumstances and I repudiate it. If my nomination for any office depended upon that endorsement, I would not accept it. Mr. Sullivan is not my friend, although he pretended to be before this discussion arose. He would not have allowed me to be endorsed if he could have prevented it, but instead of opposing me like a man, he attempted to link his name with mine and thus secure an endorsement for himself. I object to him as a political associate. He is an able man, a clever man, and personally a very genial fellow. The corporations could not afford to employ any other kind to do their political work, but my only political asset is the confidence that the people have in my sincerity, and I do not want to have that confidence shattered by intimacy with men of his political methods. Those who voted to endorse me were either deceived themselves or thought they could deceive me. If they were deceived, they will be glad to be undeceived; if they thought to deceive me, they will have more respect for me when they find that they did not succeed.

"What can the democrats of Illinois do at this time? Let me suggest that every candidate for office who wants the people to have confidence in him, should announce that he is opposed to Mr. Sullivan's methods, that he repudiates his leadership, and will oppose his re-election. He can thus make an issue between the aggressions of corporate wealth and the people, and let the people know on which side he stands. I do not hesitate to express the opinion that no man running on the democratic ticket in Illinois is entitled to the support of democrats in this crisis, who either stands with Mr. Sullivan or is afraid to oppose him. It is not the time for cowards. There are times when men can slide into office by dodging issues, but when the life of the party and its chances for success depend upon its establishing its character, those who are not with the people are against them, and those who refuse to speak out must expect their silence to be construed as acquiescence in corporate domination.

"Do you ask me whether a candidate can advance his chances for election by repudiating Mr. Sullivan and the state committee, which he controls, or which at least sympathizes with him? I cannot answer, but I deny that any candidate has a right to make his action depend upon expediency. I will express it as an opinion, however, that the man who opposes Mr. Sullivan boldly will be stronger with the people than the man who either endorses him or is silent. Mr. Sullivan asphyxiated the state convention, but I do not believe that he can asphyxiate the voters of the state. Some of the po-

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