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John W. Kern on Government Ownership

John W. Kern, the well known democrat of Indianapolis and well known to democrats throughout the country, has written for the Indianapolis Star the following statement:

"Bryan seems to be the most puzzling problems ever tackled by the newspaper men of the country. Ever since 1896—a period of ten years—the republican and so-called independent journalists of America have been busily engaged in 'writing him down' and putting him out of business. The cartoonists have pictured him in every ridiculous attitude imaginable. The jokesmiths have worn themselves to a 'frazzle' making jokes at his expense; the big guns of the editorial rooms have written thousands of columns of the choicest English, holding him up to public execration as a colossal fraud and a political charlatan of the worst kind. Yet at the end of this ten years of unceasing fusillade all were compelled to admit that W. J. Bryan is one of the foremost men in all the world and one of America's greatest citizens. But they justified their years of villification by saying the Bryan of today was not the Bryan of 1896—that he had improved vastly with age and experience and had grown so conservative as to be no longer offensive to the great business interests, etc.

"Bryan returned to America and, by his New York speech and his vigorous pronouncement that men financially interested in privilege-seeking corporations ought to have no part in demo-

cratic party management, convinced everybody concerned that he was the same old Bryan—improved by age and travel, but not improved in the way the corporation agents had fondly hoped, but that, on the contrary, age and travel had made him a more formidable champion of popular rights and a more powerful adversary of special privilege and monopoly than ever before. And so the mighty journalists had all their work to do over again in 'writing him down.'

"There was great sorrow manifested in the camps of corporations—not anger, but genuine sorrow. It was such a pity that Bryan, who was just within reach of the presidency, had in a single speech, made a 'break' which had absolutely destroyed all chance of preferment.

"In great headlines it was announced that the democrats of the south were so incensed at his declaration on the subject of government ownership of railroads that they were anxiously awaiting the opportunity to repudiate him. And so, when the democratic state convention of Georgia met a few days after the New York speech, Bryan was repudiated by a resolution, adopted unanimously, declaring for Bryan for president.

"But the independent journalist was by no means discouraged. Crowding the telegraph report of the Georgia convention down into an obscure corner of his newspaper, or crowding it out altogether, he proceeded, with much fine writing, to prove that Bryan was no longer an appreciable quantity in American politics and that the southern democracy was especially bitter toward him. One morning, about a week after the Georgia convention, I read several articles of this kind and then, turning to another part of the same paper—in an out-of-the-way place—I found an abbreviated account of the Alabama state convention held on the previous day. I there learned that early in the proceedings Congressman Clayton had introduced a resolution condemning government ownership of railroads, which resolution was summarily voted down by a vote of three or four to one, after which the convention proceeded to repudiate Bryan by the enthusiastic adoption of a resolution by a unanimous vote, declaring that Bryan was the first and only choice of the Alabama democracy for president.

"And then came the California state

convention, and then Bryan's triumphal tour of the south—the work of repudiation proceeding right along in such way as to make it reasonably plain that the only name before the next national convention for the presidency will be that of the great Nebraska.

"So it seems quite apparent that while cautious politicians were startled and alarmed the masses of the people were neither stampeded nor in the slightest degree frightened at Mr. Bryan's declarations on the subject of government ownership of railroads. And why should they be? His declaration was to the effect that up to this time the railroad corporations had been powerful enough to resist successfully all efforts on the part of the government to regulate and control them in their dealings with the public—that with that power in their hands it was doubtful if they could be regulated and controlled by legislation and that, if it so turned out, there was only one effective remedy for the people and that is government ownership.

"To put it in another form: If it became a question as to whether the great trunk lines, built as competing lines, should be owned by the Standard Oil crowd or that group of financial pirates known as 'The System' or whether the government should own those lines, the latter alternative would be preferable.

"Or, to put it in another form: As between railroad ownership of the government and government ownership of the railroad public interests would demand government ownership.

"Look at a few facts and you will readily see why the people are not frightened by a discussion of the government ownership question. Within the last month the Pennsylvania Railroad company gave out an authoritative statement that it had, the day before, sold its controlling interest in the Chesapeake & Ohio and the Norfolk & Western railroads to Kuhn, Loeb & Co., of New York—a firm of bankers—for \$54,000,000. Here was a confession by this great corporation that for several years it had owned, in defiance of law, a majority of the stock in these two great lines of railway, which were not only competitors of the Pennsylvania, but were built to compete with each other, and that it had sold both of these lines to a firm of New York bankers. Of course that firm purchased these lines for 'The System.'

"Harriman now turns up as the owner of the Baltimore & Ohio. Kuhn, Loeb & Co., ostensibly own the two roads just named. The Pennsylvania company and the Vanderbilt people own the remaining east and west trunk lines, a 'gentleman's agreement' binding them together, and the Standard Oil crowd—'The System' dominating the whole bunch.

"The great transportation lines of this country are absolutely dominated and controlled by not more than twelve men:

"Twelve souls with but a single thought,

Twelve hearts that beat as one.'

"That these twelve men pull together in elections and in all matters of legislation goes without saying. That the shipping interests of the country are at their mercy is known of all men. That they have defied all laws and resisted all efforts to control them in the past is history. That they absolutely dominate the United States senate has been proved a thousand times and demonstrated during the last session when they compelled a compromise on their own terms, on both the rate bill and the pure food bill.

In Indiana the railroad commission bill, enacted by the last legislature, had no chance for enactment until it had been trimmed and emasculated so that it received the approval of the

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Kills Hog Lice

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Your hogs have every chance to escape the contagion through a little attention on your part.

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There's but one explanation of why one man's hogs escape while around him others are dying from the plague. His hogs escape—

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- because they are kept in healthy, sanitary quarters,
- because disease germs are destroyed and are not given a chance to prey upon the animals.

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It is the remedy that has been doing this for hog raisers for years—a remedy that has been tried and endorsed by leading breeders and feeders, by veterinarians, by Experiment Stations—

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