

# Republican Editors Can Not Recognize Their Own Platform

In its issue of October 2, the Omaha (Neb.) Bee, a republican paper, printed this editorial:

## BRYAN'S TARIFF POLICY

The Denver platform plank on the tariff question is notable for its vagueness, but Mr. Bryan has come to the rescue and made it all plain. In one of his recent speeches on the tariff, he said:

"In all tariff legislation the true principle is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with reasonable profit to American industries."

Nothing prettier in the catch-all line has been offered in this campaign. The most hide-bound standpatter in the country can accept that as satisfactory and the rankest free-trader can find delight in it. The declaration means simply nothing. An attempt to legislate along that line would simply open the way to interminable wrangling as to what constitutes "a reasonable profit" for hair-splitting on wages on one industry, price of raw materials in another, rebates and drawbacks in a third and so on through the list of thousands of articles that are now on the tariff lists. Under such a proposition, an attempt at tariff revision at Bryan's direction would serve only to halt industrial and commercial progress and keep business unsettled during his term of office.

The Omaha World-Herald, in its issue of October 3, shows the bad blunder made by its republican contemporary.

The paragraph which the Bee attributes to Mr. Bryan was merely quoted by Mr. Bryan from the republican platform.

The republican plank is as follows:

"In all tariff legislation the true principle of protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with a reasonable profit to American industries."

Referring to the Bee's blunder, the World-Herald says: "Now that it develops that the blow is aimed, not at the democratic position, but at the republican position, is its force any the less? Does it not, in fact, become the more potent and convincing?"

## THIS IS TOO MUCH

On October 3 Mr. Bryan's attention was called to the Omaha World-Herald's editorial reproducing the Omaha Bee's attack upon the republican platform. He said:

"I am very much surprised that Mr. Rosewater, who is the editor of the Bee, and also a member of the executive committee of the republican national committee, and the head of the republican bureau of publicity, should have attempted to misrepresent my position. A good many unfair things have been said, but nothing more unfair than that said by Mr. Rosewater. To accuse me of using the language of the republican platform is an outrage. He ought to apologize for this injustice, and explain to his readers that the language which he criticises was taken from the republican platform and not from any speech of mine.

"Mr. Rosewater is right, however, in making fun of the language. He is right in saying that 'nothing prettier in the catch-all line has been offered in this campaign.' He is also right in saying that 'the most hide-bound standpatter in the country can accept that as satisfactory and the rankest free-trader can find delight in it.' He is right again in saying that 'the declaration means simply nothing.' And again he is right in saying 'an attempt to legislate

along that line would simply open the way to interminable wrangling as to what constitutes 'a reasonable profit,' for hair-splitting on wages on one industry, price of raw materials in another, rebates and drawbacks in a third and so on through the list of thousands of articles that are now on the tariff lists.' But I hardly expected from him so frank a confession as is contained in the last sentence of his editorial: 'Under such a proposition, an attempt at tariff revision (he says 'at Bryan's direction' but would it not be true if done at Taft's direction?) would serve to halt industrial and commercial progress and keep business unsettled during his term of office.'

"This is a rich find. It shows how absurd the republican platform looks to a republican when the republican has a chance to look at it in a disinterested way. When Mr. Rosewater thought that the language quoted was taken from a speech of mine, he could see how ridiculous the language was. I hope that his opinion of the language will not change when he finds that he was shooting at his own platform instead of at me. The amusing blunder of the Omaha Bee suggests a new diversion for the campaign. Let the democrats accuse me of using various sections from the republican platform and from Mr. Taft's speeches and see how the republican editors will ridicule the language."

## ANOTHER REPUBLICAN PAPER ATTACKS ITS PARTY'S TARIFF PLANK

The Portland Oregonian, a republican paper, made the same mistake that the Omaha Bee has made. In its issue of Monday, September 14, the Oregonian printed the following editorial:

### THE TARIFF

In his daily speeches Mr. Bryan tells us this:

"In all tariff legislation the true principle is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with reasonable profit to American industries."

This means just nothing. Every protectionist, even the extremist, will accept the statement. Who is to decide what is reasonable profit? Who is to decide what may be the fair difference between wages at home and abroad? The problem presents an infinite number and variety of factors, as well as of differences to be adjusted. Men never will agree upon them. They will agree upon the loose statement, as presented by Mr. Bryan; but never upon the details in working it out. They can't. It is not a problem of mathematics. The human spirit controls it all. Agree on the Bryan statement, yet you are no nearer the solution than you were before. The formula offers no sure values or definite quantities. For in the same conditions and under the same laws, for equalization of the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, and of a fair profit for capital, some men will succeed and others will fail. Many insist that the conditions required by the orator exist now. And it is certain that under any tariff or under none, some will succeed and some will fail: and those who succeed and capture and hold the business will be called monopolists, while those who fail will be victims of something or other, but never of their own inefficiency or other faults.

The only way to give all men an equal show, or a perfectly fair show, is to abolish all tariffs, to cut off all duties, give nobody protection, whether laborer or capitalist. Then the best talents, the highest powers, the greatest

industry and skill, will do the business. Bryan's suggestion is no real departure from the policy of the protectionists. It is, as he defines it, a protectionist policy, not different in principle from that of Cannon, Payne and Dalzell, but keeping open a way to the splitting of hairs on schedules, on wages in this industry and that, on reasonable or unreasonable profits. Short of absolute free trade, so that the tariff laws may help nobody, there is no principle on which the decision may be made.

Should Bryan be elected president, and a congress with him, and an attempt be made to adjust a tariff for "imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between cost of production at home and abroad, together with reasonable profit to American industries," we should discover at once the charlatanism and futility of the undertaking. On this formula there could be no possible agreement. Nor would any agreement, if made, have any value whatever. The only principle of tariff is tariff for revenue. But that will not be adopted by either party. And tariff for revenue only is virtual free trade. Bryan never speaks for tariff for revenue only. He always has vague notions of "protection"—some kind or degree or protection—in his mind; and so has his party. Consequently, if they come into power again they will simply shift the incidence of duties, put "the other fellow" on the free list as they did when last in power, and "protect" the special interests that have the pull on them as friends. Never will there be any genuine reform of the tariff upon the principle stated above by Candidate Bryan.

As soon as he had read the Oregonian's editorial, Mr. G. H. Thomas, chairman of the democratic county committee at Portland, wrote to the Oregonian the following letter:

Portland, Oregon, September 14, 1908.—  
To the Editor: Your crowning offense in this campaign appeared this morning in your editorial headed "The Tariff." As a basis for that editorial you took the following plank from the republican national platform of this year, but you attributed the language to Mr. Bryan:

"In all tariff legislation the true principle is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, together with reasonable profit to American industries."

As a democrat I commend the editorial mentioned to the unbiased consideration of every voter in this country. Presuming that the knockout logic employed by you in denouncing this republican plank came from a sincere mind, I ask that you deal justly with Mr. Bryan by immediately reproducing this editorial with the name of the candidate responsible therefor, Mr. Taft, substituted where you have wrongly used the name of Mr. Bryan.

You should tell the people that the republican platform contains the "loose statement" which you have denounced to perfection, but that Mr. Taft defends it; and you should tell them that Mr. Bryan is doing everything that mortal man can do, honestly, to defeat what you have termed such "vague notions of protection." Very truly,

G. H. THOMAS,  
Chairman Multnomah Democratic County Central Committee.

Mr. Thomas' letter was handed to the Oregonian editor on the night of the 14th inst. for appearance in the issue of September 15; the Oregonian editor, however, refused to publish the letter, returning it to Mr. Thomas.

Many other republican papers have reprinted the Oregonian editorial, but none have as yet apologized for it.

## TAFT'S STANDARD OIL JUDGE

Senator Foraker, in his defense, furnished Mr. Bryan with a weapon that the democratic candidate might use with terrible effect, unless the president and Mr. Taft are able to show the falsity of the senator's statement. More or less effort has been made to impress the country with the danger of permitting Mr. Bryan to nominate judges to the United States supreme court. The point was much emphasized by Governor Hughes in his Youngstown speech. Is Mr. Bryan now to have undisputed use of the retort furnished him by Senator Foraker, that Mr. Taft advised the president to place upon the fed-

eral bench a well-known Standard Oil attorney of Ohio? If so, Mr. Bryan can tour the country saying that, whatever his judicial appointees may be, they will not be Standard Oil attorneys.—Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

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## MR. TAFT IN LINCOLN

The following Associated Press dispatch explains itself:

Lincoln, Neb., September 29.—William J. Bryan has asked the democrats of Lincoln to remove lithographs of himself from store and residence windows during the visit of William

H. Taft to Lincoln Wednesday. The telegram follows:

"C. W. Bryan, Lincoln, Neb.: Please ask the democrats of Lincoln to take my picture down while Mr. Taft is in town. Have them show him every possible courtesy.

"W. J. BRYAN."

After reading the "Dear Harriman" correspondence you will understand why Messrs. Taft and Roosevelt—we mean Roosevelt and Taft—favor publicity "after election," if at all.