

Before and After Election Day

BEFORE THE ELECTION

Editorial in The Commoner, June 26, 1908, a few days after the republican national convention:

The republican platform deals with the tariff question in a way that closes the door of hope to the tariff reformer. It authorizes "a revision of the tariff by a special session of congress to be held immediately following the inauguration of the next president." Revision does not necessarily mean reduction. In fact, Secretary Taft has himself said that he thought some of the schedules were too high and others too low. There is nothing in the republican platform to give any assurance that the average tariff will not be higher after revision than before. An attempt is made to lay down the principle upon which the revision will be conducted, but the principle is not a new one, it is merely a restatement of the principle upon which the present high duties were established. When has the republican party asked for more than "the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad?" That is all that it has asked for for ten or fifteen years, and yet while it only asked for that it has built up prohibitory duties. The new platform not only asks for a tariff sufficient to recover the difference in cost of production at home and abroad, but it also asks for "a reasonable profit to American industries." If, on the pretense that they were giving us a tariff only sufficient to cover the difference in cost of production, the republicans make it high enough to cover the entire cost of labor twice over, how much more will they add to satisfy this new demand for "reasonable profit to American industries?" The trouble is that they start out with the proposition that we must have a protective tariff and then they ask the manufacturers how much they need and, as the manufacturers accompany the answer with a campaign contribution, the ordinary taxpayer gets little consideration. The government has been made a private asset by the protected interests and they have capitalized their ability to control the law making power. The fat has been fried out of the beneficiaries of the high tariff and the beneficiaries have then been given a chance to recoup themselves out of the pockets of the people. Public opinion has been corrupted by the studious circulation of the idea that the taxing power can be farmed out to a comparatively small fraction of the population and the rest of the population must pay constant tribute to the few.

The platform as written is indubitable proof that the republican party does not expect to give the country any real reform. The platform is, in fact, a contract, signed and sealed, between the republican party and the exploiting interests, guaranteeing that nothing shall be done to free the people from graft and extortion; it is an admission that the money to carry on the campaign is to be drawn from the "system" and that means that the "system" will be in control after the election. The "system" is run on business principles and when it puts up its money to carry an election, it is sure to be quite careful about the security taken.

The Explanation

The following is reproduced from an editorial written by Henry Watterson entitled "Peace With the System," and printed in the Louisville Courier-Journal a few days prior to the national election of 1908:

"Flying the flag of Roosevelt the republican leaders have made their peace with the system. From Rockefeller to Carnegie, from Harriman to Corey, every chieftain of wealth and predatory wealth, the honest too often making common cause with the dishonest, is well content with Taft and Sherman. They foretold and imply the old order of special privilege to the few, impositions of every sort to the many; high finance rampant; high tariff, 'revised by its friends,' rampant; the end of Rooseveltism and agitation 'for the good of business'—business only organized capital and licensed monopoly; the same old story, the same old song, the same old crowd slicked over with goose grease from the Roosevelt larder, but meaning four years more of the rascaldom which Roosevelt has unmasked but not downed; which Roosevelt has exposed, but left intact; which, in spite of Roosevelt and all his works, stands today as impudent and as defiant as ever it stood, a gray wolf lording it over the senate, a gray wolf lording it over the house, and two gray wolves, Sherman and Sheldon, 'Sunny Jim' and 'Black George,' giving tone and effect to the ticket. Should any thoughtful democrat, should any patriotic American, should any honest man, balk of his duty before such a layout?"

BRANDENBURG AND HIS REPUBLICAN SPONSORS

Readers of The Commoner will remember that during the presidential campaign republican newspapers made much of a letter said to have been written by the late Grover Cleveland. In this letter it was made to appear that Mr. Cleveland denounced Mr. Bryan and eulogized Mr. Taft. The republican national committee sent this letter broadcast and republican newspapers printed profound editorials relating to it. Henry Watterson charged that the letter was bogus and he set on foot an investigation which resulted in showing the fact that the letter was a forgery. Brandenburg was indicted and released on \$15,000 bail. He jumped his bond and for some time his whereabouts were unknown. Recently, however, he was arrested in San Francisco and it developed that on his way through St. Louis he kidnapped the little son of James Cabanee of St. Louis. The boy was

AFTER THE ELECTION

From an editorial in the Chicago Record-Herald (republican) April 24, 1909:

In the course of the tariff debate on Thursday, when some western senators showed they were not tied to Mr. Aldrich's apron strings, the Rhode Island senator demanded: "Where did the republican party make the statement that it would revise the tariff downward?" It is a mighty good thing for those who pleaded that the tariff be revised by its friends that this utterance was not launched prior to November, 1908. If it had been Mr. Aldrich's committee on finance would now be dealing with a bill bearing the name of some esteemed democratic representative.

Mr. Aldrich is no fool, no matter what he may think of the selfishness of the great American public in putting up with humbug statesmanship. He knows that the demand for tariff revision throughout the country was a demand to be relieved of excessive burdens. The millions of onerously taxed consumers were not so simple minded that they did not know what was wanted. The sentiment that made revision imperative did not contemplate an excuse for increasing existing burdens and adding to the profits of overprotected captains of eastern manufacturing industry. And yet the republican leader of the United States senate insolently indicates a purpose to seize the excuse.

Downward revision was part of the announced program when William H. Taft made his speech accepting the republican nomination for the presidency on July 28 last. "The tariff in a number of schedules," he declared, "exceeds the difference between the cost of production of articles abroad and at home, including a reasonable profit to the American producer. The excess over that difference serves no useful purpose, but offers a temptation to those who would monopolize the production and the sale of such articles in this country to profit by the excessive rate."

Who was more qualified to speak to the nation for the republican party than the man nominated by it for president? And it was under just such understanding as this statement gave that the country returned a republican congress to support the policy of the republican president. Mr. Aldrich may be convinced that party platforms are things to straddle, but he is not a supreme court to interpret for the people their own understanding of promises made to them.

MOTHER'S DAY WILL BE OBSERVED MAY 9

Sunday, May 9, will be observed in various portions of the country as "Mother's Day." The plan is that on this day every man and boy shall wear a white flower in memory of his mother. The Houston (Texas) Post is urging the people of Houston to observe this day and Judd Mortimer Lewis has written for the Post this beautiful poem:

FOR MOTHER'S DAY

Who'll wear a rose for Mother's Day,
A half oped rose and white
Plucked in the morning while the dew
That gathered over night
To kiss its petals like a gem
In its pure heart appears,
As pure and sweet as mother love,
As rare as mother's tears?

Who for a Mother's Day will wear
A blossom pure and white
Above his heart, wear it from dawn
Until the shades of night
Come in upon the perfumed breeze
And wrap the world and him
As softly as the mother-love
Wrapped him in days grown dim?

A white rose just to honor her
Whose love was purer far
That any gem the world has known,
Than snow-white roses are;
A white rose for the mother-love
That knows nor stop nor stay,
That up the heights or in the depths
Goes with him all the way.

For Mother's Day who'll wear a rose?
Who will not! To uplift
The thoughts of all the world one day
To the most precious gift
God ever, ever gave the world;
A pure, white, thornless rose
For the best thing the world shall see
Till heaven's gates unclose.

MOTHERHOOD

Fredericksburg is not a large city and yet it is rich in incidents of great historic value. Here the women of America have reared a monument to Mary, the mother of Washington. I am glad to stand on this spot; I am glad to feel the influences which surround her grave. In a campaign, especially in a campaign like this, there is much of bitterness, and sometimes of abuse spoken against the candidates for public office, but, my friends, there is one character, the mother—a candidate for the affections of all mankind—against whom no true man ever uttered a word of abuse. There is one name, mother, which is never found upon the tongue of the slanderer—in her presence all criticism is silenced. The painter has, with his brush, transferred the landscape to the canvas with such fidelity that the trees and grasses seem almost real; he has even made the face of a maiden seem instinct with life, but there is one picture so beautiful that no painter has ever been able to perfectly reproduce it, and that is the picture of the mother holding in her arms her babe. Within the shadow of this monument, reared to the memory of her who in her love and loyalty represents the mother of each one of us, I bow in humble reverence to motherhood. (From speech delivered by W. J. Bryan at Fredericksburg, Va., during campaign of 1896.)

"ASK THE MOTHER"

Ask the mother who holds in her arms her boy, what her ideal is concerning him and she will tell you that she desires that his heart may be so pure that it could be laid upon a pillow and not leave a stain; that his ambition may be so holy that it could be whispered in an angel's ear; and that his life may be so clean that his mother, his sister, his wife, his child could read a record of its every thought and act without a blush. But ask her if she will require this perfection in her son before she showers her love upon him, and she will answer "no." She will tell you that she will make him as good as she can; that she will follow his footsteps with a daily prayer; that in whatever land he wanders her blessing will abide with him; and that when he dies she'll hope, hope, yet hope that the world will be better that he has lived. (From address entitled "Man," delivered by W. J. Bryan at Commencement Day exercises, Nebraska State University, June 15, 1905.)

"BY ITS FRIENDS"

The American people who trusted the republican party and yielded to the appeal "let the tariff be revised by its friends," are learning something to their advantage from national capital dispatches of the present day. Will the people ever learn that a political party that derives its campaign funds from special interests can not be depended upon to serve the public interests?