

Roosevelt and Bryan Parallel

The democrat who has, for fourteen years, kept up the fight for progressive democracy will be interested in comparing the language employed by Mr. Roosevelt at Osawatomie, Kan., August 31, with democratic speeches and platforms. Any number of democratic speeches would furnish parallels, but as Mr. Bryan has been the candidate in three of the campaigns it will not be unfair to quote from the platforms on which he ran and from some of his speeches. The subject was the corporation in politics.

Mr. Roosevelt says: "We must drive the special interests out of politics. That is one of our tasks today. * * * The constitution guarantees protection to property and we must make that promise good. But it does not give the right of suffrage to any corporation."

The democratic national platform of 1900 contained this plank: "Corporations should be protected in all their rights and their legitimate interests should be respected, but any attempt by corporations to interfere with the public affairs of the people or control the sovereignty which creates them, should be forbidden under such penalties as will make such attempts impossible."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "Of that generation of men, to whom we owe so much, the man to whom we owe the most is, of course, Lincoln. Part of our debt to him is because he forecast our present struggle and saw the way out. He said: 'I hold that while man exists, it is his duty to improve not only his own condition, but to assist in ameliorating mankind.' And again, 'Labor is prior and independent of capital; capital is only the fruit of labor and could never have existed but for labor. Labor is the superior of capital and deserves much the higher consideration. Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights. * * * Nor should this lead to a war upon the owners of property. Property is the fruit of labor; property is desirable; is a positive good in the world. Let not him who is houseless pull down the house of another, but let him work diligently and build one for himself, thus by example showing that his own shall be safe from violence when built.' It seems to me that in these words Lincoln took substantially the attitude that we ought to take; he showed the proper sense of proportion in his relative estimates of capital and labor, of human rights and property rights. We can not afford weakly to blind ourselves to the actual conflict which faces us today. The issue is joined and we must fight or fail."

That has been the contention of democrats, particularly during and since 1896. In an article printed in the Saturday Evening Post in 1905 Mr. Bryan said: "Every attempt to legislate in the interests of the laboring men is met with the declaration that it is an interference with the rights of property. How would property be created but for labor, and who will say that the man who furnishes the capital should be permitted to decide without appeal the conditions upon which property shall be created by those who labor for him?"

Mr. Roosevelt said: "In every wise struggle for human betterment one of the main objects, and often the only object, has been to achieve in larger measure equality of opportunity. In the struggle for this great end, nations rise from barbarism to civilization, and through it peoples press forward from one stage of enlightenment to the next. One of the chief factors in progress is the destruction of special privilege. The essence of any struggle for healthy liberty has always been and must always be to take from some one man or class of men the right to enjoy power, or wealth, or position, or immunity which has not been earned by service to his or their fellows. At many stages in the advance of humanity this conflict between the men who possess more than they have earned and the men who have earned more than they possess is the central condition of progress. In our day it appears as the struggle of freemen to gain and hold the right of self-government as against the special interests, who twist the methods of free government into machinery for defeating the popular will. At every stage and under all circumstances the essence of the struggle is to equalize opportunity, destroy privilege and give to the life and citizenship of every individual the highest possible value both to himself and to the commonwealth."

In his letter of acceptance in 1896 Mr. Bryan said: "Our institutions rest upon the proposition that all men, being created equal, are entitled to equal consideration at the hands of the government. Because all men are created

equal it follows that no citizen has a natural right to injure any other citizen. The main purpose of government being to protect all citizens in the enjoyment of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, this purpose must lead the government, first to avoid acts of affirmative injustice, and, second, to restrain each citizen from trespassing upon the rights of any other citizen. A democratic form of government is conducive to the highest civilization because it opens before each individual the greatest opportunities for development, and stimulates to the highest endeavor by insuring to each the full enjoyment of all the rewards of toil except such contribution as is necessary to support the government which protects him."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "The true friend of property, the true conservative, is he who insists that property shall be the servant and not the master of the commonwealth; who insists that the creature of man's making shall be the servant and not the master of the man who made it. The citizens of the United States must effectively control the mighty commercial forces which they have themselves called into being."

In his speech of acceptance, delivered at Indianapolis in 1900, Mr. Bryan said: "In 1859 Lincoln said that the republican party believed in the man and the dollar, but that in case of conflict it believed in the man before the dollar. This is the proper relation which should exist between the two. Man, the handiwork of God, comes first; money, the handiwork of man, is of inferior importance. Man is the master, money the servant, but upon all important questions today republican legislation tends to make money the master and man the servant."

Writing in the Saturday Evening Post in 1905 Mr. Bryan said: "While the issue between the man and the dollar seems to be an acute one, yet in the last analysis there can be no issue between human rights and property rights, for nothing more surely undermines property rights than a disregard for human rights, and nothing brings greater security to property than a scrupulous regard for the natural rights of each human being. But we must always remember that human rights are paramount. In fact, everything depends upon the establishment of the true relation between the individual and dull, inanimate property. The house and its foundation are indissolubly connected, and we can not think of one without the other. So human rights and property rights are indissolubly connected. We can not think of the one without the other, as in the building of a house, we must think of the foundation first and of the house as a superstructure, so in thinking of society we must necessarily think of human rights first and of property rights as resting upon human rights. He who talks of property rights as if they could exist without a regard for human rights, speaks as foolishly as one who would attempt to build a house without considering the foundation upon which it is to stand."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "We must have complete and effective publicity of corporate affairs, so that the people may know beyond pre-adventure whether the corporations obey the law and whether their management entitles them to the confidence of the public. It is necessary that laws should be passed to prohibit the use of corporate funds directly or indirectly for political purposes; it is still more necessary that such laws should be thoroughly enforced."

Mr. Roosevelt also said: "It is particularly important that all moneys received or expended for campaign purposes should be publicly accounted for not only after election but before election as well."

The democratic national platform for 1908 said: "We demand federal legislation terminating the partnership which has existed between corporations of the country and the republican party under the expressed or implied agreement that in return for the contribution of great sums of money wherewith to purchase elections, they should be allowed to continue substantially unmolested in their efforts to encroach upon the rights of the people. Any reasonable doubt as to the existence of this relation has been forever dispelled by the sworn testimony of witnesses examined in the insurance investigation in New York, and the open admission—unchallenged by the republican national committee—of a single individual, that he himself, at the personal request of the republican candidate for the presidency, raised over a quarter of a million of dollars to be used in a single state during the closing hours of the last campaign.

In order that this practice shall be stopped for all time, we demand the passage of a statute punishing with imprisonment any officer of a corporation who shall either contribute on behalf of, or consent to the contribution by a corporation of any money or thing of value to be used in furthering the election of a president or vice president of the United States or of any member of the Congress thereof.

"We denounce the action of the republican party having complete control of the federal government, for its failure to pass the bill, introduced in the last congress, to compel the publication of the names of contributors and the amounts contributed toward campaign funds and point to the evidence of their insincerity, when they sought by an absolutely irrelevant and impossible amendment to defeat the passage of the bill. As a further evidence of their intention to conduct their campaign in the coming contest with vast sums of money wrested from favor-seeking corporations, we call attention to the fact that the recent republican national convention at Chicago refused, when the issue was presented to it, to declare against such practices.

"We pledge the democratic party to the enactment of a law prohibiting any corporation from contributing to a campaign fund and any individual from contributing an amount above a reasonable minimum and providing for the publication before election of all such contributions above a reasonable minimum."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "We have come to recognize that franchises should never be granted except for a limited time, and never without proper provision for compensation to the public. It is my personal belief that the same kind and degree of control and supervision which should be exercised over public service corporations should be extended also to combinations which control necessities of life, such as meat, oil and coal, or which deal in them on an important scale."

In 1906 Mr. Bryan wrote for *The Commoner* an editorial protesting against perpetual franchises in the Philippines, saying among other things: "No generation has a moral right to mortgage posterity unless a permanent improvement is created equal in value to the incumbrance. Who will calculate the value of a perpetual franchise? The future is so uncertain that the purchaser of a franchise would not pay any more for a perpetual franchise than he would for one running fifty or a hundred years."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "It has become entirely clear that we must have government supervision of the capitalization not only of public service corporations, including particularly railways, but of all corporations doing an interstate business. I do not wish to see the nation forced into ownership of the railways if it can possibly be avoided, and the only alternative is thoroughgoing and effective regulation which shall be based on a full knowledge of all the facts, including a physical valuation of the property. This physical valuation is not needed or at least is very rarely needed for fixing rates, but it is needed as the basis of honest capitalization."

The democratic national platform for 1908 contained this plank: "We favor the efficient supervision and rate regulation of railroads engaged in interstate commerce. To this end we recommend the valuation of railroads by the interstate commerce commission, such valuation to take into consideration the physical value of the property, the original cost of production and all elements of value that will render the valuation made fair and just."

Mr. Roosevelt said: "I believe that the officers and especially the directors of corporations should be held personally responsible when any corporation breaks the law."

The democratic national platform for 1908 said: "A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable. We therefore, favor the vigorous reform of the criminal law against guilty trust magnates and officials, and demand the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States."

In an address delivered in Chicago Mr. Bryan said: "They tell you that I will not enforce the law. My friends, the fear of these people is not that I will refuse to enforce the law; their fear is that I will enforce the law. They know that I entertain old-fashioned ideas upon this subject, and that, according to my ideas, the big criminals should wear striped clothes as well as the little criminals. I want to say to you that I believe in enforcing the law against all classes of society; and those who believe in that policy are better friends of the government than those who would make scapegoats of little criminals and then let the big ones run at large to