

The Sentiment in Nebraska

The following letter from Mr. G. L. Shumway, city clerk of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, was addressed to Senator G. M. Hitchcock at Washington:

There has been more interest than you imagine watching your position on the currency question, and I am sure you will entertain without offense a friendly criticism.

The whole question may be "too far up the gulch" for a layman to presume to understand, yet it seems to me that the proposed measure sounds like the good, old farmers' alliance logic of many years ago.

It looks like the one great opportunity for which men have worked, and waited and hoped for a generation, and perhaps much longer. Therefore, our fear (perhaps unreasonable fear) that some friend may block the way.

So many of those who endorse your position have voices like our old time enemies.

You advocate postponement, which was ex-President Taft's besetting sin. This six-cylinder age calls for action, and you know the many years that currency has been an issue. It seems doubtful if congress or the country will be any better advised by next session or the session after.

Since my earliest thoughts on the subject, it has always seemed that the medium of exchange is too vital to the public to be controlled by any specialized branch of business. Banking can so easily enforce industrial conditions that make fish out of one and fowl out of another.

The favorite can be extended credit and the other embarrassed, through no virtue or fault save friendship or enmity of the man behind the gun.

Banking ought to be only one of the many things that make up the composite of our government, but of late years it has become the boss. It has arrogated to itself supreme powers, and demands to know the innermost secrets of the borrower. It exacts his absolute confidence, then if the profits look big enough, it backs right into the deal, either directly, or through some dummy or side-rider. Hardly a bank exists that has not its side man, who has inside information as to the creditors of the bank, which information is abused to the side-riders' profit.

Had banking business adhered to banking services, I doubt if there had ever been any call for currency legislation.

The abuses that follow the present banking system shows its weakness and its menace. It shows the necessity of a controlling influence that has not alone banking interests to serve. A board of control that thinks just as much of an industrial, merchant, a shoemaker, a farmer, as it does of a banker. I think the fault of the present system is that it makes preferred citizens out of banking people.

Federal control might beneficially extend gradually to federal banking, taking the extension of credit entirely out of private banks.

You know the effect upon business when banks change the quantity of reserve funds from 15 per cent to—say 30 per cent. It brings distress, close money, and at the same time banks boast of their apparent "strength." You have the tables or can at least improvise one that will answer.

By the former, \$1,000 in actual currency deposited in a bank is sufficient basis for \$7,000 credit. Increase the reserve to 30 per cent and the possible credit is reduced more than a half. This expansion and contraction is now possible by the concerted action of banks, and it is the criminal latitude that has been given them by law.

I can readily see a danger in federal control if the selection of the board were in the hands of an ambitious tyrant. That is a possible danger of delay. With immediate action, President Wilson's dominating figure will insure safety in the board's formation. His Jacksonian courage without the violence, has aroused a great hope, and we feel that you and others whose spirit and ideals are right, should in no way impede him in the work of reformation. We want you to help him aid hasten the day of business emancipation.

President Wilson needs all the time possible for you to give him to get the work sufficiently advanced to show results, and all embarrassments should come from his enemies. Four years are short, when entrenched financial giants are opposing him.

I hope, Senator, that you are not so intensely involved in the attitude you have taken, that you will not at least give this call from the wilderness the consideration deserved by the friendly, earnest solicitude of the writer.

The following petition signed by nearly 100 democrats of Minden, Neb., was sent to Senator Hitchcock:

Minden, Neb., Nov. 19.—We, the following democrats whose names are here attached, ask you for the good of the country and the people to vote for the currency bill now pending before the senate and approved by President Wilson and the "rank and file" of the democratic party. We want twelve regional banks well distributed over the entire United States so as to furnish the people money, and not keep it in a few banks controlled by Wall street gamblers and the money power. Vote for the bill as it stands in its original form without any amendments whatever. The democratic party in Nebraska and in the United States cannot afford to stand by and silently see you join the enemy without protest.

At a called meeting of the voters of Payne precinct, Lincoln county, Nebraska, held at Bigne, November 19, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, Control of money and credit has created a millionaire aristocracy and millions of dependents, and

Whereas, A continuation of present conditions can but end in the degradation of American citizenship to that of serfdom, and

Whereas, The provisions of our constitution wherein it is provided that "Congress shall have power to coin money and regulate the value thereof," is the only safe and sure system for a national currency; and

Whereas, This right of the people to issue money and to control its volume has been delegated to corporate individuals, with power to make money dear or cheap; also who can use it, and who can not, thus the favored few become absolute dictators of the nation's every industry; therefore, be it

Resolved, By the voters of Payne precinct, Lincoln county, Nebraska, irrespective of political affiliations, that we demand of the representatives of the state of Nebraska in the national congress that they support such measures that will eliminate and destroy the foregoing abuses, wishing to restore the government and all its functions to the people. Be it further

Resolved, That we view with alarm, regret and extreme disapproval the subterfuges resorted to to defeat the will of the people and hold them chained to a monied oligarchy. And be it further

Resolved, That we hereby serve notice upon recreant public servants

of all political parties that we are in this fight for equal rights and industrial freedom until such time as the same shall be consummated. Be it further

Resolved, That believing as we do that the currency bill as passed by the lower house will, if enacted into law, accomplish the will and purpose of the common people, and of which we demand that our public servants aid in passing by every honorable means, thereby aiding President Wilson in fulfilling his promise to the people to reform the nation's monetary system.

Moved and supported that we approve the foregoing resolution as read and that a copy of the same be forwarded to Senators Hitchcock and Norris.

Jonathan Higgins, H. P. Stevens, M. L. D. Elder, Committee

Dannebrog, Neb., Nov. 22.—To Senator G. M. Hitchcock: We, the undersigned democrats of Howard county, Nebraska, have faith in the policies of the present democratic administration, and believing it the part of wisdom to uphold the hands of the president who has proven himself the master of the situation and a friend of the people, suggest that you, as one of our representatives in the United States senate, lay aside your personal opinion as to minor details and get squarely behind the president in this important matter now before the senate—the currency bill—and by so doing claim a part of the glory due this democratic administration as the greatest moral uplift in the history of our country. George G. Lauritsen, N. C. Peterson, H. P. Nelson, Hans N. Lauritsen, Jorgen Christensen, Viggo Christensen, Soren M. Fries, Niels Nielsen, Rasmus Sorensen, Thomas Lauritsen, Peter Petersen, J. G. Jacobs, C. B. Nelson, Paul Christensen, Jens C. Christensen, W. L. Easton, Anton Johnson, Martin Nielsen, Willie Nielsen, C. T. Petersen, Fred Jacobs, Chas. Perry, M. S. Stockholm, Fred Sorensen, Peter Stockholm, J. C. Petersen, S. C. Kiem, Hans Sorensen, Paul Nielsen, W. C. Nielsen, A. E. Carlson, Niels Larsen, Barnie Nelson, Carl L. Petersen, Swan Williamsen, H. C. Parker, Carl Fredericksen, Carl Christensen, Jens A. Carlsen, Viggo A. Sorensen, William T. Lauritsen, C. T. Lauritsen, Norman Jensen, E. Moore, R. Petersen, Sam Martin, P. N. Petersen, John G. Schlytern, Peter Fredricksen, Hans Jensen.

To the Honorable Gilbert M. Hitchcock, United States Senator, Washington, D. C.: We, the undersigned democrats of Falls City, Nebraska, hereby protest in regard to your attitude toward the administration of President Wilson, and particularly on the currency bill. We believe the bill as it passed the house a good bill and would be pleased to have you support it. Respectfully yours, John Lichty, Sam'l Kimmel, W. A. Greenwald, L. O. Wirth, Guy P. Greenwald, Chas. M. Wilson, F. Brecht, J. H. Hutchings, R. A. Neltzel, G. W. Morris, John Gagnon, J. E. McFarland, D. B. Gillespie, Chas. Loree, H. J. Prichard, O. B. Prichard, W. H. Crook, L. O. Manger, W. H. Maddox, B. F. Morgan, Sam'l Marts, James E. Higgins, H. G. Hughes, C. A. Fisher, M. Guinn, L. S. Gianini, Adam M. Voegel, William Voegel, R. C. James, J. S. Parsons, L. C. Edwards, C. H. Nolte, C. C. Davis, John F. Schmite, G. H. Fallstead, E. P. Glines, Eli Bowers, John Nolte, Wm. Fritz, Francis Shaffer, Morris Seff, E. M. Kimmel, Hugh O'Grady, Jr., John O'Grady, F. M. Parden, James Tangeny, Sr., L. L. Aldrich, W. L. White, Jacob R. Hinziaken, Wm. Rieschick, H. F. Nettlebrick, Jud J. Knowles, Ralph Walker, Geo. S. Sperry, Herman F. Fritz, John D.

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The following petition from Lincoln county, Nebraska, citizens was addressed to Senator Hitchcock at Washington.

North Platte, November 17, 1913. —As we have been watching the action of the senate committee very closely through the columns of the daily newspapers, and we are very much interested in the outcome.

In this locality we have not heard a single objection raised by any person to the currency bill as passed by the house of representatives and endorsed by the president, Woodrow Wilson, but on the other hand the measure has their most hearty endorsement and approval. We, a part of the constituency of Nebraska, feel that we have a right to request of our United States senators that they shall represent us and our wishes in this matter and not represent men and measures that we feel against our interest.

The people of Nebraska are greatly interested in this matter, and we will say that we do most earnestly hope that you can see your way clear to help support this measure as endorsed by the president, and bring the matter to a speedy settlement so it can be passed and thereby we believe change the financial system of this country to a safer and more economic basis.

We will be pleased to hear from you in regard to this very important matter.

Yours for the greatest good to the greater number of our commonwealth, J. H. Edmisten, C. C. Masters, E. W. Mann, Butler Buchanan, Frank Buchanan, F. R. Elliott, G. W. Elliott, Arthur Rush, Dr. D. C. Crocker, C. J. McNamara, Chas. Mangon.

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