

# A Fine Legislative Record

[From New York Independent]

In a presidential campaign the party in power has the advantage of position—if it has a good record. It can "point with pride," while the opposition can only "view with alarm"; and when the record is a substantial one, sounding the alarm is not too easy a task.

The record of an administration has two sides, the executive and the legislative. In the present campaign the democratic record of legislative achievement is a notable one. Chairman McCormick, of the democratic national committee, has just issued a summary of it, intended for progressive consumption. It contains a score of items:

- (1) The rural credits act, which permits the farmer the same access to credit facilities that is enjoyed by the other elements of our citizenship.
- (2) The income tax law.
- (3) The federal reserve act, which measures up to the progressive requirement for "the issue of currency as a governmental function under a system whose control should be lodged with the government and should be protected from domination or manipulation by Wall street or by any special interest."
- (4) The good roads law, which extends federal aid to road building.
- (5) The trade commission law, which fully satisfied the progressive demand for "a strong federal administrative commission of high standing that shall maintain permanent, active supervision over industrial corporations engaged in interstate commerce."
- (6) An eight-hour law applying to work done for the government as well as work done by the government.
- (7) An eight-hour law applying to female employees in the District of Columbia, over which congress has jurisdiction.
- (8) An eight-hour provision for post office clerks and carriers.

(9) An eight-hour provision applicable to civilians engaged in the manufacture of ordnance and powder for the government.

(10) An eight-hour provision as to the mining of all coal to be used by the navy.

(11) The children's bureau law to promote the welfare of children and to devise means preventive of the necessities of parents retarding development of the child.

(12) The industrial commission law to investigate the entire subject of industrial relations.

(13) The phosphorus match law to protect the health of workers in the match industry.

(14) The Clayton anti-trust act, embracing the regulations of the issuance of injunctions.

(15) The department of labor law, creating a department with a secretary, who shall be a member of the President's cabinet.

(16) The Smith-Lever agricultural education law, which responds to the progressive demand that measures be taken to lift "the last load of illiteracy from American youth" by "encouraging agricultural education and domestic schools."

(17) The corrupt elections practices act.

(18) Measures abolishing the commerce court and authorizing the interstate commerce commission to make a physical valuation of railroads.

(19) The Sherwood pension bill, which must meet the progressive idea of a "wise and just policy of pensioning American soldiers and sailors and their widows and children."

(20) The parcels post law.

This is impressive. Standing on such a record of accomplishment as this, the democrats are entitled to feel confident. The attack upon their position must be made from another angle. The indications are that it is on the executive acts and policies of the administration that the heavy guns of the republicans will be brought to bear. But that is another story.

## FROM HARDING'S OLD PASTOR

[Des Moines Register and Leader, July 11.]

W. L. Harding is a member of the Methodist Episcopal church in Morningside, Sioux City.

It is the former preacher of that church, Rev. William Campbell Wasser of York, Neb., who writes that as Harding's pastor, he "came to know him as being in the camp of the liquor forces and the interests."

The Rev. Mr. Wasser tells his nephew, L. F. Biddleman of Kellogg:

"You can render no better service to your state and mankind than to compass his (Harding's) downfall politically at the November election."

This letter brings the opposition voiced by the ministers of all churches in Des Moines, and by conferences and conventions throughout the state, right home to Mr. Harding's own church and his own pastor.

The Rev. Mr. Wasser was for years one of the leading ministers of the northwest Iowa conference. He was pastor of the church in which Mr. Harding holds membership. Personal ties operate to prevent a minister from actively opposing a man with whom he is constantly associated. The Rev. Wasser, having left Morningside, is free to express his opinion of Mr. Harding dispassionately and candidly. He gives the impression which he formed when he was Mr. Harding's pastor, and he calls upon the state to defeat him for governor.

No one can overlook the fact that a definite alignment is being formed in Iowa, having as its basis the legislative record and the campaign methods of the republican candidate for governor. This alignment is bringing the church people of the state into direct opposition to Mr. Harding. Harding is a church member himself, yet his own church is taking the lead in opposition to him.

Participation of religious organizations in politics is sometimes open to criticism. It is always to be criticized when a church endeavors to elevate its own members to office or when members of other denominations are opposed because of their religion.

But there is no criticism of a church which renounces one of its own members as morally unfit to be governor of the state. Whether the conduct of the individual merits the attack or

not, the church is moved by disinterested motives, and its action is a step in the direction of religious and personal freedom. The test of propriety is the truth and importance of the charge made against the candidate.

Now is as good a time as any to settle the question of the sincerity of the Iowa republicans who do not look with favor upon the candidacy of Mr. Harding.

Harding himself has been making charges of personal pique against his opponents. But a point is soon reached where personal motives disappear because of the very size of the opposition. A man can not confess to having personal enemies by the scores of thousands.

Honest people believe that The Register had opposed Harding for personal reasons, despite the fact that this paper's opposition antedates the personal causes cited by Harding. It is conceivable that Harding will say his old pastor denounces him as being "in the camp of the liquor forces" merely to even up some old personal grudge, and some people may believe him.

But the larger opposition, as represented by the united ministers of Des Moines, and by large conferences of sincere citizens all over Iowa, is not personal. The opposition to Mr. Harding is based upon an issue.

That fact must be recognized and discussion of the governorship must be based upon the issue.

The question before the people of Iowa is presented by the Rev. Mr. Wasser in brief and pointed fashion. It is an indictment from too near home to be passed by in silence. The charges bear too directly upon the moral welfare of Iowa to be ignored.

One old favorite of the republican orators will be missed from their campaign speeches this fall. It ran something like this: "The flames which cast their lurid glare upon the skies of burning Rome lit up no scene of greater suffering than when the democratic torch of free trade was applied to the workshops and homes of the American people."

As we understand it Colonel John M. Parker's idea is that it is a lot better to begin action to annul the marriage of the republicans and progressives at which the colonel officiated than to wait until grounds for a divorce are secured.

## PROHIBITION A SUCCESS IN LANSING

Lansing, Mich., Aug. 2, 1916.—Mr. J. E. Hammond, Mgr., United Dry Campaign, Grand Rapids, Mich. Dear Sir: This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated July 31, asking my personal opinion relative to the present business conditions during our dry regime. With your permission I wish first to call your attention to the Roger W. Babson's statistical reporting house of Wellesley Hills, Mass. In this report you will find that Lansing enjoys one of the highest financial ratings of any city in the United States. Would further call your attention to the Polks' State Gazeteer which will in a measure substantiate the following information relative to the capital city.

Lansing has a population of over 50,000, 80% of the working men own their own homes. The commercial life in our city is unexcelled anywhere, and the writer finds that the general attitude in reference to our dry conditions here, so to speak, is a blessing that is enjoyed by all our citizens with very little if any exceptions. It would be almost utterly impossible to make it comprehensive to you, Mr. Hammond, between the former wet years, of our city and the present dry regime. I respectfully call your attention to an action taken by the Lansing Chamber of Commerce on November 2, 1915, and we submit the following resolution which will give you some idea as to the opinion of our members relative to the open saloons:

"Whereas, the Lansing Chamber of Commerce is an organization to promote not only the commercial prosperity of Lansing, but to do any and all things that will make Lansing a better and more desirable city in which to live.

In May, 1916, a vote will be taken on local option, therefore, be it resolved by the directors of the Lansing Chamber of Commerce, that they are opposed to the opening of any saloons as heretofore existing in this city, and pledge the influence and support of the Lansing Chamber of Commerce to oppose any measure which attempts to legalize the "open saloon" in this city.

"We believe the open saloon to be a menace to the moral and social welfare, and a detriment to the business prosperity of our city." Carried unanimously.

There are so many reasons in my mind why any municipality can get along without saloons that it would require too much of your time to enable me to give all of them. If there is any specific point or points that we have not covered in this letter, will thank you to communicate with the writer, as I feel sure that I am safe in saying that I represent all of Lansing as a whole when I make the statement that Lansing is one of the most progressive cities in the country, and it has been largely enabled to be such without the aid of saloons.

Trusting the above information will serve your purpose, beg to remain, yours very truly,  
LANSING CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.  
CHAS. H. DAVIS, Secretary.

Maybe our hearing isn't quite as good as it once was, but our tympanums have failed to record anything lately in protest against the supposedly vast shipments of meat and corn from Argentina that it was solemnly proclaimed would displace American meat and corn from the home markets and thus depress the prices which the meat and corn producers of the United States would secure for their products. Or maybe the tariff liars are busy thinking up something else to attract attention, but which will, in the fullness of time, drop into the same old discard.

Most of the militia regiments that were sent to protect the Mexican border were forced to start without being able to secure enough recruits to make each of war strength. Which would seem to prove that the late violent propaganda to get the American people to hate the Mexicans and therefore insist upon going to war with them was not very successful.

Considerable emphasis is being laid upon the alleged fact that Mr. Wilson has a single track mind. At that it will have to be admitted that he has been transporting a great lot of new ideas over it without any wreck of consequential proportions.

"The mountains look on Marathon,  
And Marathon looks on the sea;  
And musing there an hour alone,  
I dreamed that Greece might still be free;  
For standing on the Persians' grave,  
I could not deem myself a slave."  
—Byron.