THE WAGEWORKER

ALLIED PRINTING TRADES UNION LABEL COUNCIL LINCOLN, NEB.

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Bryan Talks to Chicago Railroad Brotherhoods

Following is an address delivered by W. J. Bryan to a meeting composed of members of the Brotherhood of Railroad Firemen and Enginemen, at Chicago:

Ladies and Gentlemen: The introduction is coupled with a prophecy. He has introduced me as Mr. Bryan, the next president. I am indebted to my parents for the first part of the introduction, my name, and I shall probably be indebted to you for the last part, for the title that the chairman seemed anxious to affix to my name. I am glad to present very briefly the distinction between the republican party and the democratic party in this campaign. We are very fortunate that our platform is so clearly written and that its position is so definitely taken that we have nothing to apologize for, nothing to explain, and we can scarcely make the subjects plainer by argument than they appear in the statements in the platform. And yet, you will pardon me if I occupy just a few moments in presenting and in a word supporting the propositions that directly affect labor. Two of these are substantially like the propositions in the republican platform. I need not, therefore, dwell upon them. The democrats and republicans agree in their platform as to the eight-hour day and the employers' liability act. And all I need to say on those two subjects is that the laboring man is to decide to which party he can best entrust the carrying out of these propositions upon which the two agree in their platform. All I need to say on this subject is this, that the republicans have been in power now for more than eleven years and they have been in a position to do those things and they have not done them, and when they propose them now, they simply promise to do in the future what they have refused to do in the past; whereas, the democrats in proposing to do these things, propose to do as soon as they can get an opportunity to do it, what they would have done if they had had an opportunity.

But there are four propositions upon which the parties differ and I take it that you are more interested in the discussion of these four propositions upon which we differ than you would be in the discussions about propositions upon which our platforms are in agreement.

The first proposition presented by our party and objected to by the republican party is that there should be a department of labor with a cabinet officer at its head. That is our position, and the republicans are opposed to it. That proposition was in my platform eight years ago, and I am glad it is in my platform again, for I believe that that great group that we call wage-earners ought to have a representative in the president's council, and if I am president, I want a representative of those who toil in that cabinet that I may consult him on questions that affect the toilers of the nation.

The second proposition upon which we differ relates to the scope of the anti-trust law. We say that that law should be so amended as to exempt from its operation the organization known as the labor organization. The republicans say that the anti-trust law should include the labor organization. Now, why do we take the position that we do? Because the difference between a labor organization and an industrial combine known as the trust is so great that no one law can properly deal with both. The labor organization is composed of human beings; the trust deals with matter and merchandise, and I hope I will not offend you when I tell you what we democrats believe that a human being, with a heart, a brain, and a soul, ought not to be degraded to the level of matter and merchandise.

The third proposition upon which we disagree relates to the issuance of the injunction and our platform says that an injunction should not be issued in a labor dispute except under conditions that would justify an injunction if there were no labor dispute. This is, that the labor dispute in itself shall not be regarded as grounds for injunction. Mr. Taft says that this plank is loosely drawn and that it is capable of construction in two opposite directions; but, my friends, he is mistaken. He has had great experience in construing laws and I have challenged him time and again to find if he can find two opposite constructions in that language. I think the language is perfectly clear and the only reason why the republicans try to avoid it is because they cannot meet the argument that is presented in support of that proposition.

The fourth question upon which we differ is as to trial by jury in cases of indirect contempt. We say that there ought to be a jury trial and the republicans say that there ought not to be. This is a clear issue beween us, and, my friends, I want to give you briefly our reason, so as that if you are called upon to defend your position on this subject, if your position on this subjest is our position and our position is your position—I want to give you a few arguments, so that you will be prepared to defend them. Now, there is this difference between direct contempt and indirect contempt. In the case of direct contempt, the contempt complained of or alleged, is committed in the presence of the court. He does not have to examine witnesses; he is an eye-witness; he decides the question pending on his own knowledge. But in the case of indirect contempt, that is where the act complained of was committed outside of the presence of the court, and where it must be established by evidence. Now, we are not complaining of the case of direct contempt, but we insist that as this indirect contempt involves a prosecution which is in its nature a criminal prosecution, with a punishment by fine or imprisonment, or both, we contend as it is in its nature a criminal prosecution, the man accused shall have the protection of trial by jury to ascertain whether he is guilty or not. But some of you may not know how strong our position on this subject is, for it is stronger than a good many people imagine. It is not only important to have a trial by jury in such a case, because it is in the nature of a criminal prosecution, but it is more important than in any criminal prosecution. Why? Because in a criminal case the judge is not the man who made the law; therefore, the violation of it is not a personal offense to him, and in the criminal proceeding he is not prosecuting attorney and therefore not personally interested in the conviction. The judge in a criminal case simply sits and hears the evidence and tries the case and gives his instructions and decides points of law, and has no

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Wage Earners of Lincoln Will Demand Recognition

Noting that President Hardy of the Commercial Club did not see fit to appoint a wage-earner on the committee to investigate the working of the commission plan of city government, Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209, adopted the following resolutions at its regular meeting last Sunday:

"Whereas, The government of a city is a matter of concern to every citizen regardless of business or social condition, and

Whereas, The question of adopting or rejecting the commission plan of municipal government is now being discussed, with a view to bettering the government of our city, and

"Whereas, The president of the Commercial club, an organization presumably seeking to advance every legitimate interest in the city, has seen fit to designate a committee to visit Des Moines, or some other city with a view to investigating the commission plan, and

"Whereas, The president of the Commercial club has seen fit to name upon this committee one retail merchant, one physician who is an officeholder, one newspaper man and one bank cashier, and has utterly failed to recognize or give representation to that class which makes up by far the largest proportion of Lincoln's citizenship, the wage earners, who have contributed more to the upbuilding of Lincoln, industrially, commercially and morally, than any or all other classes, therefore be it

"Resolved, By Typographical Union No. 209, that we, the union printers of this city, resent this slight upon labor and serve notice here and now that we will seek the cooperation of our fellow wage earners in a movement having for its object the securing of the management of city affairs by those whose toil and sacrifices have made Lincoln of commanding importance in the municipal life of the middle west.

"Resolved, That the skilled wage earners of the city, regardless of union or non-union affiliations, be requested to co-operate with the members of this organization and other organizations to the end that the time may soon come when those who honestly seek to secure better things for our city will realize the necessity of recognizing the largest and most useful element in the municipality—the wage earners.

"Resolved, That Lincoln Typographical Union No. 209, a majority of whose membership are men of family and home owners, that we emphatically protest against these continued slights put upon the wage earners, and that no opportunity be lost in future to impress upon the minds of all that we will in future resent them."

The resolutions as read were adopted amidst applause. Similar resolutions should be adopted by every trades union in the city, and the request of the printers for co-operation should be complied with by the unionists of the city.

It seems that there are people who hold the opinion that because a man works for wages at some trade he is unfitted to take part in municipal government, or too ignorant or careless to take any interest therein. The men who work for wages form the largest element in Lincoln's citizenship, and a great many of them are home owners, heads of families and deeply interested in everything calculated to contribute to the betterment of Lincoln. Just why this element of Lincoln society is persistently ignored every time something like this commission plan comes up is a mystery. But if it continues the fault will lie with the workingmen themselves.

No one can find anything to criticize in the gentlemen appointed by President Hardy upon this committee. But the mere fact that they are men who have been successful in their business is no sign that they are any better fitted to manage the affairs of the municipality than the men who have succeeded in making good as printers, as electrical workers, as carpenters, as bricklayers or any other branch of the skilled trades. Neither does it signify that they are any better fitted to investigate the workings of the commissioner system than a hundred or more skilled mechanics in Lincoln, or any more interested in any plan calculated to better the municipal government.

The Wageworker suggests that the Central Labor Union appoint a committee to investigate the commission plan and formulate some ideas for presentation to the skilled mechanics of Lincoln. It might come to pass that the wage-earners of the city took such interest that they formulated a plan of their own, secured the adoption and then furnished the men to put it into practical working effect. They certainly could do it if they were so minded.

At any rate, it is a matter well worthy the attention of the mechanics of Lincoln.

THE LABOR DECISIONS OF JUDGE WILLIAM H. TAFT

"I am tired of this man Gompers running around the country claiming to have the labor vote in his pocket, and lying about me."

Stung by the just criticisms of organized labor for his unjust decisions against organized labor, and trembling with fear for success because of the almost unanimous opposition of organized labor, William Howard Taft used the above language while addressing the people of North Platte, Nebr.

Judge Taft's assertion that Gompers claims to carry the labor vote around in his pocket is on a par with his statement that his decisions in labor cases are the "magna charta of organized labor."

Samuel Gompers has never claimed to "carry the vote of union men in his pocket," and Judge Taft knows it. Yet Judge Taft, this "upright judge," this "honorable man," repeats the cruel and silly lie, hoping that his repetition of it will deceive a few voters.

His assertion that Samuel Gompers has lied about him is as false as his other assertion.

And Judge Taft's assertion that his labor decisions are really the "magna charta of organized labor" is the silliest of all.

Does William H. Taft imagine for a moment that all union men are pinheaded fools who may be deceived by smooth words and oily phrases?

Just now the republican committees are industriously circulating a pamphlet written by Frederick N. Judson, who happened to be the attorney for the railway brotherhoods in the celebrated Wabash injunction case. Judson is a republican lawyer, and in his anxiety to help the cause of his party he attempts to befog the labor issue and deceive the workers.

It is true that when Mr. Judson argued the Wabash injunction case for the Railway Brotherhoods he quoted a portion of Taft's decision in the case of Arthur and Sargent, using the quotation to prove that the railway men were within their rights. But in that portion of the Taft decision quoted by Judson no new principles of trades union ethics were pronounced. What was it that Judge Taft said that Judson and his political colleagues ——including Taft—call the "magna charta" of trades unionism? Here is one sentence:

"It is a benefit to themselves and the public that laborers should unite for their common interests and for lawful purposes—they have labor to sell."

Wonderful exposition of judicial knowledge. And Taft calls that his "magna charta of labor."

The world has recognized that right ever since Moses led the first great strike—that of the Jewish brickmakers —although Pharoah, the Taft of his time, tried to enjoin them.

But what does he mean by "lawful purposes?" That is what organized labor is trying to find out.

Judge Taft says it is not lawful for one man to strike in order to benefit another man. He says it is not lawful for one engineer to step down from the cab because his continuing at work injures his fellows and thus injures himself. He says that it is beneficial for laborers to unite for their common interests, and then sends them to jail for acting in their common interests. And that is Taft's "magna charta of labor!"

"They have labor to sell!" says Judge Taft. Thanks for that temporary concession. But now and then workingmen feel that they do not want to sell their labor because the sale will injure their future prospects and the prospects of their fellows. Judge Taft, in the same decision quoted by Judson, declared that under certain circumstances the laborer had to sell his labor or go to jail. And Judge Taft insisted upon his right to designate the circumstances.

"If they stand together," continues Judge Taft, "they are often able, all of them, to obtain better prices for their labor than dealing singly with rich employes, because the necessity of the single employe may compel him to accept any price that is offered."

O, noble deliverer! O, wise and able champion of the rights of men!

Not until Judge Taft judicially decided these points, and made them "the magna charta of labor" did we understand that we could do better by organizing, nor did we realize that we had a right to organize. Of course, the mere fact that men did organize a thousand years before Judge Taft was born does not remove the other fact that it was Judge Taft who discovered that we had a right to organize. But, somehow or other, we have been going to jail for it more frequently since Judge Taft granted us the "magna charta" than we did before.

The whole argument of Frederick N. Judson is the argument of a man who imagines that he is talking to a lot of numbskulls who will eagerly swallow any kind of dope spooned into them by a member of the legal fraternity. He utterly fails to mention the fact that the very decisions which he describes as being beneficial to organized labor have been used for the basis of every decision in the last fifteen years that has progressively hampered the work of trades unionism until today a trades union stands convicted of being a trust in restraint of trade. It is the same kind of "freedom" that the savage Indians offered their prisoners when they let the prisoners "run the gauntlet," the same kind of "freedom" that the witch hunters gave to suspects—if they walked on the water they were witches and must be burned, but if they sank and were drowned they were innocent.

In the Phelan contempt case Judge Taft laid down a principle which, if maintained, will render every trades union as inocuous as a summer breeze. This is the principle that was adhered to in the Danbury Hatters' case—the "direct interference with interstate commerce" idea. Under that principle it would be impossible to secure redress of wrongs by a strike. All that the employer against whom a strike is waged would have to do would be to show that he now and then sold some of the product of his factory in another state——and, presto, the strikers would be "restraining interstate commerce."

"The Magna Charta of Organized Labor!"

Do Taft and Judson think union men are a pack of fools? Or do Taft and Judson just talk foolishly for the fun of it?

Since Judge Taft's kindly granting of his "magna charta of organized labor" we have been restrained from accumulating funds to pay strike benefits. We have been restrained from paying strike benefits. Our preacher friends have been restrained from praying for our immortal souls. We have been restrained from consulting among ourselves with a view to mutual help. We have been restrained from notifying one another that certain firms were unfriendly to us. We have been restrained from using the United States mails for educational purposes. We have been restrained from making social visits. We have been restrained from feeding our hungry brethren. We have been jailed for daring to exercise the rights guaranteed by the constitution. Our property has been confiscated because we dared to exercise rights that have been recognized as valid rights from the days of Tubal Cain to the days of Judge William Howard Taft.

And yet William Howard Taft declares that his decisions which declared Arthur and Sargent to be conspirators, and which sent Phelan to jail on the testimony of a hired spy, were "the magna charta of organized labor!"

The workingmen who believe what Judge Taft says about his friendship for labor would readily believe that the less his weekly wage the more provisions he can buy for his wife and babies.

BACKING GOMPERS.

The American Pressman is backing Sam Gompers' political policy as loyally as any organ in the country. This is the official organ of the International Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union.