

# The Independent.

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## OHIO POPULISTS

National Committeeman Hugo Preyor  
Tells of Political Conditions in  
in His State

Editor Independent: Your favor, also copy of single tax edition, received. I congratulate you and your contributors in getting out such a valuable paper. It would be impertinent on my part should I attempt to add anything to what has been said. I can only say that I feel that the time is not far distant when the views expressed by Henry George will be enacted into law and a system of equitable taxation take the place of our present system.

There is one point to which I desire to call attention, viz: the attention of the laity should be called to the tax valuation of our county or state in detail under the old system; it should then be shown under the Henry George system, proving our assertion that the farmer and small home owner gains by the change and that he who benefits from the unearned increment is obliged to pay his just share of taxation. My 31 years of reform work has taught me that the masses will come with us if we make our position plain. We must realize that not every man can grasp or comprehend at a glance what some others can. I believe in going into details instead of generalities. It may be a little more work, but it is time well spent.

Your questions I answer as follows: There is still a populist organization in this state. I am the secretary. We have, however, affiliated with the democratic party since the first Bryan campaign. I do not know of any populists who have gone into the republican party; some, perhaps one-tenth have joined hands with the socialists. Our future action will depend upon the action of the democratic party. If that party will in national issues favor the Bryan platform we can indorse it; or if in state and local issues it will advocate the platform of Hon. Tom L. Johnson, who favors home rule, single tax, municipal ownership of all public utilities, who opposes trusts, combines and traitors in office, we can support it without sacrificing one iota of our principles.

The financial question is in my mind still the most important question and until that is satisfactorily settled, not only along the silver, but the absolute fiat line, the country will witness in the future what it has in the past—panic, bankruptcy and ruin. The present tariff holds the structure only temporarily. Wishing you success and a hearty greeting to your readers, among whom I have many friends, yours for humanity,

HUGO PREYOR.

74 Muirson st., Cleveland, O.

## MICHIGAN POPULISTS

National Committeeman Greco Tells Independent Readers the Situation in Michigan

Editor Independent: I am gratified to learn that you have adopted the plan of writing to populists throughout the country to obtain their opinions on points regarding populism and the party. It is time something were done and I have no doubt many populists, who have watched the course of events since the great campaigns of 1896 and 1900, and the efforts made, and being made, by true patriots, like Mr. Bryan and his followers, to save the democratic party and make it the party of the people, as its name implies it should be, are of the same opinion. If the people are not aroused and that quickly and unitedly this nation's life as a republic is ended.

Let any one read the first chapter of "Froude's Life of Caesar," and insert the name American republic in place of "Roman republic" and he will have an exact outline of the conditions now fastened upon this nation. If Mr. Bryan, and those who are willing to follow him, could only succeed, I am one who will dare to hope, "yet fear presumption in the hope" that the calamity of the death of the republic might be averted. But I am frank to admit that I have not faith sufficiently convincing to me, to assure me that Mr. Bryan and his supporters can, or will be able to resist the power of money and promises of advantage, office, emolument, "suc-

cess" which the reorganizers are able to make and furnish.

In my judgment the people's party should be reorganized in every state where possible. The next democratic national convention will doubtless split in two, the reorganizers obtaining control. Two democratic parties will not do; followers of the Kansas City platform must have a place to go. The people's party standing on the grand principles of the Omaha platform and other national platforms since that of 1892 will afford them just the ground on which to stand. Those principles meet the demands of the masses today.

Then what ought populists to do? A grand conference should be called at some central point, St. Louis possibly the best, and adopt a plan of reorganization. If the national chairman, ex-Senator Marion Butler, will not act, then the vice chairman, J. H. Edmisten, of your city, should, in conjunction with the national chairman of the anti-fusion populists, call the meeting, or at any rate proper action should be taken. The work should be begun immediately; there is no time for delay. Let the party be once more organized, and keep organized for the future and for the salvation of the republic.

In reply to your requests as to the condition of the populists in this state let me say as follows: (a) There has been no loss of populists in this state; they have increased, but have been voting with, and in, the democratic party. (b) The condition is due to fusion both nationally and in state campaigns. (c) The populists by far the greater portion vote with the democrats; I know of none with the republicans. The Bryan democrats, who are all believers in the main principles of the populist platform, compose the greater part of the voting strength of that party in this state. The total vote can be found in any report of the national or state election at your command. I believe far the greater part of these would go with the populists when the proper time comes. (d) There is only the semblance of a populist organization in this state. Dr. A. W. Nichols of Greenville, Mich., was chosen its last chairman, and Frank Vander Cook of St. Louis, Gratiot county, secretary and I think they are true blue yet. (f) As to party action next year, I think I have given as nearly as possible about the probable course of populist action in this state if events go as I have stated; that is, if the democratic party is captured by the "reorganizers" or goes back on its principles, then populists will surely unite and show great strength. Otherwise, if Bryan ideas prevail, they will stand by him and his efforts. I am doubtful about the single tax idea being adopted, though I am one of its advocates.

EDWARD S. GRECO.

34 Hodges bldg., Detroit, Mich.

Some socialist papers have published "populist" editions written by socialists—The Independent (a populist paper) proposes a Karl Marx Edition, July 23, 1903, written by socialists.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

National Committeeman Kent Believes the Peoples Party is Dead—Members Interested in Socialism and Single Tax

Editor Independent: Your letter and Independent came duly to hand and should have had earlier acknowledgement. I have read the former carefully, and several articles in the latter, and congratulate you and the public on the excellence of the matter you have been able to gather.

As to the questions contained in your letter, I can only say, I am unable to answer them. As the people of Washington have no vote either in the offices of the city or the nation, except as they retain their right in the several states from which they come, we have no means of estimating the voting strength of any party. Populism is never mentioned in Washington except by the press in contempt and derision.

I should say that the greater number of those who were interested in the people's party, and who sent delegates to the St. Louis convention, are now interested in socialism—which they look up as the logical outcome of

populist principles—or in the single tax, which goes a good way in the same direction. So far as I am able to judge the feeling between the single taxers and socialists in this city is more friendly than in most places. They are generally disposed to travel together so long as they are going in the same direction. Socialists we may say are headed for San Francisco; single taxers think we need not go beyond Denver. Socialists say, "All right. We will keep you company that far. If it turns out that we do not need to go any farther, we will stop there. If the need is not met, you, we trust, will be ready to take the road with us and press on to the socialist goal." Of course there are important differences in the philosophy, but we are learning that this need not interfere with a good degree of co-operation.

Personally, I think the people's party—as a party—is dead. But all that was true in its principles remains true still, and will to the end. I do not, however, look for any embodiment of these principles in any party platform that can possibly be born out of present conditions. Those in the democratic party who are in active sympathy with populist principles are too few, in my opinion, to warrant any hope of victory through fusion in 1904.

Still, I think they will be numerous enough to prevent the Bourbons from nominating their man. Personally, I am not anxious to see a democratic president and house elected in 1904. Power and responsibility belong together. Power is out of the question for the democracy in the next congress. They don't want to be in charge when the break-down comes. If they are, they won't be long. I should be glad to see the republicans try their tariff and financial policy to a finale. If the break-down comes under their policy, the party that succeeds will have a fair chance of holding power long enough to try another.

But if the present party is thrown out of power before the crash comes, and if that crash follows pretty speedily upon the change, as it is very likely to do, they would have nothing to look for but overwhelming defeat in the next campaign. I should say, Get good, capable, honest populists and democrats in the house and senate, and let them hold these bodies, as far as they can, to high standards of action, and they will do more for the country than can possibly be done under present conditions, through party victory.

The first duty of the people is to get control of the government. Government ownership of the railroads will not amount to much so long as the plutocrats own the government. When the people have the sense and courage to capture the government they will easily get the railroads and all other public utilities. The first fight logically is for popular initiative and popular veto. When citizens can force good bills to a vote, and exercise a veto power over bad ones, legislators can be forced to use their expert power for public advantage. Then public ownership of public utilities will be possible in fact as well as in name. ALEX KENT.

Washington, D. C.

The single taxers told their story in the Henry George Edition. The socialists may tell theirs in the Karl Marx Edition, July 23, 1903.

## The Cause of Sun Spots

E. Gerry Brown, one of the populist national committeemen from Massachusetts, has followed the example of Elmer E. Thomas of Omaha with a glowing prospectus of the impending populist uprising in New England and especially in the Old Bay state. If the Massachusetts upheaval is a reflex of the spontaneous populist outburst in Omaha so vividly portrayed by Apostle Thomas, we have scientific explanation of the earthquake in Minor Asia that have swallowed up towns, villages and people promiscuously without previous announcement.—Omaha Bee.

Wanted: The correct address of Hon. Eugene Smith, populist national committeeman for Illinois and member of the executive committee. A letter mailed to him from this office May 17, 1903, addressed to No. 515 Ashland block, Chicago, was returned unclaimed May 27 with the notation "No such number."

## PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

Mr. Snediker Prefaces a Series of Articles by Showing Some Benefits of Cheap Transportation

The granger agitation and legislation years ago, although proceeding on a wrong theory, had had the good effect of teaching the people that public ownership is a condition precedent to "control." Of course, we know now that private ownership should never have been permitted; the law of eminent domain was never intended to permit the taking of private property for anything but public uses, and our courts have been obliged to do all sorts of hair-splitting to justify the taking of private property for a railroad right of way, to permit the right of way to be owned and held as private property, and in some places to place the mantle of sovereignty over it so that adverse possession cannot ripen into title in another.

But having started on the wrong theory, the past cannot be undone and our steps retraced—we must simply go ahead and get right.

Mr. R. T. Snediker of Kansas City, Mo., one of the proprietors of the Stock Hotel there, is in a position to study the transportation question, and he has recently written some interesting letters to the Kansas City World on the subject. He has furnished copies of these to The Independent, saying:

Editor Independent: We cannot have equal freedom or free trade, if a few monopolize transportation. The democratic party has pledged against all private monopoly in state or nation; why not hold them to it and take a monopoly that all men can see—one of the most corruptive in government, except it be the beneficiaries of tariffs?

In these railroad stories I do not include rides in Pullman, or baggage or insurance. I only hope to arouse discussion and can bring out other points as they arise. Roosevelt is not going to stop one trust from robbing the people. Not one. Tom Johnson is going to stop a street car trust and he has the people with him.

If the democrats become democratic and will stand for human rights, they will win. And they should not win, if they follow republican lines of action.

Think I can defend my line of argument from the buying and management down to the man who shovels dirt. Men of all color and parties come to me and say they would work and vote for the party that would contend for this. R. T. SNEDIKER.

511 Genesee st., Kansas City, Mo.

Well, the people's party has been contending for public ownership of railroads for a good many years. The party organization is not in first-class shape right now, but with a little rallying it can be aroused—the growth of sentiment in favor of public ownership alone being a sufficient incentive—and it can be ready for action next year if the old parties refuse to speak for what the people want. Mr. Snediker's first letter to the World follows:

To the Editor of The World: It must be admitted that newspapers are a great instrumentality in the way of increasing intelligence. But it is a mooted question, if good roads do not do more for increasing the reasoning powers of man and make more for a higher civilization, than the whole force of the press of the country, let it be as great as it may.

Place a man on a farm or island, cut him off from personal contact with his fellows, rain all the papers and periodicals on him that he could read, and at the end of twenty or thirty years, what would he know? At the end of that time not one in a thousand would be able to take abstract propositions and reason them out to a rightful conclusion.

Reverse the illustration: Good roads mean the least possible friction in the transportation of persons and property. Take a community with the best of country roads and bridges, with up-to-date steam railways, free to all the citizens, so that men and families could go 100 or 200 miles from home and return in a day. Where everybody could travel at will, mingle and commingle with the people of the various sections of the country; argue and discuss questions from all points of view, see,