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PEOPLE'S PARTY POLICY

A Three Days Struggle at the National Committee Meeting in Omaha Last Week.

CHAIRMAN BUTLER SUSTAINED

Nearly Equal Division.—Concessions on Both Sides.—The Party Program.

Report of the Proceedings.

Special correspondence. Program for guidance of National People's Party as agreed upon at meeting of National Committee, Omaha, June 15, 16, 17, 1898.

1. The national people's party nominating convention to be held in 1900 one month earlier than either the democratic or republican conventions.

2. No proposition for fusion shall be entertained by the officers of the national committee.

3. No advice in the direction of fusion shall emanate from the officers of the national committee.

4. The national committee shall not interfere with state or local campaigns, unless it should be in favor of the straight populist candidate.

5. The calls and referendum notices to be sent out by the chairman and secretary of the national committee and to be so framed as to state simply the question to be voted on; and the same shall specify clearly the basis of representation and apportionment, said basis to be on the highest populist vote east at the state elections since 1892.

The meeting of the people's party committee at Omaha last week marks an era in the history of the organization, equal in importance and consequences to those of two era-marking events in its career—the convention at Omaha July 4, 1892, and the convention at St. Louis July 22, 1896. Populists of Nebraska are entitled to a complete, authentic and impartial report of the meeting. It is the aim of this article to furnish such a report.

The call for the meeting of the national committee at this time when no national election is pending is the outgrowth of the dissatisfaction in the populist party over the conduct of the campaign of 1896. This dissatisfaction took organized form chiefly in the states of the south and middle west. Its principal grounds of grievance were: 1. Failure of the national populist committee to insist on democratic support of the populist candidate for vice president in 1896 as a condition of supporting the democratic candidate for president. 2. Action of members of the national committee in urging further fusion or co-operation. 3. Prospect of another fusion with the democratic party upon a national ticket in 1900.

As a result of this dissatisfaction a meeting of the so-called "middle of the roaders" was held last fall at Nashville and a subsequent meeting at St. Louis. At these meetings a reorganization committee was selected with Milton Park, editor of the Southern Mercury, Dallas, Tex., as chairman. This committee submitted a referendum vote to populists upon the subject of an early nominating convention for the campaign of 1900. Most of the votes were cast in the southern states and of those voting a large majority favored July 4, 1898. Petitions were then sent to Chairman Butler to call the national committee together and after taking the sense of the committee Senator Butler called the meeting at Omaha.

A meeting of the national reform press association was held the day before the national committee met. This is the same association which met in Omaha, July 1892. At that time nearly all the populist editors of Nebraska and the northwest were active members. A year ago last winter another meeting was held at Memphis. Owing to the distance few if any editors from Kansas and Nebraska attended and the association acquired a distinctively middle-of-the-road tendency. At the Omaha meeting last week between forty and fifty editors were present, nearly all from the southern and central states and all in favor of a middle of the road policy. Nebraska was represented by Mrs. Luna E. Kelle, of the Prairie Home, Hartwell.

When Chairman Butler and Secretary Edgerton mounted the rostrum in Crighton Hall Wednesday afternoon, there were about one hundred persons present. The roll call and subsequent report of the committee on credentials disclosed that there were actually present in the flesh twenty-seven out of 144 national committeemen. Besides these there were about eighty proxies. These proxies were about equally divided, half of them being held by members of the reform press association, largely from Texas, and the other half held by prominent populists of Nebraska. There were contests from six states and on motion Chairman Butler appointed the following a committee on credentials: Wm. V. Allen, Nebraska; A. H. Cardin, Kentucky; J. P. Buchanan, Tennessee; Congressman C. A. Barlow, California; Elwood Pomeroy, New Jersey.

After the committee had gone out there were brief speeches from Congressman Gunn, of Idaho, Prof. Parsons, of Boston, Mass., and two or three others counseling union for populist principles and a spirit of mutual concession. A motion was made to adjourn until morning. The southern delegates shouted to

stay up all night and await the report of the committee. On a viva voce vote it was very close between the ayes and noes. Chairman Butler declared the motion carried and the meeting adjourned. Two or three southern delegates were on their feet calling for a division. As soon as Butler left the platform, Col. Burkitt, of Mississippi, climbed up and pounded for order. The anti-fusion members cheered and yelled their approval. Those supporting Butler started to leave the hall and then turned back. For a few moments it looked as though a break was to be made in the national committee then and there. Committeeman Mays, of Washington, made a fiery speech denouncing fusion. Editor W. S. Morgan, of Arkansas, was called out and greeted with shouts while he declared that this was the day he had long waited to see—when the populists should meet Marion Butler and others who had betrayed them to democracy and tell them to their faces what they thought. Mottisinger, of Indiana, and Hangawant, of Missouri, followed denouncing fusion. Meanwhile Milton Park had made his way to the platform and after consultation among the older heads it was announced by Park that the best thing to do was not to wear themselves out with oratory, but to adjourn, go to bed and get ready for the struggle of the next day.

Early next morning the committee on credentials reported the list of delegates and proxies handed in, with the following decisions in contested states:

Arkansas—Thomas Fletcher (fusion) and W. S. Morgan (anti-fusion), present in person, and J. H. Boyd of the Cooper (Tex.) People's Cause, holding the proxy of A. W. Files.

Florida—All proxies, A. C. Wicks (anti-fusion) for Frank H. Lytle; Elmer E. Thomas of Nebraska for S. S. Harvey and D. W. Hamilton for John F. Rhoads. For Illinois—George W. Wickline present in person, and L. D. Reynolds of the Chicago Express and Dick Hans of Texas both anti-fusionists, holding respectively for Francis R. Cole (whom the committee had recognized instead of Eugene Smith) and J. D. Hess.

For Iowa—S. B. Crane, the proxy of W. H. Robb; J. E. Anderson and S. B. Crane present in person.

For Pennsylvania—John G. Yoiser of Nebraska, proxy for Hon. W. Morris Deisher.

For Ohio—L. B. Allen, proxy for Hugo Freyer. Not present, J. S. Coxy and D. D. Chidester.

The committee further reported rules for the regulation of the proxy business. The spectacle of men from Texas and Nebraska voting the sentiments of populists in states on the Atlantic seaboard was trying to the committee's nerves. Both the Butler and the anti-Butler sides had been hustling for proxies and having them sent in by telegraph with a blank for the name of the person to whom the proxy should be given. The rules reported were as follows:

First. That hereafter the national committee do not recognize any power of substitution or right of assignment or transfer in a proxy.

Second. That no man can hold and use a proxy of any national committeeman outside his own state.

Third. That no man can hold a proxy from another state when he has been recognized publicly by the populist authorities of his own state, as not in the people's party.

Fourth. That the national chairman or secretary be directed to enter on the list of members of the national committee those whose names are certified to the national secretary by the state chairman and secretary or by the three national committeemen from that state and no other, and if the state chairman or secretary or by two of the national committeemen from his state on the rolls.

Fifth. That hereafter we recognize no telegraph proxies.

Lastly, we recommend to the next national convention of our party a change in our rules so that one man can hold and use three proxies from his own state and that no man can use any other proxies than those from his own state. As soon as the report was read Col. Burkitt, of Mississippi, moved an amendment admitting Paul Vandervoort as proxy for Congressman Howard, of Alabama. It appeared that the proxy was made out in regular form, but that populists in Nebraska (Vandervoort's home) objected to him on the ground that he was not a populist. An animated debate followed. By a vote of 54 to 51 Vandervoort was excluded. This was very nearly a test vote showing the strength of the middle-of-the-roaders and the opposing faction. As soon as the vote was announced Col. Burkitt took the floor to make the speech presenting the situation of the southern populists. He told the story of the organization of the people's party in the south, of the bitter intolerance and persecution of the democratic machine in the south, how he had stood between Gen. Weaver and a democratic mob at his own home in Tupelo, Miss., during the campaign of 1892, he pointed to a bullet scar on the side of his face as received from democratic assassins in his own state and observed "I got three others from some of our people here in the north between '91 and '95, but that was in open war and I have no resentment over them." He reviewed the campaign of 1896 and declared as a result of that campaign southern populists had no confidence in Senator Butler and would not march under his banner. He showed that fully half the populist vote was cast in the southern states and begged the populists of the northwest not to try to drive them back into the corrupt democratic organization. Probably the strongest point made by Burkitt was his statement of a consultation he had with Senator Allen. He had asked the senator whether he would have supported McKinley if he had been nominated on the Chicago platform instead of Bryan. The answer had been "no." "Now," said Burkitt "it could not be because McKinley had not been a

good free silver man, for he had voted again and again for free silver—it was because you had a corrupt republican party here in Nebraska and you could not fight and fuse with it at the same time. We're in the same shape in the south. We have a corrupt ballot-box stuffing democracy in power. We can't make any headway fighting them so long as you are trying to fuse us nationally with them." In conclusion Col. Burkitt faced Chairman Butler upon the platform and asked him to resign as the best means of restoring harmony.

J. Rodes Buchanan, of New Jersey, one of the best known reform writers in the country, replied to Burkitt in a vein that captured the convention. He declared that the only point presented by the men of the south was the decapitation of Butler—a mere personality. As a southern born man he begged the southern members to drop their fight on one man, to ask what they wanted as to future party policy and the men of the north would go three-fourths of the way to meet them and preserve the people's party. Harry Tracy, of Texas, whom everyone at the St. Louis convention will remember, sprang to his feet and seized Buchanan's hand, Gen. Phillips, of Georgia, another confederate veteran, did the same thing and amid excitement the report of the committee on credentials was adopted.

Ex-Congressman "Calamity" Weller, of Iowa, got the floor to make a speech when he was interrupted by Milton Park, who begged every speaker to remember that he was talking to brethren and to say nothing that would cause regret.

A conference had been going on between the two sides the result of which was the appointment by Senator Butler of a committee composed of Senator Allen, J. Rodes Buchanan and Congressman Gunn of Idaho to meet a committee appointed by Milton Park consisting of Col. Burkitt, W. S. Morgan and Harry Tracy and endeavor to bring in a report that would harmonize all differences.

This committee retired and after laboring five or six hours returned and asked that the body go into executive session to consider their report. After all but members of the committee had been excluded the report was read. The committee had been able to agree upon nearly everything but the removal of Chairman Butler. The southern committee demanded his withdrawal while the northern committee would not concede. A vigorous debate followed in which Senator Allen, Col. Burkitt and some others took part. Senator Allen defended both Butler and himself from some of the charges made against them and Butler made an impassioned speech appealing to the southern delegates from Texas and Georgia whether they would resign under like circumstances. He declared that he would not retreat when under fire. He spoke of the fact that the proxies of two committeemen from North Carolina had been secured by the Texans and used against him and he would go down now rather than surrender.

Another conference committee was ordered and George F. Washburn of Massachusetts, J. H. Anderson, of Idaho and Elwood Pomeroy of New Jersey were made members by Senator Butler, General Phillips of Georgia, J. H. Ferris of Joliet, Ill., and S. C. Granberry of Texas named by Milton Park.

It was now Thursday night and the meeting began its sessions Wednesday. It was voted to give the new committee until 1 o'clock Friday morning to bring in its report. A good deal of bitter feeling was produced by the entrance of J. R. Sovereign of Arkansas, with a proxy from Colorado. The Arkansas delegates insisted that Sovereign was no populist in Arkansas and he was compelled to walk the plank along with Paul Vandervoort.

The new conference committee came back with two reports. One of them was signed by four members, the other by two. After prolonged and sometimes bitter discussions Gen. Phillips withdrew the minority report. Senator Allen then moved to amend the minority report by striking out the provision for a convention in March 1899, to determine the course of the party. This was done on roll call by a vote of 61 to 49. The majority report, covering the points given at the head of this article was then adopted and as daylight came struggling across the Missouri river the historic committee meeting adjourned.

A. E. SHELDON.

General Party News.

Peoples Press Bureau, St. Louis, Mo., June 23.

The colored republicans of Alabama have bolted the regular party organization and nominated an independent ticket composed entirely of negroes.

The populists of Kansas, in state convention at Topeka, on June 16th, re-nominated the present state officers, as follows: Governor, John W. Leedy; lieutenant governor, A. M. Harvey; associate justice, H. S. Allen; attorney-general, L. C. Boyle; auditor of state, W. H. Morris; secretary of state, W. E. Bush; treasurer of state, D. H. Helffower; superintendent of instruction, William Stricker; congressman at large, J. D. Botkin. The entire ticket was endorsed by the democratic state convention.

The Hawaiian annexation resolution having passed the house is now before the senate. Advocates of the measure expect its passage before July 1, and that the American flag will be floating over the islands on that date.

Hon. George L. Flint, a free silver republican, has been nominated for congress in the 8th Iowa district by the democrats, populists, and free silver republicans of that district. Flint is a fighter and stands a good show for election.

The result of the recent goldbug victory in Oregon is attributed directly to

the fact that the silver elements were more or less divided, while the gold advocates were completely united.

The populist state convention of Missouri convenes at St. Louis July 7. It is unlikely that any attempt will be made to "fuse" with any other political party.

The three factories of the northeast, after having reduced their spinners to starvation by the lockout of the past winter, are preparing to unite in a gigantic trust.

Secretary of the Treasury Gage, has been making a stiff fight to have the recently passed bond bill so amended that the buyers of large blocks of bonds shall have preference rather than bidders for amounts under five hundred dollars, as provided for in that measure. The fact that all bids under the sum stated must be paid for in cash (and cash is what Uncle Sam is supposed to be in need of just now) while those for larger amounts are to be paid for in installments, makes the arguments of the treasury in favor of the latter class but another instance of that favoritism which would be amusing if it were not such a flagrant violation of the spirit of equality and freedom which is supposed to animate the institutions of the United States.

Democratic leaders in New York are again discussing the feasibility of dropping the silver issue in the campaign of 1900.

Old John Sherman has gone out west for his health and at that safe distance from Washington City he announces to interviewers that when his lost health is regained he means to re-enter politics in his home state.

The question of whether the ballot or colonization is the more potent means of reforming the world has split the social democracy. At their recent meeting in Chicago a vote of 52 to 36 in favor of colonization caused Eugene V. Debs and some of his more enthusiastic adherents to leave the hall. Meeting elsewhere they adopted a platform declaring for the use of the ballot as the means of remedying public ills, municipal and government ownership of all utilities, abolition of war, woman's rights, the initiative and referendum, transportation reforms and the nationalization of farm mortgages. Those favoring colonization propose to establish a mining colony at Green Mountain Falls, Colorado.

The eight hour extension bill was called up by the senate committee on labor and education, June 16. Representatives of nearly all the big corporations that are engaged on government orders for coal, supplies and ships were given a hearing. They were a unit in declaring that the limitation of a day's labor to eight hours would ruin them, and make it impossible for them to fill rush orders that they now hold from the government.

The bolting middle-of-the-road populists in Minnesota held their convention June 15, and nominated a full ticket as follows: Governor, L. C. Long; lieutenant governor, K. Haverson; secretary of state, M. Wogenburg; auditor, Chas. Hopkins; treasurer, P. H. Rahilly; attorney-general, J. F. Kelley. The members of the national committee were also elected. Ignatius Donnelly, who led the bolters, was endorsed for the United States. Those populists favoring fusion will co-operate with the silver republicans and democrats.

A propos of the refusal of the democratic state convention of North Carolina to give respectful attention to the committee sent to wait upon that body by the populist state convention, the "Caucasian," Senator Marion Butler's paper, has this to say:

When the proposition of the people's party for a co-operation of all opposed to gold and monopoly, as recommended by Bryan, was read in the democratic state convention, the goldbugs and railroad attorneys met the proposition with grunts and groans. These goldbug grunts and monopoly groans controlled the convention. Let every honest silver man and every true friend of Mr. Bryan see to it that this gang of monopoly agents do some more grunting and groaning when the votes are counted next November.

The meeting of the populist national committee at Omaha, on the 15th inst., resulted in a victory for Chairman Butler. Some concessions were made to the radicals, who were under the leadership of Milton Park of Texas, but in the main their cherished ideals were not realized. There will be no convention in 1899 to outline the policy of the party. In 1900 there will be an early convention to nominate a national ticket the same to be held prior to the democratic convention. No overtures looking to fusion will emanate from the national committee, and none will be received and entertained by it. The national committee is required to keep hands off in state campaigns, or, if its assistance is invited, it may interfere only on behalf of the populist ticket, and not to assist in fusion. The effort to force Chairman Butler to resign proved futile, and he will continue to act until the next national convention in 1900.

A. H.

BAD FIRE IN LINCOLN.

The fire last night totally destroyed the fine four story brick building just south of the B. & M. depot on F street. Its origin is unknown, but it was discovered about 9:30 on the second floor of the side occupied by the Lincoln Creamery company. It burned rapidly and soon consumed the entire building which was used on the west by the creamery company and on the east by H. P. Lau's wholesale grocery. The building was owned by the Fitzgerald estate and valued at \$20,000, insured for \$40,000. H. P. Lau's stock was valued at \$30,000 and the creamery company's stock and machinery was insured for about 30 per cent of the loss.

BOODLE IN POLITICS

Pacific Express Co. Revelations Corporation Methods Continue at Omaha.

JUST HALF A MILLION GONE

Part of It Proven to Have Been Spent For Election of Republican Ticket.

Some Astonishing Disclosures.

The case against T. K. Sudborough, former chief clerk of the Pacific Express Company, republican candidate for the state senate in 1896, and general corporation campaign manager, is having its preliminary hearing this week at Omaha. Mr. Sudborough with his partner Mr. Bechler are charged with misappropriating the funds of the company in a sum running up into thousands of dollars, their peculations extending back fifteen or twenty years.

Monday of this week was occupied with examination of E. M. Morsman, former president of the Express company and A. J. Hunt, former clerk and bookkeeper. Hunt testified that he paid out money on the order of Sudborough and that some of it went for political purposes. On direct examination Hunt testified that during the campaign when Sudborough was a candidate for the state legislature the sum of \$2,000 was used to advance his political interests, the money being that belonging to the express company.

At the afternoon session ex-President Morsman was called as a witness for the state. He related the methods employed in the conduct of the affairs of the office, detailing the fact that T. K. Sudborough was the chief clerk in the auditing department. As such official he approved certain bills and ordered the payment of money.

Morsman stated that during the campaign when Sudborough was a candidate for the legislature the company contributed \$300 or \$400 to the campaign fund. So far as he knows that was the only money used for political purposes. Asked about the alleged shortage of Sudborough witness said that last spring, when he was president of the company and when Sudborough was chief clerk, the latter called upon him and in a conversation said that he was a defaulter. The exact amount of the defalcation was not mentioned, but from the remarks that were made at the time witness thought that it was about \$14,500.

Hunt further testified as to the sums charged against Sudborough, was used in Sudborough's campaign for election as state senator on the republican ticket; that \$300 of the amount was paid to the republican county central committee.

Here are startling disclosures indeed for the people of Nebraska who have been paying exorbitant express charges these many years. The president and confidential officers of one of the corporations engaged in the express business admitting upon the witness stand that thousands of dollars taken from the people in express charges was spent in conducting republican campaigns in Nebraska.

Populists have charged in many a hard fought campaign that the republican party in this state was in the pay of corporations. They have produced countless circumstances tending to establish the fact, but never before have they had the absolute proof from the mouth of the corporation officers themselves.

Two weeks ago it will be remembered that testimony was given in the case against ex-Auditor Bechler, of the same company, that a fund of \$10,000 or \$12,000 had been raised and spent at each session of the legislature for a long period of years for the purpose of controlling the legislature. Now it appears that the corporation corruption fund was applied not only to the purchase of members of the legislature, but that the republican party organization was upon the pay roll of the company.

Is it any wonder that the corporations have controlled the politics of Nebraska? One single company spending thousands of dollars every year in contributions to the dominant party and thousands more in maintaining a toboggan slide at the state capital during the legislature what relations may we expect when the full history of corporation work in this state is made known?

Since the exposure of the fact that a shortage existed, the amount has been variously estimated, at between \$40,000 and \$50,000. During the preliminary examination of William F. Bechler it was announced that the shortage traced at that time amounted to about \$150,000.

The information given out Monday was that the experts have reported to the officials of the company the result of their examination of the books up to date, the time of the examination reaching back into the '80s, and that this report shows that the shortage so far ascertained approaches to within a few dollars of \$500,000.

Where all this money has gone to the express officials do not profess to know, and they do not state that the shortage is traceable to Bechler and Sudborough. Information is had from a person in a position to know that a fourth man was implicated in the disposition of the company's funds and that he has been promised immunity from arrest. Whether or not it was because of his having given

information concerning the company's affairs was not learned, as upon this subject the officials refused to talk.

The experts are still working on the books and will go back several years beyond the time they have reached to learn if any shortage exists more than that already found.

WAR NEWS

BLANCO REFUSES EXCHANGE.

Havana, Cuba, June 18.—Captain General Blanco has refused to entertain a proposition to exchange the Merriman prisoners. The Spanish torpedo boat Martin Alonso Pinzon sailed out ten miles to the northeast of the harbor Friday under a flag of truce. She met the monitor Terror and Mangrove. The monitor sent an officer off in a small boat to whom Lieutenant Manuel Cubello, commander of the Martin Alonso Pinzon, handed General Blanco's reply in a sealed envelope. The Martin Alonso Pinzon returned to port at 3 o'clock.

THAT DYNAMITE CRUISER.

New York, June 18.—"What can it do?" said Mr. Wilmott, representing the company which built the dynamite cruiser Vesuvius, repeating the question of a reporter. "I can answer that better by giving you a description of the vessel, which has inaugurated a new era when it made havoc of the Santiago harbor fortifications Monday with three of its giant shells." "The Vesuvius," said Mr. Wilmott, "has a battery of three pneumatic guns, mounted in the bow at a fixed angle of 18 degrees. The guns are fifty-five feet long, fifteen inches bore, and built rigidly into the vessel. From all I have read about Monday night's trial with three shells I am convinced that it has not shown half of its ability.

"What can it do? It can drop 500 pounds of nitro-gelatin nearly two miles away with accuracy. It can repeat this fifteen times in ten minutes. That means three and three-fourths tons of high explosives thrown on the enemy's ships or forts or whatever the object of attack may be. It would wipe a city off the face of the earth. The nitro-gelatin is half as strong again as dynamite. Imagine the effect of three and three-fourths tons of it.

"Where a shell strikes from one of the guns of the Vesuvius the havoc is awful. One of its projectiles dropped in the midst of a regiment would eliminate it from the war. Against a ship the Vesuvius would be deadly. One of its big shells dropping on the deck would crush through the armor part and would shatter the ship. If one of these shells exploded within fifty feet of a modern man-of-war it will render it useless, for the detonation will throw the bearing of its engines out of line, dislocate the shaft, and thus the ship will become a mere target.

"The range is found by range finders and the guns are aimed by pointing the vessel in the line of fire. The guns themselves cannot be moved. The extreme range is three or four miles."

DEFENSES DEMOLISHED.

Guantanamo Bay, June 15, via Kingston, June 16.—The defenses of Caimanera have been demolished by the battleship Texas and the cruisers Marblehead and Swanee. The bombardment lasted an hour and a half. The Spaniards fired but a few shots, and did no damage whatever to the fleet.

The Texas used its twelve-inch shells, tearing down the walls of the fort and throwing the debris hundred of feet into the air. The Marblehead confined its fire to the earthworks and the barracks on the west side of the harbor, which were entirely demolished.

After the bombardment had closed and the ships stood out into the harbor, some Spaniards on the beach opened fire on the Marblehead's launch, which was returned with interest and vigor by the sailors and marines aboard the small craft. At this attack the Swanee turned back and, steaming close in shore, shelled the bushes, killing many of the Spaniards and driving them to the bushes pell mell. SPANIARDS HAVE DESERTED.

Key West, June 16.—Cuban Junta advisers are to the effect that over 5,000 Spanish volunteers have deserted and joined the insurgents through fear of the American fleet. The deserters include, beside the volunteers, many regulars from the Puerto Principe and Nuevitas garrisons.

He Ought to Have It.

A barber at Lubec, Maine has closed his shop and posted the following notice on the door: "To the public: This barber shop will be closed for a brief period, as the proprietor has gone to help a few of Uncle Sam's barbers (better known as soldiers) scrape the lice of the western hemisphere clear of an obnoxious growth of whiskers, commonly called Spaniards. I shall not be gone long, as Dewey and Sampson are applying the lather and everything points to a quick job, and a clean one. I wish to thank the public for past patronage, and on my return hope to have a share also."

An exchange says that a Russian fights for empire, a Turk for faith, a Dutchman for pay, a Spaniard for jealousy, an Italian for revenge, a German for home, a Frenchman for glory, a Swiss for liberty, a Scotchman for kin, an Englishman for trade, an Irishman for fun, a Yankee for power and a fool for not being.