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NATIONAL PRISON CONGRESS

The committee on arrangements appointed to plan for the meeting of the annual congress of the National Prison association, to convene in Lincoln, October 10 to 20, 1905, elected Hon. M. B. Reese chairman, and John Davis, secretary, of the local executive committee. J. E. Miller was elected chairman, and Warden A. D. Beemer, vice chairman of the committee on reception and entertainment.

Nebraska Democratic Editors

The fourth annual session of the Nebraska Democratic Editorial association met at the Lindell Hotel, Lincoln, on March 22. Charles D. Casper, editor of the David City Press, presiding. Twenty-four democratic editors were present, and Louis F. Post, editor of the Public, Chicago, was the guest of the association. The papers read were full of interest and made manifest the fact that the democratic press of Nebraska was awake to the needs of the party. The discussions were interesting and full of vigor, and faith in democratic principles and determination to promulgate them were renewed.

As the business session following the regular program the following officers were chosen for the ensuing year: William J. Bryan, Commoner, president; Harry W. Risley, Fremont Daily Herald, vice president; J. W. Barnhart, Auburn Herald, secretary-treasurer. The retiring president, Mr. Casper, and R. O. Adams, Grand Island Democrat, were made members of the executive committee. At the evening meeting Mr. Post delivered an address on "Democratic Ideals in American Journalism," being introduced to a large and representative audience by Mr. Bryan. For an hour and a half Mr. Post held the closest attention of his audience. The Commoner regrets its inability to publish Mr. Post's address in full, as a synopsis can not do it justice.

Mr. Post said in part: A man's democracy doesn't depend upon color or race or caste or station or wealth or dress. It depends upon his respect for the rights of others. Without this he may be anything else you please, but not a democrat. The very foundation stone of democracy is respect for the rights of man.

To be a member of the democratic party, that does not make a man a democrat. The democratic party has a whole job-lot of members who don't believe that there is any such thing as the rights of man. It has a whole job-lot of members who would like to use it to trample upon the rights of man. I know many republicans who are better democrats than some members of the democratic party. There are plenty of populists who are better democrats than lots of men who have got themselves stamped with the democratic trade mark. The question is not whether we are loyal to the democratic party. It is whether we are true to the democratic principle.

The democratic party embraces millions of voters who are democrats at heart, even if they can be fooled now and then by plutocrats in democratic uniform and under the democratic flag. What these voters want, and what they have proved they want, is democratic leadership inside of the democratic party and not outside of it. Democratic leaders who break away from the democratic party and try to form third parties may serve a good purpose. Their work may be educational. They may make good political school-teachers. But they cease to be good political leaders.

Make no mistake about it, third parties do not grow from little to big in this country. The reason is plain enough. It is because the election machinery of this country does not give small parties a chance to grow gradually. If we had proportional representation, small parties might grow gradually into big ones. So if we had second elections when a candidate doesn't get a majority, as they have on the continent of Europe. But under the election system that we do have, the little party is at a disadvantage. It can not poll its own vote. It barely polls a small percentage of its own vote.

Shall the democratic party be abandoned and a new democratic party be formed as in Lincoln's day? Or shall it be clung to and its democracy re-

vied as in Jackson's day? That is an issue which can not be settled by party leaders and newspaper editors. It can be settled only by the people themselves. And let me tell you that when the people do call for a new party, there will be no mistaking the call. You won't have to wonder whether it is really a call or only a whisper. When the people call, they don't call in whispers, they call with reverberating shouts. There is no call yet for a third party, but there is a call from the democratic people to democratic newspapers to revive democracy in the democratic party. It is the loudest kind of call. Didn't you hear it last November?

There have been great difficulties in the way of radically democratic journalism. The democratic editor who has tried to make his paper truly democratic has been getting lots of experience and not much else. He has found that the machinery of his party is often influenced by special interests and that he must submit to these or be secretly pounded to death. His notes haven't been in favor at the bank. Advertisers have discovered that his paper wasn't a good medium. Every plutocratic influence in the community has realized that he was running a democratic paper, and they have proceeded with wonderful unanimity regardless of party to make him see that no paper can live without the support of plutocratic influences. So some democratic papers have been like a notoriously bad politician, regarding whom some one asked: "Has he no principles?" and the reply was, "Oh, yes; he's got principles, but he keeps them under control."

Now I don't intend to be severe upon those papers. When a newspaper must either keep its principles under control or quit, when it must suppress its principles or be suppressed, the editor faces a serious problem. It may be that editors ought to be as wise as the plutocratic serpent while they try to be as good as the democratic dove.

With all seriousness let us remember that there are times with a newspaper as with a ship, when it may be necessary to beat against head winds; that there are times with a newspaper as with a pedestrian on a crowded sidewalk, when it is necessary to accommodate its movements to the jostling crowd. It would judge newspapers, therefore, by their general course, by the general direction in which they seem to be going, and the general headway they seem to be making.

But, my friends, I believe that the dangers and difficulties which have confronted middle-of-the-road democracy are passing away. Democratic journalism is coming to its own again. The people have begun to distrust democratic newspapers which play fast and loose with democratic principles. They are beginning to place confidence in the democratic newspapers that are steady and true to the principles of equal human rights and no special privileges. Some democratic newspapers may still make money without being faithful to democratic principles. Many may still have to be unfaithful in order to live at all. But no democratic paper can any longer be unfaithful to democratic principles and yet command the respect and confidence of the people. And I am optimistic enough to believe that the time is near at hand—I think it has already come—when democratic papers that are faithful to democratic principle will not only be the most trusted, but will also be the most prosperous.

Go down below the surface of party manipulation and party treachery, of bossism and personal ambition and corporate greed—go down below the surface of partisan contests to the heart of our politics, and the conflict between the democratic and the republican party is one for supremacy

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in democracy. Which shall be the most faithfully devoted to the principle of human rights? Those are the questions that are really the undertow in American politics.

The indictment that democratic-democrats bring against the republican party is this, that it is not democratic, that it has drifted away from its original anchorage in the principles of human rights. The indictment that democratic republicans bring against the democratic party is the same, that it is not democratic, that it has drifted away from its original anchorage in human rights. Both indictments are true bills.

Now if these indictments are true