

Pledges Come From All Sections

J. A. Ohey, Lawyer, Colwell, Ohio, referring to The Commoner's pledge plan, writes: The plan of organization, as set forth by you in The Commoner, is a good one, and is calculated to solidify the forces composing the democratic party for the campaign of 1908. I desire to have a part in the next presidential campaign because it will be a contest of supreme importance to the common people. It does not need a prophet to tell that there is a force at work in this country, although it may be some times silent and insidious in its character, but none the less active and potent, that is gradually encroaching upon the sacred rights of the people. The issue is even now distinctly drawn between the forces of the great common people on one side, and the force of corporate greed on the other. The principles on which the democratic party was founded, and on which it has rested ever since its organization, have ever been held sacred by the people. Since this is so, then the democratic party, in order to be faithful to its fundamental principles, must espouse the cause of the common people. The democratic party must be a party of affirmation and not negation. We must meet new issues as they arise and solve them by the standard of right. We must not depend upon the mistakes of our enemy for party success. We must have an affirmative remedy to offer for existing evils. No backward steps must be taken. The great bulk of our party is opposed to this and we need no better proof than the result of the last presidential campaign. The party platform ought to reflect the will of the people and in order for this to be true, the people must have a part in our party organization.

Extracts from other letters enclosing pledges follow:

Addison F. McGhee, Lawyer, Anniston, Ala.—The slogan "back to the people," is the proper key, the primary pledge is a good plan and easy to be carried out. Alabama, as well as the entire south may be depended upon to support the democratic ticket as against the republican ticket, although the platform may not be entirely what is desired, but the people will be more enthusiastic when the platform shall embody principles of greatest good to the greatest number, with candidates unhampered by the trusts and the influence of corporate wealth.

F. C. Willey, Assessor Mason County, Shelton, Wash.—I heartily endorse the plan of securing primary pledges; I like it because it is democratic; and the democratic party must be democratic to win; state and national platforms should reflect the sentiments expressed at the primaries. Your plan I believe will have the effect of arousing the masses of democratic voters, to the necessity of taking a more active interest in the affairs of the party, and make it impossible for the next national democratic convention to adopt an undemocratic platform.

J. W. Seybold, Dell, N. Y.—It is my honest wish to see true democratic success, which I believe is the only salvation for our country. The primary pledge is the true system which, if zealously carried out, will put the party on the true platform. Enclosed find six true democrats' names and I will get as many more as I possibly can.

P. M. Troy, Lawyer, Olympia, Wash.—No good democrat has any right to refuse to comply with its provisions whether he signs the pledge or not. Consequently if it is his duty to observe the requirements of the pledge,

certainly no reason can be advanced for not signing. The hope of the nation is in the honest, people's democracy. It is not a time to quail, but every democrat who loves the land of his forefathers and desires to bring his country back to the plain old fashioned doctrine of being honest and doing right should sign the pledge and

work until the next presidential campaign is fought and won. Yours for the peoples' democracy.

J. V. Pearsall, Douglas, Ariz.—I expected to attend the primaries anyway, but am glad of this opportunity to enlist in the good work. I trust that the next national democratic platform will not omit the income tax plank

and that it will, in all other respects, be a departure from blank-cartridge-ism, with candidates who stand for progress rather than retreat.

George W. Hall, Wyaconda, Mo.—I heartily approve of your primary pledge which I will sign and return. Not that it will do me any good, because I am with the party

The Primary Pledge--Organize Now

From The Commoner, Lincoln, Nebraska, March 17, 1905

Newspapers favoring the plan outlined are requested to reproduce this editorial together with the primary pledge as it appears below. They may request their readers to sign this pledge and forward the same either to The Commoner or to the office of their local democratic paper. In the latter event these pledges may be then forwarded in bulk to The Commoner office where they will be duly recorded.

The Pledge Outlined

The following editorial appeared in The Commoner of March 17:

"Mr. Bryan has been in receipt of a multitude of letters since the election urging organization for the campaign of 1908. The rank and file of the party are ready to begin the fight; they only await a plan of co-operation. This plan has been under consideration for some weeks and is herewith submitted.

"Let each democrat pledge himself to attend all of the primaries of his party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use his influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of

the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

"This plan does not involve the writing of a platform in advance of the primaries; it does not rest upon the paramount importance of any one issue. It recognizes the right of the democratic voters to control the policy of the democratic party, and to determine its position upon public questions. It also recognizes the importance of honesty and sincerity in politics.

"This proposition will appeal to all who believe in the rule of the people—to all who are willing that the majority shall govern in party management and in the nation. It does not mean that those who exert themselves to secure a good platform will be bound to support a bad platform—that is a question which each must determine for himself—but it does mean that the democratic platform shall give voice to the prevailing sentiment of the democratic party, and that the party shall take the country into its confidence. The pledge proposed is a primary pledge—because the people speak at the primaries. The national convention is attended by delegates and each delegate represents tens of thousands of democrats. The state convention is also attended by delegates, and these represent thousands of democrats. The county conventions are, as a rule, attended by delegates, and these in turn represent hundreds of democrats. At the primary the voters speak for themselves; there democracy has its citadel.

"When the work of organization is

sufficiently advanced, a time can be set for the meeting of the members in their various localities. The members of this organization, while pledged to but one thing—namely, attendance upon the primaries—are urged to co-operate among themselves for the support of every effort put forth to eliminate corruption in politics. No cause can prosper permanently that does not appeal to the moral sense of the country, and the moral sense of the country is now being awakened to the importance of purifying politics.

"The Commoner will do its part in aiding every movement that has for its object the ascertainment of the will of the people and the scrupulous enforcement of that will.

"The Commoner will also furnish all the information that it can upon the questions which are before the public to the end that its readers may be prepared to render the maximum of assistance to every worthy cause.

"Who will be the first to make this pledge? A record will be kept in The Commoner office of the name and address of each person who enters into this movement. Those who desire to be enrolled can either write approving the object of the organization, and asking to have their names entered on the roll, or they can fill out and mail the blank which is printed below.

"The Commoner will be pleased to publish a limited number of brief letters on this subject. Mr. Bryan is encouraged by his correspondence to believe that there will be a prompt and hearty response to the above proposition."

THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

I promise to attend all the primaries of my party to be held between now and the next democratic national convention, unless unavoidably prevented, and to use my influence to secure a clear, honest and straightforward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak.

Signed.....

Street..... Postoffice..... State.....

County..... Voting precinct or ward.....

Fill out blanks and mail to Commoner Office, Lincoln, Neb.