

## TO COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PEOPLE

George W. Register, of Ironton, Mo., writes: "Some of our democratic brethren seems to be casting about for a name for local organizations for democrats. Why not call them Democratic Primary clubs and be done with it? That is really what they are—the club where the people as their initial or primary act, express their views upon public questions. It would seem to be the next step in Mr. Bryan's primary pledge plan. These local organizations would also form a nucleus for the education of the people and for the distribution of educational matter. Democratic Primary club would suit me, taking primary in its genuine sense."

Mr. Register has made a good suggestion. Why not act on it?

Primary pledges, accompanied by encouraging letters continue to reach The Commoner office in a gratifying way. There are hundreds of thousands of democrats who have not been enrolled. The field is a large one and in order to cover it effectually every one who believes in this plan of organization must do his part.

Don't withhold your pledge because you always attend primaries. You can help the work by setting a good example to your careless colleague. Send in your own pledge. Then ask your neighbor to sign. Every democrat is asked to 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 secure a clear, honest and straight-forward declaration of the party's position on every question upon which the voters of the party desire to speak. Those desiring to be enrolled can either write to The Commoner 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 pledge, which is printed on page 9.

Extracts from letters to The Commoner follow:

Walt W. Vandiver, Coweta, I. T.—Mr. Bryan's idea of an organization of the people is fine. Let there be an addition made to the pledge in which each signer agrees to get two more voters to sign this pledge next week, each of these to pledge himself to get two more for the week following. If this plan is followed in four months—if there are as many pledges sent in next week as were last week, and each signer does as he pledges himself—there would be sixteen million signers. Let any one make the calculation, starting at one thousand. I trust that the coming three years will serve to bring the great agricultural west to understand and to amalgamate the always highminded and eminently correct south.

George W. Courtright, Wheelersburg, Ohio.—You are doing a glorious work, and we intend to help all we can.

Robert Neill, Attorney, Batesville, Ark.—I enclose herein the primary pledge, signed by myself. Our Arkansas democrats always attend the primaries, however, and do not need much pledging in that regard. The Commoner's books will show that my subscription, and one for my mother, Mrs. D. Neill, who was then living, were in and paid before the first issue of the paper, and it has been a pleasure to me to send in several blocks of subscriptions since. My first vote was cast in 1860 for Bell and Everett, as the presidential candidates, though I would cheerfully have voted either for Stephen A. Douglas or John C. Breckinridge, as my father had been a life-long democrat, and a devoted adherent of Andrew Jackson. I was somewhat like yourself, barely reconciled into supporting Judge Parker in the late contest. It was my supposition that he was a believer in the single gold standard, like nearly all New Yorkers, but his record as an upright and able jurist was good, and I presumed he was a democrat. His silence on public questions seemed to me rather ominous, and his gold telegram to the St. Louis convention, evidenced to my mind that he was not a statesman; the idea that the present gold standard of money is "irrevocably fixed" seems to me that of a tyro statesmanship. It now turns out from the judge's speech at the Jefferson banquet in New York that he is in sympathy with the plutocratic element of the country. I will not say of the democracy, as plutocracy and Jefferson-Jacksonian democracy are antipodes. Now it is not my intention

to abuse Judge Parker, who I doubt not is an estimable gentleman, clean in his professional and personal life, but I am just a little sore at the way some of our "leaders" allowed the party to be sold out by Jo. Pulitzer et al, in the late presidential contest. Now these leaders I have in mind are "good fellows"—"real democrats," and able men, but wisdom will not die with them. With some of them you and I served in congress, and know them, and that their intentions were good, but the same can scarcely be said of their judgment in the matter in question. In my humble opinion if the democratic party shall ever command the confidence of the country, it must be an aggressive party, standing up for the traditional tenets of the party and the rights of the masses. Jefferson and Jackson were both denounced in their respective days as radicals, and I reckon as anarchists. Success to The Commoner, its editor, the new editor and the little editors.

J. B. Brown, Wilton, Ky.—I enclose herewith primary pledge with 20 signatures. Among the names you will find Henry A. Bowling, manager Wilton hotel; M. A. Gray, lawyer; M. D. Vanhoose, ex-member general assembly of Kentucky from Lawrence and Boyd counties; S. McLemore, foreman North Jellico Coal Co., store. A. Jenkins, M. D.; M. T. Preston, merchant; John Engles, merchant; I did not see all the democrats here; all I did see approved the plan and signed the pledge. Success to Bryan democracy.

Thomas Marlow, Omega, Ill.—Please find enclosed primary pledge. I am one among the oldest democratic voters in old Marian county, Illinois. Push the good work when election day comes and we'll all be there. Please send me some blank pledges and oblige yours for pure democracy.

I. F. King, Marshfield, Mo.—Find enclosed pledge. It seems that it is not necessary for me to sign pledge, but probably it will be of some benefit as I am a chronic voter, having been voting the democratic ticket all my life since I arrived at the voting age, except four years, while we had to take that blood and thunder oath under the Drake constitution. It set me back. I am 66 years old and have never failed to register my vote, even down to Parker, but that was the bitterest pill I ever swallowed. I had to hold my nose and hand the ticket in on a stick about four feet long. There are about forty of my name and relatives that are voters in this, Webster, county, and they vote the democratic ticket to a man, and with

the help of God and The Commoner, the time is coming when I expect to aid a democrat in the White House. Then I could pass in my checks a great deal better satisfied. Go on with the god work.

E. G. Fickler, Eagle Creek, Canada.—Enclosed please find primary pledge signed. I am away up here under the north star, but I want to be with my old democrat friends in this good move in spirit if not in person. This plan gives every democrat a chance to show his colors, and gives him a voice in shaping the issues as he sees them. This inspires hope and activity in the voter and I hope that many reformers in other parties will see their opportunity to go on record with us in this move for good government.

J. F. Hager, Hewitt, W. Va.—I write you today to say I am going to use my utmost efforts to extend the circulation of The Commoner. Enclosed find pledge and order for ten subscription cards. Yours to command.

J. H. Mills, Port Townsend, Wash.—Enclosed you will find my pledge duly signed. I am in hearty sympathy with you in the work you are doing. If we hope ever to be successful we must organize. The old G. O. P. is always organized and unless we get our forces together we might as well give up the fight. If you will kindly send me a dozen pledges I will try and find some signatures for them. I am as ever yours for the war.

George Hoover, Chicago, Ill.—Had started with a blank of my own make, but will turn that in and circulate yours. Our crowd in the Third ward are Bryan democrats and municipal ownership advocates—are all believers in the primary work. And we are trying to put in nomination men whose names we can mention to decent voters and ask them for their support. Some democracy is all right and must be maintained. The Commoner is doing a great and good work. I wish you success.

V. E. Jewell, Piggott, Ark.—Enclosed please find 36 democrats pledged to support the cause you advocate.

D. A. Douglas, Spearfish, S. D.—I was going through your city and intended to have the pleasure of handing this list of 49 names to you in person. You being absent from the city, I will do the next best thing and put it in the postoffice. I got those names in one day and could not see them all. We have about one hundred and they are all true blue Bryan democrats.

O. L. Bright, Harris, Colo.—Some time ago I sent you my signed primary pledge and today I am sending you 20 names to be enrolled. If I had a little time I could send you 500 names. If convenient it would be a good plan to send each of these signers a copy of The Commoner. I subscribed for The Commoner before it was published and would not be without it. Here's to your health and a long life of usefulness.

I. H. Givler, Carthage, Mo.—Enclosed find list and pledges. Could get many more. These are all neighbors and all favor your primary plan. No one that I asked to sign said no, but all willingly signed the pledge. Send some more blanks and I will put them in other hands in our county precinct for signatures to primary work. Personally I think it will help both locally and nationally in our work as a party.

John L. Moore, acting secretary democratic county committee, Van Buren, Mo.—Please send me 30 primary pledge blanks, as I am anxious to have one to send to each school district in this county. Awaiting your

prompt reply, I am yours for democracy.

Linn A. E. Gale, East Pharsalia, N. Y.—I have read the primary plan and beg to record my hearty approval of the same. It is the duty of every democrat to attend his party primaries every year if possible and he who does not when he might is false to the party. I am not yet a voter, but I am doing all I can for the cause. I enclose pledge signed by democrats who are firm advocates of radical democratic principles. The present apathy so noticeable in the east is dangerous and ought to be stemmed. In McDonough (the town I live in) there are 108 democrats. I think, of these, no more than 40 ever attend the primaries. The result is a few men who voted for Palmer and Buckner do the business.

R. H. Smith, Red Star, Ark.—I send you 12 names, all for Bryan and good government. Continue the fight and Bryan and the people will win.

M. H. Williams, secretary Democratic club, Milburn, I. T.—Enclosed find primary pledge signed with eleven other good democrats. The primary pledge plan is heartily endorsed by the people in all parties here. We want to see another campaign in 1908 with live issues like we had in 1896, something that is in the interest of the masses of the people of the United States.

C. R. Gardner, Georgetown, Colo.—You will find enclosed signed primary pledge. Please send me fifty more and I will do all I can to get them signed.

M. E. Cady, Camden, Ill.—Enclosed find five primary pledges who believe if this republican form of government is perpetuated and maintained it will be through Jeffersonian principles as advocated by The Commoner and endorsed by true democrats not of the Cleveland make up. I voted for Greeley and Parker, but if I shall be permitted to live till 1908 and we have the same kind of material I think I will go fishing on election day.

T. R. Burgie, Elizabethton, Tenn.—Enclosed find primary pledges of 35 dyed in the wool democrats of this stronghold of republicanism. We approve the plan of organization and don't want any harmony with so-called democracy who in reality are radical republicans, and only pretend to be democrats, because by so doing they can injure the democratic party more than they could if they came out in their true colors. If there are any who will have the decency to stop this infamous lying and hypocrisy let them do so.

J. A. Gleason, Washington, Cal.—Enclosed find renewal of my subscription for Commoner and "Gatling Gun;" also primary pledge duly signed. It is not only a pleasure, but also an honor to be permitted to join this great democratic family circle. I have been much interested in reading the enthusiastic responses from patriotic democrats all along the line. It is virtually a "feast of reason." Jefferson and Bryan democracy is good enough for me. But under the existing conditions I think we should have a whole lot of real old Jackson democracy freely intermingled with it. Democracy that has snap, vim and backbone to it. Straightforward, fearless and outspoken. We must have democracy that stands for something and that something so positive and simple that all the people may understand its meaning. We must first strive to get the party squarely on to its feet. Then stand it "pat" on its old time foundation. With that end in view let all get aboard the great democratic life boat. Then with that wonderful leader, W. J. Bryan at the helm, "Pull for the Shore," boys "pull