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clusion on the theory "that public ownership is necessary where competition is impossible," and then follows the statement: "The high handed manner in which the railroads have violated the law and ignored authority, together with the corruption discovered in high places, has done more to create sentiment in favor of public ownership than all the speeches and arguments of the opponents of private ownership." He further says: "If any of you question the propriety of my mentioning this subject I beg to remind you that the president could not have secured the passage of the rate bill had he not appealed to the fear of the more radical remedy of government ownership, and nothing will so restrain a railroad magnate from attempting to capture the interstate commerce commission as the same fear." He also states specifically the great objection to government ownership—the danger of centraliza-

In this same speech Mr. Bryan states that the next democratic platform will be largely shaped by the action of the next congress. From these statements we think the conclusion is inevitable that he was not, as a great many of the newspapers seem to think, announcing a new issue for the party, but was merely expressing his views of what might be made necessary and which all reasonable men admit will be necessary, if railroad rate legislation fails to bring relief to the public and correct the great abuses which the railroad trust has created. Mr. Bryan bases his argument squarely on the contingency "that public ownership is necessary where competition is impossible." From this it necessarily follows that if the monopoly which destroys competition among railroads can be destroyed by railroad legislation and the basis of true competition restored, unlawful discrimination prevented and the rail-

road companies taken out of politics, then no "competition destroying monopoly existing," there would be no necessity for public ownership and under such circumstances Bryan would not favor it. But, if on the contrary the railroad rate bill should prove inefficient and through the corrupting influence of the railroad trust other legislation which would bring about the much desired remedy to the people should be prevented and the railroads should continue to destroy competition, levy extortionate rates, practice unjust discrimination, debauch the politics of the nation, corrupt the courts, place a dollar mark on public service, control by corrupt means city councils, legislatures and congresses and prevent the enforcement of law, thus presenting, as every one must admit under such conditions, the great question which Mr. Bryan must have had in mind when he proposed this radical remedy—namely, whether the railroads should control the government, or the government own the railroads; then the Globe stands with Mr. Bryan in favor of government ownership of railroads as the ultimate and final remedy if such a condition arises.—Joplin (Mo.) Globe.

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THE PRIMARY PLEDGE

As this copy of The Commoner may be read by some one not familiar with the details of the primary pledge plan, it is necessary to say that according to the terms of this plan 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 straightforward 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 below. L. D. Chambers, Sr., Rolfe, W. Va.—Enclosed please find primary pledge. I concluded to hold it until after our

primary election in order to see whether or not it would have any effect in bringing out our people. Every signer but one attended our primary. I think every democrat in this county would sign a pledge of this kind. Logan county is about two-thirds democratic. I live five and one-half miles east of Logan. All the signers to this pledge live near me. All that is necessary is for some one to take an interest in the matter and democrats will very readily sign. I am getting old—soon will be 79. Am well pleased with The Commoner and wish it great success. Primary pledges have been received in number as follows: A. Thiel, Laurel, Mont., 9; Wake Massie, Lebanon, Mo., 11; W. F. Smith, West Union, W. Va., 12; C. W. Crossley, Corpus Christi, Texas, 35; J. N. French, Glouford, Ill., 10.

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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.....
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