

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IS IN FULL RETREAT

The republicans who attended the national convention as spectators and joined in the demonstration in favor of President Roosevelt and Senator LaFollette must have felt indignant as they watched the panic stricken delegates running over each other in their effort to get away from the LaFollette reforms, some of which had been endorsed by the president himself. Congressman Cooper, of Wisconsin, representing the LaFollette men, brought in a minority report signed by himself alone. Fifty-two members of the committee signed the majority report, and one signed the minority report. The republican party will find the ratio of fifty-two to one a very embarrassing one to deal with in the coming campaign. Mr. Cooper's report contained a declaration in favor of publicity as to campaign funds. It was lost by a vote of 880 to 94, more than nine to one, and yet the president has been advocating legislation in favor of publicity as to campaign contributions, and Secretary Taft wrote a letter to Mr. Burrows advocating the passage of a publicity bill. How fortunate it was that Secretary Taft's letter was finally discovered and published! Senator Burrows, the man to whom the Taft letter was addressed, was the temporary chairman of the convention, and the convention over which he presided turned down the publicity plank by a vote of nine to one! Who will deny that, on this subject, the republican party is retreating?

Another plank of the LaFollette platform authorized the ascertaining of the value of the railroads. This plank was lost by a vote of 917 to 63—nearly fifteen to one—and yet President Roosevelt has advocated this very proposition. Here is a retreat on the railroad question.

In another column reference is made to the

injunction plank. The injunction plank adopted by the republican convention is a retreat from the position taken by the president and from the position taken by Secretary Taft in his speeches, although neither of them went as far as they ought to have gone in their effort to prevent what is known as government by injunction. Here is the third retreat.

The president has advocated the income tax as a means of preventing swollen fortunes and of equalizing the burdens of government. The republican platform is silent on the subject. Was the president right in the position he took? If so, then the convention was wrong in not endorsing him. Will the republican voters follow the president in this just demand or will they follow the republican organization in retreating from it?

The president advocated an inheritance tax, but the republican convention is silent on that subject. Was the president ahead of the republican party in advocating this reform, or has the republican party receded from the president's position? Did the president give a false alarm on this question or has the party sounded a retreat?

In the president's message to congress last spring he presented an indictment against the conspiracy formed among the great lawbreakers to prevent the enforcement of the law and to evade the punishments provided by law. The platform adopted by the republican convention contains no intimation of danger. If there are any conspiracies, the convention did not see them; if there are any combinations, it had not heard of them; if there are any dangers ahead, it was unconscious of them. Was the president mistaken when he issued his defiance, or are the republican managers deceived when they

think that an aroused public will calmly contemplate the encroachments of predatory wealth. This is retreat number six.

The convention, by vote of 866 to 114—more than seven to one—voted down the plank in favor of the popular election of United States senators. It is true that the president and Secretary Taft have never advocated the popular election of senators. They seem to take the Hamiltonian rather than the Jeffersonian view, but the most popular reform in the United States today is the reform that has for its object the election of United States senators by direct vote. It has five times been endorsed by the national house of representatives—three times when the house of representatives was republican. It has been endorsed by nearly two-thirds of the states of the union, and there is probably not a state in the union in which it would not be endorsed at a popular election and yet in spite of the record made in the house of representatives and by the various states, this reform is rejected by a seven-to-one vote in a republican national convention.

Here are seven propositions upon which the republican party, in national convention assembled, has retreated from the position taken by that party in congress or from the position taken by the president. What have Roosevelt republicans to say? The president has awakened a spirit of reform within his party, he has at least revealed to the world that there are reformers in the republican party. Can that spirit now be quelled by a stand-pat convention? Millions of republicans have enlisted at the president's call to arms and are ready to march forward; will they furl their banners and turn back merely because the president acquiesces in the sounding of a retreat?

HAVE YOU READ THE STANDPAT PLATFORM FOR 1908?

Have you read the republican platform? If not, you ought to read it. The contest in the republican party between the reformer and the standpatter is for the present at an end, with the standpatter in the saddle. The platform is a silent repudiation of nearly every promise of reform that the president and his followers have given to the country. It begins with an eulogy of the president. "In no other period since the days of Lincoln," according to the platform, "has there been such mighty progress in those ideals of government which make for justice, equality and fair-dealing among men." "The highest aspirations of the American people have found a voice." (A reflection is here implied on previous republican presidents who have failed to furnish a voice for "the highest aspirations of the American people.") "Their most exalted servant represents the best aims and worthiest purposes of all his countrymen. American manhood has been lifted to a noble sense of duty and obligation." Without asking why the republican party has held office and divided the official salaries among its partisans so long without giving us a president who represented "the best aims and worthiest purposes of the people;" without asking why no other republican president in recent days "has lifted American manhood to a noble sense of duty and obligation," we may ask why it is that the republican convention spends so much time in praising the president and gives so little attention to the specific endorsement of the things he has advocated. But the president must feel that he is the only republican deserving of praise. The recent congresses, according to the platform, have been full of patriots and the republican legislators have been keeping "step in the forward march to better government." What does the president think of being bracketed with republican senators and members of congress in this indiscriminate praise? Nothing is said of the conspiracy formed among the republican leaders of the senate to defeat the president's railroad rate bill; no intimation is here given that he sent several messages to congress in a vain endeavor to get the lower house to take up the reforms which he was urging. The president must resent the fact that the platform expresses no gratitude to the democratic members and senators for supporting him when the republicans deserted him. Not only does the platform fail to give the democrats credit for helping the president in every effort to lift up American manhood to "a noble sense of duty and obliga-

tion," but it ACTUALLY CONDEMNNS THE FILIBUSTER WHICH THE DEMOCRATIC MINORITY INSTITUTED AND CARRIED ON FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE OF COMPELLING THE REPUBLICANS TO CARRY OUT THE PRESIDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS. Mr. Williams, leader of the minority, time and again called upon the republicans to furnish thirty votes in support of the president's policies and pledged the democratic minority to furnish the remaining number of votes necessary to carry out several of the president's recommendations, and yet the men who wrote the platform presume upon the ignorance of the public and complain that the filibuster prevented the enactment of "many wholesome and progressive laws."

The writers of the platform "especially commend the passage of the emergency currency bill"—a bill which combined two features, one of which had been rejected by the senate, and the other by the house. So long as there was a chance for a discussion there was sufficient republican opposition to condemn both features of the bill, but under the influence of a few financiers, the bill was rushed through during the closing hours with all of the bad features restored and all of the good ones eliminated. How proud the republican bosses in the senate and house must feel to have their work thus endorsed by a republican national convention.

The plank demanding a permanent change in the currency system is general enough to permit the republican orators to advocate in each section of the country the system most popular there, and sufficiently indefinite to enable congress to do whatever it pleases or nothing without violating any pledge.

The trust plank must prove a disappointment to every republican who has come to understand the iniquity of the trusts. There is no demand for a rigid enforcement of the law; there is no suggestion that the criminal clause—which has not yet brought a trust malefactor within the walls of a penitentiary—should be called into use. The platform says that the law can be strengthened by amendments which will enlarge the supervision of the general government, but these amendments are not mentioned and there is nothing in this plank of the platform that can be appealed to to secure any real improvement in the law. If the president, with all of his strenuousness, has not been able to enforce the criminal law against a single trust, what chance is there of a less strenuous man making progress with such an anti-trust plank as that inserted in the republican platform?

There is a plank in the platform in favor of such legislation and supervision "as will prevent the future over-issue of stocks and bonds by interstate carriers." This is good, but it is coupled with the advocacy of a pooling arrangement which makes a large concession to the railroads without exacting any security to the public, for the convention voted down an amendment proposed by Senator LaFollette's followers authorizing an enlargement of the powers of the interstate commerce commission.

The negro comes in for his quadrennial quota of taffy. He is reminded that the republican party gave him freedom and citizenship and in this there is the implied warning that he must not use his citizenship against the party that gave it to him. It boasts that he is indebted to that party for his political rights and for his progress in intelligence, industry, etc. The republican party has made political capital out of the negro for a third of a century. In many of the close states it has won its elections by the negro vote and in the states where it has had power it has never treated the negro any better than he has been treated by the democrats. In other words, in the northern states the democrats, without receiving any support from the negro vote, have been as friendly to him as the republicans. In the south the democrats have furnished a large part of the money to provide that education of which the republican platform boasts. And yet in each recurring campaign the republican leaders have attempted to appeal to the prejudices of the negro by parading before him the restrictions placed upon suffrage in some of the southern states. They have been in control of the government, with the exception of a few years, for now nearly half a century and they have controlled the courts as well as the other branches of the government. If the democrats have done anything that they ought not to have done, why have not the republicans prevented it? Why is it that the republican leaders are only solicitous about the colored man when voting time comes? The republican platform says: "We condemn all devices which have for their real aim his (the negro's) disfranchisement for reasons of color alone as unfair, un-American and repugnant to the supreme law of the land." How can these things be repugnant to the supreme law of the land when the republican supreme court is supposed to stand guard over the supreme law of the land? There is scarcely a republican platform that does not approach the negro with the