

THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL PLATFORM

We, the representatives of the democracy of the United States, in national convention assembled, reaffirm our belief in, and pledge our loyalty to the principles of the party.

We rejoice at the increasing signs of an awakening throughout the country. The various investigations have traced graft and political corruption to the representatives of predatory wealth and laid bare the unscrupulous methods by which they have debauched elections and preyed upon a defenseless public through the subservient officials whom they have raised to place and power. The conscience of the nation is now aroused and will free the government from the grip of those who have made it a business asset of the favor seeking corporations; it must become again a people's government, and be administered in all its departments according to the Jeffersonian maxim, "equal rights to all special privileges to none."

"Shall the people rule?" is the overshadowing issue which manifests itself in all the questions now under discussion.

ECONOMY IN ADMINISTRATION

The republican congress in the session just ended made appropriations amounting to \$1,008,000,000, exceeding the total expenditures of the past fiscal year by \$90,000,000, and leaving a deficit of more than \$60,000,000 for the fiscal year just ended. We denounce the heedless waste of the peoples' money which has resulted in this appalling increase as a shameful violation of all prudent considerations of government and as no less than a crime against the millions of working men and women from whose earnings the great proportion of these colossal sums must be extorted through excessive tariff exactions and other indirect methods. It is not surprising that in the face of this shocking record the republican platform contains no reference to economical administration or promise thereof in the future. We demand that a stop be put to this frightful extravagance and insist upon the strictest economy in every department compatible with frugal and efficient administration.

INCREASE OF OFFICEHOLDERS

Coincident with the enormous increase in expenditures is a like addition to the number of officeholders. During the past year 23,784 were added, costing \$16,156,000 and in the past six years of republican administration the total number of new offices created aside from many commissions has been 99,319, entailing an additional expenditure of nearly \$70,000,000 as against only 10,279 new offices created under the Cleveland and McKinley administrations, which involved an expenditure of only six million dollars. We denounce this great and growing increase in the number of officeholders as not only unnecessary and wasteful, but also as clearly indicating a deliberate purpose on the part of the administration to keep the republican party in power at public expense by thus increasing the number of its retainers and dependents. Such procedure we declare to be no less dangerous and corrupt than the open purchase of votes at the polls.

ARBITRARY POWER—THE SPEAKER

The house of representatives was designed by the fathers of the constitution to be the popular branch of our government responsive to the public will.

The house of representatives, as controlled in recent years by the republican party, has ceased to be a deliberative and legislative body, responsive to the will of a majority of its members, but has come under the absolute domination of the speaker who has entire control of its deliberations and powers of legislation.

We have observed with amazement the popular branch of our federal government helpless to obtain either the consideration or enactment of measures desired by a majority of its members.

Legislative control becomes a failure when one member in the person of the speaker is more powerful than the entire body.

We demand that the house of representatives shall again become a deliberative body, controlled by a majority of the peoples' representatives and not by the speaker and we pledge ourselves to adopt such rules and regulations to govern the house of representatives as will enable a majority of its members to direct its deliberations and control legislation.

MISUSE OF PATRONAGE

We condemn as a violation of the spirit of our institutions, the action of the present chief

executive in using the patronage of his high office to secure the nomination for the presidency of one of his cabinet officers. A forced succession in the presidency is scarcely less repugnant to public sentiment than is life tenure in that office. No good intention on the part of the executive and no virtue in the one selected can justify the establishment of a dynasty.

The right of the people to freely select their officials is inalienable and can not be delegated.

PUBLICITY OF CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

We demand federal legislation, forever terminating the partnership which has existed between corporations of the country and the republican party under the expressed or implied agreement that in return for the contribution of great sums of money wherewith to purchase elections they should be allowed to continue substantially unmolested in their efforts to encroach upon the rights of the people.

Any reasonable doubt as to the existence of this relation has been dispelled by the sworn testimony of witnesses examined in the insurance investigation in New York and the open admission of a single individual—unchallenged by the republican national committee—that he himself at the personal request of the then republican candidate for the presidency raised over a quarter of a million dollars to be used in a single state during the closing hours of the last campaign. In order that this practice shall be stopped for all time we demand the passage of a statute punishing by imprisonment any officer of a corporation who shall either contribute on behalf of or consent to the contribution by a corporation of any money or thing of value to be used in furthering the election of a president or vice president of the United States or of any member of the congress thereof. We denounce the republican party, having complete control of the federal government for its failure to pass the bill, introduced in the last congress to compel the publication of the names of contributors and the amounts contributed toward campaign funds and point to the evidence of the insincerity of republican leaders when they sought by an absolutely irrelevant and impossible amendment to defeat the passage of the bill, as a further evidence of their intention to conduct their campaign in the coming contest with vast sums of money wrested from favor-seeking corporations. We call attention to the fact that the recent republican national convention at Chicago refused, when the issue was presented to it, to declare against such practices.

We pledge the democratic party to the enactment of a law prohibiting any corporation from contributing to a campaign fund and any individual from contributing an amount above a reasonable maximum and providing for the publication before election of all such contributions above a reasonable minimum.

THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES

Believing, with Jefferson, in "the support of the state governments in all their rights as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns, and the surest bulwarks against anti-republican tendencies," and in "the preservation of the general government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad," we are opposed to the centralization implied in the suggestion, now frequently made, that the powers of the general government should be extended by judicial construction. There is no twilight zone between the nation and the state in which exploiting interests can take refuge from both; and it is as necessary that the federal government shall exercise the powers delegated to it as it is that the state governments shall use the authority reserved to them; but we insist that federal remedies for the regulation of interstate commerce and for the prevention of private monopoly shall be added to, not substituted for, state remedies.

POPULAR ELECTION OF SENATORS

We favor the election of United States senators by direct vote of the people and regard this reform as the gateway to other national reforms.

TARIFF

We welcome the belated promise of tariff reform now offered by the republican party as a tardy recognition of the righteousness of the

democratic position on this question. But the people can not safely entrust the execution of this important work to a party which is so deeply obligated to the highly protected interests as is the republican party. We call attention to the significant fact that the promised relief is postponed until after the coming election—an election to succeed in which the republican party must have that same support from the beneficiaries of the high protective tariff as it has always heretofore received from them; and to the further fact that during years of uninterrupted power no action whatever has been taken by the republican congress to correct the admittedly existing tariff iniquities.

We favor immediate revision of the tariff by the reduction of import duties. Articles entering into competition with trust controlled products should be placed upon the free list; material reductions should be made in the tariff upon the necessities of life, especially upon articles competing with such American manufactures as are sold abroad more cheaply than at home, and gradual reductions should be made in such other schedules as may be necessary to restore the tariff to a revenue basis.

Existing duties have given the manufacturers of paper a shelter behind which they have organized combinations to raise the price of pulp and of paper, thus imposing a tax upon the spread of knowledge. We demand the immediate repeal of the tariff on wood pulp, print paper, lumber, timber and logs and that these articles be placed upon the free list.

INCOME TAX

We favor an income tax as part of our revenue system and we urge the submission of a constitutional amendment specifically authorizing congress to levy and collect a tax upon individual and corporate incomes to the end that wealth may bear its proportionate share of the burdens of the federal government.

TRUSTS

A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable; we therefore favor the vigorous enforcement of the criminal law against guilty trust magnates and officials and demand the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States. Among the additional remedies, we specify three: First, a law preventing a duplication of directors among competing corporations; second a license system which will, without abridging the right of each state to create corporations, or its right to regulate as it will foreign corporations doing business within its limits, make it necessary for a manufacturing or trading corporation engaged in interstate commerce to take out a federal license before it shall be permitted to control as much as twenty-five per cent of the product in which it deals, the license to protect the public from watered stock and to prohibit the control by such corporation of more than fifty per cent of the total amount of any product consumed in the United States, and, third, a law compelling such licensed corporations to sell to all purchasers in all parts of the country or the same terms, after making due allowance for cost of transportation.

RAILROAD LEGISLATION

We assert the right of congress to exercise complete control over interstate commerce and the right of each state to exercise like control over commerce within its borders.

We demand such enlargement of the powers of the interstate commerce commission as may be necessary to enable it to compel railroads to perform their duties as common carriers and prevent discrimination and extortion.

We favor the efficient supervision and rate regulation of railroads engaged in interstate commerce. To this end we recommend the valuation of railroads by the interstate commerce commission, such valuation to take into consideration the physical value of the property, the original cost, the cost of production, and all elements of value that will render the valuation fair and just.

We favor such legislation as will prohibit the railroads from engaging in business which brings them into competition with their shippers; also legislation preventing the over-issue of stocks and bonds by interstate railroads, and legislation which will assure such reduction in transportation rates as conditions will permit, care being taken to avoid reduction that