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Stealing a March

The president's message relating to the Sherman anti-trust law and to trusts is formal notice to the people that they have nothing to expect in the way of "trust busting" at the hands of this administration and re-assurance to the trust magnate that he may hold the American consumers within the hollow of his hand. In this message the president of the United States undertakes, seriously, for the first time to show the difference between a "good" trust and a "bad" trust. That the president makes a very sorry effort in these descriptions must be apparent to every one who has read his message. Throughout the message fairly bristles with phrases and forms of argument and protest that are so familiar in the circles where trust magnates most do congregate. The president admits that it is impractical to undertake, in an explicit law, to differentiate between good and bad trusts. But he leaves it to be inferred that the "remedy" he proposes and the legislation he suggests will be carried out in conformity with his own oddly stated ideas of the difference between a good trust and a bad trust. Then the president boldly recommends the enactment by congress of a general law incorporating corporations by the national government. He says this will protect these corporations from "undue interference by the states," and that it will also enable the federal government to enforce the anti-trust law. The president overlooks what the American people are not likely to forget, viz., that all of the practical efforts toward relief have been brought about through state legislation and under state authority. Under the president's own description of his national incorporation law every corporation in the country, desiring to do business in more than one state, must reorganize and become incorporated under federal charter. He tries to answer the objections on the ground of centralization but he makes lamentable failure of this. Indeed, throughout the president's message his own words, his own tone, his own argument give emphasis to the dangers of centralized authority over the great corporations. He bluntly proclaims that they should be permitted to combine and to concentrate capital where such combination seems desirable. He would not object to a good trust, and he points out the "dangers" of indiscriminate investigation into the affairs of trusts.

In his recommendation for national incorporation President Taft is doing just what the trust magnates of this country want done and no amount of well phrased messages can alter the fact that will become more and more apparent

EVERYONE MAY HELP

Circulating The Commoner in your community helps to interest your people in the questions which are so vital at this time.

It will help you get out the democratic vote on election day.

It will help you to get legislation that will permit you to retain a larger share of the results of your labor.

It will assist you in convincing your republican neighbor that the democratic party is fighting his battles and should have his support.

Do you agree with The Commoner upon the importance of commencing this year's campaign at once and learning what candidates may be trusted and which ones should be retired?

We must depend upon our subscribers to secure other readers, and the wider dissemination of Mr. Bryan's writings and speeches will help bring about the election of a democratic congress.

A year's subscription now will continue the paper through the coming congressional elections. Your assistance in placing The Commoner in the hands of your acquaintances may enlist their active interest in a cause which needs their help.

to the plain people of America as the days go by.

Such a measure is so uncalled for, so indefensible and so inexcusable that the attempt to bring about such a revolution in the regulation of corporations suggests an organized and far-reaching plot to withdraw the corporations from state control. No state has asked for this, no platform has demanded it and the people have not discussed it. With a cabinet filled with corporation attorneys the president seems to be planning the biggest surrender of the century. The great corporations want to escape from state supervision, and national incorporation is the means proposed. The democratic democrats and the progressive republicans will have the fight of a life time to defeat it.

Doubtless many congressmen have been secretly pledged to it and many of the senators are pecuniarily interested in bringing it about. The predatory corporations are preparing to steal a march on the people. It is not necessary to have national incorporation; we can have all the regulation necessary without national incorporation. The democratic platform demands that federal remedies be ADDED TO, NOT SUBSTITUTED FOR state remedies. That platform was made to warn the public against this very proposition.

It is not exaggeration to say that never in American history has a president so uncovered his inclinations and his purposes as Mr. Taft has done in his recent message to congress.

So centralize the authority over the railroads of the country that railroad regulation will be entrusted to the whim of one man and to the inclination of a political party. So centralize railroad authority that the means whereby complaint may be made will be so remote and the method so cumbersome that the ordinary shipper will find it difficult to register his complaint.

Take from the states all control over the corporations, centralize that control in the federal government and give the reins into the keeping of a political organization which, deriving its campaign funds from the very concerns it is expected to regulate, finds it convenient to allow the people to be oppressed in order that the "business interests of the country" may thrive.

Is it possible that there is in all America a republican who, having no axe to grind, can not see that the policies so bluntly outlined in the president's special message are not intended to advance the interests of popular government?

Principle or Pie

Republican insurgents who have been told that they must either support administration measures or abandon hope for obtaining federal offices for their friends are now becoming personally familiar with a threat that is as old as human government itself. "Do as the king wills if you would enjoy the king's favor" is the edict with which the history of monarchies abounds. Sometimes in the olden days men who displeased the king lost their heads and where that radical course was not deemed advisable social and political prestige was withdrawn. In America the cutting off of a man's head is not to be thought of and so the plan of cutting off the republican congressmen's pie has been adopted.

Something like sixteen years ago a democratic president undertook to say to members of congress who refused to vote for the repeal of a particular measure, in the repeal of which the president was interested, that those who antagonized the administration on this proposition would lose favor. For many months it would have seemed from the Washington view that the democratic congressmen who adhered to what they conceived to be principle had been barred from their party. But at the next national convention of their party their course was approved and the principle for which they contended formally received the sanction of their party organization. It would not be right to hold out to the republican insurgents the hope that their party will formally endorse the action of those republican congressmen who, in the name of popular government, rebel from the decrees of the representatives of special interests. It must be patent to every observing person that these special interests are so thoroughly entrenched in power in the republican party that nothing but the defeat of the party at the polls will provide any hope for the party's regeneration. President Taft boldly endorsed Senator Aldrich, calling him a faithful servant of public interests and there is every reason to believe that Messrs. Aldrich and Cannon may confidently depend upon the president's co-operation in the great program they have outlined for the benefit of the "business interests of the country."

Mr. Victor Rosewater, editor of the Omaha Bee, in an authorized interview denies that the president is using the patronage club to whip insurgents into line. But Mr. Rosewater quotes the president as saying that "there is a well founded custom that has become almost a rule that in making certain appointments such as postmasters, the president should act on recommendation of the members of congress in whose districts the appointments lie if reported by a member of the same political party. This obligation resting on the president, however, is reciprocal. The republican congressmen is under a similar obligation to support administration measures recommended by the president to carry out platform pledges on which both were elected." Mr. Rosewater adds: "The president says he has not turned down recommendations of insurgent congressmen but is simply preserving the status quo to impress them of their obligation." Could anything be plainer than that? It is the old demand to "bend the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift may follow fawning."

No matter that these congressmen were elected to serve in a branch of government co-ordinate with that occupied by the gentleman who was elected to the presidency; no matter that these congressmen were nominated and elected on the theory that they were men of ability and independence, men who could be depended upon to think and act for themselves; no matter that they could read, as all the world may read, that the republican administration is more thoroughly allied with the special interests and more firmly committed to the scheme of predatory wealth than any other

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