

STERLING P. BOND'S PLATFORM

Sterling P. Bond, a well known lawyer of St. Louis, has written to Harry M. Rubey, chairman of the democratic state committee, Macon, Mo., a letter in which Mr. Bond announces his candidacy for the nomination of United States senator from Missouri on the democratic ticket. In this letter Mr. Bond says: "No party, be it the democratic or republican party can stand upon its record of the past, alone, but it is upon what it proposes to do and shall carry out in the future, in policy and law, for the welfare of the American people, that will perpetuate or efface the name of one or both of these great parties. Let us see to it that the name of the democratic party is not effaced."

On the tariff question Mr. Bond says: Immediate revision of the tariff downward.

The last national democratic convention declared for a tariff on a revenue basis that "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."

Convinced that free iron ore is an "article entering into competition with the trust controlled products" of the iron and steel trust, the greatest iron and steel trust in the United States and the world, I will, if nominated and elected to the United States senate, vote for free iron ore, not only from the standpoint of my convictions, but from the standpoint of the democratic platform obligation.

The last national democratic convention declared that "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 taxes upon individual and corporate incomes to the end that wealth may bear its proportionate share of the burdens of the federal government."

A few months ago some men met at Saratoga New York, and declared that they were opposed to an income tax that authorized congress to levy and collect taxes upon corporate incomes to the end that this kind of wealth might bear its proportionate share of the burdens of the federal government.

This, notwithstanding that the most prominent man among them was one of the committee on platform, who, a little over a year ago, assisted in framing the national democratic platform at Denver, in which it declared for an income tax not only on individual, but corporate incomes.

I am in favor of the Denver platform on the income tax question. I do not believe in the Saratoga brand, and if elected to the United States senate, I will vote for an income tax not only on individual but corporate incomes.

Endorsing the tariff plank of the last national democratic platform, I believe, with the greatest living democrat, that the next democratic platform in this state should, among other things, declare for:

Free wool and the reduction of the woolen schedules.

Free lumber, free wood pulp and free paper.

Free hides, leather, harness, boots and shoes.

Free oil, and the products of oil.

Free iron ore, structural iron and steel ready for use.

Free material for bridges, free steel rails, nails and articles entering into competition with the articles whose prices are controlled by the iron and steel trust and all other trusts.

Free binding twine, cotton ties and cotton bagging.

Free farming implements, barbed and fence wire, mechanics and miners' tools.

Free coal and free powder used in mining coal and minerals. Reduction in the cotton schedules and in the tariff upon all other necessities of life, upon articles sold abroad more cheaply than at home, the aim being to put the lowest duty on articles of necessity, and the highest on articles of luxury.

TARIFF AND COST OF LIVING

Speaking on the resolution to investigate food prices, Senator Stone of Missouri declared that the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill is largely responsible for the enhanced price of many of the necessities of life. The following report of Senator Stone's remarks is taken from the Associated Press report:

Contrasting the delay in reporting the Elkins resolution with the dispatch in bringing in the Lodge measure Mr. Stone declared that there had been a vast "amount of monkey business in connection with the consideration of the subject."

Saying he had been greatly puzzled to know the meaning of the method of proceeding he

declared it had the complexion of a "purpose to conceal rather than to discover."

If not, why, he asked, did the republican members of the finance committee come rushing headlong into this business and exhibit an overweening anxiety to take charge of the proposed inquiry?

"If the remarkable things done here have given to this business the sinister aspect of a scheme on the part of certain senators to organize a committee that would start in primarily to hold the Payne-Aldrich tariff law blameless for the evils the country complains of, then the senator from Massachusetts and his republican associates on the finance committee have only themselves to blame.

"Is it the purpose of the great senators who have thrown themselves into this breach," he proceeded, "to put the proposed investigation under the control of senators who were chiefly instrumental in framing the new law and most concerned in exempting it from all responsibility for the higher prices which have followed its enactment? A deep laid apprehension to that effect has been expressed by many newspapers and by many people in different parts of the country."

He said he knew of nothing which stood in such great need of a coating of whitewash as the tariff law. Asserting that there had been a rapid enhancement of prices since the passage of the tariff law, he declared that neither an increase in the demand for food, nor an increase in the gold supply could explain these advances in so short a time.

This point was made in response to suggestions in a recent speech by Senator Lodge and quoting one of the Massachusetts senator's remarks concerning the gold standard, Mr. Stone declared that it must have been taken from one of the 1896 speeches of Mr. Bryan.

In all probability, Mr. Stone continued, Mr. Lodge would head the committee of investigation and Mr. Stone expressed apprehension that that senator would hesitate to follow out any line of inquiry which might substantiate Secretary Wilson's contention that American food products are sold more cheaply abroad than in the United States.

Mr. Stone quoted from letters and newspapers to show a general increase in the necessities of life since the enactment of the Payne-Aldrich bill. Among the letters was one from a St. Louis merchant saying that cotton goods had increased in price from 12 1/2 to 33 per cent; linens 7 1/2 to 10 per cent, and on hosiery 10 per cent. Every man of common sense ought, he said, to know that "the enormous profits accruing to investors in these industries are the result of artificial conditions created by law.

"I don't see how it can be contended," he continued, "that these artificial conditions from which the consumers of the country are, thank heaven, beginning to become the impatient sufferers, are chiefly for the benefit of the American wage earners employed in those industries. I assert with the greatest confidence that the tariff rates as a rule are far in excess of any difference in the labor wage in America and the chief competing countries of Europe; and I assert with equal confidence that the beneficiaries of this system are the men who employ this labor, as the chief sufferers are the consumers who are the victims of their monopolies.

"I would not contend that the tariff is the sole cause and excuse for exorbitant prices, but I do insist that a practically prohibitive tariff, such as we have, is at least one of the chief causes that make exorbitant prices for human necessities a possibility. It may be that trusts and combinations put up the prices; I think they do. But at the same time I believe the old contention to be true that a high protective tariff is the mother of trusts."

TRUE TO LIFE

Herbert Johnson, the talented cartoonist for the Philadelphia North American, has given a number of striking pictorial arguments relating to the high cost of living. It can not be accidental that Mr. Johnson's high cost of living is always represented by a shadow in the form of an elephant. It is certainly true to life and places the responsibility largely where it belongs.

FEELING GOOD

Walter Wellman, Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald, says that President Taft and all his associates are feeling good over the reception which his special message has had in the west; also that they are greatly pleased to learn "that the country has already

begun to take a more kindly view of Mr. Taft and to regard him as earnest and sincere in his determination and efforts to carry on true reform policies." These gentlemen are certainly easily pleased if they can find any comfort in western opinion concerning Mr. Taft's special message and in the attitude towards the course generally of the Taft administration.

THE ONLY WAY TO DEMOCRATIC SUCCESS

"Define Democratic Principles in a Specific Platform and Place the Standard in the Hands of Democratic Leaders Who Will Face the Foe and Not Play Hide and Seek in the Enemy's Camp."

Editor The Commoner: Webster's Dictionary defines a platform as a declaration of the principles upon which a person, a sect, or a party proposes to stand. The up-to-date officeholder seems to agree with the fellow who said it was like the platform of a car—only made to get in on but not to stand on.

Is not violating the platform pledges breaking the fundamental law of the party? Then who can violate such a law and be worthy of holding a position of honor and trust in the councils of that party? Has a man the right to take a political vow and break it at will any more than a marriage vow or church vow? How many grades and degrees are to be found in obligations of any kind?

There is but one way, in the writer's opinion, to get the country democratic—that is to define democratic principles in a specific platform and place the standard in the hands of democratic leaders who will face the foe and not play hide and seek in the enemy's camp.

In other words, a man who disregards the platform is like a tramp steamer with no fixed port for which to steer but on the trackless ocean makes any and every port with self interest as the propelling force and expediency for his compass.

The democratic ship will continue drifting so long as it continues to trust such seafarers with self made charts.

It will be recalled that some representatives, pleading justification for violating platform pledges on the tariff said that as they were "on the spot" they could use better judgment than the authors of the platform. Is it fair to assume that the democrats of the country could not judge of democratic needs in a democratic convention as well as could those who were elected as democrats? Can a few men in Washington, practically in the enemy's country, know more than the great body of democrats? Is it not an admission of their ignorance and that they were late in getting important information? The trade winds must blow rather strong in Washington as the expressed opinions of presidents seem to veer considerably.

If Washington is a training school for democracy, would it not be better for all democrats to go to that Mecca of learning to get true expert democracy rather than depend on the nostrums of the stay-at-homes?

It is a serious question to decide the limit of free will which should be allowed a representative before we decide that he ceases to represent.

It has been further contended that those who were in office at the time the platform was made are not bound by the present platform. If the people can reassemble in their sovereign capacity to amend or remake a platform, have they not the right to do so without consulting those in office or being in danger of being repudiated by their own servants?

It is similar to an officeholder taking oath of office under the constitution of a state when during his term a new convention makes another, yet he has to take the oath under the new one. Otherwise there would be two constitutions in operation. Two or more platforms would present the same anomaly.

BRAXTON H. TABB. Richmond, Va., January 30, 1910.