

The Commoner.

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Predatory Interests Are Always at Work--- Let Every True Democrat Lend a Hand

The friends of predatory interests—the beneficiaries of special privilege and governmental favoritism are always at work. They never sleep. With them politics is a business because they make the government a business asset. Before they give their favor to a party they must know the tendency of the leaders of that party. Before they give their support to a candidate for office they must know just where that candidate stands upon every public question.

Democrats will profit by the "1908 lesson" taught to republicans since that year. The republicans took Mr. Roosevelt's word for the political disposition of the republican candidate for the presidency and they have been, naturally, greatly disappointed.

The only way to learn the opinions of a public man is either from his public record or from himself.

However promising to democrats the situation may at this time be it can not be expected that the party will win a victory unless it goes before the people entirely free from special interests, with a platform that deals frankly with public questions, and with a candidate whose record and present day attitude justify the hope that the people may fairly count upon the party in the inevitable contest between the public interests and special interests.

The San Francisco Star recently said: "Working quietly and practically unnoticed by the body of the American people, the special interests are already more than a year in advance of the national conventions, planning to bring about the nomination of a republican and democratic candidate for the presidency. Big business, naturally enough, prefers to have a candidate in both parties, so that no matter which way the wind blows, it will win."

A number of men are being mentioned as presidential candidates and several of them have admitted that they will be pleased to accept the democratic nomination. The president may exert great influence over legislation and the formation of policies for the public good. He appoints judges of the supreme court and of the lower courts. He selects inter-state commerce commissioners who have considerable control over railroad rates. Upon his bent of mind politically the people must depend largely for the character of the public policies they are to have during his official term.

Some men imagine that the office of president is such a high one that the candidate for that office should not be catechised. As a matter of fact the voters ought to find out just where every candidate for the presidency stands upon the important public questions; and no man who is in any degree worthy of that high office will refuse to give candid answers to courteous questions put to him concerning his attitude on current public affairs.

The Commoner suggests that its readers put questions to those who are in the attitude of candidate for the democratic presidential nomination. Every student of public affairs will be able to frame his own questions, but for convenience sake and by way of suggestion The Commoner submits some of the queries that may in all fairness be offered to every man who is regarded as a candidate for the

democratic nomination. If their answers are uncertain and ambiguous they may be set down as friendly to some particular interests. The genuine reformer is not afraid to speak out. Every candidate is, to be sure, entitled to his opinion, but the people have the right to know what it is in order that they may act intelligently when they come to choose their party's candidates for the presidency.

Commoner readers everywhere are advised to submit to the various presidential candidates questions something like the following:

Do you favor tariff for revenue only?

Do you favor free raw material and the placing of a revenue duty only on manufactured goods?

Do you believe that in the revision of the tariff the element of protection should be given consideration?

Do you believe that the three branches of government are co-ordinate and that each one should keep within its constitutional sphere?

Do you approve the recent Standard Oil decision wherein the United States supreme court legislated the word "unreasonable" into the Sherman anti-trust act?

Do you favor the repeal of the criminal clause of the anti-trust law or do you believe that in view of supreme court legislation congress should make it clear that all restraint of trade is unreasonable?

Do you favor the election of senators by the people?

Do you favor the income tax?

Do you believe that it is the duty of the American people to promise independence to the Filipinos immediately and to give it in the same way in which they gave independence to the Cubans?

Do you believe in the publicity of campaign contributions and expenditures both before and after election day in order that the people may know in advance the character of support each party and candidate receives.

Are you willing that the source of every dollar of contribution made to your campaign fund either after your nomination or during the contest for the nomination shall be made public prior to election day?

Do you believe in the support of state governments in all their rights?

Do you indorse the labor planks of the 1908 platform?

Do you believe in the strict regulation of railroads?

Do you indorse the democratic platform of 1908 respecting trusts wherein it declares that "a private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable" and presents a remedy?

Do you approve the plan known as the Aldrich currency scheme?

Do you favor asset currency in any form?

Do you believe in the establishment of what is known as a central bank?

Do you favor legislation compelling banks to insure depositors?

Let democrats everywhere ask questions and secure answers, thus finding out just what every candidate stands for. In this way democrats may be able to determine with some degree of intelligence as to the available candidate.

The Commoner will be glad to print the replies made to these questions by gentlemen whose names have been mentioned in connection with the democratic presidential nomination.

ASK THE CANDIDATE---Cut the Question Blank from Page 4