

The Revolution in the Republican Party

More than two hundred insurgent republicans from all-sections of the country met at Chicago and in speeches and resolutions reflected the mighty revolution that is now going on within the republican party.

INSURGENT PLATFORM

The gathering adopted the following platform:

"We, republicans from thirty states in conference assembled at Chicago October 16, 1911, believing in progressive principles declare:

"1. The progressive movement is a struggle to wrest the control of government in the nation and states from the representatives of special privilege, and restore it to the control of the people. The issue is the same in all the states of the union, though the problem may be presented in different ways.

"2. In the national field the control of government by special privilege is evidenced by the influence and power of the reactionary leaders of both parties in checking or preventing the enactment of the progressive policies pledged by the republican party.

"3. The progressive movement aims to nominate and elect as candidates of the republican party men who will with sincerity and singleness of purpose represent its rank and file, and carry out their will.

"4. The present condition of uncertainty in business is intolerable and destructive of industrial prosperity. It is worse than idle to leave the question of whether great business enterprises are legal or not, merely to judicial determination. Industrial corporations should by affirmative legislative enactment, be given definite rules of conduct by which business conducted in accordance therewith shall be made safe and stable while at the same time the interests of the public shall be fully safeguarded. We seek constructive legislation not destructive litigation.

"5. We favor the ascertainment of the choice of republican voters as to candidates for president and vice president by a direct primary vote held in each state pursuant to statute, and where no such statute exists, we urge that the republican state committee provide that the people be given the right to express their choice for president.

"6. Constructive leadership being the urgent need of the present time, it is necessary that republicans support a candidate for president whose record gives the fullest assurance of the enactment and enforcement of sound progressive policies.

"7. Robert Marion La Follette, of Wisconsin, years ago found conditions in his state not unlike those of the nation today. Under his leadership, all opposition was overcome, and there has been enacted in Wisconsin a system of laws that stand as models for legislation in all states of the union. Laws have been passed in the state adequately regulating all public service corporations; equalizing the burdens of taxation; providing for direct nominations by the people; protecting legitimate business and capital honestly invested; promoting the welfare of labor—in short, real representative government has been restored.

"8. The record of Senator La Follette in state and nation makes him a logical candidate for president of the United States. His experience, his character, his courage, his record of constructive legislation and administrative ability meet the requirements for leadership such as present conditions demand.

"9. This conference indorses him as the candidate for the republican nomination for president, and urges that in all the states organizations be formed to promote his nomination."

REPORT OF ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE

"Resolved, That we recommend to the progressive republicans of all the states that they at once organize by counties and precincts to uphold the principles put forth at this convention, each state to proceed in this movement according to its local conditions, and we recommend that the chairmen of such organizations report to and co-operate with the chairman of the progressive republican campaign committee already formed at Washington."

REPORT OF FINANCE COMMITTEE

"In the raising of funds to carry on this campaign we earnestly urge that a method of popular subscription be devised so that the progressive movement which is in behalf of the people shall be financed by the people. We also

recommend that a permanent national finance committee of five to take charge of the finances of the campaign be appointed by the chairman of this temporary committee in consultation with the chairman of this conference, and with W. L. Houser, chairman of the progressive republican campaign committee."

MESSAGE FROM RUDOLPH SPRECKLES

The following telegram was read to the convention: "San Francisco, Oct. 16, 1911.—Deeply regret my inability to be present at the progressive conference today. You are organizing the people's fight against special privilege, and if you succeed the next national administration will respond to the best interests of the whole people and at the same time safeguard the interests of all legitimate business. Ninety per cent of the American people are progressive at heart and it is but necessary to make the republican party respond to the spirit of the people to assure success at the next national election.

"I hope you will make an appeal to all good citizens to actively join and support the movement and give their financial aid as well. The people must be made to understand that they must finance their own fight. Let the average citizen's dollar take the place of corporation contributions and you will have an organization that will be free to serve the best interests of the whole people. Business prosperity depends upon the confidence of the people and this can be secured by giving the people a voice in their government and a fair deal for all legitimate business.

"In my opinion the one man who has the confidence of the people and whose whole public career gives proof of his being safe and fair for all legitimate business is Robert M. La Follette, and I hope he will have the support of your conference for the next republican nomination, and if nominated his election is certain. Then the great and general unrest will end. All honest business men can go forward in confidence and prosper.

"Health permitting I will soon be ready to do my share in the fight you are waging for human rights. (Signed) RUDOLPH SPRECKLES."

FLETCHER DOBYNS' SPEECH

Fletcher Dobyns, president of the Cook County (Illinois) Progressive league (Chicago) addressed the convention as follows: "Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Conference: After the many very able speeches to which we have listened I shall not attempt at this hour to enter upon any discussion of progressive principles and policies, but I do want to say that although we started a little late in Illinois, that we have started, and we are going to be there at the finish, and we are going to be there strong. (Applause.)

"Last spring Mr. Merriam demonstrated to the people of Chicago and Cook county and the state of Illinois, that it was unnecessary for them to remain in bondage to the patronage brokers and the bosses that have disgraced this state for so long a time, and the people have learned that lesson and the spell of bosses and machines is gone. Now, we have started out to win this fight in the state of Illinois. The bosses succeeded in defeating Mr. Merriam here in Chicago because their spell had not yet been broken, and they preferred to have a democrat to a republican that they could not use for their own ends. But they never can have that power again.

"Illinois is a republican state, and we have named for our governor a candidate who is a thorough progressive, a man who for years has been fighting for those principles in the legislature of Illinois, a man who has been a progressive at heart and who has fought for those principles, and so we believe that in the coming fight that we are going to win. We believe that Mr. Jones is going to be the republican candidate for governor. (Applause.) Wherever we go we have found that the people are determined to take the government of this state back into their own hands. They believe that the patronage brokers, the bosses, the spoilsmen have only disgraced this state and have misrepresented and betrayed the people and they are determined to take the reins of government back into their own hands, and they are going to do it at once, the very first chance they get which will be at the next primaries and the next election.

"I want to say to you further that the progressive republicans of Illinois will stand behind Senator La Follette for president of the

United States. (Applause.) From every part of this state has come the report from the farmers, from the laboring people, from the business men, those who want to see the government taken back into the hands of the people, who want to see privilege and bossism overthrown in this country and in Illinois, they say they look to La Follette as the great leader of this cause, and wherever we have gone this has been the sentiment and this is the sentiment of those who are leading in this movement. So we pledge you that the people of Illinois will give their support to the progressive republican policies and to La Follette for president." (Applause.)

SCRIPPS PAPERS TO SUPPORT MOVEMENT

H. W. Rickey, editor of the Scripps' daily newspapers, which are large in number and powerful in influence, addressed the convention as follows: "The spirit of insurgency, progression, reform, or by initiative, or other name, this great world wide movement for a square deal for the common man may be called is just as much alive and as militant in Ohio today as in California or New Jersey or Wisconsin. What is needed in Ohio is leadership and organization.

"While I am not a politician and make no claim to extraordinary political sagacity, I claim to have some knowledge of political conditions in my state.

"For 25 years I have been in the newspaper business in Ohio; for ten years I was the editor of an independent newspaper with the largest circulation in the state; and for the past six years have been and am now editor-in-chief of a league of independent newspapers with some 400,000 circulation in the state.

"We have a primary law in Ohio providing for the election of national convention delegates by popular vote, and I have never been able to figure out just why the political overlords of the state permitted this law to be passed, but we have it and in my judgment that it is the opportunity which the common people of all parties in Ohio will take full advantage of to put the state up in the van of those states that have already emancipated themselves from the grip of privilege.

"Robert M. La Follette can at least split even with President Taft in the delegation to the next republican convention. This is not a prediction, for I am neither a prophet nor the son of one, but it is the statement of what my observation and general knowledge of the situation tells me is an obvious fact. But this dream will not come true unless it is made to come by leadership and organization.

"In the papers which I have the honor to represent, and in dozens of others throughout the state, we have ready to hand that vital thing, a state-wide honest medium of publicity.

"Do not misunderstand me. Our newspapers are not republican, they are not pledged, and I distinctly disclaim that I am now pledging them to La Follette or any other man. But we stand for progressivism in both parties, and the friends of Senator La Follette may feel sure that when they throw down the gage of battle to President Taft in his own state, they will have honest and full publicity, and probably more.

"Just a word in conclusion. While progressivism in Ohio is ripe for picking, it can not be picked by pussy foot methods or those gentlemen who, while calling themselves progressives, are so judicial in temperament and so fearful that business or some other conditions will be disturbed.

"The leadership in Ohio must be aggressive, as well as progressive. It must be undertaken by men who are willing and will consider it a privilege to make whatever personal and political sacrifice they may be called upon to make, who are patriots before they are partisans, who are inspired by feelings of real sympathy with labor, who are willing to burn their political bridges.

"The greatest care must be exercised in the election of an executive committee to take hold of the movement. I do not care to go further into the details of this particular phase of the matter at this time beyond suggesting and earnestly recommending to this conference that you get busy in Ohio at once.

"It is not beyond reason, in fact it is quite within the range of possibility, that before many months have passed it will be apparent, even to President Taft himself, that he cannot count with any degree of certainty upon the support of even his own state."

SENATOR CLAPP'S STIRRING SPEECH

Senator Moses E. Clapp of Minnesota, delivered the following stirring speech: "Mr.