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The Explanation

Below will be found Governor Harmon's explanation of his speech against the initiative and referendum:

"Columbus, O., Feb. 17.—Governor Harmon issued a statement today in reply to the attack made by Mayor Newton D. Baker of Cleveland on his recent address on the initiative and referendum before the constitutional convention. Mr. Baker condemned the governor for his stand. Governor Harmon said:

"I think Mr. Baker can not have read my entire address before the convention, but was misled by false statements and garbled extracts in which some newspapers have persistently indulged. I have been represented as saying that the people of Ohio are not capable of self-government. What I said was that they have governed themselves for over a hundred years with conspicuous success. The subject of dispute now is not their ability to govern themselves, but whether the mode of doing it shall be changed.

"It is just as truly self-government for the people to act through chosen representatives as it is to act directly. So, as the discussion is about mere methods, there is no apparent reason why it should not be carried on in good temper.

"It was because the platform on which I was elected favored the principle of the initiative and referendum that I signed the Crosser bill authorizing its adoption in municipalities. It was not at all inconsistent with the platform to advocate, as I did, awaiting the result of a trial in the cities and villages before giving the plan state-wide operation. This seemed to me a most sensible course to pursue under the circumstances. And I simply followed Thomas Jefferson."

The explanation clouds the subject instead of clarifying it. If Mr. Harmon had made during the last campaign, the speech which he recently delivered before the Ohio constitutional convention, would he have been elected? If he had, at the beginning of his campaign for the presidency, interpreted his platform as he now does, would he have been entitled to call himself a progressive? He now takes his proper place as a reactionary, not merely because he is opposed to a proposition fundamentally democratic, but also because he has shown himself willing to repudiate a platform having secured an election upon it. A platform that is not binding is worse than useless. It is a fraud. If Governor Harmon was opposed to the initiative and referendum, he ought to have repudiated that plank of his platform when he accepted the nomination, for his interpretation is more than a repudiation of it—it is a repudiation mingled with double dealing. To interpret his platform as indorsing the initiative and referendum only as

applied to cities when he knew—when every one knew—that it was intended to apply to the whole state, is a reflection upon his own intelligence or upon the intelligence of the people of Ohio.

His platform dealt with the initiative and referendum as a state issue and candor required him to repudiate it if it was not in harmony with his views. Silence could not be construed otherwise than as an indorsement. If he is anxious to make an explanation—if he indulges in any more explanations, he should explain whether he regards a national platform as binding. If he does not give any more weight to a national platform than he has given to a state platform, his candidacy ought to be conditioned upon the abandonment of the platform idea.

MR. ROOSEVELT'S SPEECH

Ex-President Roosevelt's Columbus speech will stand out as the strongest he has yet delivered. The dominant note is "Trust the People." In taking this position he is on solid ground. While he advocates little in the way of reform that democrats have not advocated for years, still it is gratifying to have his influence thrown into the balance in favor of the direct election of senators, the initiative and the referendum. These reforms are distinctly and emphatically democratic. The proposition to submit to the people judicial decisions on constitutional questions is of democratic origin and is sound but his attitude on the trust question is reactionary. **THE REGULATION OF PRIVATE MONOPOLIES WILL NOT WORK.** It has been "weighed in the balance and found wanting." He tried the plan for seven years and a half and there were more trusts at the end of the time than at the beginning. He even allowed the Steel trust to frighten him into permitting still further consolidation.

THE ATTEMPT TO REGULATE PRIVATE MONOPOLIES RESULTS FINALLY IN GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP. This is legitimate in the case of NATURAL monopolies but industrial monopolies are neither natural nor necessary—they should be prevented. Mr. Roosevelt's plan for dealing with the trusts leads directly to socialism.

The democratic anti-trust plan contemplates the restoration of competition—this is the only plan that appeals to individualists.

But the country is to be congratulated upon the delivery of the speech—it helps to mould public opinion in favor of several good measures and even he can not lead the public to the dangerous doctrine that we can rely on regulation as a cure for trust evils.

ROBERT L. HENRY

The name of Robert L. Henry of Texas is writ large in the hearts of democrats. Undaunted by repeated defeats of his effort to have the Money trust investigated he kept pegging away until members of congress who said they would not yield yielded in a marked degree. Under the resolution finally adopted the investigation may not be as thorough as it would have been had Mr. Henry's original plan prevailed but the way is now open for the real friends of investigation to push a serious inquiry and the inquiry will be pushed. It is interesting to note that Washington dispatches say that congressmen were "deluged" with telegrams and letters from their constituents urging them to stand by Henry. Such prodding ought not to have been necessary but it is well that Mr. Henry succeeded even in a degree and for his good work he is receiving thanks and congratulations from the rank and file of his party.

SUCH A SPECTACLE

When have we ever had in the national history such a spectacle as that of a man coming into the presidency on the recommendation of one man and going out of it on the condemnation of the same man? And now it seems they are planning to violate precedents of a hundred years by the nomination of the same man, in order, if possible, to save the republican party from overwhelming defeat.

Self-Government

President Taft is reported as giving deliverance to a very radical statement in a speech recently delivered in New York. Here is what he is said to have said: "There are those who do not believe that all people are fitted for popular government. The fact is we know they are not. Some of us don't dare say so, but I do."

The president then went on to speak of the protection of the judiciary from the recall. He said, "We are called upon now, we of the bar, to say whether we are going to protect the institution of the judiciary and continue it independent of the majority or of all the people."

What shall we say of this denial of the capacity of the people for self-government? How shall we characterize this argument of superior intelligence and patriotism? "We of the bar," he says, "are called upon to protect the judiciary" and "continue it independent of the majority or of all the people." Couldn't the president leave the task of making the judiciary independent of the people to the attorneys for the predatory wealth? They have been laboring diligently to make the judiciary independent of the people for some years, but why should the president step down from the presidency where he is supposed to represent all the people to join the "bar" in protecting the judiciary from the people whom the judges are presumed to serve. If the president has not closed his eyes to information easily obtainable, he knows that the demand for the recall is due to the fact that many of our judges, while independent of the people have not been independent of the predatory interests. The anxiety that is now being manifest for the independence of the judiciary is fundamental among those who have reason to know that some of our judges have been dependent upon the corporations for their appointment to the bench, and that they have been paying their obligations with their decisions.

Mr. Taft is so concerned for fear the people may influence the judges, that he delivers a broad-side against popular government, and even credits himself with courage in making the attack. Has it come to this that his distrust of the people is a qualification for the presidency? Ought the people to trust a man when the man does not trust them? It is an insult to the intelligence of the masses to think that they would degrade themselves as to desire public servants who "are independent of the majority or of all the people." A judge ought to have the moral courage to do justice as between the parties to a suit, but no public servant ought to be able to display with impunity, contempt for the deliberate judgment of those whose servant he is. Mr. Taft is rapidly gaining distinction as the most ultra of the reactionaries.

KEEPING GOOD COMPANY

The press reports may be doing Speaker Clark an injustice but if it is true that his managers are seeking alliance with the Harmon forces wherever necessary to defeat the Wilson supporters they should be reminded of the risk they run. The line between the progressive and the stand-patter is so clearly drawn that a real progressive does not appeal to a stand-patter. It always excites suspicion, therefore, when stand-patters begin to flock to one who is running as a progressive. Mr. Clark's literature appeals to progressives and his natural alliance is with Governor Wilson's friends. Progressives should fight shoulder to shoulder against the reactionary democrats.

A GREAT PROGRESSIVE VICTORY

The progressives in both political parties are to be congratulated on the supreme court's decision refusing to overthrow the initiative and referendum. The way is now clear for the adoption of this great reform in all states of the union. At least those who favor the reform can organize to that end.

CONTENTS

THE EXPLANATION
SELF-GOVERNMENT
HENRY'S FIGHT CROWNED WITH VICTORY
ROOSEVELT IN THE RACE
PRESS OPINIONS ON ROOSEVELT'S SPEECH
OHIO CONGRESSMEN ON GOVERNOR HARMON'S POSITION
MR. ROOSEVELT'S SPEECH AT COLUMBUS
MR. ROOSEVELT AND THE THIRD TERM
HOME DEPARTMENT
NEWS OF THE WEEK
WASHINGTON NEWS