

The Commoner.

WILLIAM J. BRYAN, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

VOL. 12, NO. 29

Lincoln, Nebraska, July 26, 1912

Whole Number 601

Wanted a Democratic Campaign Fund by Popular Contribution

Governor Wilson has announced that no campaign contributions will be received from corporations. This act of the democratic candidate for the presidency will be approved by democrats who want their party to be free from the control of the special interests. The National committee must, however, have money with which to carry on the campaign and this money must come from the people. The COMMONER will assist in the collection of this fund and it will receive contributions, acknowledging the same in its columns and delivering the fund to the treasurer of the democratic national committee. Every democrat ought to have some part in this work. Do not be ashamed to make a small contribution. Give what you feel you can afford and every penny will be acceptable.

Here is a hint: Circulate a subscription list at once among the democrats of your precinct and send the proceeds to The Commoner office without delay. The Democratic National committee must be supplied with funds immediately.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT VS. DEMOCRACY

On another page will be found Mr. Roosevelt's editorial attack on the democratic platform. It is fortunate that his objections are stated now and stated plainly so that they can be considered carefully by progressives in both parties. Mr. Roosevelt does not believe in the fundamental principles upon which our government is founded. He does not believe in the declaration of independence or in the division of powers provided for in the constitution.

In the Outlook editorial he criticizes the democratic position on the Philippine question, saying: "The democratic party denies to this nation the right to hold island possessions. It would treat the Philippine problem, not on a basis of national sovereignty, exercised for constructive and humane purposes, but on a basis of individualism and separation." In his London speech he emphasized his repudiation of the doctrine of government by the consent of the governed and indorsed Great Britain's colonial policy in Egypt.

There are but two ideas of government; the first, that a government is an organization entirely independent of the people and resting on force—an organization that can be thrown over a weaker people as a net is thrown over a bird. This is the old and dying idea. The second theory is ours—the one set forth in our Declaration of Independence and growing throughout the world, namely, that governments are organizations framed by the people for themselves and

derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Mr. Roosevelt is a believer in the old theory—a theory that challenges the Christian civilization of the world. He would abandon the doctrines that have made us the leader of the nations in their progress toward more popular government; he would put our nation at the rear of the monarchical procession and make it a defender of the policy of force and hypocrisy that has put commercial expansion above the inalienable rights of man.

He criticizes our tariff plank; of course, he does this because he stands for the doctrine of taxation of the many for the benefit of a few, and he has done nothing to relieve the people of the extortion now being practiced upon them through high tariff schedules.

His references to state bank circulation, income taxes and inheritance taxes are aside from the issue and only introduced to befog the subject. Income and inheritance taxes can be levied for revenue only. Swollen fortunes can be reached in other ways and can be prevented by the withdrawal of the privileges which Mr. Roosevelt defends. State bank circulation can be prevented by other forms of legislation, and besides the taxation of all the people for the benefit of a few of the people does the public infinitely more injury than a state bank circulation ever did.

On the trust question his position is radically wrong and probably accounts for the support which he is receiving from some of the trusts.

Corporations engaged in legitimate business can and should be regulated, but a private monopoly is different—it should not be permitted to exist. Regulation was tried under Mr. Roosevelt himself and trusts grew and fattened under him. One trust, the steel trust—the worst of all—secured from him permission to swallow up its largest rival, and his most conspicuous supporter, Mr. Perkins, is connected with several trusts. Mr. Roosevelt has recommended federal incorporation—the very thing that the trusts desire. The trusts want relief from state laws and Mr. Roosevelt is the first president to join them in advocating this legislation. On the trust question Mr. Roosevelt is hand-in-hand with predatory wealth. His policy on this subject is not only not progressive, but is reactionary and dangerous.

But Mr. Roosevelt's errors are not to be wondered at. His whole bias is wrong. He is more Hamiltonian than Hamilton himself. No public man since the government was formed has treated constitutional limitations so contemptuously. He concludes his Outlook editorial with the following significant words: "The progressives would discard those limita-

tions surviving from the past that hamper and interfere with the progress of the people, and turning forward, would insist that ninety million people of the nation should be permitted to do whatever is necessary for the welfare of the nation and for securing social justice."

Away with the constitution and let us decide what the people need and then do it for them! That is the Roosevelt program. He has a passion for power—such a passion as no other president ever had. No other president ever felt so rebellious against the restrictions which our forefathers thought it wise to throw about the executive office.

In his Ossawatimie speech, as interpreted afterwards in the Outlook, he outlined his policy, first, the absorption by the general government of much of the power now exercised by the states; second, the absorption by the federal executive of much of the power now exercised by other departments, and, third, a president who will be looked to as the steward of the people. This is not popular government; it is despotism. Add to this centralization of government a man of Mr. Roosevelt's temperament and you have the man on horseback. He repudiates the traditions against a third term and sets no limit to his ambition.

Can he lead the progressive republicans to the extreme that he represents? Did he not show by his conduct at Chicago that he is more interested in obtaining the office for himself than in advancing reforms? He could have nominated any one of a number of progressives—why did he refuse to stand aside? Is there no other person big enough for such a swollen presidency as he would create? If so, does not this show the danger of enlarging the powers of the executive as he desires to enlarge them.

The democratic platform contains all the progressiveness that the people are ready to accept and Governor Wilson can be trusted to carry out the platform. Mr. Roosevelt stands for a number of progressive policies, popular election of senators, income tax, regulation of railroads and publicity, for instance, but these things are practically secured, and the democrats have done much more than Mr. Roosevelt to secure them. Mr. Roosevelt is in favor of the initiative and referendum but no more than the democrats are, and they are state issues anyhow.

On questions now before the national government, such as tariff, trusts, national incorporation, imperialism and the third term, Mr. Roosevelt is wrong. On these subjects he is reactionary and can not secure a following among democrats—he can hardly hope to hold progressive republicans.

CONTENTS

THEODORE ROOSEVELT VS. DEMOCRACY
PUSH THE MONEY TRUST INVESTIGATION
CHAIRMAN McCOMBS
WILSON AND MARSHALL CLUBS
WHAT IS A "PROGRESSIVE?"
MR. BRYAN AND HIS NEIGHBORS
"THE FOLKS AT HOME" IN WEST VIRGINIA
BUY MONTICELLO
NO CASH FROM CORPORATIONS
PRESS OPINION ON GOVERNOR WILSON'S NOMINATION
BRYAN WINS GREAT FIGHT WHEN TIMID FRIENDS FALTER
HOME DEPARTMENT
WHETHER COMMON OR NOT
DEMOCRATIC CAMPAIGN NEWS
NEWS OF THE WEEK
WASHINGTON NEWS