Striking Sentences from Woodrow Wilson's Speech of Acceptance

The forces of the nation are asserting themselves against every form of special privilege and private control.

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We need no revolution, we need no excited change; we need only a new point of view and a new method and spirit of counsel.

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What we are seeking is not destruction of any kind, nor the disruption of any sound or honest thing, but merely the rule of right and of the common advantage.

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Our domestic markets no longer suffice. We need foreign markets. That is another force that is going to break the tariff down. The tariff was once a bulwark; now it is a dam. For trade is reciprocal; we can not sell unless we also buy.

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Favors are never conceived in the general interest; they are always for the benefit of the few, and the few who seek and obtain them have only themselves to blame if presently they seem to be condemned and distrusted.

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No man can be just who is not free; and no man who has to show favors ought to undertake the solemn responsibility of government in any rank or post whatever, least of all in the supreme post of president of the United States.

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To be free is not necessarily to be wise. But wisdom comes with counsed, with the frank and free conference of untrammeled men united in the common interest. Should I be entrusted with the great office of president, I would seek counsel wherever it could be had upon free terms.

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We must speak, not to catch votes. but to satisfy the thought and conscience of a people deeply stirred by the conviction that they have come to a critical turning point in their moral and political development. We stand in the presence of an awakened nation, impatient of partisan make-believe.

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We denounce the Payne-Aldrich tariff act as the most conspicuous example ever afforded the country of the special favors and monopolistic advantages which the leaders of the republican party have so often shown themselves willing to extend to those to whom they looked for campaign contributions.

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I know the temper of the great convention which nominated me; I know the temper of the country that lay back of that convention and spoke through it. I heed with deep thankfulness the message you bring me from it. I feel that I am surrounded by men whose principles and ambitions are those of true servants of the people.

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The tariff question, as dealt with in our time at any rate, has not been business. It has been politics. Tariff schedules have been made up for the purpose of keeping as large a number as possible of the rich and influential manufacturers of the country in a good humor with the republican party, which desired their constant financial support.

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We are not the owners of the Philippine Islands. We hold them in trust for the people who live in them. They are theirs, for the uses of their life. We are not even their partners. It is our duty, as trustee, to make whatever arrangement of government will be most serviceable to their freedom and development. Here, again, we are to set up the rule of justice and of right.

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It is not as easy for us to live as it used to be. Our money will not buy as much. High wages, even when we can get them, yield us no great comfort. We used to be better off with less, because a dollar could buy so much more. The majority of us have been disturbed to find ourselves growing poorer, even though our earnings were slowly increasing. Prices climb faster than we can push our earnings up.

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The trusts do not belong to the period of infant industries. They are not the products of the time, that old laborious time, when the great continent we live on was undeveloped, the young nation struggling to find itself and get upon its feet amidst older and more experienced competitors. They belong to a very recent and very sophisticated age, when men knew what they wanted and knew how to get it by the favor of the government.

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No law that safeguards their life, that improves the physical and moral conditions under which they live, that makes their hours of labor rational and tolerable, that gives them freedom to act in their own interest, and that protects them where they can not protect themselves, can properly be regarded as class legislation or as anything but a measure taken in the interest of the whole people, whose partnership in right action we are trying to establish and make real and practical.

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We do not ignore the fact that the business of a country like ours is exceedingly sensitive to changes in legislation of this kind. It has been built up, however, ill-advisedly, upon tariff schedules written in the way I have indicated, and its foundations must not be too radically or too suddenly disturbed. When we act we should act with caution and prudence, like men who know what they are about, and not like those in love with a theory. It is obvious that the changes we make should be made only at such a rate and in such a way as will least interfere with the normal and healthful course of commerce and manufacture. But we shall not on that account act with timidity, as if we did not know our own minds, for we are certain of our ground and of our object. There should be an immediate revision, and it should be downward, unhesitatingly and steadily downward.

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Moreover, we begin to perceive some things about the movement of prices that concern us very deeply, and fix our attention upon the tariff schedules with a more definite determination than ever to get to the bottom of this matter. We have been looking into it, at trials held under the Sherman act, and in investigations in the committee rooms of congress, where men who wanted to know the real facts have been busy with inquiry, and we begin to see very clearly what at least some of the methods are by which prices are fixed. We know that they are not fixed by the competitions of the market, or by the ancient law of supply and demand which is to be found stated in all the primers of economics, but by private arrangements with regard to what the supply should be and agreements among the producers themselves. Those who buy are not even represented by counsel. The high cost of living is arranged by private understanding.

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There are two great things to do. One is to set up the rule of justice and of right in such matters as the tariff, the regulation of the trusts and the prevention of monopoly, the adaptation of our banking and currency laws to the varied uses to which our people must put them, the treatment of those who do the daily labor in our factories and mines and throughout all our great industrial and commercial undertakings, and the political life of the people of the Philippines, for whom we hold governmental power in trust, for their service not our own. The other, the additional duty, is the great task of protecting our people and our resources and of keeping open to the whole people the doors of opportunity through which they must, generation by generation, pass if they are to make conquest of their fortunes in health, in freedom, in peace and in contentment.

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The welfare, the happiness, the energy and spirit of the men and women who do the daily work in our mines and factories, on our railroads, in our offices and ports of trade, on our farms and on the sea, is of the essence of our national life. There can be nothing wholesome unless their life is wholesome; there can be no contentment unless they are contented. Their physical welfare affects the soundness of the whole nation. We shall never get very far in the settlement of these vital matters so long as we regard everything done for the working man by law or by private agreement, as a concession yielded to keep him from agitation and a disturbance of our peace.

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I thank God and take courage.

NEW DEMOCRATIC CLUBS

New clubs reported to The Commoner since the last published list up to and including Friday, September 20:

Wilson and Marshall Club, Marion, Iowa—C. S. Shanklin, president; M. W. Courtney, secretary; T. J. Davis, treasurer.

Wilson and Marshall League, Indianapolis, Ind.—Gustav W. Kevers, president; W. C. Liller, chairman executive committee; C. R. Cameron, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Grand Forks, N. D.—W. V. O'Connor, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, New Rockford, N. D.—J. S. Cameron, president; Ray Creig, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Binford, N. D.—Theodore Smogard, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Williston, N. D.—George A. Gilmore, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Collins, N. D.—Ben Collins, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Minot, N. D.—Clarence Vandenover, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Hannaford, N. D.—Rev. P. A. Thoreson, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Edgerely, N. D.—I. C. Doane, secretary.

Wilson-Hawley Progressive Club, Gooding, Idaho—Lester Steinkopf, president; J. E. Henkle, secretary and treasurer; Edward K. Walsh, vice president.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Sebree, Ky.—W. G. Collins, president; R. B. McGregor, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Salem, Mo.—Earl A. Seay, president; L. D. Vandivort, vice president; W. W. Young, treasurer; Frank Harris, secretary.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Humboldt, Neb.—Otto Koutouc, president; J. W. Youngman, vice president; T. H. Gillian, secretary and treasurer.

Wilson and Marshall Club, Norman, Okla.—Judge W. L. Eagelton, president; Dr. C. S. Bobo, vice president; J. O. Fox, secretary; W. J. Stevens, treasurer.

Young Men's Woodrow Wilson Club, Huntington, Pa.—John C. Dunkle, president; H. H. Davis, vice president; C. H. Lesher, secretary; G. B. Herncane, treasurer.

THE MYSTERIOUS TWENTY-TWO

The Kansas City Times prints this editorial: "Five dollars reward for the list of Missouri delegates who voted for Parker for temporary chairman at Baltimore is pitifully small. If Mr. Bryan really desires the list he will have to make it worth while for somebody like Mr. William J. Burns to investigate. The vote was taken on the Tuesday when the convention opened. A canvass by a correspondent for the Star on Wednesday morning was futile. Every Missouri delegate who could be found swore that he was one of the fourteen who voted for Bryan. There were sad rumors that in the caucus before the vote on temporary chairman the thirty-six Missouri delegates were nearly unanimous for Parker. Then it was decided that it would "look better" if a substantial vote should be given the Bryan candidate. So fourteen unselfish souls agreed to forego their personal inclinations and frown on Parker. But when the full meaning of the Parker-Bryan contest dawned on the convention, when angry progressive democrats came around to Missouri headquarters in the Emerson hotel demanding to know why Missouri was for the reactionary candidate, then the unhappy delegates began with one accord to vow that cross-their-heart-and-hope-to-die they really and truly did vote for Bryan. No, if Mr. Bryan is going to get an accurate list he will have to set an entire detective force on the job of ferreting out the information."

The reward offered by The Commoner still holds good.

Mr. Roosevelt had seven years in which to do things. Now he wants four years more—eleven in all—in which to really do them. But will the country stand for this "seven come eleven" game?