

# The Commoner.

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## Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Popular Government

We have a democratic senate and a democratic house, as well as a democratic president, but let no one think it safe to go to sleep. One majority in the senate is very small—a few reactionaries may obstruct legislation or insist on concessions as the price of support. There are reactionaries in the house, also, and an eye must be kept on them. It behooves every democrat to be on the alert and to warn his senators and his member of congress against any backward step. The Baltimore platform says: "Our pledges are made to be kept when in office as well as relied upon during the campaign." Every official should be held to the letter and spirit of the platform. Ten cents spent by each voter for postal cards and cards used to indorse faithful representatives and to admonish unfaithful ones would work wonders in securing progressive measures. The officials at Washington should be informed that the rank and file of the democratic party insists on the carrying out of the platform. The first work to be done is to secure legislation which will give an immediate reduction of the high tariff, make a private monopoly impossible and reform the currency in the interest of the whole people with protection against Wall street's control.

## Banking Legislation in the Democratic Congress

Those who are interested in knowing the democratic position on banking and banking and currency, should read the following plank of the Baltimore platform:

"We oppose the so-called Aldrich bill for the establishment of a central bank; and we believe our country will be largely freed from panics, and consequent unemployment and business depression by such a systematic revision of our banking laws as will render temporary relief in localities where such relief is needed, with protection from control or domination by what is known as the money trust. Banks exist for the accommodation of the public and not for the control of business. All legislation on the subject of banking and currency should have for its purpose the securing of these accommodations on terms of absolute security to the public and of complete protection from the misuse of the power that wealth gives to those who possess it.

"We condemn the present methods of depositing government funds in a few favored banks largely situated in or controlled by Wall street, in return for political favors, and we pledge our party to provide by law for their deposit by competitive bidding in the banking institutions of the country, national and state, without discrimination as to locality, upon approved securities, and subject to call by the government.

"Of equal importance with the question of currency reform is the question of rural credits or agricultural finance. Therefore, we recommend that an investigation of agricultural credit societies in foreign countries be made, so that it may be ascertained whether a system of rural credits may be devised suitable to conditions in the United States; and we also favor legislation permitting national banks to loan a reasonable proportion of their funds on real estate security.

"We recognize the value of vocational educa-

tion, and urge federal appropriations for such training and extension teaching in agriculture in co-operation with the several states."

It will be noticed that the plank begins with a denunciation of the Aldrich bill which proposes the establishment of a central bank. Any democrat who votes for the establishment of a central bank will not only oppose the democratic platform but the traditional policy of the party. As stated in the platform, our party believes in "such a systematic revision of our banking laws as will render temporary relief in localities where such relief is needed, with protection from control or domination by what is known as the money trust."

The real purpose of the Aldrich bill is not to relieve the public but to enlarge the influence, already tyrannical, of the money trust. Legislators will find that the enthusiasm of the big financiers for monetary revision will very quickly subside when they are confronted with any plan which furnishes relief to the people without putting the people at the mercy of Wall street.

Those who are entrusted with legislation will do well to commit to memory the following paragraph of the democratic platform:

"Banks exist for the accommodation of the public and not for the control of business. All legislation on the subject of banking and currency should have for its purpose the securing of these accommodations on terms of absolute protection from the misuse of the power that wealth gives to those who possess it."

This is the fundamental principle which ought to guide in all currency legislation. "Banks exist for the accommodation of the public and not for the control of business." This is the truth which the big banks seem prone to forget. All legislation on the subject of banking and currency should have for its purpose "the securing of these accommodations on terms of absolute security to the public and of complete protection from the misuse of power that wealth gives to those who possess it." This sentence should be framed and hung in the room of the committee on banking and currency. If the doctrine therein set forth is followed, the currency will be revised in such a way as to furnish all the relief needed by localities and yet give, with that relief, complete protection from the domination of the money trust and from "the misuse of power which wealth gives to those who possess it."

Congress will have no difficulty in putting into operation the third paragraph of the banking plank which provides for the deposit of government money on competitive bidding without discrimination as to locality.

The fourth paragraph of the money plank is also important, but it will not be difficult to carry out the entire democratic policy in all its details as soon as it is definitely understood that "banks exist for the accommodation of the public and not for the control of business." All depends upon the point of view. When ques-

tions are looked at from the standpoint of the welfare of ALL the people, it is easy enough to secure such legislation as is needed; our banking laws have been made for the banking fraternity and not for the business public.

### WORK IN THE STATES

The great democratic victory in the states should not be allowed to pass unimproved. The income tax amendment should be ratified by every state that has not already ratified it. The amendment providing for the popular election of senators should also be ratified—only two states have ratified thus far. The primary system should be adopted wherever it has not yet been and should be extended to presidential contests. Provision should be made for the expression of a second choice at the primaries. The initiative and referendum should be secured where they have not been. The recall should be secured also, where the people are ready for it, but it should not be pushed where it would endanger the securing of the initiative and referendum—these are the more important and with the initiative secured anything else can be obtained when the people want it. Publicity should be ensured, legitimate corporations should be effectively regulated and trusts should be prevented. Wherever the democrats are in power they should proceed to fulfill the promises made during the campaign.

### INAUGURATION DAY POSTPONED

President-elect Wilson has announced that while he will take the oath of office on March 4th, he is willing that the formalities of inauguration day be postponed until the last Thursday in April. This suggestion is due to the fact that Washington City weather in the early part of March is habitually poor. If it were possible to carry out Governor Wilson's suggestion the formal inaugural festivities would be carried on under more agreeable conditions than those attending, as a rule, the inauguration of an American president.

### UNTO OTHERS

A song of those within the desert places—  
The dull, the strange, the erring of all lands,  
Who face the future with despairing faces,  
And stretch forth pleading, unavailing hands.

The heirs of poverty, the slaves of weakness,  
The arrogant who will not heed commands;  
The spiritless who wear a coward's meekness,  
The desperate who spill life's creeping sands.

Oh! holders of the prized and vantage places,  
Oh! sharers of the peaceful, happy days,  
Oh! scions of the wise and favored races,  
Oh! revelers along the sunny ways—

I beg a moment's pause, with earnest faces,  
That common blood and Fatherhood demands;  
A prayer for those within the dreary places  
Who stretch forth pleading, unavailing hands  
—George W. Priest in Colliers.

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