

The Story of a White House Deal

Associated Press Dispatches Printed Before and After the Election of 1908
—and Later—Which Tell Their Own Story and Carry Their Own Moral

BEFORE ELECTION

(Introducing Daniel J. Keefe.)

Akron, Ohio, October 12, 1908.—At the Akron meeting tonight Mr. Taft reiterated the points he had previously made on the labor question and brought to his support the recently published letters of Daniel J. Keefe, member of the executive council of the American Federation of Labor and head of the International Longshoremen organization.

The candidate said the testimony of Mr. Keefe was the more weighty because Mr. Keefe had ascertained his (Taft's) position on labor in constant references during the Panama troubles.

Mr. Keefe closed his indorsement of Mr. Taft, which the latter read, as follows:

"I shall support and vote for Mr. Taft, who was admitted to membership in the International Brotherhood of Steam Shovel and Dredgemen on account of his strong advocacy of the enforcement of the eight hour law on all government work coming under the jurisdiction of the war department. I might say that Mr. Taft has done more to enforce laws in favor of organized labor than all his predecessors."

SHOWING DANIEL J. KEEFE'S MOTIVE

New York, October 13, 1908.—The democratic national committee, through John G. Jordan, assistant and acting chief of the press bureau at headquarters, tonight made public the following statement:

"It was stated at the national democratic headquarters tonight that President Roosevelt, by promise of office, has succeeded in having one of the big men of the American Federation of Labor desert President Gompers in his advocacy of the election of Mr. Bryan for his presidency. The leader in question is Daniel J. Keefe of Detroit, president of the Longshoremen's Union, and one of the vice presidents of the American Federation of Labor. The committee alleges that Keefe and the president were closeted for several hours in Washington on Saturday, October 3, and that Keefe is to be made commissioner of immigration, in consideration of Keefe's repudiating Mr. Gompers and the executive council of the federation.

"Keefe on Saturday last issued a statement in which he said: 'I am going to vote for William H. Taft.'

"It is pointed out that on September 28, last, the executive council of the American Federation of Labor issued a circular calling on labor organizations to work for the defeat of Mr. Taft and the republican congressmen seeking re-election, and Mr. Keefe authorized his signature to be attached to it. The source of the democratic committee's information was not divulged tonight, but the information was offered that if Mr. Keefe and President Roosevelt deny the charge another big leader now in New York will come forward with the charge that the offer was made and Keefe accepted it and has commenced to make good his part of the deal."

SETS MR. ROOSEVELT TO THINKING

Washington, October 13, 1908.—Secretary Loeb, upon being shown the statement issued from democratic headquarters in New York, said nothing in the nature of a reply would be

CABINET ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are no hard-and-fast precedents which would guide President-elect Wilson in the matter of informing the public of the cabinet selections which he has made. He may adopt the method which General Grant thought best in the announcement of his first cabinet. Grant himself was then like a sphinx, being absolutely silent about cabinet appointments even to his friends. The list which he sent to the senate the day after his inauguration contained several names which had never been mentioned in any of the guesses. Nobody dreamed that President Grant was to appoint Elihu Washburn as secretary of state. Grant himself afterward was quoted by some of his intimate friends as having said that it might have been better if he had not been so secretive about his cabinet

given out at the White House tonight, but that the charge would probably receive attention tomorrow. Daniel J. Keefe was one of the president's callers on October 3. Patrick Morrissey of Cleveland, Ohio, head of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, also visited the president during the same day.

DANIEL J. KEEFE DENIES IT

Detroit, Mich., October 13, 1908.—President Daniel J. Keefe of the International Longshoremen, Marine and Transport Workers' Association, when informed tonight of the statement made at national democratic headquarters in New York that he had been promised the position of commissioner general of immigration in return for his advocacy of W. H. Taft, entered a vigorous denial. After having the statement read to him Mr. Keefe said:

"I was not closeted with President Roosevelt at all. I did see him on October 3, but for only four or five minutes, and several others were present."

THE CHARGE REITERATED

New York, October 14, 1908.—The democratic national committee issued a statement tonight quoting Timothy Healey, president of the International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen, as authority for the allegation that Daniel J. Keefe had been promised by the president appointment as commissioner general of immigration in return for the Detroit labor leader's support of Mr. Taft. The national committee had promised to make known its informant if the charge was denied as it has been both by Keefe and at the White House.

The national committee quotes Mr. Healey in part as follows:

"I was in Washington on Wednesday of last week on a matter dealing with our organization which brought me in contact with an official of high standing in the government service. He said to me: 'Dan Keefe has been selected for commissioner general of immigration.'

"'Is that so?' I asked.

"'Yes, the job is his,' he replied.

"I asked him how he knew, and he told me that his informant was a member of the president's cabinet and knew what he was talking about.

"This information was not given to me in a confidential manner, but I will not give my informant's name, for it is plain to see what would happen to him if his name came out.

"There is not any doubt in my mind but that the statement that the president offered Keefe the position and that Keefe agreed to accept is true. Perhaps the offer was not made at this conference on October 3, last, but I believe it has been made."

ANOTHER STATEMENT FROM KEEFE

Cleveland, Ohio, October 14, 1908.—Daniel J. Keefe, president of the International Longshoremen's Union, and member of the executive committee of the American Federation of Labor, was in Cleveland today attending a meeting of the Lumber Carriers' Association. Mr. Keefe reiterated his statements made yesterday in regard to the allegations that he was promised the commissionership of immigration as a reward

appointments. He probably would have been spared the peculiar experience exemplified by the speedy resignation of Elihu Washburn as secretary of state and his appointment as minister to France. General Grant always felt that he would have been spared the humiliation, or at least the annoyance, occasioned by his appointment of Alexander T. Stewart of New York as secretary of the treasury had he sought advice. For had he told any member of the senate that he expected to nominate Mr. Stewart for that office he would have been informed that Mr. Stewart under the law was ineligible.

General Garfield's cabinet was an unknown quantity, not because Garfield was secretive, but because he had the greatest difficulty in making up his cabinet. It was in fact not completed until after Garfield's inauguration. The only

member of his cabinet whose appointment was well-known to the public was James G. Blaine as secretary of state. President Cleveland, who never cared for newspaper support and who was always indifferent to newspaper influence, decided as a matter of policy to let the public guess what the membership of his first cabinet would be. McKinley, while not authorizing any announcement of his cabinet, nevertheless was glad to have its membership known to the public because he felt that in this way he could get an idea of what the public estimate of his cabinet would be. Lincoln, it was known, decided to name for his cabinet the men who had been leading candidates for the presidential nomination before the republican national convention by which Lincoln himself was nominated.—Buffalo (N. Y.) Times.

for his support of Candidate Taft. Mr. Keefe said:

"It is not reasonable to suppose that the republican party, if it was in the business of buying up votes, would waste its energy and efforts on life long republicans.

"On October 3 I went to Washington to see Mr. Wright, secretary of war, on some business pertaining to my organization. While there I called upon and paid my respects to the president. P. H. Morrissey, head of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, and others were with me at the time. I talked to the president in their presence. No mention was made of the immigration department and the president did not ask me to accept the position made vacant by the late Frank Sargent.

"I am not and never have been a candidate for that position. I do know of two other prominent labor men who are being urged for the place."

ROOSEVELT AND LOEB DENY IT

Washington, October 14, 1908.—While no formal statement was issued from the White House, Secretary Loeb today denied that President Roosevelt promised the office of commissioner general of immigration to Daniel J. Keefe of Detroit, president of the International Association of Longshoremen in consideration of Mr. Keefe's action in declaring for Mr. Taft in opposition to the pro-Bryan campaign of President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Loeb added that Mr. Keefe in his denial of the story was absolutely correct.

AFTER THE ELECTION

Washington, December 1, 1908.—Daniel J. Keefe of Detroit, Mich., was today appointed commissioner general of immigration to succeed the late Frank P. Sargent. Mr. Keefe is president of the International Longshoremen's Union.

THE NATURAL RESULT

Washington, February 22, 1913.—Secretary Nagel has made a report to President Taft on the official conduct of Daniel J. Keefe, of Detroit, commissioner general of immigration and has recommended that Keefe's resignation be demanded.

The report alleges that the head of the immigration service has accepted free transportation for himself and family from railroads and steamships. These alleged acts were considered by Secretary Nagel as sufficiently serious to be called to the president's attention, because the commissioner general of immigration necessarily deals officially with railroads and steamships in connection with immigration cases.

It is not known whether President Taft will take any action. He may leave the case for the consideration of President Wilson in view of the few remaining days of his administration. Secretary Nagel will not discuss the situation. He made his investigation and submitted his report to the president some time ago.

Keefe was appointed commissioner general of immigration in November, 1908, for an indeterminate term. He formerly was president of the International Longshoremen's Union and sixth vice president of the American Federation of Labor.