

Some Needed Reforms

Two new cabinet officers, secretary of education and secretary of health; three constitutional amendments, one permitting ratification of treaties by a majority vote, another making the constitution amendable when amendments are submitted by a majority in two successive congresses and ratified by a majority of the popular vote in a majority of the states, provided it is also a majority of the popular vote in the nation; third, an amendment requiring a referendum on a declaration of war except in case of actual invasion.

Several statutory reforms are needed: First, a federal primary law providing for presidential primaries in all the states on the same day, voter to express first, second and third choice; campaign expenses to be limited in amount and source to be made known before the primary.

Second, a national bulletin should be established under bipartisan control, with editorial space equitably divided between parties represented in congress.

Third, penal laws that will prevent profiteering.

Fourth, legislation that will prevent private monopoly.

Fifth, legislation that will prevent speculation in farm products, government bonds and industrial securities.

State reforms and other national reforms will be discussed in the next issue.

W. J. BRYAN.

THEY WILL RISE AGAIN

Landslides do not respect great personalities; the big are overwhelmed with the small, the blameless with those who are at fault. As a result of the very magnitude of the Republican victory the country will temporarily lose the services of many Democrats whose re-election would have been sure under normal conditions—men like Chamberlain, Phelan, Nugent, Mark Smith and Beckham in the Senate, and like Champ Clark, Henry Rainey, Ayres of Kansas and Ferris of Oklahoma, not to speak of such promising new men as Julian of Ohio, Long of Missouri, Scott of Colorado and Moyle of Utah.

We also lose many splendid officials who hold appointive positions, like John Skelton Williams, the best comptroller of the currency the nation ever had; Indian Commissioner Sells, Anthony Caminetti, commissioner general of immigration, and Louis F. Post, assistant secretary of labor. The cabinet officers, too, go into partial eclipse, but the good Democrats die not without hope—they will rise again with the resurrection of democracy which is sure to come.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again;
Th' eternal years of God are hers."

If the Democrats of New York will consult the platform which they adopted last spring and then review the course of their delegation at San Francisco, they may understand the causes of Democratic defeat as well as the other Democrats of the nation do.

If the authorities can find any one who issued or circulated the cruel slander against Senator Harding during the closing days of the campaign, the culprit should be dealt with criminally. Civil process is not severe enough for such cases.

CONGRESS, TAKE NOTICE!

An effort will be made to repeal the excess profits tax. Candidate Harding declared for the repeal of the excess profits tax, Candidate Cox declared for repeal, and the President has recommended repeal. Quite a respectable group of supporters of repeal, I admit, but it is a Wall Street demand and congress can not afford to yield to the demand. The excess profit has already been collected from the people for ten months and a half of the year 1920—why allow the profiteers to keep it all? If the profiteers will quit profiteering there will be no excess profits to tax. Why not reduce the excess profits tax by reducing PROFITEERING? If profiteers plunder in spite of the tax, they would plunder still more if there was no tax. The excess profits tax should stand until profiteering is STOPPED. Stop profiteering; let the tax stand.

W. J. BRYAN.

MR. BRYAN'S PART IN THE CAMPAIGN

Mr. Bryan did not make any political speeches during the campaign of 1920 but he traveled nearly two-thousand miles—from his winter home in Florida to Lincoln, Nebraska—to cast his vote for Cox and Roosevelt and the entire Democratic state and congressional ticket. He did not speak because his speeches would not fit into the plans of the campaign. The presidential candidate has a right to direct the campaign, and Governor Cox so directed it that, distressing as it was to Mr. Bryan, he could not make speeches in harmony with those made by the candidate. He could not guarantee Governor Cox's position on the liquor question or endorse his evasions in the West and his silence on this subject in the East. He could not support Mr. Cox's declaration in favor of a repeal of the excess profit tax—a gratuitous abandonment of the national platform in order to throw a sop to Wall Street. Neither could he support Governor Cox in his effort to make the Democratic party appear as the sole champion of world peace. Knowing that the President was more to blame than Mr. Harding for the failure of our nation to enter the league on March 19, 1920, and believing as firmly in the sincerity of such peace advocates as Taft and Hoover as he did in the sincerity of the Democratic candidate, he could not insult the intelligence of the American people by questioning the good faith of these distinguished Americans.

He voted for Mr. Cox, not because of the latter's campaign speeches but in spite of them. He believed that Mr. Cox would use his influence to prevent a surrender of the splendid economic reforms secured by the Democratic party during its lease of power, and he believed that the Democratic party could better be trusted than the Republican party with the solution of the economic problems that demand the attention of the American people.

W. J. BRYAN.

WHEN LAW IS ENFORCED

The wets are boasting of lawlessness under prohibition, but it is where prohibition is not enforced. Some states and cities are not helping the federal government to enforce the law. The New York governor ran on a platform that encouraged violation of prohibition; Chicago's chief of police has just been removed for collusion with bootleggers, and look at New Jersey's governor. But New York's governor was defeated by a candidate pledged to enforcement, and New Jersey's governor has been rebuked at the polls. Ohio and Missouri have ratified their enforcement laws, and Great Britain will soon cease to permit her territory to be used as a base for conspiracies against our laws. The world moves.

HOW MANY WANT INCREASE?

If, as estimated, the government will need four billions in revenues next year, and Wall street succeeds in securing a repeal of the excess profits tax, how shall we make up the billion dollars that repeal of the excess profits tax will give to the profiteers? It will require an increase of 33 1-3 per cent in the taxes on the rest of the people. Those who want their taxes increased will please raise their hands.

THE WOMAN VOTE

The woman vote did not seem to help Cox much, but that is no reason for regretting woman suffrage—the male vote did not help much either. Some hope for the future can be derived from the old proverb that credits woman with the right to change her mind. To win in 1924 we need a large amount of change.

NO NEW PARTY NECESSARY

Candidate Cox is correct when, in his post-election statement, he declares that the Democratic party is not dead. War questions have overshadowed domestic issues; the way will soon be cleared for the consideration of economic questions and then it will be easy to see which party is the real progressive.

SPECIAL INTERESTS REPRESENTED

On another page will be found a list of the organizations represented by special agents at Washington. The average man is the "forgotter man." He must rely upon his congressman and senators; therefore, he should be careful to secure the nomination and election of candidates who can be trusted to represent the masses.

The Democratic Party Still Lives

Let no Democrat despair. Today clouds conceal the shining sun, but Senator Harding's big majority is not an expression of confidence in the reactionary leaders of the Republican party; it is a protest against the failure of the Democratic party to measure up to great opportunities. There never has been as many people yearning for reform as there are today; their forces are defeated and their councils are distracted but the reaction against the Republican party will begin on the fifth day of March if not on the fourth day of November. When the Democratic party makes an inventory of its stock, it will find that its splendid economic record will be its great asset. If the Republican party permits it to stand, it will be a confession of Democratic virtue; if it attempts to undo what has been done, it will arouse an opposition as irresistible as that which the Democratic party has just encountered. The time for preparation for the next conflict is at hand. Let the Democrats bestir themselves and put their house in order; let unfaithful leaders be relegated to the rear and men of vision and unselfish purpose be called to the front; let the progressive forces of the nation join hands and compel the Republican party to meet the present domestic problems of today, or falling, give way to those who are able to protect the people's interests.

W. J. BRYAN.

DEMOCRATIC PARTY BETRAYED

On another page will be found an editorial reproduced from The Commoner of last February entitled "1904 Over Again." It may be interesting for the readers of The Commoner to compare prediction with fulfillment. The New York democracy played its old game and played it with unusual success. It took the party up on to the mountain and offered it victory in return for surrender, and then it basely betrayed the party and helped to give the Republican candidates an unprecedented majority in the state. How long, oh Lord, how long can this policy of deception and betrayal continue to mislead the well-meaning Democrats of the nation?

RELIGION NECESSARY

The effort to divorce religion from education has been carried so far that scepticism and agnosticism are being taught under the guise of science and philosophy. If the Bible can not be defended in public schools the teachers should not be allowed to attack it or to undermine the faith of those who believe in it. Attention is called to an article on this subject on another page.

In view of the fact that New York gave Harding a million majority, New Jersey three hundred thousand, Illinois eight hundred thousand, Ohio four hundred thousand, and Indiana over a hundred thousand, it may be well to remember that Murphy, Nugent, Brennan and Taggart helped to select the Democratic candidate and pledged their states to him. Can they deceive the west and south again?

The failure of wet Democrats to make good the pledges into which they entered at San Francisco will relieve the Democratic party of the prohibition issue for the future. Never again can a bunch of brewers deceive or intimidate the Democratic hosts into silence upon this great moral question. It was costly experience but its lesson will not be forgotten.

The Democratic National Committee assured us that the tide turned in favor of Governor Cox about the middle of October and was running higher and higher up to the time of election. It makes us shudder to think what the result might have been if the election had occurred before the tide turned.

Wanted, a Democratic party in New York that cannot be intoxicated by the liquor interests or intimidated by Wall Street.

The day is past when the liquor machines and Wall Street interests of the large cities can successfully dictate to the great moral majority of the nation. Make the Democratic party deserve to win, then organize for the coming struggle.