

## Comments on Democratic Defeat

Below are extracts from a few of the many letters received by Mr. Bryan following the November election:

Robert M. Small, Ohio.—Enclosed you will find a copy of a press report which appeared in "The Ohio State Journal" at Columbus as of Sunday, November 7. Reading this statement one is reminded of "The Devil Interpreting Scriptures"—that to judge the rewards for righteousness is absolutely within his province.

To be more charitable, reviewing our recent political experience one is reminded of the conditions developed when children usurp the duties of the household and farm—the beds are unmade, the dishes unwashed, the orchards unpruned, and the fields not properly tilled for the sowing.

The real democrats of Ohio are not in sympathy with the presumptions exposed in this procedure as outlined by this press report, and you can depend upon it that Ohio democracy will right itself in due time.

Governor Cox was successful in his political campaigns in Ohio only when handed a "rain-check," and like all such is the loudest "rooster" when the home team wins and the most unappreciative "knocker" when it loses.

During the recent political campaign I heard, and now hear from a great number of democrats and republicans alike, "What a mistake was made that the admonitions of Col. Bryan were not heeded." To me this is a preface to a demand which will later come from the people that you again assume the leadership of the democratic party of the nation. It should be stated that it will be a demand that you continue your leadership of true democracy. You are assured of our best wishes.

(Below is a copy of press report referred to in above letter.—Ed.)

Washington, Nov. 6.—Denouncing as "slackers" democrats who refused to take part in the campaign to elect Governor Cox, some officers of the democratic national committee made public here today a "blacklist" of distinguished democrats, including intimate advisers of the administration, who, it is stated, can hereafter expect neither support nor favor from the present organization. Postmaster General Burleson heads the list. In the Frisco convention he was one of McAdoo's strongest supporters.

William Jennings Bryan comes next on the list. The committee failed to obtain a single speech from him during the campaign. Others listed are: Senators Gore of Oklahoma, Reed of Missouri, Walsh of Massachusetts, Swanson and Glass of Virginia, Smith and Harris of Georgia, Dial of South Carolina, Simmons and Overman of North Carolina, Smith of South Carolina, and Secretary of the Treasury Houston. All of the members of the federal trade commission and federal reserve board are included, it is said.

The publication precedes a meeting called by the insurgent democrats to discuss plans for reorganization of the party. Some of those whose names appear on the "blacklist" have been mentioned as among those who will attend the conference.

Wm. G. Carter, Washington, D. C.—To my mind the result of the recent election completely confirms my previous good opinion of your political sagacity. I heard you at the Jackson Day banquet in this city, advocate the idea of the president allowing the senate to ratify the peace treaty as they desired and thus taking it out of politics, at least so far as this campaign was concerned. At that time I thought you were making a mistake but the result shows me that you were right and that my thought was wrong. Further, I read with great interest your wonderful speech at San Francisco advocating a DRY plank in the democratic platform and I most heartily approve of every word you said on the subject and feel sure that if the democratic party had put a dry plank in its platform and nominated a candidate who was known to be friendly to such a sentiment we would all have gone into the campaign with more enthusiasm and more force and the result would doubtless have been quite different.

W. H. Calhoun, California.—The election is over and we have certainly had a landslide so great as to bury the leaders of the democratic party so completely that they will never get out

of the debris again to run another campaign. Had the democratic convention recognized you and put the prohibition plank in the platform, also your profiteering plank, thus giving the people something worth fighting for, a prohibition candidate as leader of the party would have given us the temperance vote, we could have succeeded. But no, they must put Bryan out of the way. They did so and now suffer defeat for themselves and the people out of a progressive party to the rule of a few for the benefit of a few. Yet I am thankful for the good legislation of the last eight years, all of which is owing to your effort in the Baltimore convention and which would be the result if you could have controlled the convention at San Francisco. Yet I am an admirer of President Wilson for the statesmanlike manner in which he has managed the affairs of the government as president. You are yet young and you will get your reward.

Edward D. Poffenberger, Ohio.—I read with interest an article in our local paper written by yourself expressing your views on the election in which you speak of Wilson laying the foundation for the defeat. Commendation from one in my humble walk in life may not mean much, but I am one of the hundreds of thousands that helped to bring this about and, in a general way, I think I was actuated by the same impulse as many others. I have been a republican all my life and voted against you twice, but I want to state that you have in your article displayed a keen perception and a correct diagnosis of the causes that make Governor Cox's defeat so overwhelming. You have expressed concisely in a general way the cause and effect, and the article, coming as it does from a man of your established standing in the nation as an unincumbered and free thinking democrat, must have more weight with the reading public than it would from any other American citizen today, and I want to congratulate you for the personal independence that permits you to step out and criticize men in your party when they overstep the bounds of right and lay aside the general good of all in preference for some personal success or gratification. I wish we had more men in both parties who would follow your example.

We all want peace, but we will not jeopardize our country's rights by giving any other country the power to entangle us in war without our full, sober and unreserved consent, and we republicans will expect our next president to safeguard those rights as well as to put us, not on a basis with, but on a higher plane of international agreement for preventing wars than it was possible for those countries to conceive of at the time they composed the present league. I close with best wishes for the future and assure you of a clearer understanding of the man William Jennings Bryan than I ever had before.

Robert G. Haight, New York.—Now let us all whoop it up for a real man, a real democrat, a man every real man with red blood in his veins dearly loves, the true and only democratic leader, our own Wm. J. Bryan. With every effort of my life for 1924, I am sincerely as from the first (1896) yours faithfully and forever.

L. L. Hunt, Virginia.—As the election is over and we have gotten back to normal conditions again, I want to write and tell you how much I appreciate your good work. In the first place, I don't think the league of nations issue is what beat the democratic party. I believe that a large majority of the American people want some kind of a league of nations to prevent future wars, but 75% of the American people want the right thing in politics, and I believe that the day has come when the intelligence of the country is voting. That day has passed when the "court house bums," "bar-room flies," and crooked politicians can control the elections, and when the citizenship of the country went to the polls they had the common sense to pass judgment on the issue. When it was known that our president vetoed the prohibition bill passed by congress because the war was over and there was no further need for war time prohibition and then turned to the miners and told them to go back to work because the war was not over, then swung around the circle preaching the league of nations and not raising his voice against profiteering and other evils, we saw that some one was inconsistent.

Then, when the Democratic party in convention at San Francisco endorsed that administration in toto; then we saw how you were treated in the committee room when you made such a noble fight for a law enforcement plank in the platform; then we followed you up when you carried the fight on before the convention, how they voted you down and how you were defeated. Some of the American people shed tears of sympathy.

Then, when Mr. Cox said that prohibition was "as dead as slavery" we knew that was false and he was "wet." Slavery is not peddled over the country in automobiles. Then, many people went to the polls and for the first time in their lives voted against the democratic nominee. May God bless you and keep you in good health to continue your noble fight against evil.

Alonzo B. Johnson, Michigan.—I notice an article by you in the Chicago Herald and Examiner, under date of November 5, 1920, in which you state plans for a change in democratic policies. Am glad you are taking part in affairs once again. With best wishes for the success you so richly deserve.

Homer Stronsider, West Virginia.—Two million Democrats were lost, strayed and stolen on last Tuesday because their party has been for about two years without effective leadership. Being without such leadership as nominated and elected President Wilson in 1912 and again in 1916, made us an easy prey for the very leadership which nominated and defeated Judge Parker in 1904 and which fought us in 1912 and 1916, and which nominated and defeated Governor Cox. Every Democrat familiar with our party's history since 1884 must have expected our defeat this year, but he never dreamed that it would reach such proportions.

Finding us without effective leadership induced the Republican leaders and press to attack us viciously and effectively, and although we were strongly entrenched behind the great achievements of the party since 1912, no defense was made by our press until the sentiment of the country had crystallized against us. It was then too late to make a counter attack, for it is as difficult to reclaim a Democrat after he is against his party as it is to convert a Republican to Democracy.

Our defeat was on account of so many conflicting reasons that I am convinced it can be turned into victory in 1924, if not sooner, with proper leadership backed by an aggressive press.

I suggest that we should immediately organize the Democratic press of the country into an effective fighting force. We should have an organization composed of representatives from at least every state to direct the fight. The material should be supplied to every Democratic paper in the country, daily and weekly, to the end that the whole country would be reading at about the same time the news and editorials supplied by this organization. By this means we would mould public opinion, reclaim the Democrats who have left us temporarily, and convert Republicans to Democracy—and win.

Of course, this fight will require funds, and I suggest that there are enough Bryan Democrats to supply them. I am willing to take charge of the collection of funds in this city.

And I would like to suggest that you take charge of this organization. Millions of Democrats and thousands of Republicans "Want Bryan," and his magnificent leadership again will win.

Joseph Howley, Pennsylvania.—I am inclosing herewith an editorial from the Pittsburgh Leader. Your statement on the late election hit the nail on the head exactly. We are ready for another battle under your progressive leadership. With every good wish and with kindest regards to Mrs. Bryan.

Wm. H. Rogers, California.—I write to thank you for your silence during the recent political campaign. Your silence this time made votes by the million against a continuation of an autocratic government at Washington, and thus preserved our republican form of government. Unless the leadership of the Democratic party is taken and conceded to you, I shall keep my word and in the future be known as independent of the party.

Henry E. Schmiedeskamp, Illinois.—The writer is a member of the democratic county central committee of Adams county. I feel that