

Hearing from the People

Below are extracts from a few of the many letters received by The Commoner commenting on current events:

William W. Knowles, Delaware.—I have just received The Commoner and have just begun to read the front page. I hasten to write you. I have read your article under "DESERVE TO WIN—THEN ORGANIZE."

You have stated the situation clearly. The Democrats in county, state and nation must be organized in conformity and in harmony with your plan if the party hopes to win. A repetition of the San Francisco convention in 1924 means that the Democratic party must go out of existence and a receiver will have to be appointed to distribute its effects.

I am with you hand and heart for any purpose and for any work that means the elimination of Wall Street influences in the control and management of the affairs of the Democratic party. Draft me when my services are needed.

John Y. Peete, Tennessee.—I am enclosing you money order for \$1 to renew my subscription for the next 12 months, and to express not only my appreciation and enjoyment of every line in your columns, but my admiration and esteem of your brilliant and gifted and patriotic editor—William Jennings Bryan, and the sentiment of the whole country is that he is the incomparable champion of the people's rights, and the greatest American as well as the foremost statesman in the world.

Twelve months ago, I wrote you, suggesting, and giving my reasons therefor, for him to be the nominee for president by the Democratic convention held last June, and he was the only man whom the Democrats could elect. His every utterance in the columns of this (November) issue of The Commoner are the rallying calls to the great hosts of democracy, men and women, for the great battle of 1924. And if you will permit me to prophesy, and to name a winning ticket for next time, I will name William J. Bryan for president, and Governor Malcolm R. Patterson for vice-president (a scion of the North, and a scion of the South), both powerful in debate, graceful, and gifted in speech, and sound on every principle of constitutional government, their leadership will prove invincible. On the opposite side of this page, I am sending you about a dozen names as probable subscribers, to your paper—the greatest exponent of democracy.

A. A. Meredith, West Virginia.—Noticing an appeal to men who would be willing to help rehabilitate the Democratic party in their respective counties and states, in The Commoner of November issue, I will venture my assistance though humble as it may be. I have always been a great admirer of W. J. Bryan, having cast my first vote for him in 1896. I have voted for him three times and have always voted the Democratic ticket though at some elections I had to hold my nose to do it.

I am willing to do my part to make the Democratic party a real party of the people, for the people, but I am not willing to sacrifice my country to satisfy the ambition of some selfish man who thinks more of some other country than of his own: a man whose heart is in England or Wall Street while his hands are in the pockets of the American people.

I am willing to go with Mr. Bryan on his suggestions, "Some Needed Reforms," printed on page two of November issue. I think those reforms mentioned are sorely needed, especially the amendment referring to the referendum on all wars except when in actual invasion. I think it could be amended somewhat and made stronger by inserting the sentiment that no president of the United States or Senate be allowed to take the soldiers of the United States out of the United States without the consent of the people by a direct referendum.

I am in heartfelt sympathy with Mr. Bryan. He is a man among men and had he been elected instead of Mr. Wilson, I am sure that the United States would not have been in such condition as it is today.

In nearly every paper we read the cause of the Democratic defeat and the landslide for the Republicans. I have failed to see the real cause of the defeat mentioned. It was not mentioned during the campaign nor has it been mentioned

TIME TO MAKE DISTINCTION

Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 23, 1920.

My dear Mr. Bryan:

It was my happy privilege last night to take home with me the November issue of "The Commoner" and I want to congratulate you and commend you on the whole issue, from A to Z, but particularly was I pleased with your article "Placing the Blame." Also I was pleased with the article headed "Deserve to Win—Then Organize," and I am glad you put that in heavy type because it deserves the emphasis, and it will be well for all of us Democrats in our travels hither and thither to keep that uppermost in the mind of the real Democrat of the country as well as the real Republican.

This is the time for us to make a distinction between mere place hunters, or rather office hunters and real Democrats. Some years ago I had occasion to make a distinction between a statesman and a politician, and I put it in these words and I believe you might sometime see fit to use it in your "Commoner" column: "A statesman is a man who lies awake nights thinking and planning how he may do something for everybody, while a politician is a man who lies awake nights thinking and planning how he may do everybody for something." Isn't it a happy expression of the difference between some of the men who undertook to represent the Democratic party in the last campaign and the men who refused to prostitute themselves to being all things to all men.

Your address entitled "Father or Brute" is one of the greatest and one of the most effective you have ever made. I remember the effect and the impression you created when you talked to the Northwestern law students and I am happy in finding the substance of this address in this November issue of "The Commoner." I wish you could deliver it to a thousand different audiences in the next two or three years. It will give you one of the finest opportunities and it will make it easy to determine who shall be our leader from this time on. The talk about the leadership of certain other individuals died "abornin." Nothing is quite so flat as talk about anybody's leadership except your own among the real Democrats in this part of the state of Ohio. It would be just as reasonable to talk about the future leadership of Alton B. Parker as to talk about the leadership of any other individual as against yourself.

Yours forever and a day,
AN OHIO DEMOCRAT.

since the election. The people were not so much concerned about the league. I believe the great majority of the people do not want any league with any foreign country, but that is not the cause of the wholesale slaughter of the Democrats. To make it short, it was the universal unpopularity of the war itself. * * * * * The Democrats got just what was coming to them—a complete thrashing and the soldier boys and their parents did it and the war lords need not try to explain it otherwise for it is not the truth.

I am with Bryan and all his reform movements. May God bless him and give him strength to push them to the front.

G. A. Kenderdine, Iowa.—God Bless you, Mr. Bryan, for having courage to be true to convictions even though we don't always agree with you. Never before have you been more needed in the councils of our party for I believe we can win if we steer by the Jeffersonian Chart and not follow after personalities of false gods. I await with keenest interest your plans for progressive Democrats in the future.

N. P. W. New Jersey.—I have just read Mr. Bryan's statement on the result of the election and heartily concur in every conclusion. Above and beyond all causes of Democratic defeat were the lack of party solidarity and the president's refusal to recognize any co-ordinate power or responsibility on the part of the Senate in our foreign relations.

In his arrogant autocracy he flouted every Democrat of sincere convictions, and in his arbitrary choice of appointees he insulted the great body of the Democratic party who are swayed

neither by expedience or opportunism. Sincere and influential Democrats who were instrumental in making Wilson president were not only denied any participation in the administration which they brought into being, but were harassed and persecuted with a despicable malevolence that finds no parallel in our political history. His absolute disregard of the mandates of his party undoubtedly drove many Democrats out of their party and repelled thousands of maturing voters. His insistence on the repeal of the Panama Canal tolls bill, in defiance of the Baltimore platform, and his autocratic suspension of parts of the Jones shipping act, and his persecution of Democratic congressmen who disagreed with him on the former, were but a repetition of his defiance as governor of New Jersey, when he imperiously brushed aside as of no consequence the emphatic mandate of the voters of Hudson county on the matter of jury reform, kept the state legislature of New Jersey in a seething turmoil for two years and, after he had been invested with the tremendous powers of the presidency, dragooned a puerile governor and a subservient legislature into enacting the present abortive statute, which has proven to be a most facile instrument of corruption.

In 1896, 1900 and 1908 we fought a good fight and went down to honorable defeat, preserving undefiled and unaltered the exalted principles of democracy, and after each defeat furnished up our weapons in eager anticipation of the next battle, inspired with ardent hope of victory by the righteousness of our cause. But what prospect is before us now? A gallant army with mercenaries in the trenches and traitors or incompetents at general headquarters has small chance of reorganization after a general rout. To the patriots who have survived we must look for the inspiration and energy to reassemble our scattered forces and once again raise the standard of True Democracy under which may gather the now scattered forces of a great and historic party.

Chas. A. Ewell, Michigan.—I write to thank you for the brave and noble stand you have taken for our great land of liberty so called. The Scriptures say they love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. I was at the Fort Street Presbyterian church, and I enjoyed your address so well that my heart leaps within me, and when I think of the Puritans and the way they founded our great eastern hemisphere on principles of holiness unto the Lord, oh, Mr. Bryan, I am with you any time you want a helper.

Byron G. Hooper, Nebraska.—The reorganization of the Democratic party which has been hanging gloomily over every good Democrat since the election is a problem. What Nebraska wants to do is get behind W. J. and put him where he can either back a presidential possibility or run himself, which in my opinion is the best thing to do. I will gladly help to organize this town, county and state to that advantage. If you have any plans for the coming reorganization, your suggestion would be gladly received. I wish to put myself at your disposal for the coming work.

Jas. F. Mallinckrodt, Utah.—The plan he conceives is obvious, feasible, desirable and all under the law. It is as if I should expect, Wilson, Harding, Marshall, with approval of congress, will carry it out at once. If world peace is a good thing (and who can doubt it?) saving three or four months' delay would remove a lot of blocks and logs in the way.

J. H. Lemond, North Carolina.—In a renewing my subscription, please let me add a word of commendation for the sake of gratitude we feel for the relentless war you have made on all forms of mockery under the guise of democracy. Many sincere Democrats here were inclined to criticize Mr. Bryan for not giving the party ticket a warmer support. I defended Mr. Bryan's course on the ground that it was the pro-corporation, pro-whiskey faction of the party that was selected from precinct primaries up to national delegates to the convention. That faction would naturally oppose anything Mr. Bryan favored even if they were friendly to the policy. The record of the vote on the profiteering and government bulletin planks would substantiate the contention. We who are in favor of progress must not let political apathy defeat real democracy again. I am thoroughly with Mr. Bryan in not wanting to fight any sham battles. When