

The Commoner

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Reorganization

Chairman White has appointed a special committee and called a meeting for February 17th. Another group has asked for a meeting of the full committee to be held about March 1st at some central point such as St. Louis. These meetings may mean something or nothing according to the action taken. If the members have no higher purpose than to give some presidential candidate the inside track it would be better not to get together. If they meet to plan a constructive program the value of the meeting will depend on the wisdom of the plan formulated. The nation needs a Democratic party, but the party cannot be run with the water that has passed over the dam. Neither can it be made a tail to anybody's candidacy. The differences of the past can be forgotten, and should be forgotten, by those who agree upon the things to be done now. The party must **DESERVE** success before it can hope for success. It must take the people's side of every question and courageously defend the people's interests. It must purge the organization of the representatives of the special interests so that the people will believe in the party's sincerity and trust it with the government. The Republican organization might be autocratic, but the Democratic organization must solicit the opinion of the rank and file and be responsive to the will of the voters. The Democratic pyramid must rest upon its base—it can not be balanced on its apex.

W. J. BRYAN.

DEFEAT MILITARISM

Two hundred and seventy-one to 16, or a little more than 16 to 1, was the vote by which the House passed the army reduction resolution over the President's veto. Ninety-two Democrats voted with the Republicans to reduce the army. The Senate passed the same resolution over the President's veto of 67 to 1.

Once more congress—even a Republican congress—has stood with the people against the President. It is unfortunate for the country that the chief executive should so inexcusably ignore the growing antagonism to militarism but it is fortunate for the Democratic party that the Democrats in congress repudiated the President's leadership on this question as they did on prohibition and compulsory military training. During the next two years the Democrats in the Senate and House must make the record on which to fight the campaign of 1922.

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BEGIN NOW

On this page we present the national legislative program. This program is intended to bring about world peace, curb the profiteer, prevent the extravagance and waste in the administration of governmental affairs, and to restore "people's rule." We desire to hear immediately from everyone who approves this legislative program and will assist in crystallizing public opinion to write it into the law of the land.

A National Legislative Program

A forward-looking Democratic legislative program prepared with the advice and approval of students of governmental needs, and represents the consensus of opinion of progressive Democrats throughout the country. The program is not complete, and will be added to as means for dealing with other questions are worked out. The legislative remedies are only briefly outlined, and will be more elaborately set forth and discussed hereafter. The program as thus far developed is as follows:

PEACE PROGRAM

A league of nations or an association of nations providing for arbitration of all disputes that can be arbitrated and an investigation of all others as provided for in the plan of the thirty peace treaties, each nation reserving the right to accept or reject the findings.

DISARMAMENT

The United States should immediately endeavor to assemble the representatives of the leading nations of the world in a sincere effort to bring about disarmament.

A REFERENDUM ON WAR

We favor a national referendum on war before a declaration of war can be made by congress, unless the country is invaded by a foreign foe.

LIMIT TERM OF PRESIDENT

The president of the United States should be limited to one term of not more than six years by making him ineligible for re-election, and the inauguration of the president and the assembling of the new congress should be set for January following the November election.

A MAJORITY SHOULD RATIFY

We favor an amendment to the federal constitution permitting a majority of the United States senate to ratify a treaty.

PROHIBITION

The national prohibition amendment should be enforced by the national, state and municipal officers without fear or favor.

MILITARY TRAINING

We are opposed to universal compulsory military training in time of peace.

PROFITEERING

The Democratic party pledges the nation to rid it of the profiteer and to close the door against his return. It will endeavor to eliminate all unnecessary middlemen by the encouragement of organizations among producers that will bring those who produce and those who use nearer together. It will enact and enforce laws that will effectively prevent excessive charges by such middlemen as are necessary. To this end it will demand legislation subjecting to the penalties of the criminal law all corporate officers and employees who give or carry out instructions that result in extortion; it will make it unlawful for anyone engaged in interstate commerce to make the sale of one article dependent upon the purchase of another article, and it will require such corporation to disclose to customers the difference between cost price and selling price or limit the profit that can be legally charged as the rate of interest is now limited.

RECOGNIZE THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

We favor a liberal policy in providing for soldiers and sailors who made sacrifices in the world war.

A NATIONAL BULLETIN

We favor a national bulletin, not a newspaper, but a bulletin, issued by the federal government, under the fair and equitable control of the two leading parties, such bulletin to furnish information as to the political issues of the campaign.

ARBITRATE DISPUTES

In the settlement of disputes between capital and labor we favor a board of conciliation patterned after the tribunal created by the thirty peace treaties, the board to have power to investigate all disputes but no power to bind the parties.

PROHIBIT GAMBLING

Gambling in food stuffs should be prohibited by national enactment.

BANK DEPOSITS

We favor national and state legislation guaranteeing the people's deposits in national and state banks against loss through bank failures.

LIBERTY BONDS

We favor federal action that will maintain the price of liberty bonds at par.

FEDERAL RESERVE BANK SYSTEM

We favor the federal reserve banking law but insist that it must not be used to squeeze the debtor by deflation processes.

FARM LOAN BANK

The farm loan bank law should be maintained and strengthened to extend credit to the farmers and to protect them from high interest rates.

MONOPOLIES

A private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable. All necessary monopolies should be taken over by the government, national, state and municipal.

ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY

We favor the reorganization of the administrative and executive departments of the federal government on an economy and efficiency basis, including the establishing of a budget system and a reduction in the number of departmental employees to the minimum needs of the government.

EXCESS PROFITS

We are opposed to the repeal of the excess profits tax law, and are opposed to the enactment of a sales tax law.

REDUCE TAXES

For the purpose of lightening the people's burdens we favor an immediate return to a peace footing basis to bring about a reduction in taxes, and that in reducing taxes consideration should be shown to those least able to pay.

VOTING BY MAIL

We favor a legislative provision for voting by mail for voters away from home and for collecting ballots in order to accommodate women and men who are disabled or distant from the polls.

NATIONAL PRIMARY LAW

We favor a national primary election law.