

Indorse Definite Program of Action for Party

Sentiment Fast Developing Among Democrats for Rehabilitation of Party Around Program for Benefit of the Masses

The Commoner continues to receive hundreds of letters from all sections of the country indorsing its plans for the reorganization and rehabilitation of the Democratic party. A few of these letters are reproduced below. It is the unanimous opinion of the writers that the Democratic party's future success lies not in waiting to capitalize the mistakes of the Republican party, but in placing before the people a program of definite action in behalf of the masses.

The Commoner reproduces its National Legislative Program, as first published in its February issue. This program is intended to bring about world peace, curb the profiteer, prevent extravagance and waste in governmental affairs, and to restore "people's rule." The Democratic party must **DESERVE TO WIN** if it is to be successfully rehabilitated. 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.—Editor The Commoner.

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 employes 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.

Letters From the People

Thomas G. Campbell, Indiana.—I heartily endorse Mr. Bryan's legislative program and his efforts to reorganize the party in the interest of the people and along progressive Democratic lines. I'd like to make one suggestion in connection with the proposed national presidential primary law. A general primary law is certainly needed and such a law should have the first, second and third choice feature, in order that the actual wishes and desires of the people can be determined and made effective. I want to suggest an additional provision, how-

ever, which I believe has as yet not been considered. My plan is to permit every voter to express his own individual opinion as to who should be the candidate. In other words, let the names of all the contestants be printed on the ballot to be voted for as first, second and third, etc., choice, as the case may be; and also let there be a space left blank in which each voter can write in the name of his own personal choice. The law should provide that all such votes should be counted and, if the individual choice votes should outnumber the others, then the man so voted for should be the candidate. In my opinion such a law would give the people a real opportunity to select their own candidates and their own officials. The same provision should apply to general elections and not be confined to the primaries.

H. H. Ramsey, Kentucky.—I greatly appreciate your efforts to reorganize and rehabilitate life in the dear old party, and I hope I can in some way help. It seems to me that it would be a good idea to raise a fund and appeal to the best men in each ward and precinct, say six or more to get together, not politicians (except those like yourself who bear a record of always working unselfishly for the best interests of the long suffering masses), and select or recommend the candidates for the municipality and county, likewise a certain number from each voting ward or precinct meet at the court house and select the county officers and their state representatives, and also recommend a good man for congress. The main idea is to induce, strictly not self-seeking, but honorable citizens, a great many of whom try to avoid politics, to arouse themselves and get busy in order to wrest the party from the hands of professional ring politicians.

It seems to me also that unselfish men should not only recommend but put the candidate on honor; let him sign up as to what laws they want or do not want. In this way they might more successfully get what they want. Also, some law to terminate political treason without spending thousands of dollars to impeach an officer who might be false to his promises. Suppose a banker had to spend thousands of dollars in order to discharge a traitor or thief from his pay rolls. It seems to me our laws should be so amended that when a candidate refuses to do that which he promised he would do (and I believe that he should be compelled to sign his name in the presence of two witnesses relative to laws which he would or would not vote for), then if he voted otherwise without a majority of his constituents petitioning him to change, that his tenure of office should automatically terminate and a special election called immediately to select a man to take his place. The patriotic masses would subscribe liberally to a National Bulletin such as you have already suggested, and it would be of great assistance to the voter. Long live our beloved leader.

H. H. Stallard, Washington.—I have just read the press reports of Mr. Bryan's plan for the reorganization of the Democratic party. I supported the Democratic party up to and including the 1908 campaign, since that I have had no use for the party as I felt like it had left all the landmarks of Jefferson, the great commoner. I can heartily indorse the proposed principles, and will help reorganize the party along these lines. The state of Washington can be carried in 1922 on a platform such as outlined by Mr. Bryan. Anything I can do to aid will be done.

W. J. Rodgers, Missouri.—I am glad to know W. J. Bryan intends to take an active part in helping to reorganize the Democratic party. He took it over after it was demolished at St. Louis