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THE PEOPLE'S RULE

George Fred Williams Engaged Building up a New Political Organization in Massachusetts

For the past year it has been evident that the people of the east are just beginning to take an interest in the study of economic questions, and that conditions there are similar to those prevailing in this state in the early nineties. The Independent's subscription list is growing in New York, Massachusetts and other eastern states in gratifying manner, and the letters it receives from the east show that populism is spreading rapidly.

George Fred Williams, whose manifesto to the Gaston democracy of Massachusetts was published in The Independent some weeks ago has given out a statement of and program for proposed political organization and action in Massachusetts, as follows:

"THE PEOPLE'S RULE."

Great social, political and economic changes, involving incalculable consequences to humanity, are now being forced upon us, and in them the people's interests seem to be feebly guarded. There is, therefore, supreme necessity in our politics for the impulse of a public opinion, directly, boldly and decisively expressed.

We believe this impulse will be furnished by an organization of voters of all parties, with a new purpose, a new method and a new program. We suggest:

The purpose—to restore, extend and effectuate the sovereignty of the popular will.

The method—to force our principles upon the parties and insist upon their loyalty thereto.

The program—three articles of faith:

First, direct legislation, or the right of the people at the polls to vote laws or veto legislation.

Second, the ownership by the people of all public utilities.

Third, a restriction upon the power of judges in equity to take the liberty of the citizen without trial by jury.

We do not propose a new political party, but an organization within which members of any party may unite to bring their party to the support of our principles.

We would organize for the distribution of literature, for full and free debate, and for questioning and pledging candidates, to the end that our politicians, officials and legislatures may be turned from mastery to service of the people.

The name of the organization shall be "The People's Rule." The various organizations shall be known as "councils," and be identified by the name of the political sub-division to which they belong.

The council units shall be town wards, but a provisional state council shall be formed at once to promote immediate local organization, secure state headquarters and perfect a plan for adoption by the members as a permanent state council.

Unions of local councils may be formed temporarily or permanently in any political sub-division of the state.

A citizen of the state may become a member by signing his name and postoffice address to the pledge printed below, and sending the same to the state treasurer with the sum of 25 cents.

Any member paying the established dues shall retain his membership until he resigns, violates his pledge, or is removed by vote of a majority of the local council of which he is a member.

The principles and policy of "The People's Rule" shall always be subject to a vote by ballot, and to the will of a majority of all members voting.

Pledges with dues may, until further notice, be sent to Edwin Stanley MacFarland, at 209 Washington street, Boston, and whenever there shall be members equal to 1 per cent of the registered voters in any town or ward notice will be issued to them to organize in such town or ward.

PLEDGE OF MEMBERSHIP.

I hereby apply for membership in the People's Rule, and pledge myself during my membership to work for its principles and policy.

P. O. Address.....
Full name.....
Ward of city.....

RECRUITING FOR 1904

The Contest for the Control of the Government Next Year Will be Between the People and Organized Greed in the Form of Trusts

IN WHICH ARMY WILL YOU ENLIST

The Independent Begins the Battle for the People Now and Invites the Assistance and Co-Operation of Every Patriotic and Liberty-Loving Citizen

100,000 FRESH RECRUITS ARE WANTED

To Assist in Spreading Educational Matter and Perfecting the Organization Until It Reaches Every Hamlet and Precinct in the United States

Recruiting Coupon Subscription Books—Unparalleled Offer for New Readers

The chaotic condition of American political parties was never more evident than now. No man can foretell what the platforms will be. No man knows the party alignment. The republican party discipline, once such a power for success, has received a severe blow—what with the "Iowa Idea," reciprocity, and inability or disinclination to cope with the trusts. The democratic party is in worse condition with its shrewd, determined traitors to democracy at the helm in so many states. The people's party is united on questions of principle, but at present is divided on questions purely of party policy. This makes it in somewhat better shape for presenting a united front to the enemy next year—if the mid-roads and fusionists will get together on a program for securing what they are united in wanting. The socialists are even more irreconcilably divided, and one faction contemptuously refers to the other as "kangaroos."

Such a condition indicates a great deal of independent thinking on the part of voters of all parties. It may presage the final overthrow of party politics and the inauguration of direct legislation. In any event there is doubtless a majority among the American voters upon whom the party yoke sets very lightly—voters who will vote with the political party in 1904 whose platform promises the most for good government and whose candidates are such men of integrity as to cause no doubt about fulfillment of the platform promises if given power.

Questions of grave importance press upon the American people for solution. The great questions—money, land and transportation—pointed out in the Omaha populist national platform of 1892, are still unsolved. Growing out of and incidental to these is the trust question, which bids fair to overshadow all others. The republican party is showing itself utterly incompetent or unwilling to cope with the trusts. With one faction of the democratic party in power the result would be no better.

The Independent is a people's party paper—or "populist," if you prefer the name. It stands for the reforms demanded in the national platform of the people's party. It stands for the public ownership and government operation of the railroads (and kindred utilities) as the first step in breaking the backbone of the trusts. It stands for postal savings banks to safe guard the savings of America's bone and sinew—the men and women who labor with hand and brain. It stands for the government issue of all money, whether gold coin, silver coin or paper notes, every dollar to be a full legal tender, without the intervention of private banking institutions of any kind—the second step in trust smashing. And it stands for a graduated income tax to gradually supplant the iniquitous tariff—the final blow in rendering trusts harmless.

There is no present need for any man to change his party coat. Let him call himself republican, democrat, populist, socialist, or what not. But if he believes in the things briefly sketched above—believes they would inure to his benefit and the benefit of all who work at useful labor—let him enlist as one of The Independent's "Recruits for 1904." Let him agitate these questions. Talk about them to his neighbor. Read about them. Think about them. Don't worry about "what party"—that will take care of itself. Seven or eight million voters all wanting public ownership of railroads can't be kept divided forever.

The Independent will be modest in setting its mark. It will not ask for a "million" new subscribers—because it does not believe it could reach that in years, if ever. But it does want 100,000 picked recruits for 1904—men who know what they want and how to ask for it, and feels sure it will get them. It wants to enlist them for the war—an army of sharpshooters, every man of whom will before election day 1904 get ten other men to vote with him for government railroads and government money, an income tax and "down with the trusts."

RECRUITING COUPON BOOKS.

For the convenience of those who will assist in pushing the work of education and organization, The Independent has prepared Recruiting Coupon Books of different sizes, containing 5 or 10 or 25 detachable private mailing cards, each card good for a "recruit" subscription to The Independent until after the election in 1904, (22 months from this time).

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We are willing to trust you. Send your order for the book and we'll send it to you. You can pay for the subscriptions after you have secured them. It costs you nothing to try. The charge is \$5.00 for a book of five; \$10.00 for a book of 10 and \$25.00 for a book of 25 coupons, payable after coupons are sold. Join as a charter member—enlist today.

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Address THE INDEPENDENT, Lincoln, Nebraska.

THE COAL FAMINE

Mr. De Hart Discusses the Coal Famine in New York—Attorney General Should be Removed

Editor Independent: I started in to write on the "value of money," but the coal famine has become so acute that I must turn aside and notice this.

The worst feature of the whole matter is, that the senate does not pass the bill giving the attorney general \$250,000 with which to prosecute the trusts. The house passed the bill before the holidays, but the senate wants to talk.

The attorney general, however, has no excuse for not proceeding against the coal trust because Mr. William R. Hearst of the New York American has offered to furnish the testimony. This will relieve the government of any expense and the attorney general cannot say that he is in need of funds. It, therefore, begins to look as if we ought to have a new attorney general. The president, himself, seems to be in earnest, but there is a lack of spirit in congress as well as in the attorney general's office. There is altogether too much disagreement among the members of the house of representatives.

That there is actually a coal famine in New York read the following from the New York World of January 8, which is corroborated by all the other papers:

"Coal sold yesterday as high as \$14 a ton. Within a week the price may exceed \$18. The fuel famine that marked the closing days of the strike, before the advent of cold weather, will, it is feared, be duplicated in a form more distressing to the people, because of the mid-winter season.

"The independent operators have formed an organization for the purpose of squeezing the public to the utmost limit. They held a meeting yesterday and fixed upon a minimum price of \$10 'alongside' in Jersey City. That means at least \$12 to the consumer in this city. No maximum price was set.

"The one rule of the independent operator from now on is to get the highest price he possibly can.

"Coal that ordinarily comes to New York will be shipped elsewhere if higher prices can be obtained. This means that the supply of this city is to be diminished materially. New England cities have suffered from a fuel famine more severe than that which has afflicted New York. If Boston is willing to pay \$18 a ton, and New York but \$15, Boston will get the coal. The place that bids the highest will be the market of the independents from now on.

"Coxe Brothers, which, next to Markle & Co., is the biggest firm of independent operators, took instant advantage of the no-maximum-price rule and showed what the public must expect now that the independents have abrogated their agreement with the combined coal-carrying roads. Though most of the independents sold coal at the minimum price of \$10, Coxe Brothers fixed an arbitrary price of \$12 a ton wholesale, freight across the river from the Jersey side not included. To make only a small profit, the retailer who pays this price must charge his customers \$14 or \$14.50 a ton.

"No change was or will be made in price by the regular coal-carrying roads, \$5 a ton in wholesale lots on the Jersey side being the schedule. Dealers, however, declared yesterday that they get only about one-third of their supplies from the combined companies, depending for the other two-thirds upon the independents.

"Some of the larger dealers get a greater percentage than this from the regular operators. One of these said he would have to average his prices to his customers. If he got half of his supply at \$10 a ton wholesale and the other half at \$5 he would base his retail price upon the wholesale price of \$7.50. He said that as the sources of his supply would vary each day, his price to customers would be constantly changing.

"Relative to President Baer's statement that he would blacklist any dealer who was found selling railroad coal at independent prices, a railroad official said yesterday:

"President Baer is talking through his hat. It would be impossible for him to identify coal a man sells as railroad or independent coal. The re-