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The People's Rule

—BY—
Geo. H. Shibley.

(Continued From Last Week.)

In states other than Kentucky, if the state convention has been held, the state executive committee or a local committee can go forward and question the candidates, demanding an immediate answer. In order to get the answer in writing and to get a specific form of an amendment, it is suggested that a few citizens sign and deliver in their own names, or that of a majority rule league, copy of the letter to candidates set forth in a preceding issue of The Independent. One determined man or woman can pledge the candidates in a district:

Inform each candidate that a statement of his attitude will at once be made to every non-partisan organization in the district—labor unions, farmers' organizations, etc.

This will usually result in a favorable reply. In case a candidate refuses, then get each of the non-partisan organizations to adopt a resolution for majority rule, instructing its executive committee to question each legislative nominee in the district.

In getting the resolution presented to a grange or union, should it become necessary, it will be well to say little or nothing about the refusal of a nominee. Leave this for the debate, should objections be raised. Your representative can win in open debate, but might be kept from getting the resolution before the meeting if the refusal should become known.

The questioning of candidates should be pushed in your district if you live in either of the ten states that elect legislatures this year, namely, Kentucky, Ohio, Iowa, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, South Carolina or Mississippi. It is your duty to see that the work is done in your district. Speak of it,

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therefore, to two or three of your friends and ask them to join you in signing and presenting the letter, which can be done personally or by mail. There is no expense.

Those who work for liberty are patriots. Those who refuse to do what they are able should realize their short-coming. They should realize that they are lacking in the spirit of 1776 and are lacking in the spirit of Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln. They have only an instinct that keeps them a slave to the ruling few rather than risk a sneer from them, though in so doing they help to become sovereigns. Such men cannot see the on-sweeping march of the people's power whose victory is close at hand.

CAMPAIGN OF 1904 FOR ABOLISHING PARTY GOVERNMENT.

Next year forty states elect legislatures, except the half of the senates that hold over, and there will be elected a new national house and one-third the national senate. The people's party should hold its state and national conventions, and apply the Kentucky program. (The questions for national candidates are set forth in an earlier paragraph.) By applying this program an immediate victory will be achieved in state and nation, and early in the succeeding November a national conference can be called to frame the national bills that are to be directly initiated for the control of railways and other interstate monopolies. The conference will include representatives of organized labor and organized farmers, and the bills when put out for signatures through these organizations will be ready to file with congress when it meets in 1905.

This prospect for immediate success almost takes one's breath. Close examination, however, shows no flaw, and shows no conflict with the recommendation of the Denver conference or of previous action by the people's party. It is simply a recognition of the importance of changing the system of government before attempting to use the improved system. There is an order of time in securing reforms, the first of which is the establishment of the people's rule; then will come the legislative reforms, and numberless ones. In the words of the Denver conference: "As an open door

for all economic reforms, we urge the rule of the people through the optional referendum and initiative."

The independent political action of the people's party, recommended by the Denver conference, should, of course, center its efforts upon the installation of this improved system of government. As to whether or not this independent action should include the nomination of president and vice president, is not necessary to decide at this time. It is a mere detail—the main thing is the establishment of the improved system of government. The president has no veto as to the adoption of rules of procedure in the house and senate, and whenever a majority of the people vote for a bill no president will veto it.

Reviewing the program for the immediate success of majority rule, we find the basis in four recently discovered methods of political action, coupled with their recognition by organized labor, organized farmers, the national federation for majority rule, referendum leagues, direct legislation leagues, people's rule league of Massachusetts, which Hon. George Fred Williams is organizing, the people's party, and by other organizations and hosts of individuals. These recently discovered methods of political action are:

1. Majority rule can be established in national affairs without waiting to change the federal constitution—merely a majority vote in the house and senate for rules of procedure for majority rule is sufficient.

2. The majority rule in the house can be secured in next year's campaign by questioning candidates—proclaiming that organized labor, organized farmers, and referendum and majority rule leagues, demand a people's veto and direct initiative, and that the candidates who do not pledge themselves to vote for the dethronement of the rule of the few, will be defeated; while the people's party should further declare that in each district there will be placed in nomination at least one reputable candidate who is pledged to majority rule. In short, wherever necessary, the people's party should supply the nominating machinery for the majority rule cause, at the same time centering the efforts of populist workers and all other enlightened patriots on the need for pledging candidates for congress and defeating the enemies of the people's rule.

3. The majority in the senate can

be secured in next year's campaign by pledging candidates for the legislatures—pledging them to vote only for such men for the United States senate as are pledged to vote for majority rule, and also pledging the candidates for the legislature to vote to instruct the hold-over senator or senators. The Declaration of Independence was the result of instruction by legislatures, and our second declaration can come in the same way.

4. Another cardinal fact to be recognized in determining the program of a third party is that the establishment of a people's veto and a direct initiative terminates party government—the final power as to legislation is transferred to the people from the organization known as the political party.

This and the three preceding facts are all important in determining the best tactics for the populist party. Success will be achieved by electing congressmen and members of legislatures who are pledged to abolish party government. The mission of the people's party is to establish the sovereignty of the people—the people's rule—majority rule. This is "an open door for all economic reform," says the Denver address, and the statement is true. Establish in the people themselves the final power instead of in a political machine, and reforms will at once come and from all directions. Every association of people who are working for a good cause, a cause that will stand the light of scientific investigation, can and will secure a public hearing. Reforms will come as inevitably as gravitation brings down the apple. Let the people's party, then, proclaim next year a platform of immediate demands and state that the reforms demanded will inevitably result from the establishment of majority rule. Then if a sufficient number of pledged members of congress and of legislatures are elected next year, steps can at once be taken to co-operate with the grange and organized labor in framing bills for the more pressing of the economic reforms, and the bills can be circulated for signatures and filed with the new congress when it meets. Within one year thereafter congress will be obliged to submit to a direct ballot of the people the initiated bill, and submit, also, such competing measures or other recommendations as it may choose to put forth.

This is a practical plan of campaign, and one that organized labor is