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Bryan Will Vote For Parker

(W. J. Bryan in The Commoner of July 15)

I shall vote for Parker and Davis, the nominees of the democratic national convention, and shall do so for the following reasons:

First—Because the democratic ticket stands for opposition to imperialism, while the republican ticket stands for an imperialistic policy. On this question, which was the paramount issue in 1900, and which must remain an important issue so long as an attempt is made to hold colonies under the American flag—on this issue the convention was unanimous, the platform emphatic, and I have no doubt that the candidate will carry out the platform.

Second—Mr. Roosevelt is injecting the race issue into American politics, and this issue, if it becomes national, will make it impossible to consider economic questions that demand solution. The election of the democratic ticket will put a quietus upon this attempt and permit the race question to work itself out without the bitterness which Mr. Roosevelt's conduct has engendered.

Third—Mr. Roosevelt stands for the spirit of war. His friends present him as a man of blood and iron. He believes in strenuousness and inculcates a love for war-like things. The democratic ticket stands for peace, for reason and for arbitration rather than for force, conquest and bluster.

Fourth—The democratic platform declares in favor of the reduction of the standing army, and as this plank was unanimously adopted there is reason to believe that a democratic success on this subject would bring some advantage to the people.

For these four reasons I feel justified in supporting the ticket, but I shall not misrepresent the situation, or appeal for votes for the ticket upon false grounds. A democratic victory will mean very little, if any, progress on economic questions so long as the party is under the control of the Wall street element. On the money question Mr. Parker is as thoroughly committed to the side of the financiers as Mr. Roosevelt. If he does not go as far as

the republicans would in retiring silver dollars, in establishing branch banks, in enlarging the powers of the national banks, and in the substitution of an asset currency for the present currency, it will be because he is restrained by the democrats in the house and senate. Nothing good can be expected of him on the money question.

On the trust question the democratic platform is very much better than the republican platform, but the nomination of Judge Parker virtually nullifies the anti-trust plank. Unless in his letter of acceptance he commits himself to attempt anti-trust legislation we need not expect him to pursue a different course from that pursued by President Roosevelt.

So far as the labor questions are concerned we must await Judge Parker's letter before we shall know whether the laboring man has anything to expect from his election. The labor plank as prepared by Judge Parker's friends on the sub-committee was a straddling, meaningless plank. In the full committee planks were adopted in favor of arbitration, the eight-hour day, and against government by injunction; also a plank on the Colorado situation. If Judge Parker is silent or ambiguous on these subjects it will mean that the financial influence back of him will not permit him to take the labor side on these disputed questions.

On the tariff question some little progress may be hoped for, but the Parker men on the committee were nearly all in favor of a very conservative tariff plank, and it remains to be seen whether Judge Parker will carry out the positive and definite plank which was submitted by the full committee. This is the situation.

Judge Parker stands for enough things that are good to justify me in giving him my vote, but as I have tried to point out for several months, the triumph of the Wall street element of the party denies to the country any hope of relief on economic questions. I have nothing to take back, I have nothing to withdraw of the things that I have said against the methods pursued to advance his candidacy. It was a plain and deliber-

ate attempt to deceive the party. The New York platform was vague and meaningless and purposely so, because the advocates of Judge Parker were trying to secure votes from among the people who would have opposed his views had they known them. If he had sent to the Albany convention the telegram that he sent to the St. Louis convention he would have had very few instructed delegates from the south, and no possible chance for the nomination. But he and his managers adroitly and purposely concealed his position until the delegates had been corraled and the nomination assured. Then his friends attempted to secure a gold plank, which was overwhelmingly defeated in the committee. After the party had rejoiced over the harmony secured by the omission of the question, and after he had secured the nomination, he injected his views upon the subject at a time when he could not be taken from the ticket without great demoralization. The nomination was secured, therefore, by crooked and indefensible methods, but the democrat who loves his country has to make his decisions upon conditions as he finds them, not upon conditions as he would like to have them.

After having stated that I shall support the ticket, and after having given my reason for so doing, I think it due to the democrats of the nation to say that while the fight on economic questions is postponed, it is not abandoned. As soon as the election is over I shall, with the help of those who believe as I do, undertake to organize for the campaign of 1908, the object being to marshal the friends of popular government within the democratic party to the support of a radical and progressive policy to make the democratic party an efficient means in the hands of the people for securing relief from the plutocratic element that controls the republican party and for the time being is in control of the democratic party. This plan of organization will be elaborated soon. It is only mentioned at this time that the readers of The Commoner may know that the contest for economic and political reform will begin again as soon as the polls close, and be continued until success is achieved.

Which Shall It Be?

Editor Independent: Three possible courses are open to the populist state convention when it meets next month:

1.—To appoint a conference committee to meet the democrats and endeavor to secure a division of the state ticket which both conventions will ratify.

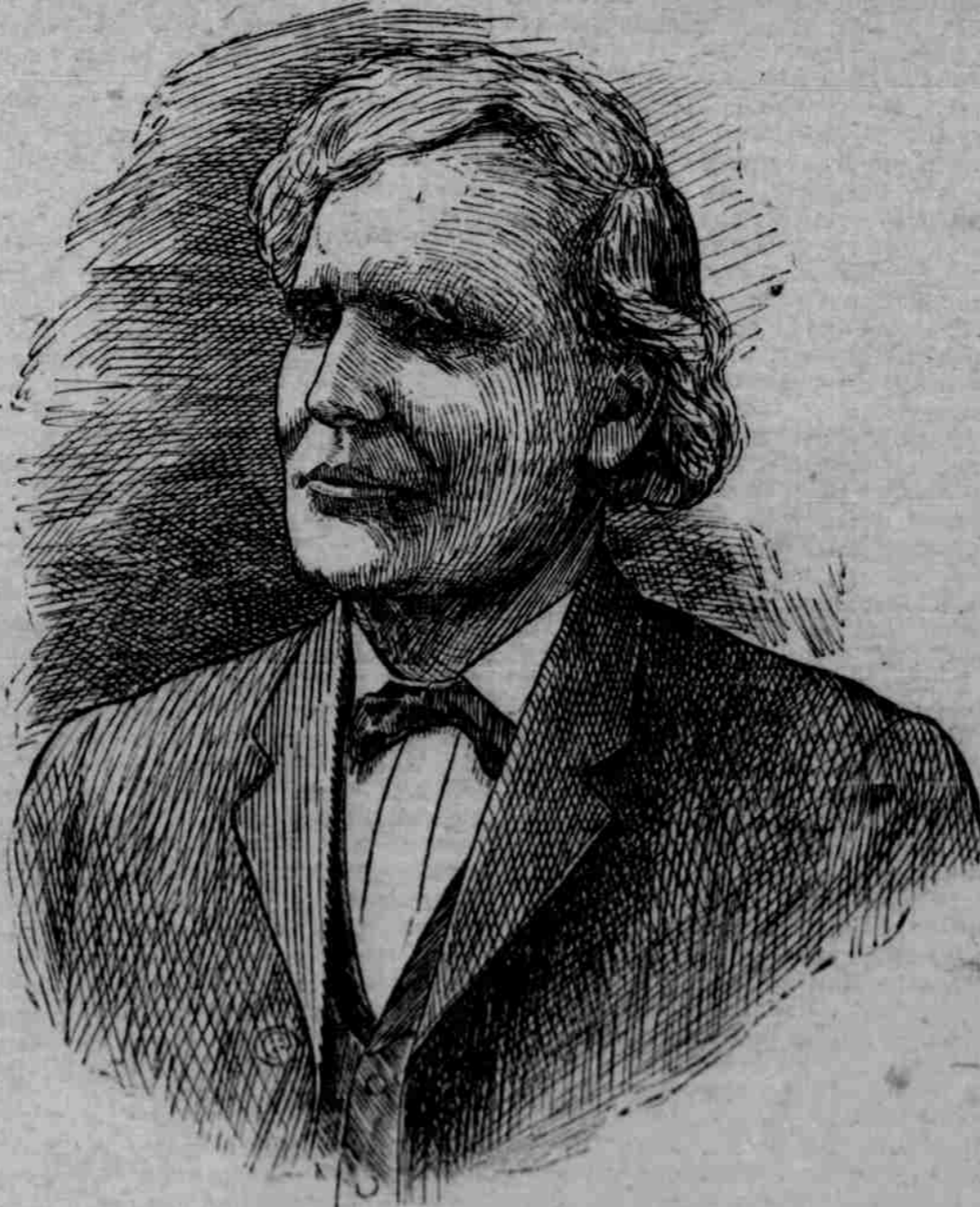
2.—To name part of a ticket, leaving the remainder blank to be filled by the democrats, with power to a committee to effect fusion.

3.—To nominate an entire ticket, adopt a platform and adjourn, leaving the rest to the voters at the polls.

The events of the past few days render some clear, frank discussion of these courses in advance imperative if we are to have clear thinking, straightforward action and union. I am no longer in active political life and have other work which demands more time than each day contains, but after fourteen years fellowship with men professing common ends of public policy one does not lightly contemplate separation—and I am convinced that for many members of the people's party separation from the organization is certain in the event of possible action which may be taken by the coming state convention. As one of these I am unwilling to remain silent in this crisis.

First of all the practical political problems of the time in which we live is that that of union—how to unite in one compact, homogeneous organization the progressive elements in our society in order to accomplish political changes made necessary by the great changes in production and distribution of wealth in the past century. Under a system of party government such as ours I do not believe it reasonable to expect these changes until a political party united upon them is formed, including the great mass of those who favor them and strong enough to carry them into operation.

Twelve years ago we met in Omaha to form such a party. Who of those



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present will ever forget that convention? The union of north and south, the spirit of fraternity and altruism, the great wave of enthusiasm for humanity and popular rights—these marked a new political era for America. Spite of all the critics might say

of the "freaks" on the floor and the crudities in the platform there was a genuine foundation for a new party—a great, honest, level-headed, courageous majority, bound by the ties of common ideals as well as common interests. The fundamental principles

for society there declared will outlive the ridicule and hatred of this generation—the brief vogue of half-way patchwork compromises—and become the basis of the future social structure. I mean such declarations as these: "Land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes." "Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people." The one serious mistake the convention made, repeated in the campaign that followed, was in emphasizing the free coinage of silver as a means of securing the public welfare. By none of the strong thinkers in the movement then was silver regarded as the important question. The temptation to make it such arose from the defeat of the silver mining interests in the democratic national convention and their promise of substantial support and an immediate harvest of votes from men who were ready to follow the free silver flag, but were not educated up to the fundamental doctrines of the platform.

Eight years ago there was a revolution in the democratic party. Primarily a fight over free silver, in the outcome it went farther than that and touched the edges of deeper problems. The victory of the free silver element in the democratic national convention was made the basis for an appeal to the populists to "place principles above party" and endorse the democratic nominations. The nominee for vice president was notoriously out of sympathy with the purposes of the people's party and the effort to endorse him failed properly. After a struggle which rent the party organization, whose intensity only those who went through it can ever realize, the people party convention nominated the democratic candidate for president and for vice president named one of its own sons—a man of democratic antecedents who should have been more acceptable to the