

# WILL REFUSE THE BRIBE

Believing that it was due the people of this state to know whether all the candidates seeking the suffrages of the people of this state would, if elected, accept any passes or other favors from public service corporations, especially from the railroads, The Independent mailed to each of such candidates a letter asking in plain English this pointed question. The question and the replies thereto will be published as fast as received. The Independent will also call attention of its readers to the names of all candidates who fail to respond to this question. It matters not whether these candidates are on the populist and democratic tickets or not, the public shall know their position on this important question. In this campaign this issue is an important one, and the candidate unwilling to pledge himself on this point is unfit to be elected. Here is the letter:

Dear Sir: You have doubtless observed that our candidate for governor, George W. Berge, has taken a positive and definite stand upon the question of railroad passes. It has not come to the knowledge of the Independent that any other of the candidates on our state ticket or of the candidates for congress have expressed themselves upon this question.

As the major portion of the candidates upon the state ticket will compose the state board of equalization, The Independent believes that it is due the people of this state to know whether those composing this board will pledge themselves as Mr. Berge has done. The Independent, therefore, desires to ask you directly this question: If elected to the office to which you have been nominated, will you accept any pass or other favor from the railroads of this or any other state, or will you accept from any public franchised corporation any favor of any description whatever?

As The Independent desires to publish the answers of every candidate seeking the suffrages of the populists and democrats of this state, an immediate answer to this query is urged.

Very respectfully,  
L. J. QUINBY,  
Associate Editor.

Omaha, Neb., Sept. 26, 1904.

Mr. L. J. Quinby, Associate Editor, Nebraska Independent, Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sir: I am in receipt of your letter of September 24, asking me whether I will pledge myself, if elected, not to accept any pass or other favor from the railroads of this or any other state.

In reply, I beg to say that I do not believe that a state official or member of congress should accept passes from railroads and for that reason, when the railroads tendered me passes in 1903 and 1904, I declined them with thanks.

This action of mine in the past is probably the best indication of my actions in the future.

Yours very truly,  
G. M. HITCHCOCK,  
M. C.

Campbell, Neb., Sept. 26, 1904.  
Editor Independent,  
Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 23rd inst., received. In reply will say I have no hesitancy in stating my position on this question as plainly and forcibly as has Mr. Berge. I will under no circumstances or conditions, accept any pass or any other remuneration whatever from any railroad or other corporation doing business in this or any other state, either previous to or following the election. I think it is the duty of every candidate on the fusion state ticket to express himself plainly on these issues as enunciated by our candidate for governor at the opening of the fusion campaign in Lincoln on September 17.

Yours very truly,  
A. TOWNSEND.

Grant, Neb., Sept. 26, 1904.  
L. J. Quinby,  
The Nebraska Independent,  
Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sir: I will very cheerfully promise that: If I am elected to the office of state superintendent, I will neither accept any pass nor other favor from the railroads of this or any other

state, nor will I accept from any public franchised corporation any favor of any description whatever.

Yours truly,  
A. SOFTLEY.

O'Neill, Neb., Sept. 26, 1904.

Editor Independent: Replying to your inquiry, "Whether, if elected, I should accept passes or other favors from railway corporations?" I have no hesitation in answering "No; certainly not."

Under the circumstances supposed, it would almost certainly be my duty to prosecute actions against railroads and other monopolistic corporations, and to accept free transportation from them would be tantamount to accepting a fee from both sides of the case.

A state official who accepts a free railroad pass will accept a money bribe also, if tactfully offered, for no one accepts a pass accepts that which has a money value.

Some gentlemen of my political faith may look upon the pass from the "good fellow's" point of view, and say that it would not interfere with the performance of official duty. This is a most dangerous view to take, for the pass places the official under an obligation to the pass-giver. It blunts the official conscience, dulls the official attention, and dims the official eye. It is the entering wedge of dishonesty, "That little rift within the lute Which by-and-by will make the music mute

And ever widening, deaden all within." As it appears before my vision—and I believe I see it clearly—the pass traffic between railroads and state officials is not merely "similar to bribery"—it is not merely "in the nature of bribery"—it is bribery, and that in the fullest sense.

It is a crime against honor and against morals, and I will use my best efforts to make it a crime against the laws of Nebraska, whether elected attorney general or not.

Sincerely yours,  
EDWARD H. WHELAN.

York, Neb., Sept. 27, 1904.  
The Independent,  
Lincoln, Neb.

Gentlemen: Your favor requesting my views on the railroad pass duly received. I am opposed to the pass in every form, and if elected to congress I will not accept any pass or other favor from the railroads of this or other state, nor will I accept from any public franchised corporation any favor of any description whatever. I believe that every patriotic and honorable man should refuse to take a pass whether he be in public or private life.

Yours truly,  
CHAS. F. GILBERT.

Lincoln, Neb., Sept. 27, 1904.  
L. J. Quinby,  
Associate Editor Independent,  
Lincoln, Neb.

My Dear Sir: Replying to your inquiry as to my position on the pass question, I wish to say: First, that I have been and am still a radical advocate of government ownership of railroads, which would eliminate the pass question from politics, as there would be no favoritism in our transportation system. Second, that until we have government ownership of the railroads, I am unalterably opposed to the use of passes by any public official and if elected to any office at any time in any place, I shall never ask for nor use one if tendered me; I consider a pass, granted a public official, in the nature of a bribe; and I believe that those public officials who make use of the pass are placing themselves in a position to be used by the corporations, syndicates and trusts.

You understand, of course, Mr. Quinby, that I felt it unnecessary to express myself on this question, as the use of passes by a public official is a violation of one of the cardinal principles in the platform upon which we stand.

Sincerely yours,  
A. A. WORSLEY.

Pawnee City, Neb., Sept. 27, 1904.  
The Nebraska Independent,  
Lincoln, Neb.

Replying to yours of the 23d inst., I believe the "free pass system" is wrong and ought to be discouraged.

If elected to the office of state treasurer, I will not accept any pass or other favor from any railroad in this or any other state nor will I accept from any public franchised corporation any favor of any description whatever.

Very respectfully,  
JOHN M. OSBORNE.

Humphrey, Neb., Sept. 26, 1904.  
L. J. Quinby, Associate Editor,  
Lincoln, Neb.

Dear Sir: Replying to yours of 24th inst., would say that I am in absolute sympathy with the position taken by Hon. George W. Berge, candidate for governor, on the pass question, and if elected to congress from the Third congressional district of Nebraska I will not accept any pass or any other favor from the railroads of this or any other state, nor will I accept from any public franchised corporation any favor of any description whatsoever.

The platform adopted by both conventions in the Third congressional district, at my request, declared absolutely in favor of government ownership of railroads and I am standing squarely on that platform.

Very truly yours,  
PATRICK E. McKILLIP.

## Enthusiastic for Worsley

Those who presented the name of Albinus A. Worsley to the state conventions for the place of commissioner of public lands and buildings knew what they were about, when they said that he would be a power on the state ticket. Since the conventions he has done more speaking than any other candidate on the ticket. The letters received at this office speaking of his work confirm all that was promised of him. Here are some samples:

Editor Independent: A. A. Worsley delivered the greatest speech here last night that was ever delivered in this county. He is the greatest speaker we ever heard.  
D. C. SPARR,  
County Assessor.

Dunning, Neb.

Editor Independent: I want you to say to your readers that Hon. A. A. Worsley delivered the best speech here last night that was ever heard in this county. Bryan never saw the day that he could touch Worsley on economics. Everybody should hear Worsley. I am a democrat, but not for Parker. Bless The Independent for saving the people's party.  
J. N. RIDENOUR,  
Merna, Neb.

The Independent does not hesitate to predict that when Mr. Worsley assumes his place on the state board of equalization he will be heard there also as one of the powerful members of that board in the interests of the people.

## Direct Legislation Was Defeated? in Illinois.

There was a good deal of mourning a year and a half ago because the Illinois legislature turned down the direct legislation state amendment and passed another in its place. By that state's constitution, the legislature can amend but one section of the constitution at a session and the people can only vote on amendments to one section at a time. So the opponents of direct legislation did not oppose it. Oh, no, they would not do such a wicked deed, but then you know Chicago must be provided with a new charter and that amendment must be passed first.

So they passed the Chicago charter amendment and sidetracked the full direct legislation amendment and the Chicago charter amendment comes to a vote this fall. I advise all advocates of direct legislation to vote for it. Here is the gist of it in the first and last paragraphs. The center is only a useless repetition of powers.

"Section 34. The general assembly shall have power, subject to the conditions and limitations hereinafter contained, to pass any law (local, special or general) providing a scheme or charter of local municipal government for the territory now or hereafter embraced within the limits of the city of Chicago. \* \* \*

"No law based upon this amendment to the constitution, affecting the municipal government of the city of Chicago, shall take effect until such law shall be consented to by a majority of the legal voters of said city voting on the question at any election, general, municipal or special; and no local or special law based upon this amendment affecting specially any part of the city of Chicago shall take effect until consented to by a majority of the legal voters of such part of said city voting on the question at any election, general, municipal or special."

The last section is a provision for a complete and compulsory referendum on every change in Chicago's city charter. The legislature may make all sorts of changes but the people can reject any they do not want.

This does not take away from the legislature the power they now have to make general laws affecting every city in the state including Chicago, but its moral effect will be against

the inclusion of anything affecting Chicago in such laws. It does not repeal the old statutes affecting Chicago, but in the future, such will gradually be replaced by new ones on which the people of Chicago have the referendum.

It does not give the people of Chicago any right of initiative in framing their own laws. It would be a great deal better if it did. But it does give them the compulsory referendum on every change in their charter. Thus far it is very good. And notice that in order to defeat a direct legislation amendment in which the referendum would depend on a petition, they give to Chicago, the compulsory referendum, or that every charter change must not be submitted. It was not so very bad a defeat for the direct legislation forces, was it? They had to use a partial but more stringent form of direct legislation to defeat the complete form.

ELTWEED POMEROY.

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