

The Independent.

Vol. XVI.

LINCOLN, NEB., NOVEMBER 24, 1904.

No. 27

Results of Referendum Vote

What Populists
Should Do

For a New Party

Favors a New Party

Editor Independent: I am in receipt of your recent letter inviting an expression of my views on the question of "What populists should do?" It is my belief that there should be a free expression of opinion by all who have taken an interest in the movement, and that along in the winter there should be a national conference called of all who are interested in like reforms, and then a determination as to what should be done. I do not think it best to assume any hard or fast attitude until we have fully discussed the question; and it is only for the purpose of contributing my views for the consideration of others, the same as I shall consider theirs, that this letter is written.

It is certain that an increasingly large number of the American people are at this time in favor of the following progressive reforms:

1. The national ownership and operation of the railroads and telegraph lines of the country.
2. The national ownership of enough coal and other mines, to prevent monopoly, and to accord independent citizens an opportunity to acquire the raw material as advantageously as the trust acquires them.
3. Postal savings banks.
4. A graduated income tax.
5. A graduated inheritance tax.
6. Local application in the states of the principles of initiative and referendum, with a subsequent application to our national affairs should experience in the states prove such extension desirable.
7. The issue of all money by the federal government without the intervention of any bank.
8. Compulsory primaries.

The most important of these reforms and the one which is securing the greatest number of converts, is the national ownership and operation of the railroads and telegraph lines. Students of our industrial system, including business men of all classes, now understand that the very backbone of the trust system is the favoritism of the private owners of the railroads. This favoritism is exercised in many ways, such as securing rebates on freight; a delay in furnishing cars to the ordinary business man, while they are furnished the trusts promptly; a delay in forwarding the product of the ordinary business man, while sending the trust-made product to its destination speedily; the use of the right-of-way of the railroad company by favored interests for grain elevators and coal yards and other purposes, while to the ordinary business man these privileges are denied. In my judgment this transportation question should be placed at the very forefront in the reform movement; first, because it is right; and secondly, because it is constantly gaining new adherents from all classes of people. With a sufficient ownership of coal and other mines, the citizen who desired to engage in a new manufacturing enterprise would be assured of being on an equal footing with the trust in the matter of securing raw material and transportation to his factory; and then through the national ownership of the railroads he would be secure in getting equal terms in the distribution of his manufactured goods.

The question is, how to bring about these desired reforms, and how best to unite the people who are in favor of them. My own judgment is, that we can make the greatest progress through a new political party. We need no party that is founded on mere wail of calamity, but the nation does need a party which stands for industrial progress without poverty. The present system leads to progress and poverty; it furnishes the multimillionaire and the pauper. The aim of the new movement should be to furnish all an equal opportunity, and make this a country where we have neither the plutocrat nor the pauper. In a new political party, men who have been populists, democrats or republicans, could all unite

The referendum taken by The Independent, at 12 o'clock noon, on Wednesday stood:

For People's Party organization	1,872
For co-operation with Democrats	151

on common ground. They could bury all past differences and join together in favor of those reforms on which they all agree. They would have no past political hatreds or bitterness in their way. They would not only be on an equal footing, but what is just as important, they would all feel that they were on an equal footing. To those who are ambitious and desire to serve the public in office, there is nothing deterrent in a new party. In a new party, all would enter with an equal chance for political preference. The new party would be under no obligations to any man for past political services; there would be no party debts to pay; there would be no factions as a result of past party differences.

Without this new party movement we will not get the full benefit of the support of those who believe alike in reforms. A new party would secure the active support of all reformers during the next four years. But if no new movement is started, some will go into the democratic party, some into the socialist party and some into the prohibition party.

Why any democrat should object to thus forming a new party, I can not understand. The democrats are practically without any national organization or standing. They retain control of a few southern states where the negro question is the controlling one in politics. But in the territory north of the Mason and Dixon line, which comprises the great bulk of industrial America, there is practically no democratic organization. True, there are many democratic voters, but they are a disorganized body. It seems to me that even under the leadership of Bryan and Hearst, republicans will not enter the democratic party as they would enter a new party that stood for reforms in which they believed. I believe that more than two-thirds of the republicans of Nebraska believe in the government ownership of the railroads, and a very large number of them would enter a new party. But it is quite plain that they have no present intention of entering the democratic party. They remember the fights of the past. In their own communities they have been lined up in political battles on the republican side, and the way that their assistance can be most effectively secured for these reforms is in a new party where all meet on common ground.

The people are all right. The vote for George W. Berge in Nebraska shows this. Except for the Roosevelt landslide, which was occasioned by disgust of Parker and the crowd around him, Berge would have received an overwhelming plurality.

In saying what I have said here, it is not through any prejudice against the mere word "democrat." If the issues were finally made up in the next presidential election solely between a democrat of the Bryan or Hearst kind and a republican, my vote would be cast for the democratic candidate. But the trouble is, that there is in the democratic party today, quite an element which is just the same as the crowd that controls the republican party in the nation and state. The republican party in both state and nation is owned body, soul and pataloos by predatory wealth, and there is quite an element in the democratic party that belongs in the same class. In Nebraska, James E. Boyd, Lee Herdman, James E. Kelly, Lee Spratlin and George L. Miller, still claim to be democrats, and I would no more think of co-operating with these men in politics than of co-operating with John H. Mickey, John Baldwin, Charles F.

Manderson, B. T. White and J. H. Ager.

And, as it is in the state, so it is in the nation. For myself, I could never see such difference between Theodore Roosevelt and Alton B. Parker. No doubt Judge Parker is still a democrat, and will be a democrat four years from now. Then take the leaders: John D. Rockefeller, Henry H. Rogers and Jas. Stillman of the Standard Oil trust; J. P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, Cornelius Vanderbilt, George Gould and E. H. Harriman, are all republicans and supported Roosevelt. So did Armour and Swift and Morris of the beef trust; so did Schneider of the grain trust. On the other hand, August Belmont, Jas. J. Hill of the Great Northern, Ingalls of the Big Four railroad, Arthur Pue Gorman, David B. Hill and Grover Cleveland are still democrats and supported Parker, and no doubt they expect to be democrats four years from now and will use their influence to nominate a corporation democrat for president, and if they fail in that a genuine Jefferson democrat is nominated, those corporation democrats will knife the ticket as they did in 1896 and 1900. The corporation democrats keep anti-monopoly republicans out of the democratic party, and at the same time these corporation democrats always have and always will knife any presidential nominee who stands for the great principles of government typified in the person of Thomas Jefferson.

If these reforms are to be brought about, they will only be accomplished by a union of the west and south. It is in the west and south that the real Jefferson sentiment exists. As a result of war prejudices, the west has not been voting its true sentiments. As a matter of fact, it has had no opportunity to vote its sentiments in a national election except in 1896 and 1900. But the west, in sentiment, believes in the principles of Jefferson and not those of Alexander Hamilton. The vote for Berge in Nebraska, for Adams in Colorado and Toole in Montana shows that there is plenty of Jeffersonian sentiment in the west whenever it is aroused and united.

Unless advantage is taken of this condition, the democrats will find an increased socialist vote. It is probably true that a large majority of those who voted for Debs are not socialists. They were protesting democrats or populists. In South Omaha, the democratic stronghold in Nebraska, Debs was as strong as Parker. In Milwaukee, Debs received two thousand more votes than Parker. In the democratic strongholds in Chicago, the vote for Debs took the breath from the democratic leaders. It all shows that you can't fool the people. The vote for Roosevelt was not a republican vote. Of course all republicans voted for him, but democrats and populists by the tens of thousands all over the country voted for him as a protest against the political domination of the Belmonts, Gormans and Cleverlands.

I fully recognize that it is hard work to build up a new organization without the assistance of Mr. Bryan and Mr. Hearst; and my hope is that those gentlemen may finally realize that reform can best be accomplished through a new organization. If we had in this new movement, Bryan, Hearst, Folk and LaFollette, its ultimate success would not be in doubt. LaFollette has accomplished a great work in Wisconsin in the matter of railroad taxes and a primary election law. He has now probably secured the necessary power in the legislature to secure a reduction in freight rates. This is the end of

the state reforms for which he has been contending, and when these are secured the agitation will cease very largely. Mr. LaFollette will find that his freight rate law will be fought and largely defied by the railroads and that the railroads will be protected by the republican courts; and he will further find that the only solution of the great transportation problem is the public ownership and operation of the railroads, and to secure this, he will have to leave the republican party. LaFollette will finally have to leave the republicans or abandon his fight for reforms, and surrender to the vicious and organized garrison that he has fought so well.

In a new party, such as I have outlined, LaFollette and all men like him would find a congenial home.

M. F. HARRINGTON.

O'Neill, Neb.

A New Party

Editor Independent: It seems evident to me that the followers of Bryan as well as of Watson can never win single handed and alone. The trusts and banking power with their hirelings of the press as well as those of the pulpit whose large salaried ministers are but satellites that revolve around the Rockefeller, Cleveland, Hill and Belmont gang. Such animals with woolly back as with sanctimonious mien kneel before their altars and with pathetic words plead with their God to bless the widows and the orphans, the poor and oppressed, while at any moment they are eager to grasp their exorbitant salaries and huge donations; blood money that has been wrung from the oppressed and lily fed poor. With such a united political Gibraltar to combat I see no hope for the leaders of Jeffersonian democracy, marshalled under Bryan and Watson to conquer our common political enemies while divided. Why can not our two giants in oratory, whose pathetic and burning words have rang like the clarion of immortality through the hearts of vast assemblies and awakened new life and hope of millions of deceived and wandering toilers. The political enemies of Bryan or Watson can find no tarnish or flit upon their escutcheons. They stand as torchlights high in the political heavens to beckon mankind to a higher sense of justice. Crushing defeat that would sink the most of men to oblivion, has only made them stronger. The words of the slanderers the fifth thrown upon their garments has left them unsullied. Why can not those two grand agents of reform together with that grand old veteran, Tibbles, whose able pen and ringing voice inspired by the love of justice for the enslaved toilers, together with Hearst, whose millions have not created within him that fire of greed which has consumed the consciences of many, and with many others devoted to the same reform, why, I ask, can they not, why will they not unite their forces in one grand army, discarding old party names, form a new party with a new name agreeable to them all and under the banner of Jackson and Jefferson emblazoned with the motto "United we stand, divided we fall," attempt to collect the scattered and wandering elements of reform with the slogan, "Principle before party." Let all true patriots lend their united efforts to all those who believe in the reforms advocated by Bryan and Watson and join them in one solid phalanx to combat their common enemy. With such a union and with such choice spirits as Bryan and Watson we can see in 1908 the flag of liberty unfurled over a redeemed nation above the dome of our national capital when a universal jubilee of rejoicing arising from the toiling millions over their emancipation from the shackles of cunning greed and abject slavery, would ascend a volume of grateful incense to the God of Liberty.

J. S. G.

"The Jeffersonians"

Editor Independent: Apropos of your referendum ballot question, I can not answer fully on the form of ballot submitted. Ever since our Denver re-