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National Democracy Wrecked

The Case Stated
by
Thos. E. Watson

Editor Independent: During the eight years which preceded my nomination for the presidency on July 4, 1904, I had been out of politics. By methods which no honest man will defend, I had been relegated to the outer darkness. Compromise I would not make; defeat I was forced to recognize. Like a sensible man, I knew when I was whipped; but I neither surrendered nor apostatized. Bryan had organized the fusion movement of 1896 and with the help of Senator Jones had lured our populist leaders into the ambush. I protested but was overpowered. In good faith I endeavored to make the Bryan-Watson ticket a success. In bad faith Senator Jones held Sewall on the ticket and made republican victory a certainty. Bryan was nearer to the white house in 1896 than he will ever be again; and he did not enter it because he was ashamed to recognize the populists who wanted to elect him and whose full strength was necessary to his triumph. For eight years democracy paraded our platform and controlled the populist national committee. For eight years there was no room to work in for a mid-road populist like myself. Seeing no chance to do anything under such circumstances I quit the field, and I believed, forever. It never entered my head that the democratic leaders would be so incredibly stupid as to do what they did at St. Louis in this year 1904. I never dreamed that they would shed their principles like a garment, frame a quasi-republican platform, put at the head of the committee a notorious gambling housekeeper like Tom Taggart, sell the nomination to a Rothschild agent and corporation like August Belmont and put up as nominee for president a featureless candidate who was utterly unknown except as a creature of the most crooked wire worker in American politics, David B. Hill.

Neither in 1896 nor in 1904 had I sought the populist nomination. No man can say that I ever moved a finger or spoke a syllable to get either nomi-

nation. Each of them came to me absolutely unsought. As soon as it was known that the democratic bosses had surrendered to Wall street at St. Louis, as soon as I learned that Bryan, Tillmar, Bailey, Daniels, Williams, etc., had not only knuckled to Parker as nominee but had flattened themselves out beneath that "gold standard telegram" I fully realized what a monstrous crime had been committed against the people and what a splendid opportunity the politicians had left open for the men of principles. I did not believe that the American voters would stand for the "crime of 1904," it was only a question of how to protest.

For eight years I had been out of touch with the people. Secluded, politically, an outcast, given over to book reading, book-writing, law-practice and private business, I knew nothing of the feeling of the masses. Naturally I waited for signs of encouragement, for indications that a revolt against existing conditions would be supported. For nearly a month after the St. Louis "sell-out" the country seemed dazed. Then indeed, the low sounds of the distant thunder could be heard by anyone who was not deaf. The storm clouds could be seen by anyone who was not blind. The democratic "crime of 1904" stirred the country as it has not been shaken since the civil war, and the unprecedented triumph of Theodore Roosevelt is due quite as much to the revolt against the cowardice, corruption and imbecility shown by the democratic leaders at St. Louis as to any other cause whatsoever. The man who does not now realize that the recent election and the exposures that have been made since vindicate my judgment and my conduct must be lost to common sense. No real democrat is proud of the fact that he supported the ticket of Tom Taggart, Pat McCarren, Dave Hill, August Belmont and Aiton B. Parker. Only those democrats whose principles are republican are satisfied. These democrats whose principles are democratic are ashamed, and apologetic. They know that they were

tricked at St. Louis. They know that to the extent of their support of Parker they condoned the fraud, endorsed the trick and aided the attempt to bamboozle the American people. They know it now; they confess it now.

My sin is that I saw it then, denounced it then, and did all I could to smash the scheme. Had real democrats been willing to listen to me, Parker would have been driven out of the field during the first month of the campaign, the true democracy would have organized, would have drawn to itself all the reform elements and we could have come much nearer to success than the leader of democracy who set out with seven million democrats and let Roosevelt capture two million of them.

During the entire campaign I said nothing against Parker or the St. Louis convention that were as harsh as the things Bryan said of both. Without recalling any of his accusations Mr. Bryan campaigned for the "unfit" nominee and for the "crooked and undefensible nomination." Mr. Bryan will have four years in which to explain that inconsistency and will no doubt find the job sufficiently difficult.

During the campaign I said nothing more complimentary of Mr. Roosevelt as a man than the Hon. John Temple Graves said since the election in the Atlanta News. The fact that I said it during the battle and that the brilliant editor said it afterwards, will not militate against either of us, I am sure. Throughout the canvas I was the one nominee who constantly leveled every gun I could bring into play against the principles, the measures, the policies, the ruinous tendencies of the republican party. It was I, not Parker, who persistently advocated the income tax as the method by which the untaxed corporate wealth of the land could be made to pay its fair proportion of the federal taxes. It was I, not Parker, who antagonized, as Jefferson and Jackson did, the exclusive privileges which the national banks have in the creation of national currency. It was I, not Parker, who advocated the election of all officers by

the people in order that we might get rid of that cloud of corporation agents, the United States senate, and of the federal judges who have nullified the right to habeas corpus and the trial by jury. It was I, not Parker who clamored for a repeal of the tariff taxes on the necessities of life and for public ownership of public utilities.

In other words, Parker made no fight for democratic principles; he stood for nothing beyond the plain simple proposition that he would rather have the office than to let Roosevelt keep it. Throughout the campaign the republican party was consistent with itself and its creed. Socialism was consistent with itself and its creed. The people's party was consistent with itself and its creed. Democracy was at war with itself and had no creed. Hence, national democracy came out of the campaign utterly wrecked—without policy, principle, purpose or leadership, discredited before all the world for all time to come. Never in this generation can it again inspire confidence. Never can it again deceive the east, the north or the west. I pray God that the time is not far off when it can not even deceive the south. Why prate about reform inside the democratic party? You might as well talk about reforming hell from the inside. How can you get rid of Tom Taggart, the gambling establishment man? How can you eject Belmont, the Rothschild man? How can you banish Pat McCarren, the Standard Oil man? Or Gorman of Maryland, the sugar trust man? The whole machinery of the party for the next four years will be in the control of the plutocratic element which overthrew Bryan at St. Louis. For four years the party has no platform excepting the quasi-republican abomination which was adopted at St. Louis. And for the next four years the official commander-in-chief of the democratic party is not Bryan, nor Hearst, nor Bailey. The commander-in-chief is Tom Taggart, the gambling hell man of Indiana.

THOMAS E. WATSON,
Thomson, Ga.

Let Us Be Men

Editor Independent: Until I finally return home and resume my regular work on The Independent, I presume I may be considered one of its subscribers rather than one of its editors. If so, I desire to cast my vote for continuing the people's party organization, and unqualifiedly against any further fusion or co-operation with the democratic or any other party.

I opposed the fusion on state ticket this year because I felt that the net effect would be to break down the people's party and diminish Mr. Watson's vote on the one hand and to strengthen the democratic party and increase Mr. Parker's vote on the other. Mr. Newbranch of the World-Herald will doubtless remember that I told him this in The Independent office convention day—August 10. Mr. Berge will doubtless remember a conversation had with me over the phone in which I assured him that fusion would break down the populist strength and build up Parker democracy. He believed otherwise.

I am not in an I-told-you-so mood tonight—and the full returns are not at hand—but I here venture this guess: That Nebraska made a better showing for Parker than any other state in the union, and except Kansas, a poorer showing for Watson. This could not have been accomplished except by fusion on state and legislative candidates. This could not have been done had many of the leading populists of Nebraska been as energetic in behalf of our national ticket as they were in trying to elect a legislature to send Mr. Bryan to the United States senate.

I have no quarrel with these gentlemen. They have their ideas as to what is best—that is their American right—and they outclass us poor tongue-tied devils when it comes convention time. They have their ideas enforced at convention—but there is another story to tell election day.

Ever since 1902 it has been plain as day what sort of candidate would be nominated and what sort of platform

would be enunciated by the democratic party in 1904. When Iowa democracy absorbed our party over there—all but about 700—and then in 1902 repudiated the Kansas City platform, defeating W. H. Robb, one of our national committeemen, who led the fight for reaffirmation; and when Mr. Bryan urged support of the ticket as a choice of evils—then some populists began to see a "choice of evils" looming up for 1904. A few of these tried to prepare for emergencies, hoping to escape both the devil and the deep blue sea—and the Denver conference resulted; the Springfield convention was held; Watson and Tibbles were nominated, and the populist campaign of 1904 was carried on, hampered on every side by those who claim to be populists.

It is impossible now to say how many votes were cast for Watson and Tibbles electors—but we shall know some time how many were counted for them. Possibly not more than 200,000 will be the recorded vote for Watson and Tibbles. But if only that many, we have accomplished what was never done before—revived a dead party after its identity was almost wholly lost. If only 200,000, that represents an army of radicals who can never again be caught by the chaff of "ephemeral opportunism." They will never again trust the democratic party. If a real crisis should come, they would doubtless help to organize a new radical party on broader lines—but until such a time comes they will stand solidly for the people's party.

I am now preparing a final report of all receipts and expenditures by our committee during the campaign. In addition to this, I shall give a report of all receipts and expenditures enrolling the Old Guard of Populism, from December 5, 1903, to date. This will be classified by states and counties and show exactly who gave the money, and where the workers live. After this is completed we can tell how to proceed with the work of enrolling men who will not only stand up and be counted

for populism but will fight for it.

Certainly there will be no more attempts in Nebraska to compel Parker democrats and Watson populists to join in the fusion embrace. That can not be dignified by calling it political harlotry—it is nothing less than political rape, and resented as such by both democrats and populists. I have a right to say this, because I traveled 500 miles and back to vote for Watson and Tibbles and George Berge. I did intend to cut out all Parker supporters, but when I reached the booth I put in a straight vote for the entire ticket—because this was a year when party regularity was at a premium—and my party had nominated some Parker supporters.

Suppose we have only 20,000 populists now in Nebraska—what of it? Next year, with a straight ticket, we can begin to recover our lost ground. By 1906 we can carry a congressman or two possibly and scare the republican machine much worse than it was scared this year. If we go at it with a will we can carry the state in 1906. Shall we try? It can't be done by fusion—that's evident, because we can't get any better man than George Berge and he couldn't escape the curse of political miscegenation.

Let us be men just for once, and quit this boy's play. Let us begin now the fight for a straight populist ticket all along the line and keep it up until we've cleared out the "redeemers" and routed them horse, foot and dragoons.

CHARLES Q. DE FRANCE.

Joliet, Ill.

Is This So?

The Lincoln Independent, populist, is boosting a movement against any more fusion with the democrats. Its words sound very nice just now. The election is over. There is nothing doing. The Independent will get lots of assent and many brave promises from populists.

But wait a few months. Wait till

we have some more offices to fill in Nebraska. Then fusion will be humming again. Then in dozens of counties the local managers, the local office holders and office seekers of both fusing parties will come to life. Then we shall again have the same old convention calls for "same place and time," the same old conference committees, the same old result in fusion tickets.

You can't teach old dogs new tricks.—Lincoln Star.

Ghouls of Industry

There are also ghouls in industry, men of intellectual power and energy, who employ their rare abilities in devising schemes to wax fat upon the sweat of other men's faces, to live without earning a living, to get rich without working. These men may not break the law. They may be eminently respectable. Their plan may be merely to take advantage of the law's imperfections. They may dedicate millions to enterprises of great pith and moment, like universities, libraries and art galleries. Yet an impartial judgment, at the close of their lives, will hold that they profited by unjust laws and said no word to point out the injustice by which their fellow men were robbed. It is not fair to denounce, nor even to blame, such men. They are not necessarily guilty of conscious, personal wrong doing. But the man who, seeing the wrong, defends it to win the applause of its beneficiaries is a pious fraud.

Away with this blind and ignorant worship of stark ability! Look to the moral character of the act, to its effect upon mankind. If it is good, commend it, though a Rowan perform it. If it is bad condemn it, though a Funston commit it. Look to the moral character of your laws, to their effect upon mankind. If they are bad, strive for their amendment or repeal, though all the hosts of Philistinism chatter and hurl epithets and things at you.—What's The Use.