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Governor Douglass for Direct Legislation

It Was an Issue in Massachusetts

By fraud and bull-doing Governor Garvin was defeated in Rhode Island, but her sister state, Massachusetts, elected a man who is not afraid to speak his mind. In his inaugural address Governor Douglas of Massachusetts twice endorsed direct legislation, once for national matters and once for state affairs. He spoke about how the tariff was cramping the industries of Massachusetts and the necessity of reciprocity with Canada and advocated the appointment of an industrial commission to study and report and said:

"It should consider the advisability of a referendum vote on one or more of its conclusions—the primary object of such vote being to obtain an expression of opinion from the people for the information and guidance of our representatives in the congress."

Then when he came to state affairs, he dwelt longer on direct legislation and said:

"I have unbounded faith in the intelligence of our people and their ability to govern themselves. Our colony and commonwealth have been bred in pure democracy through the town-meeting, which has educated the people to the wise conduct of their own business, and has produced local administration as free from corruption or excess as any in the world. There seems no reason why this system should be confined to towns and may not be wisely extended, in certain cases, to the state. Indeed, our constitution is amended by popular vote directly upon the measure proposed, and if our organic law is thus confined to the direct vote of the people, it would be no innovation if such a vote of popular approval were to be required upon measures of legislation which are clearly inferior in dignity and importance to constitutional amendments."

It is common complaint that our legislatures are not always responsive to the popular will, and it would be quite within the principles of democratic government if, by convenient means, the will of the people should be made effective when legislative measures prove unsatisfactory. Such measures have already been put to the test elsewhere with results uniformly good.

"It is difficult to see what objection there can be to such a grant of power to the people over this legislation. As members of the legislature are representatives of the people, they should not object if their constituents be given power to reverse or approve their acts. If the objection be made that the people can not be trusted, such an objection is a denial of the success of popular government as shown by the history of town-meetings for more than two centuries."

"Especially do I commend the passage of a law giving broad powers to

the people of our cities to secure the submission to them of acts of the city councils affecting the interests of the citizens. Such a law would in my judgment do more to purify the state and city governments than any other plan of reform. Any unfair grants of privileges to private individuals and corporations would thus be subjected to popular judgment and legislatures would become more cautious as they became directly accountable to the popular judgment."

"I believe that the public outcry against the prevailing legislative methods is the natural and inevitable result of the granting of valuable franchises by the state, especially those known as public franchises, which derive their value from the necessities of the community. When capital has been invested in these franchises there arises at once, in the nature of things, a conflict between the public, which desires the cheapest and best service, and the franchise owners, whose purpose is to gain profit. It is futile to expect, if the legislature continues the sole distributor of these valuable franchises, that it will not be invaded by men who seek them, or that their possessors will not protect their privileges to the utmost."

"If the people are given the right by direct vote to determine whether such franchises shall be granted and how, within legal limitations, they shall be exercised, the seekers and holders of such franchises will be compelled to meet the popular requirement. I believe this principle to be wise and salutary, and recommend legislation along these lines."

The Springfield Republican said editorially of this part of the message:

"Third in point of commanding prominence are the discussion of democratic principles and recommendations for a closer adherence thereto in the government of the commonwealth. Governor Douglas is obviously a true believer in the theory of democracy, and therefore he refuses to halt with glib words about the theory and to shy at the practice of democratic principles. If the town-meeting principle of legislation directly by the people is a sound and good one, as all admit, why not extend it so far as practicable to the cities and the state, as through the initiative and referendum? His argument for the referendum has irresistible force, and will so impress pretty much everybody except the syndicates seeking special privileges from the state legislature and city councils, and the members of those bodies who are possessed with the idea that they have been elected to represent themselves and their own interests rather than the people and their interests. In line with his more-democratic recommendations is that of giving more home rule to the cities."

A National Party

This election made more satisfaction to the square mile than any of recent times. The republicans were satisfied because they saw nothing to make them leave their party and were exceedingly gratified because of the large majority that seemingly endorsed them. The populists, Bryan and Hearst democrats were pleased because it wiped out the politico-corporation democrats and the socialists were pleased according to Debs, because the democratic party as a middle class party was wiped out. The democratic politico-corporationists were satisfied because their interests are safe in the hands of their republican partners. So on the whole it was almost unanimous. The disappointed ones are only the ignorant of the present trend of political thought who vote the ticket or tickets because their fathers did. May the country pray to be delivered from the "yellow-dog" voter, whose ignorance or prejudice is a constant menace to progress and broadness of view, and in whose ranks are the unreasoning persecutors of liberal, thoughtful, sympathetic workers of the world's weal. It now behooves all thinking men who devote time and thought to the enlargement of democratic ideals to consider on what grounds a party

that can be truly called national should be founded in order to effectually oppose the republican party.

It must be constructive.

It must be able to preserve individualism in unhampered development.

It must provide ample means of revenue to meet the legitimate needs of government.

It must not be sectional.

The republican party meets the first and the third of the aforesaid propositions. With the defeat of Mr. Bryan and the utter defeat of Mr. Parker, where is the democratic party?

In the minds of the people it stands merely as a carping critic, first trying one expedient and then another only to be defeated and then coming up supporting the things it formerly denounced. Instance, Seymour—greenbackism vs. Tilden—hard money, Bryan—silver vs. Parker gold. Mr. Bryan's proposed re-organization scheme is merely mutilated populism.

The republican party has consistently supported the demands of every special interest and has given privileges with a lavish hand; from its Pacific railroad legislation to the extension of national bank privileges and power.

On the other extreme lies the socialist party who see in this growth

the crushing out of the middle class and establishment of sole power in the hands of a few; the ultimate clear cut contest between the "workers" and the "worked." In this contest they propose to seize the interests of the all-powerful few and apply and operate them for the needs of the many. This is revolutionary. Then to what party should the mass of the people turn?

In the seizure of governmental power as an asset of a private business both republicans and socialists are agreed, except as to who shall use and enjoy the same. Thus violating two fundamentals of this republic, distinguishing it from monarchical forms of government. First, that of the individual; second, that of the government. These distinctions are important and will explain when looked into much of lack of the principle and spirit of Christianity in modern business as shown in Lawson's articles in Everybody's Magazine. Only by the complete separation of these two spheres of human action and sternly insisting on them will the corruption and venality, the utter selfishness now rampant be subdued.

The new national party must also be true to the fundamental concepts of Christianity.

1. "Our Father" means brotherhood of man, consideration.

2. The equality of all men before God.

a. Equality as to justice.
b. Equality as to opportunity in use of His material gifts.

There is only one party then left that appeared in the last election that will be considered here. This is the people's party of which the Hon. Thos. E. Watson was presidential nominee. It had in this campaign three main planks:

Land—Single Tax.

Transportation—railroad ownership.

Money—issue and control solely in the government.

Besides it stood for the initiative and referendum, the imperative mandate, election of United States senators, federal judges, etc.

On all three propositions it is constructive.

They preserve individualism in unhampered development.

It provides a better and more stable revenue than by the present system of tax on imports and internal revenue levy on spirits, liquors and tobacco.

It is not sectional because its policies are uniform all over the country; not as the tariff high protection in Louisiana sugar and free trade in hides as desired in Massachusetts. Thus making one think with General Hancock when he said: "The tariff is a local issue."

Needless here to present and argue the merits of single tax so ably brought forth by the late Henry George, except as it applies to the propositions made in this article.

1. It is constructive.
2. It preserves individualism.
3. Provides ample revenue.

4. Is not sectional.
5. Gives justice to the worker.
6. Gives equal opportunity to use God's gift—land.

Railroad ownership in private hands is a violation of two spheres of government. The individual and governmental. When public necessity compels the use of governmental power in a business that business should cease to be a legitimate sphere of private individual action. Other governments do not allow it, why we?

By railroad ownership in one stroke 440 trusts, fostered by the railroads through rebates and rate discriminations, would go, and through free competition prices would be lowered to normal, and the tariff prove to be but a subsidiary question easily taken care of and the people will be astonished that they ever laid such undue stress upon it.

By single tax and railroad ownership the business man and the workman, whether mechanic or laborer, will enjoy a real stable prosperity, get more for his labor, find more places to apply his energy unhindered and have greater economic and political freedom.

"Money makes the mare go." It is the "life blood of trade." Even if the single tax and ownership of the railroads be in the hands of the people, they still would be held at a disadvantage if they couldn't control their money and prevent the credit of their government from assaults by a gang of commercial pirates. These men by the control of the people's money can stimulate prices or depress them by making money scarce. Fundamentally money is a "measure of value" established by government, just as the yard stick, the metric system, weights, etc., are fixed. When money is saved it is stored labor value.

We believe in the absolute issue and control of money by the government, the abolishment of national banks (such banks were a civil war necessity and like war taxes must be set aside) and the compelling of banks to actually have on hand the 25 per cent of reserves instead of loaning them to another bank and thereby the more to inflate credits and the more redly cause commercial disaster when confidence is shaken. The bonds of the government are the printed issue of its credit paying interest, its greenbacks also represent its credit, but draw no interest.

Could more space be used the various phases and points here brought forth would be more plainly shown.

Summed up, the people's party is a great middle class party standing for both business man and worker, not a disseminator of hate or a breeder of anarchy, having a broad view of the people's needs and rational practical methods to gradually restore to the people of these United States and perpetuate the democratic ideals of Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln.

F. FORRESTER.

St. Louis, Mo.

PASS DISTRIBUTORS VERY BUSY

BADGE OF DISGRACE SEEN EVERYWHERE

This is the season when the railway pass dispenser gets busy. One who travels in any state, the legislature of which is in session, will see embryo tatesmen flashing their passes in blissful ignorance of the holy show they are making of themselves to the rate paying public. I say "holy show" because of the lesson it teaches us. Some people consider it an honor to hold a railway pass but that is a question of education, or want of it. In the writer's opinion, the time will come when the records of railway passes will be records of disgrace. In this matter, reference, of course, is made to passes that are issued to people because of their social prominence, or official position in federal, state or municipal office. It must be understood that no reference is made to transportation which is issued legitimately to operative employees of the railway lines. Anyone who visited the Indian village at the World's fair last summer possibly noticed the Indian boys dressed with pants, the seats of which had been cut out. Those who were cu-

rious to know why that was so were politely informed that the Indian mother had cut out the seats in order to make the savage nature of their boys, dove-tail as it were, with the civilized environment of their pants. And not an Indian mother but was proud of her dressed up boy, and the little matter of the mutilation of his trousers cut no figure with her contentment. The Indian mother and her boy illustrate the passholder of the day. It would be well if we could enact a law that all who travel on a pass should wear uniform, consisting of a short jacket of blue cloth (blue as an emblem of truth) and pants of same name nature with seat cut out. On the jacket we should put brass buttons lettered "We are not bribed; it is only a matter of course" and very coarse, at that. When entering the train the holder of the pass should be seated well up in front and the common herd seated in back of the coach, those who pay the fare not only for themselves but for the pass holder, would thus be able to take particular notice of the