

The Progressive Party's Appeal*

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THE time is ripe for a genuine Progressive movement. We must put at the service of all our people the collective power of the people, thru their governmental agencies. We propose boldly to face the real and great questions of the day on a platform which is a contract with the people. If the people accept this platform by putting us in power we shall hold ourselves under honorable obligation to fulfill every promise it contains as loyally as if it were actually enforceable under the penalties of the law.

We are now in the midst of a great economic evolution. There is urgent necessity of applying both common sense and the highest ethical standard to this movement for better economic conditions among the mass of our people if we are to make it one of healthy evolution and not one of revolution. To do this we must break up old party organizations and obliterate the old cleavage lines on the dead issues inherited from fifty years ago. Our fight is a fundamental fight against both of the old corrupt party machines, for at present both the old parties are controlled by professional politicians in the interests of the privileged classes. Our aim will be to use the government as an efficient agency for the practical betterment of social and economic conditions thruout the land.

We have founded a new party of nation-wide and non-sectional principles, a party where the titular national chiefs and the real State leaders shall be in general accord; a party in whose counsels the people shall be supreme; a party that shall represent in the nation and in the several States alike the same cause, the cause of human rights and of governmental efficiency.

The first essential in the Progressive party program is *the right of the people to rule*. We stand for woman suffrage, believing, as our platform declares, that "no people can justly claim to be a true democracy which denies political rights

on account of sex, and we pledge ourselves to the task of securing equal suffrage to men and women alike." We stand for Presidential primaries; for the election of United States Senators by popular vote; for a short ballot; for stringent and efficient corrupt practices acts and publicity of campaign contributions during the campaign. We would provide thruout this Union for giving the people in every State the right really and not nominally to control their public service and their agencies for doing public business; wherever representative government has in actual effect become non-representative, there the people should secure for themselves the initiative, the referendum and the recall. I do not mean that we shall abandon representative government. My proposal is merely that we shall give to the people the power, to be used not wantonly but only in exceptional cases. The American people, and not the courts, are to determine their own fundamental policies. I deny that the American people have surrendered to any set of men the final right to determine those fundamental questions upon which free self-government ultimately depends. Means should be devised for making it easier than at present to get rid of an incompetent judge, and by the bar and the bench acting in conjunction with the various legislative bodies to make justice far more expeditious and more certain than at present.

The first charge on the industrial statesmanship of the day is to prevent human waste. In the last twenty years an increasing percentage of our people have come to depend on industry for their livelihood, so that today the wage workers in industry rank in importance side by side with the tillers of the soil. As a people we cannot afford to let citizens live or labor under conditions injurious to the common welfare. Industry, therefore, must submit to such public regulation as will make it a means of life and health.

The public has a right to complete knowledge of the facts of work. The

*As compiled from his campaign speeches by one of his supporters.

constituted authorities should be empowered to require all employers to file with them such wage scales and other data as the public element in industry demands. All tallies, scales and check systems

minimum occupational standards below which, demonstrably, work can be prosecuted only at a human deficit. Minimum wage commissions should be established in the nation and in each State to



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should be open to inspection. All deaths, injuries and diseases due to industrial operation should be reported to public authorities. On the basis of these facts and with the recent discoveries of physicians and neurologists, engineers and economists, the public can formulate

inquire into wages and determine the standards which the public ought to sanction as a minimum. There should be at once established minimum standards for the wages of women. We stand for the passage of legislation in the nation and in all States providing standards of com-

pensation for industrial accidents and death, and for diseases clearly due to the nature of conditions of industry, and we stand for the adoption by law of a fair standard of compensation for casualties resulting fatally which shall clearly fix

normal and should be prohibited; that the seven-day working week is abnormal, and that one day of rest in seven should be provided by law. We hold that the continuous industries, operating twenty-four hours out of twenty-four,



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the minimum compensation in all cases. We stand for a living wage. We hold that the night labor of women and children is abnormal and should be prohibited; that the employment of women over forty-eight hours per week is ab-

are abnormal, and where, because of public necessity or of technical reasons (such as molten metal), the twenty-four hours must be divided into two shifts of twelve hours, or three shifts of eight hours, they should by law be divided

into three of eight. Safety conditions are abnormal when, thru unguarded machinery, poisons, electrical voltage, or otherwise, the workers are subjected to unnecessary hazards of life and limb; all such occupations should come under governmental regulation and control. Home life is abnormal when tenement manufacture is carried on in the household. Temporary construction camps are abnormal homes and should be subjected to governmental sanitary regulation. The premature employment of children is abnormal and should be prohibited; so also the employment of women in manufacturing, commerce or other trades where work compels standing constantly; and also any employment of women in such trades for a period of at least eight weeks at time of childbirth. Our aim should be to secure conditions which will tend everywhere toward regular industry, and will do away with the necessity for rush periods followed by out-of-work seasons.

The welfare of the farmer is a basic need of this nation. The Country Life Commission should be revived with greatly increased powers. Everything possible should be done to better the economic condition of the farmer, and also to increase the social value of the life of the farmer, the farmer's wife and their children. The Government must cooperate with the farmer to make the farm more productive. Every invention and improvement, every discovery and economy, should be at the service of the farmer in the work of production; and, in addition, he should be helped to cooperate in business fashion with his fellows, so that the money paid by the consumer for the product of the soil shall to as large a degree as possible go into the pockets of the man who raised that product from the soil. Steps must be taken at once to put a stop to the tendency toward absentee landlordism and tenant farming. The question of rural banking and rural credits is also of immediate importance.

The present conditions of business cannot be accepted as satisfactory. We heartily approve of prosperity, no matter how great, of any man, if it comes as an incident to rendering service to the community. But we wish to shape condi-

tions so that a greater number of the small men who are decent, industrious and energetic shall be able to succeed, and so that the big man who is dishonest shall not be allowed to succeed at all.

Our aim is to control business, not to strangle it. Our aim is to promote prosperity, and then see to its proper division. We wish to control big business so as to secure among other things good wages for the wage workers and reasonable prices for the consumers. Says President Van Hise, "concentration, cooperation and control are the keywords for a scientific solution for the mighty industrial problem which now confronts this nation."

We Progressives stand for the rights of the people. When these rights can best be secured by insistence upon States' rights, then we are for States' rights. When they can best be secured by insistence upon national rights, then we are for national rights. Interstate commerce can be effectively controlled only by the nation. There is no surer way to prevent all successful effort to deal with the trusts than to insist that they be dealt with by the States rather than by the nation, or to create a conflict between the States and the nation on the subject. The only effective way in which to regulate the trusts is thru the exercise of the collective power of our people as a whole thru the governmental agencies established by the Constitution.

It is utterly hopeless to attempt to control the trusts merely by the anti-trust law or by any law the same in principle, no matter what the modifications may be in detail. In the first place, these great corporations cannot possibly be controlled merely by a succession of lawsuits; the administrative branch of the Government must exercise such control.

While the anti-trust law should be kept on the statute books and strengthened to make it generally and thoroly effective against monopoly or anti-social practices, at the same time a National Industrial Commission should be created which should have complete power to regulate and control all great industrial concerns engaged in interstate business.

This commission should exercise over these industrial concerns like powers to those exercised over the railways by the

Interstate Commerce Commission, and over the national banks by the Controller of the Currency, and additional powers if found necessary. The establishment of such a commission would enable us to punish the individual rather than merely the corporation. This commission should deal with all the abuses of the trusts. It should have complete power to make the capitalization absolutely honest and put a stop to all stock watering. It should have free access to the books of each corporation and power to find out exactly how it treats its employees, its rivals and the general public. It should have power to compel the unsparing publicity of all the acts of any corporation which goes wrong. The regulation should be primarily under the administrative branch of the Government, and not by lawsuit. It should prohibit and effectually punish monopoly achieved thru wrong, and also actual wrongs done by industrial corporations which are not monopolies, such as the artificial raising of prices, the artificial restriction on productivity, the elimination of competition by unfair or predatory practices, and the like; leaving industrial organizations free within the limits of fair and honest dealing to promote thru the inherent efficiency of organization the power of the United States as a competitive nation among nations, and the greater abundance at home that will come to our people from that power wisely exercised.

The Progressive proposal is definite. It is practicable. We promise adequate control of all big business and the stern suppression of evils connected with big business, and this promise we can absolutely keep. Our proposal is to help honest business activity, however extended, and to see that it is rewarded with fair returns, so that there may be no oppression either of business men or of the common people. We propose to make it worth while for our business men to develop the most efficient business agencies for use in international trade. But we propose to make those business agencies do complete justice to our own people. Whenever it is practicable we propose to preserve competition, but where, under modern conditions, competition has been eliminated

and cannot be successfully restored, then the Government must step in and itself supply the needed control on behalf of the people as a whole.

The tariff question should be approached from the standpoint of the interests of the whole people, and not as a bundle of preferences to be given to favored individuals. The American people desire a protective tariff primarily in the interest of the wage-worker and the consumer. The chief opposition to our tariff at the present moment comes from the general conviction that certain interests have been favored by overprotection.

It is not merely the tariff that should be revised, but the method of tariff making and of tariff administration. Wherever nowadays an industry is to be protected it should be on the theory that such protection will serve to keep up the wages and the standard of living of the wage-worker in that industry, with full regard for the interests of the consumer. To accomplish this, the tariff to be levied should as nearly as is scientifically possible approximate the differential between the cost of production at home and abroad. This differential is chiefly, if not wholly, in labor cost.

The first step in tariff reform should be the creation of a permanent commission of non-partisan experts whose business shall be to study scientifically all phases of tariff making and of tariff defects. As a further means of disrupting the old crooked, log-rolling method of tariff making, all future revisions of the tariff should be made schedule by schedule, as changing conditions may require. Under the Constitution, Congress is the tariff-making power. It should not be the purpose in creating a tariff commission to take anything away from this power of Congress, but rather to afford a wise means of giving to Congress the widest assistance possible, and of furnishing disinterested information.

We in this country are blessed with great natural resources, and our men and women have a very high standard of intelligence and of industrial capacity. We cannot permanently support conditions under which each family finds it increasingly difficult to secure the necessities of life and a fair share of its com-

forts thru the earnings of its members. The cost of living in this country has risen during the last few years out of all proportion to the increase in the rate of most salaries and wages; the same situation confronts alike the majority of wage-workers, small business men, small professional men, the clerks, the doctors, clergymen. The problem is worldwide. No conditions have been shown which warrant us in believing that the abolition of a protective tariff as a whole would bring any substantial benefit to the consumer, while it would certainly cause unheard of immediate disaster to all wage-workers, all business men and all farmers, and in all probability would permanently lower the standard of living here.

It is also asserted that the trusts are responsible for the high cost of living. Trusts which increase production—unless they do it wastefully as in certain forms of mining and lumber—cannot permanently increase the cost of living; it is the trusts which limit production, or which, without limiting production, take advantage of the lack of governmental control, and eliminate competition by combining to control the market, that cause an increase.

There remain many other elements. Wrong taxation, including failure to tax swollen inheritances and unused land and other natural resources held for speculative purposes, is one of these elements. The tendency to leave the country for the town is another; the exhaustion of the soil and poor methods of raising and marketing the products of the soil make up another. Another element is that of waste and extravagance, individual and national. There are yet other elements. There should be a fearless, intelligent, searching inquiry into the whole subject by a non-partisan body of experts, with no prejudices to warp their minds, no objects to serve, who shall recommend any necessary remedy, heedless of what interests may be helped or hurt thereby.

We must conserve the soil, the forests, the mines. The public should not alienate its fee in the water power. Just as the nation has gone into the work of irrigation in the West, so it should go into the work of helping reclaim the

swamp lands of the South. We should undertake the complete development and control of the Mississippi as a national work, just as we have undertaken the work of building the Panama Canal. In the West, the forests, the grazing lands, the reserves of every kind, should be so handled as to be in the interest of the actual settler, the actual home maker. Alaska should be developed at once, but in the interest of the actual settler. The Government should at once construct, own and operate the railways in Alaska. The Government should keep the fee of all the coal fields and allow them to be operated by lessees, with the condition in the lease that non-use shall operate as a forfeit.

In international affairs we should do no wrong to any nation, weak or strong, and we should submit to no wrong. Above all, we should never in any treaty make any promise which we do not intend in good faith to fulfil. I believe it essential that our small army should be kept at a high pitch of perfection, and that the navy should be steadily built up. The process of upbuilding must not be stopped until it proves possible to secure by international agreement a general reduction of armament.

The Panama Canal must be fortified. In time of war the canal would of course be open to our warships and closed to the warships of the nation with which we were engaged in hostilities. But at all times the canal should be opened on equal terms to the ships of all nations engaged in international commerce.

Surely there was never a fight better worth making than the one in which we are engaged. It matters little what befalls any one of us who for the time being stand in the forefront of the battle. I hope we shall win, and I believe that if we can wake the people to what the fight really means we shall win. But, win or lose, we shall not falter. Our cause is based on the eternal principles of righteousness; in the end the cause itself shall triumph.

We, here in America, hold in our hands the hope of the world, the fate of the coming years; and shame and disgrace will be ours if in our eyes the light of high resolve is dimmed, if we trail in the dust the golden hopes of men.