

THE POPULIST  
MOVEMENT

WINONA MONTGOMERY

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T H E  
P O P U L I S T  
M O V E M E N T

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## THE POPULIST MOVEMENT

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# THE POPULIST MOVEMENT

## PART I

### Forces that Caused the Populist Movement

#### Chapter I

##### Situation of the Farmer

During the Civil War and immediately following that period, agricultural products were selling for high prices.

<sup>1</sup>  
In 1867 wheat on the Chicago market sold for two dollars and eighty-five cents per bushel. Foreign markets were also offering high prices for farm products. In England the average price of wheat was two dollars a bushel.<sup>2</sup> Because of these high prices farmers in the East were encouraged to larger enterprises, and many laborers left the factory to seek homes in the West. The stories of prosperity in America caused the people of Europe to come to the United States to make their fortunes by cultivating the fertile soil in the West. The following table will show how the acreage of cereal products increased in the United States.

<sup>3</sup> Year	Corn Acres	Avg. price per bu.
1866-1875	37,216	41.9
1876-1885	61,671	39.5
1886-1895	74,274	36.7
1896	86,560	21.3

- <sup>1</sup> Noyes Forty Years of American Finance p. 3  
<sup>2</sup> Dewey Financial History of the U.S. p. 343  
<sup>3</sup> United States Dept. of Agriculture, Year Book, 1921, p. 509

1		
	Wheat	
Year	Acres	Avg. price per bu.
1866-1875	20,470	105.3
1876-1885	34,433	92.0
1886-1895	37,500	67.3
1896	43,916	71.7

  

2		
	Oats	
Year	Acres	Avg. price per bu.
1866-1875	9,680	37.5
1876-1885	17,143	32.5
1886-1895	27,482	28.9
1896	29,645	18.3

By the table of prices it is easy to see how, with increased production of agricultural products, prices declined. However, the price was not controlled entirely by production, as will be proved later, but it played an important part in fixing prices, as supply far exceeded demand.

The financial condition of the country also influenced the expansion of the West.<sup>3</sup> In 1862, in order to meet the tremendous expenses of the Civil War, the United States<sup>4</sup> was forced to issue paper money that was known as 'legal tender', or greenbacks. In a few months<sup>4</sup> \$431,000,000 of these notes were in circulation. The injection of this enormous amount of paper money into circulation caused gold to disappear, and the notes to fluctuate in value.

The rapid expansion of the West began after the depreciation of the currency had commenced.<sup>5</sup> The farmer bought his land with the depreciated currency; many times

- 1 U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Year Book, 1921 p. 522  
 2 " " " " " " " " p. 541  
 3 Holdsworth Money and Banking p. 28  
 4 Dewey Financial History of the United States 288  
 5 Paxon The New Nation p. 29

on the plan of paying for it with the crops produced, but when prices fell, due to over expansion and the increased value of currency, they were forced to give up their farms and all the improvements they had made. This usually meant the complete financial ruin of the farmer, so he must make a new start.

Many farmers who owned their holdings were forced to mortgage their farms at a high rate of interest which ate up all the profits. The panic of <sup>1</sup> 1873 made it almost impossible to renew the mortgages, so there was one failure after another.

<sup>2</sup> In 1879 the treasury department of the United States began the redemption of greenbacks, that is, all greenbacks presented were redeemed in gold on demand. The farmers believed that this caused a decline in the price of their products. For example, they could point to the fact <sup>3</sup> that wheat on the Chicago market fell from 1.17½ in March to 1.10 in April 1879.

As production increased during this period, trade increased. When the greenbacks were redeemed, the currency supply was reduced. <sup>4</sup> This condition caused an increase in the value of the dollar, and a decline in prices. In order to increase the value of his products and thus save his industry, the farmer demanded that the amount of money in circulation be increased. <sup>5</sup> They de-

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1	Solon J. Buck	The Agrarian Crusade,	p. 102
2	Noyes	Forty Years of American Finance	pp. 55-59
3	"	" " " " " "	p. 54
4	Dewey	National Problems	p.246
5	Solon J. Buck	The Agrarian Crusade	p. 80

manded that money be issued by the government in the form of legal tender paper redeemable only with bonds bearing a low interest, these bonds in turn to be convertible into greenbacks at the option of the holder.

<sup>1</sup> Farmers, especially in the West, needed great quantities of means of payment, either credit or money, to develop the new country. At first they must put all their efforts in preparing their land for cultivation, so could expect little return in form of money for a few years. During this period he must have money to buy the necessary supply of grain for planting, machinery, and his own personal demands. He had no connection with foreign trade, so was not interested in the value of United States currency in other nations. <sup>2</sup> By 1878 the demand for the free coinage of silver won the farmer. He wanted more money as a remedy for the evils due to falling prices, and silver offered a ready supply on a much better basis than the paper money that he had advocated. From 1878 to 1896 most farmers in the West were free silver advocates.

When the great Pacific Railroad lines were surveyed in the West, the farmers were delighted, because they thought of the advent of the railroad as a great blessing to them. Railroads meant the opening up of new territory for agricultural purposes, and the means of sending crops to market. Before the railroads, it was useless for the farmer living a great distance from a navigable river to

1 McVey The Populist Movement  
2 Moulton Money and Banking

p. 169  
p. 218

produce a great quantity of wheat or other product, for transportation rates were prohibitive. The coming of the railroads also made it possible for the farmer to have more of the comforts of life, for previous to this time, every community, and practically every household, had to be self-supporting. The farmers were so delighted with the new prospects that they were willing to do almost anything to get the railroad into their communities. Many were so anxious to help shipping facilities, that <sup>1</sup> they mortgaged their farms in order to buy railroad stock. Counties also plunged into debt as deeply as possible in order to buy stock to build railroads. Later when the railroads were merged or re-organized, the farmers' and counties' shares were wiped out or decreased in value until they were worthless. The farmer now found his shares of railroad stock of no value, his farm mortgaged, and his taxes high in order to make up the deficit of his county. In return for all his loss and effort, the railroad company charged him exorbitant freight rates.

The following table gives the freight rates of that period:

<sup>2</sup>

Statistics of Receipts from Freight Service

Revenue per Ton Mile	Revenue per Ton of Freight Carried
1894 0.860 cents	\$1.11938
1895 0.839 "	1.07463
1896 0.806 "	1.05101

<sup>1</sup> Forum 28:661

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Abstract of U.S. 1916

The following table gives the annual average freight rates per bushel of wheat for transportation from Chicago to New York.

1	1870 - 33.3 cents	1885 - 14.00 cents
	1875 - 24.1 "	1890 - 14.31 "
	1880 - 19.9 "	

2  
Farmers felt that the railroad and its agent, the elevator company, fixed the price of farm products, for the rates were so high there was nothing left for them after they had paid the <sup>3</sup> freight charges. <sup>4</sup> The farmers were discriminated against by the railroads in favor of the big shipper, like the Standard Oil Company, for the railroads had a policy of charging what the traffic would bear. When John D. Rockefeller ordered the railroad to lower the freight rate, it could not hesitate, but must accept his terms. The farmers could not receive favorable freight rates, for they did not have the power over the railroads, but were at their mercy.

The farmers were well aware of the graft sanctioned and practiced by some construction companies of railroads.

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The Credit Mobilier was the best known example of corrupt business connected with railroad building. The stockholders of this company were also the leading stock-holders and directors in the Union Pacific Railroad Company, and in this capacity voted themselves unduly profitable con-

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1	Statistical Abstract of U.S.	1891	p. 273
2	Dewey	National Problems	p. 392
3	Woodburn	People's Party	p. 114
4	Bogart	Economic History of the U.S.	p. 353
5	J.F. Rhodes	History of the U.S.	p. 353

tracts, thus defrauding both the government and innocent investors.

<sup>1</sup>  
By 1870 the New York Central and Pennsylvania, Erie and Grand Trunk railroads had through lines between New York and Chicago. They began to compete with each other in order to get the traffic. They reduced the rates by underbidding each other until this proved ruinous. Then they resorted to a new system known as 'pooling.'<sup>2</sup> Agreements were made according to which the whole traffic or earnings were divided among the erst-while competitors on some pre-arranged basis.<sup>3</sup>

The farmers had still another grievance against the railroad. From<sup>4</sup> the Federal government the railroad corporations received a total of one hundred and fifty-nine million acres of land and from the state governments, fifty-five million acres more.<sup>5</sup> The railroads held their lands for speculative purposes, or sold their claims to speculators, who in turn made a profit.<sup>6</sup> Railroad companies scattered advertising literature all over Europe, in regard to the wonderful opportunities in Western Canada. This attracted the attention of many English noblemen, who became ready customers for great tracts of railroad lands. They did not live on their farms and improve

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1	Bogart	Economic History of the U.S.	p. 354
2	Arena	Vol. 30:410	
3	Bogart	Economic History of the U.S.	p. 355
4	Bogart	" " " " " "	p. 351
5	Van Metre	Economic History of the U.S.	p. 246
6	Paxon	The New Nation	p. 148

them, but <sup>1</sup> sent managers with whom the people in the community often had misunderstandings. This aroused opposition from the native American settlers, who began to declare it was unpatriotic for a foreigner to own land. Along with this idea developed a fear of a landed aristocracy in this country, as in Europe, and especially as it was in England. The people opposed <sup>2</sup> alien ownership, and began to demand that land held by aliens and corporations be returned to the government. Factions hostile to the railroad forced the government to be more strict with its contracts. <sup>3</sup> Previous to this time it had been the custom to extend more time to a railroad to complete the necessary work to bind the contract, if it had not been able to build the required amount of track.

<sup>4</sup> Railroads also sold land to farmers, who expected to pay for their holdings with their crops, but in case of hard times they could not meet their payments, so were forced to lose all they had invested. When the railroad reached a small town, it often caused over-expansion. For example, the little town of <sup>4</sup> Wichita, Kansas, was laid out in city lots and plans made for a city the size of Philadelphia. Prices of the land went up to several dollars per acre foot. Finally the mortgages came due, then the bubble was broken, and property became worthless. This added to the list of dissatisfied people in the West.

1 McVey The Populist Movement p. 157  
2 " " " " p. 157  
3 Beard Contemporary American History p. 30  
4 Letter from T.A. McNeal, Editor Cappers Weekly, Topeka, Kan.  
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In 1889 even the elements seemed to be against the farmers. The Arkansas Valley, with an average rainfall of eighteen inches, had only thirteen inches that year. This condition, although not so serious, existed in all the Central Western states. The drought caused the farmers to mortgage their lands. Many, who were in debt, failed. They left their farms and went back to their old homes farther east.

The farmers in the South were recovering from the effect of the Civil War, so were not able to make as strong protest against their hard times as the Northern and Western farmers. The following table will show the production and price of cotton during this period.

2

Year	Cotton	
	Acres	Price per Pound
1866-1875	8,810	9.1
1876-1885	15,209	7.7

The price of cotton was very low, but continued to decline during the next decade.

The farmers were seeking a relief from all their burdens during the period of hard times. The Grange, an organization founded<sup>3</sup> by Oliver Hudson Kelley, was the first to promise relief. Each community was organized to improve its conditions. When a number of communities were organized, a state Grange was founded, and later a national organization was completed. The movement grew very rapidly. In seven years it claimed a membership of over

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1 Paxon The New Nation p. 182  
 2 U.S. Department of Agriculture Year Book 1921, p. 610  
 3 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 1

half a million. It was intended for the agricultural people, but all occupations were represented.

At first the Grange hoped to achieve its desires through the old parties, but decided that they could enter politics effectively only by way of a third party. During 1873-1874 a number of new parties were established. They were known as Independent, Reform, Anti-Monopoly, or Farmers' parties. They were all a part of the same general movement, and their platforms were quite similar, The principal demands were: the subjection of corporations, and especially of railroad corporations, to the control of the State, and reform and economy in government. The parties exercised control over local politics in many of the Western states, but never had very much influence in national matters. The movement soon collapsed because its demands for railroad laws were passed, and its work as a party was done. By 1876 they had merged into the Greenback party.

The various farmers' organizations, usually known as Alliances, were the outgrowth of the Grange. The first effort made at <sup>2</sup> Lampasas, Texas, was in 1875, when a club was organized for mutual protection against horse thieves, land sharks, and for cooperation in rounding up strayed stock. It proved a benefit, so it was decided to enlarge the scope and work of the Alliance in

1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 31  
2 " " " " " " p. 112

order to take in the farmers of the entire state and deal with public affairs generally. In 1878 a Grand State Alliance was organized. Its declaration of purposes were: <sup>1</sup> "To labor for the education of the agricultural classes in the science of economical government in a strictly non-partisan spirit; to develop a better state, mentally, morally, socially, and financially; to create a better understanding for sustaining civil officers in maintaining law and order; constantly to strive to secure entire harmony and good will among all mankind and brotherly love among ourselves; to suppress personal, local sectional and national prejudice, all unhealthy rivalry and selfish ambition."

The organization attempted too much, so was almost ruined. One of its members, <sup>2</sup> C.W. McCune, took it upon himself to save the orders. <sup>3</sup> He called a special session of the state Alliance to meet in January 1887, at Waco, Texas. At this meeting steps were taken to bring into harmony with the Alliance, other organizations of farmers in Louisiana, known as the Farmers' Union. The organization was perfected and took the name of the "Farmers' Alliance and Coöperative Union of America."

Measures were taken to extend the organization in other states. Organizers and lecturers were sent out,

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1 Cosmopolitan Vol 10:694  
2 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:297  
3 Cosmopolitan Vol. 10:694

and in a short time the Farmers' Alliance was operating in Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. While this movement was developing, another farmers' organization was operating in the states of Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee. This was known as the "Agricultural Wheel."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In 1887, at a meeting held in Shreveport, Louisiana, the "Wheel" was merged into the Farmers' Alliance. The states of Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Tennessee, Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Kansas were represented. President MacCune in his address to the meeting said, "It seems to be an admitted fact that organization is the only hope of the farmers." The new organization, including the Alliance, the Union, and the Wheel was called "The Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America."

Up to this time the Farmers' Alliance was almost exclusively a Southern institution. It was a secret organization, with grips and passwords. It had taken no action whatever in politics.

While this organization was developing in the South, a similar one with practically the same principles had organized in Illinois. It became a strong body about

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1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade  
2 Cosmopolitan Vol. 10:695

1877 and was known as the <sup>1</sup> National Farmers' Alliance. It extended into the states of Illinios, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and the Dakotas. The object of the body was declared to be <sup>2</sup> "to **interest** the farmers of the United States for their protection against class legislation, the encroachments of a concentrated capital, the tyranny of monopoly, to oppose, in our respective political parties the election of any candidate to office, state or national, who is not thoroughly in sympathy with the farmers' interests; to demand that the existing political parties shall nominate farmers or those who are in sympathy with them for all offices within the gift of the people; and to do anything in a legitimate manner that may secure benefit to the producer."

Farmers saw laborers organizing strong unions; employers uniting to form employer's associations; and capitalists uniting corporations to form trusts, so knew if they were to exist as a class they must unite. The Grange awakened the farmers to their possibilities when organized. Farmers' organizations sprang up in every farming community. They soon realized that "in union there is strength," so united to form stronger and more influential organizations. This seemed the best way to improve their class and enforce their demands, so organization became the watchword of the farmers.

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1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:292  
2 Cosmopolitan Vol. 10:893

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## Chapter II

## American Labor

In the United States during the period following the Civil War wages were very low. There was a slight increase in the average daily wages between 1870-1872; this being from <sup>1</sup> \$2.20 $\frac{1}{4}$  in 1870 to \$2.45 in 1872. Following this there was a decline during the four succeeding years. From 1878 to 1884 there was a gradual increase until the average daily wage was \$2.49.

The following table gives the average daily wages in gold for a number of occupations in Chicago and St. Louis.

Average Daily Wages in Gold		
Blacksmiths		
Year	Chicago	St. Louis
1870	2.51 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.39
1875	2.57	2.66 $\frac{1}{2}$
1880	2.67 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.63 $\frac{1}{4}$
1885	2.88	2.63 $\frac{1}{2}$
1890	2.86 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.63
1892	2.84	2.64 $\frac{3}{4}$
1895	2.80	2.62 $\frac{1}{2}$
1896	2.80 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.26 $\frac{1}{2}$
Carpenters		
1870	2.12 $\frac{1}{4}$	2.88 $\frac{1}{2}$
1875	1.96 $\frac{1}{2}$	3.11
1880	2.20	2.80
1885	2.35 $\frac{1}{2}$	2.80
1890	2.29 $\frac{3}{4}$	3.18
1892	2.59 $\frac{1}{2}$	3.20
1895	2.69 $\frac{3}{4}$	2.80
1896	2.54	2.80

1 Bulletin of Dept. of Labor 1898

2 " " " " " 1898 pp. 670, 673, 676

Iron Molders		
1870	2.52 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2.47 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1875	2.62 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2.44 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
1880	2.55 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2.40
1885	2.65	2.40
1890	2.74 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	2.40
1892	2.83 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	2.50
1895	2.69 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2.50
1896	2.73 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	2.30

The table above shows an increase in wages during this period, but the fact must not be forgotten that great cities, which had grown up rendered life more expensive than it had been in previous times. Streetcar fares cost, for a family living on the outskirts of a city, one hundred dollars a year. Unsanitary conditions in the city caused a great deal of sickness which added to expenses. As civilization developed there were increasing wants of the most legitimate kind.

Laborers on the farms were poorly paid. Agriculture labor, that is, those who work for hire, was declining as compared with entire farm labor of the United States. In 1870 they constituted 48.9 per cent. while in 1880 only 43.6 percent. The following table gives the price of farm labor for **three** of the leading agricultural states.

(Wages in dollars and cents in currency.)

Farm Labor per Month (Without Board)					
	1869	1875	1885	1890	1890
Missouri	24.47	19.40	17.59	21.35	20.25
Kansas	28.96	23.20	20.67	24.70	22.75
Nebraska	33.25	24.00	23.04	25.00	25.50

1 Century 17:941

2 U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Division of Statistics 1901 p.6-7

3 " " " " " " " " " p.10

<sup>1</sup>Laborers worked long hours during this time, The average working day in the city was ten and three tenths hours, while on the farm a day was from sun to sun. Not only were wages lowered, and hours of labor long, but there was a great army of unemployed. <sup>2</sup> Increasing improvements in industrial processes rendered a farmer's skill useless, and reduced skilled artisans and mechanics to the overcrowded ranks of unskilled day laborers. The introduction of labor-saving machinery was the cause of most of it. To the same source could be traced more unemployment, for not so many men were needed to produce the necessary amount of goods to meet the demand. <sup>3</sup> Industry had not adapted itself to the changes in the environment produced by machinery. In case of a sudden demand great numbers would be employed for a few days, but as soon as the order was finished the men would be dismissed and left to find new employment, to take the consequences of unemployment that would follow.

At this time factories had not organized to meet the season demands; for instance, in the clothing manufacture there was the fall and spring rush. The sugar refining industry employed its men for ninety days a year. The rest of the time they must depend on some other trade.

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1 Bogart Economic History of U.S. p. 503  
2 Century 17:940  
3 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 8:106

<sup>1</sup>  
When the Union Pacific Railroad was being built, thousands of Chinese laborers were brought into the United States as contract labor. <sup>2</sup> By 1876 Chinese immigration had become an issue of national importance. An investigation commission for the subject recommended that immediate action be taken to restrict Chinese immigration. The

<sup>3</sup>  
Federal government soon saw the necessity of abrogating the Burlingame treaty; modified in 1882, it excluded coolies for six years. The Chinese rushed to the United States before the gates would be closed against them.

<sup>4</sup>  
In 1882, more than thirty-nine thousand Chinese came in to the United States.

During this same period immigration from Europe was increasing every year. <sup>5</sup> In 1880 the immigration doubled that of 1879. The class of immigrants was now changing. Southern Europe was sending more people than the Northern nations. This type of immigrant affected the price of wages in the Eastern cities, for they settled in the cities and joined the factory workers, while the Northern European went West and joined the farmers in developing the fertile fields.

Many things combined to make the life of the day

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- 1 Paxon The New Nation p. 25
  - 2 Commons Principles of Organized Labor p. 265
  - 3 Haworth The United States in Our Own Times 132
  - 4 Commons & Associates History of Labor in U.S. p. 266
  - 5 Noyes Forty Years of American Finance pp. 61

laborer a hard one. Labor felt that the employer class was to blame for all its difficulties. It showed its opposition to this oppression by strikes.<sup>1</sup> The first great labor dispute in the United States was the railroad strike of 1877. This, accompanied by serious rioting and the destruction of property, stopped railway traffic. State troops were called out, and gatling guns were used. This brought labor face to face with an openly hostile government.

Labor had long been attempting to improve its condition. As early as 1837<sup>2</sup> we find local organizations making demands, and nominating candidates that would favor labor. These early attempts only revealed the eagerness of the older parties to win the labor vote and the futility of relying on a separate organization to get the desired results. There was not sufficient class homogeneity to keep the labor vote together. Labor simply took the partisan short cut to enforce his demands. Although the efforts as a party proved of no immediate benefit, they had their influence on politics, for the other parties must cater to some of labor's demands in order to get their votes.

After the Civil War labor attempted to form a National party. The National Labor Union at its congress of

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1 Carlton History and Problems of Organized Labor p.183  
2 S.P. Orth Armies of Labor p.221

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1866 resolved "that, sofar as political action is concerned, each locality should be governed by its own policy." This policy was of some benefit to local unions, but the effort was not united enough to prove of great importance to Labor as a whole. They found that it was necessary to unite the unions and thus concentrate their efforts.

2  
In 1872 the first National Convention was held. The party, was strong, so soon lost its independent character and was absorbed by the Greenback party, which offered a meeting ground for the farmers and laborers. This combination did not bring the expected results.

3  
Another effort was made, and in February 1878, a conference was held at Toledo, Ohio. Delegates were sent from twenty-eight states. They perfected an alliance between the Labor Reform and Greenback parties. They invited all patriotic citizens to unite in an effort to secure financial reforms and industrial emancipation.

The party entered the campaign of 1880. It was very active, and was able to send twelve representatives to Congress, from the Middle and far-West states. It was more of a farmers' party than of city Labor. By 1884 it had lost its political influence.

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- 1 S.P. Orth Armies of Labor p. 229  
2 Carlton History and Problems of Organized Labor p. 61  
3 S.P. Orth Armies of Labor p.231

By this time farmers and laborers had accepted the old adage, "in union there is strength," so had made numerous attempts to unite and form a great party. Their demands were too adverse to permit of their agreement on a common platform. <sup>1</sup> Delegates representing the Knights of Labor and farmers' organizations met in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1887 and organized the National Union Labor party. Again in 1888 a conference was held at Chicago, to form a stronger union, but they could not agree, so neither accomplished anything. in the elections of 1888. By this time both the farmers and laborers knew that they must unite in spite of their differences if they were to accomplish anything. In December 1889, <sup>2</sup> committees representing the Knights of Labor and the Farmers' Alliance met in St. Louis to come to some agreement in political policies. Again the two elements could not agree on all the demands they wished to incorporate into a platform, but they did decide that <sup>3</sup> "the legislative committees of both organizations act in concert before Congress for the purpose of securing the enactment of laws in harmony with their demands." This coöperation was a fore-runner of the People's party.

A number of Unions became dissatisfied with the rule of the Knights of Labor, so in 1881 the American Federation

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1 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms p. 251  
2 S.P. Orth Armies of Labor p. 235  
3 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:290

of Labor was organized. It claimed a membership of 262,000. It was a confederation of trade and labor unions, each trade organized separately, and the unions alone represented in the national body, whereas the Knights of Labor was highly centralized, and the order itself was composed of distinct assemblies with little local autonomy. The American Federation *do'd* not go into politics, but attempted to get its demands through the two main parties.

Chapter III  
The Silver Question

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The silver question was not a very important factor in the history of the United States before 1870.<sup>1</sup> A law was passed by the United States Congress in 1834, which made the ratio of silver to gold sixteen to one. Under this regulation the silver dollar became practically obsolete. By 1872<sup>2</sup> only about eight million silver dollars had been coined by the United States mints. In 1872 the silver bullion needed to coin a dollar was worth one dollar and two cents, so no one thought of bringing it to the mint to be coined.<sup>3</sup> An act passed by Congress in 1873, which dropped the silver dollar from the United States coinage list, was simply a legal recognition of the fact that the silver dollars were no longer a part of the circulating medium of exchange. At first the act was not noticed by the masses of the people. Soon the increased production of silver brought an over supply of the metal into the market, and caused the price of silver bullion to decline. The following table will show the increased production and the decline in price of the silver bullion.

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1 Holdsworth Money and Banking p. 29  
2 Bogart Economic History of the U.S. p. 396  
3 Dewey & Sprague Banking and Credit p. 22

1

Silver Production from the Mines  
In the United States  
1870-1899

Year	Fine Ounces Troy	Dollars
1870	12,375,000	16,434,000
1875	24,539,300	30,485,900
1880	30,318,700	34,717,000
1885	39,909,400	42,503,500
1890	50,094,500	46,838,400
1895	55,727,000	36,445,500
1899	54,764,000	32,858,700

Not only was production increased in the United States, but the total world production shows an increase from 43,051,583 troy ounces in 1870 to 120,213,611 troy ounces in 1890. The increase in the production and decline of price are illustrated by the following table.

2

World Silver Production  
1870-1899

Year	Fine Ounces Troy	Dollars
1870	43,051,583	55,663,000
1872	63,317,014,	81,864,000
1875	62,621,719	80,500,000
1880	74,795,273	96,705,000
1885	91,609,959	118,445,200
1890	120,213,611	155,427,700
1895	167,800,960	212,944,400
1899	168,337,453	218,576,800

When the price of silver billion had declined enough to affect their industry, the silver mine owners began to call the act of Congress of 1873 "the crime of '73" and "the political plot." The silver mine owners and their

- 1 Statistical Abstract of U.S. 1916  
2 The World Almanac 1920  
3 Baughlin The Principle of Money

p. 226  
p. 530  
p. 466

sympathizers began a campaign for the free coinage of silver in order to increase the price of their product. They easily won the cooperation of the agricultural and laboring classes, for they wanted great quantities of cheap money.

<sup>1</sup> By 1878 all the forces favoring cheap money and the free coinage of silver were able to pass the Bland-Allison act, which provided for the purchase of from two to four million dollars worth of silver a month. This did not allow the free coinage, which had been demanded, but furnished a market for the excess production that was over-stocking the market.

<sup>2</sup> From 1878~~to~~ 1884 there was little change in the value of silver as measured in terms of gold; then it was 16 to 1, but in 1885 depreciation was marked by a ratio of 19 to 1, which by 1889 became 22.10 to 1. <sup>3</sup> Mr. St. John, president of the National Bank of New York City, recommended the gradual retirement of United States notes, and an accompanying increase of silver coinage to balance the circulation.

<sup>4</sup> During this same period of increased production of silver, Germany adopted the gold standard and began to sell

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- |   |                              |        |
|---|------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Moulton Money and Banking    | p. 218 |
| 2 | Dewey National Problems      | p. 77  |
| 3 | Arena 16:211                 |        |
| 4 | Holdsworth Money and Banking | p. 30  |

her silver to other nations. <sup>1</sup> The Latin Union limited the coinage of silver during this period, and Holland and the Scandinavian peninsula demonetized silver. There was also a falling off in demand for silver in India. These changes contributed to the decline in the value of silver bullion in the United States.

The silver advocates continued their demand for the free coinage of silver. As time passed and financial depression increased, and all classes seemed to be having a struggle to survive, the silver leaders were joined by many others who believed that the free coinage of silver was the only solution of the financial problem. By 1890 we find a large element in both branches of Congress in favor of silver coinage, but the legislators were not yet willing to adopt free coinage. The Farmers' Alliance representatives in Congress were not a separate party, but they had become strong enough to make their influence a force in passing legislation that affected the Middle and Far West states. The silver question was one of the most important subjects before Western Congressmen.

<sup>2</sup> On July 14, 1890, Congress passed the Sherman act, which provided for the issue of an indefinite amount of legal tender notes for the purchase of silver bullion. The only restriction on the rate of the note issue was

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1 Bogart Economic History of the U/S. p. 396  
2 Congressional Record 1890 Senate Bill 4675

the sum necessary to pay for 4,500,000 ounces of silver bullion each month at the market rate, which varied from time to time. The notes were to be redeemed on demand in 'coin', either gold or silver, at the discretion of the Secretary of the Treasury, but it was declared in the act to be "the established policy of the United States to maintain the two metals on a parity with each other upon the present legal ratio, as may be established by law."

From this date to 1896 the silver question was of first importance to every person in the United States.

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PART II

THE POPULIST PARTY

Chapter I

The Convention of 1890

In the previous chapters we have seen how farmers and laborers were dissatisfied with their conditions. In order to better themselves they formed many organizations, Most of the members of these organizations cast their votes with either the Democrat or Republican party, so their influence was not of national importance.

One disappointment after another made it apparent that little could be expected from either of the main parties.<sup>1</sup> The alliances found that trust in individual politicians proved equally vain, for promises made in campaign speeches were easily forgotten. The farmers' organizations decided if nothing was to be gained by giving their votes to the other parties, they would organize an independent party of their own.<sup>2</sup> This was the idea back of the convention called at the city of St. Louis, early in December, 1889. The Farmers' and Laborers' Union of America sent invitations to the officers of all the different farmers' organizations, also to the officials of the Knights of Labbr. Every organization answered

1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:287

2 Cosmopolitan Vol. 10:296

by sending representatives to this meeting. Conference committees were appointed and a union for political purposes was effected. The new body was to be called the "Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union."

The new party, or Alliance as it was generally known, was not partisan but was intensely political. The question before the order was whether it should operate through the machinery of the old parties, or whether it should join with similar organizations in a new and distinct movement for redress of grievances, which were universally conceded to exist. They agreed that since the Alliance was made up of all parties; every member would be a missionary in his own party to spread Alliance doctrines. The Alliance emphasized the fact that Alliance members would expect to vote only for persons friendly to its demands, and it hoped to find them in the ranks of the old parties.

They adopted the following platform:

1

Farmers' Alliance Platform

"1. We demand the abolition of national banks, and the substitution of legal tender treasury notes in lieu of national bank notes, issued in sufficient volume to do the business of the country on a cash system, regulating the amount needed on a per capita basis as the business

interests of the country expand; and that all money issued by the government shall be legal tender in payment of all debts, both public and private.

2. We demand that Congress shall pass such laws as shall eventually prevent the dealing in futures of all agricultural and mechanical productions, preserving a stringent system of procedure in trials, and imposing such penalties as shall secure the most perfect compliance with the law.

3 We demand the free and unlimited coinage of silver.

4. We demand the passage of laws prohibiting the alien ownership of land, and that Congress take early steps to devise some plan to obtain all lands now owned by aliens and foreign syndicates; and that all lands now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of such as are actually used and needed by them be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers.

5. Believing in the doctrine of equal rights to all and special privileges to none, we demand that taxation, national or state, shall not be used to build up one interest or class at the expense of another. We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people; and hence we demand that all revenues, national, state, or county--shall be

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limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered.

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6. That Congress issue a sufficient amount of fractional paper currency to facilitate exchange through the medium of the United States mail.

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7. That the means of communication and transportation should be owned and operated in the interest of the people, as is the United States postal system."

The platform stated the party demands like a political platform, but it was only a reorganized statement of earlier programs, of the different bodies that united to form the new organization.

The contribution in the meeting of the Agrarian movement was the report of the monetary committee. It proposed that <sup>1</sup> "The system of using certain banks as United States depositories be abolished, and in place of said system, establish, in every county in each of the states that offers for sale during the year \$500,000 worth of farm products--including wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, rice, tobacco, cotton, wool and sugar, all together-- a sub-treasury office." In connection with it a system of warehouses was to be established, where farmers might

\* Omitted in 1890

4 Was changed at Ocala to read as follows: "We demand the most rigid, honest and just state and national control of of the means of public communication and transportation, and if this control and supervision does not remove the abuse now existing, we demand the government ownership of such means of communication and transportation.

1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:291

deposit their crops, in order that they ~~farmers~~ might get warehouse certificates, they were to be allowed a loan of United States legal tender paper equal to eighty percent of the local current value of the product deposited. This plan was expected to make the currency more elastic, also to allow the farmer to hold his crop for a higher value.

The National Farmers' Alliance and Coöperative Union and the National Farmers' Alliance could agree on a political platform, but when they attempted to blend the two orders the Alliance made three demands upon the Union, as conditions on which they would join it.<sup>1</sup> "The name should be changed to National Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union, the word 'white' should be stricken out of the qualifications for membership; the question of secrecy in organization should be optional with each state." The first demand was granted, the second complied with by the new constitution; but the third was refused. The question of secrecy was the sole cause for failure of the two organizations to unite. Three states, Kansas, North Dakota and South Dakota deserted the "Northern" Alliance and went over to the secret order.

<sup>2</sup>  
A constitution was adopted by the National Farmers'

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1 Political Science Quarterly Vol 6:284

2 " " " " Vol,6:285

Alliance and Industrial Union, which divided the powers into legislative, executive and judicial. The legislative power was vested in the Supreme Council of the Order. This council was composed of the National officers together with delegates from the various state organizations. It was to hold annual meetings, elect all officers, and make all laws. The president, elected by the Council, was to interpret the laws through official rulings. Appeals from rulings could be heard by the judiciary department, which was composed of three judges, elected for three year terms, one retiring each year. In addition to farmers, membership was opened to preachers, teachers, and doctors residing in rural districts and to mechanics and editors of agricultural journals.

In the South the Alliance was made up of the middle class, composed of small farmers and mechanics.<sup>1</sup> In 1890 the Southern branch claimed three million male members, women also being eligible. The headquarters of the order were at Washington, D.C. Here the officials were to exercise their influence on legislation, for all thought this the only way to relieve the burdens of the farmers.

The party demands were not the same in all the states, nor were the organizations within the state united. The meetings that followed the Convention at St. Louis in 1888 showed that each section was striving to better its

own conditions.

The report of the Monetary Committee at St. Louis in 1889 caused considerable discussion. Many states believed the movement ~~as~~ a great blessing, but some states opposed it bitterly. The Michigan state Grange declared that the scheme would, <sup>1</sup> "prove a curse instead of a blessing." The Missouri Farmers' and Labor Union also bitterly opposed the measure. They said the scheme <sup>2</sup>

"was a measure more infamous than the National banks." The claim was made that there would have to be as many warehouses to carry out the system as they then had national banks.

Most of the Northern and Western states said nothing about the tariff for the idea; that "the tariff is a tax" was beginning to be discussed among the Farmers of this section.

Minnesota expressed her demands in no uncertain terms when she said, <sup>3</sup> "We demand that the war-tariff, which has too long survived the object of its creation, shall be radically revised, giving very material reductions on the necessaries of life, and placing raw material upon the free list, to the end that we may compete with the world for a market; and that such luxuries as whiskey, and tobacco shall in no manner be relieved from internal

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1 Political Science Quarterly Vol.6:296  
 2 " " " Vol. 6:297  
 3 W " " Vol. 6:297

taxation, till the high protection tariff has been wholly divested of its extortions." Minnesota also asked for laws that "will make the hidden property pay equal taxes with the visible property." Many other states were trying to devise means by which they could secure the listing for taxation of notes and other evidences of debt.

The railroad problem was considered very differently by the different state organizations, Some scarcely mentioned it. The "northern" Alliance states always had grievances against the Central and Union Pacific Railways. The Alliance demanded that the Pacific railroads <sup>1</sup> " be taken in charge by the government, and run in the interests of the people, with a view to extending both these lines to the Eastern seaboard." At the same time Missouri began a movement against government ownership of transportation lines. They complained of the great cost and increased taxation, which such a step would require.

The question of alien ownership of land was discussed and declarations made for <sup>2</sup> "National prohibition of alien ownership of any kind of property for the purpose of gaining wealth" to "private ownership of real estate should be limited to use and occupation of the owner."

The influence of the <sup>3</sup>Knights of Labor may be traced

1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:299  
 2 " " " " 6:301  
 3 " " " " 6:301

in various planks of state platforms. The Michigan Alliance demanded an eight-hour day,<sup>1</sup> "in factories, mines, and shops," Nebraska favored an eight-hour day "except on farms." Mississippi wanted her convict labor used in making cheap cotton-bagging; while Minnesota would employ it in manufacture of cheap binding twine.

Most all state platforms demanded the election of president, vice-president, and United States Senators by popular vote. This shows that the masses were demanding a greater share in their government.

Generally state platforms indorsed public schools and the cause of higher education.

The important questions before Congress in the summer of 1890 were, the Silver Purchase Act, and the McKinley tariff bill, added fuel to the anger and enthusiasm of the Alliance organizations.

The Alliance men added their votes to the strength of the votes from the Mining states to pass the Silver Purchase Act. They demanded free silver, but had to compromise on this and accept an increase in the amount to be purchased. The manufacturers were wanting to pass a high tariff measure, but they had to compromise in this bill as the farmers had demanded<sup>3</sup> the downward revision

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1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:201

2 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 132

3 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 6:309

of the duties upon manufactured products. They were given protection for their farm products. The farmers were also insisting on adequate control of the trusts, which they feared would crush them, but they secured only the Sherman Act, a law which might or might not curb the monopolists.

After the farmers found that their demands could not be secured in Congress, they determined to fight harder than ever before to elect men who would be favorable to the farmers in their legislative acts.

There were hosts of state organizations, such as farmers' clubs, cooperative unions, Alliances, Agricultural Wheels and so on, each working under one of the national organizations. There were state unions, composed of the representatives of the various representatives of the various orders in the state. Kansas was a typical leader in this movement.<sup>1</sup> At the suggestion of the Farmers' Alliance, a meeting was called in June, 1890, at Topeka, Kansas, of Farmers' Alliance, Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association, and Knights of Labor. These different bodies decided that they would join with voters of like belief in a political movement to be known as the Peoples' party. Arrangements were made for a convention in August.

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1 Cosmopolitan Vol. 10:697

The convention was held at Topeka, Kansas, and the regular state ticket was nominated, and they pledged themselves to carry out the platform that was drawn up at St. Louis in 1889. The campaign opened with a great deal of enthusiasm. Men of the party were listened to with great interest.<sup>1</sup> Political meetings of five and six thousand were common, and meetings of ten thousand were not uncommon. The old parties found their meetings attended by a small number, who were not enthusiastic, so knew that defeat was ahead of them.

The new party in 1890, in the state of Kansas, elected the following officials: five of the seven Congressmen, ninety-three of the one hundred and twenty-five members of the lower house of the state legislature, and one United States Senator. The election changed the political complexion of one hundred thousand voters of the state.

In some of the Southern states, notably,<sup>2</sup> Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, Alliance men took possession of the Democratic conventions and forced both the incorporation of their demands into the platforms and the nomination of candidates who agreed to support those demands.

The results of the election caused by this movement were very encouraging to the Alliance. The table of the results of the election will make this plain.

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1 The Cosmopolitan Vol 10:698

2 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade

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States	.Num..of Mem. in Senate	Num. of Memb. in House	Num.Rep. in Both	Num. Dem. in Both,
Ill.	51	153	100	101
Ind.	50	100		
Minn.	54	110	69	58
Neb.	33	100	23-26	35-38
N. Dak.			61	22
S. Dak.	45	124	81	20
Ala.	33	100	3	130
Fla.	32	68	1	99
Ga.-	44	175	4	215
Kan.	40	125	64	10
Ky.				
Mo.	34	141		
Miss.				
N. Car.	50	120	25	145
S. Car.	36	124	4	156
Tenn.	22	53	4	71
Texas				
Va.				

States	*Farmer Rep. in Both	"Rep.Pledged support Far.	Dem. Pledged DSupport Far.	! Cong. pledged Support Far.
Ill.	3	10	15	
Ind.				
Minn.	31	3	5	1
Neb.	72			2
N. Dak.	10			
Ala.			75-80	1
S. Dak.	68			
Fla.			52	
Ga.		2	164	6
Kan.	90	1		5
Ky				4
Mo.	5	29	105	14
Miss.				2
N. Car.				8
S. Car.			105	4
Tenn.			33	
Texas				5
Va.				

\* Farmer Representatives  
 " Republicans Pledged to Support Farmers demands  
 ! Congressmen pledged to Support Farmers demands

States	Remarks
Ill.)	Fifteen sen., 45 Rep. farmers by occupation
Ind.)	
Minn.	
Neb.	
N. Dak.	
S. Dak.	One U. S. Senator
Ala.	One U.S. Senator Claimed
Fla.	
Ga.	All state officers are Alliance men.
Kan.	One U. S. Senator
Ky.	No election, 17 Alliance men. State Con. Conv.*
Mo.	!Rr. Com. Alliance man, U. Labor complicates
Miss.	$\frac{1}{2}$ Legis., $\frac{1}{2}$ Con. Conv.* Alliance men
N. Car.	All Dem. and half Rep. pledged
S. Car.	One U. S. Senator
Tenn.	Alliance Governor
Texas.	Information refused
Va.	No state election

The new party was very much encouraged by its success, which was greater than they had anticipated. The Western states were the leaders in the movement. They felt that they would be the future political leaders.

Flushed and excited over the success of the election of 1890 the delegates of the different Alliances and Unions met at Ocala, Florida, December 1890. They made only a few changes in the platform that had been made at the St. Louis convention the previous year.<sup>1</sup> Plans were made for carrying on the work throughout the country during the following year. They decided that they would form a third party for the National election of 1892. Plans

1 See ante. p. 31

\* State Constitutional Convention

! Railway Commissioner

were made for a convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1891. The leaders went at their tasks with assurance and a steady determination that they would gain their demands and relieve the burdens of their fellows in the field and factory.

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## Chapter II

### The Convention of 1892

1

At the convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, in May 1891, the new organization decided that since each of the great parties was believed to be indifferent to the people and corrupt in their dealings, a permanent third party was necessary. At the Cincinnati Convention the party was formally created. The leaders of the meeting, James B. Weaver, and Ignatius Donnelly, had a strong influence in favor of inflationist's demands, as they were leaders in the old Greenback party, and the free silver movement. The platform shows that reforms similar to the old platform demands were insisted upon, but they were over-shadowed by the financial plank. The platform will illustrate this fact:

2 Platform Adopted May 20, by Conference of Cincinnati

"That we most heartily indorse the demands of the platforms as adopted at St. Louis, Missouri, in 1889, and Ocala, Florida in 1890 by industrial organizations, there represented, summarized as follows:

The right to make and issue money is a sovereign power to be maintained by the people for the common benefit, hence we demand the abolition of national banks as banks of issue, and as a substitute for national bank notes we demand that legal tender treasury notes be issued in sufficient volume to transact the business of the country on a cash basis, without damage or especial advantage to any class or calling, such notes to be legal tender

1 Paxson The New Nation  
2 Annual Cyclopaedia 1891

p. 209  
p. 832

in payment of all debts, public and private, and such notes when demanded by the people shall be loaned to them at not more than two per cent per annum upon non-perishable products, as indicated in the sub-treasury plan, and also upon real estate with proper limitations upon the quantity of land and amount of money.

We demand the free, unlimited coinage of silver.

We demand the passage of laws prohibiting alien ownership of land, and that Congress take prompt action to devise some plan to obtain all lands now owned by alien and foreign syndicates, and that all land held by railroads and other corporations in excess of such as is actually used and needed by them be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

We demand a just and equitable system of graduated tax on income.

We demand the most rigid, honest and just national control and supervision of the means of public communication and transportation. We demand the election of president, vice-president, and United States Senators by a direct vote of the people.

During the year 1891 state conventions were held and the people were kept enthusiastic about the new party. Efforts were made to win the dissatisfied element of the Democratic and Republican parties.

In Kentucky the new party held a state convention, nominating the following:

For governor, Erwin; for lieutenant-governor, S.F. Smith; for treasurer, I.G. Sallee; for auditor, W.C. Fulkerson, for attorney-general, B.L.D. Guffy; for superintendent of Public Instruction, J.B. Beceest; for registrar of the land office, T.B. Harreld; for clerk of Court of Appeals, W. B. Ogden.

The platform adopted was very similar to the national

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platform of the party, but modified to meet the states' demands.

<sup>1</sup> State Convention

"The free and unlimited coinage of silver; declares that no more banks of issue should be organized, and those already chartered discontinued as soon as possible under the law; opposes alien ownership of lands; favors laws to prevent dealing in futures; opposes all taxation that has for its object the building up of one class or interest at the expense of another class, or interest; demands a Bureau of Labor Statistics; that the government should pay the Union soldier the difference between currency and specie at the time he was paid paper money, with interest added, and that to meet such payments Congress should issue enough Treasury notes, making them full legal tender for all debts, public or private."

The campaign was conducted with great interest, because of the strength of the third party. The election results were one member of state senate, and twelve in the House of Representatives in the state.

At the Convention at Cincinnati <sup>2</sup> it was decided to call a National Convention of the party at St. Louis, in

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1 Annual Cyclopaedia 1891 p.408  
2 Quarterly Journal of Economics Vol. 10:272

February, 1892. At this meeting plans were made for a National Nominating Convention to be held at Omaha, Nebraska in July 1892. A National Committee was created for the party.

<sup>1</sup>  
Nearly thirteen hundred delegates from all parts of the United States went to the National Nominating Convention at Omaha July 2, 1892 to take part in the selection of candidates for president, vice-president and to adopt a platform for the new party.

The meeting opened with the people all very enthusiastic and anxious to better the conditions of all who felt that they were oppressed. <sup>2</sup> C.H. Eddington, of Georgia, was chosen temporary, and H.S. Loucks of South Dakota, permanent chairman.

The previous platforms of the party supplied the material from which was constructed the new platform. To the other parties it seemed based on calamity. The platform best speaks for itself:

<sup>3</sup>

National People's Platform

Assembled upon the 116th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the People's party of America, in their first national convention, invoking upon their action the blessing of Almighty God, puts forth, in the name and

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1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 142  
2 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms, 280  
3 " " " " " " " 280

on behalf of the people of this country, the following preamble and declaration of principles:

The conditions which surround us best justify our co-operation: we meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political, and material, ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot-box, the legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The People are demoralized; most of the states have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places to prevent universal intimidation or bribery. The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, our homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of the capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right of organization for self-protection; imported pauperized labor beats down their wages, a hireling standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down, and they are rapidly degenerating into European conditions. The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of these, in turn, despise the republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice we breed the two great classes--tramps and millionaires.

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The national power to create money is appropriated to enrich bondholders; a vast public debt payable in legal-tender currency has been funded into gold-bearing bonds, thereby adding millions to the burdens of the people.

Silver, which has been accepted as coin since the dawn of history, has been demonetized, to add to the purchasing power of gold by decreasing the value of all forms of property, as well as human labor, and the supply of currency is purposely abridged to fatten usurers, bankrupt enterprise, and enslave industry. A vast conspiracy against mankind has been organized on two continents, and it is rapidly taking possession of the world. If not met and overthrown at once, it forebodes terrible social convulsions, the destruction of civilization or the establishment of an absolute despotism.

We have witnessed for more than a quarter of a century the struggles of the two great political parties for power and plunder, while grievous wrongs have been inflicted upon the suffering people. We charge that the controlling influences dominating both these parties have permitted the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to prevent or restrain them. Neither do they now promise us any substantial reform. They have agreed together to ignore, in the coming campaign, every issue but one. They propose to drown the

outcries of a plundered people with the uproar of a sham battle over the tariff, so that capitalists, corporations, national banks, rings, trusts, watered stock, the demonization of silver, and the oppressions of the usurers may all be lost sight of. They propose to sacrifice our homes, lives and children on the altar of Mammon; to destroy the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the millionaires.

Assembled on the anniversary of the birthday of the nation, and filled with the spirit of the grand general chief who established our independence, we seek to restore the government of the republic to the hands of "the plain people," with whose class it originated. We assert our purposes to be identical with the purposes of the National Constitution, "to form a more perfect union and establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

We declare that this republic can only endure as a free government while built upon the love of the whole people for each other and for the nation; that it cannot be pinned together by bayonets; that the civil war is over, and that every passion and resentment which grew out of it must die with it, and that we must be in fact, as we are in name, one united brotherhood.

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Our country finds itself confronted by conditions for which there is no precedent in the history of the world. Our annual agricultural productions amount to billions of dollars in value, which must within a few weeks or months be exchanged for billions of dollars of commodities consumed in their production; the existing currency supply is wholly inadequate to make this change. The results are falling prices, the formation of combines and rings, the impoverishment of the producing class. We pledge ourselves that, if given power, we will labor to correct these evils by wise and reasonable legislation in accordance with the terms of our platform.

We believe that the powers of government--in other words, of the people--should be expanded (as in the case of the postal service) as rapidly and as far as the good sense of an intelligent people and the teachings of experience shall justify, to the end that oppression, injustice, and poverty shall eventually cease in the land.

While our sympathies as a party of reform are naturally upon the side of every proposition which will tend to make men intelligent, virtuous, and temperate, we nevertheless, regard these questions, important as they are, as secondary to the great issues now pressing for solution, and upon which not only our individual prosperity, but the very

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existence of free institutions depend; and we ask all men to first help us to determine whether we are to have a republic to administer, before we differ as to the conditions upon which it is to be administered, believing that the forces of reform this day organized will never cease to move forward until every wrong is righted and equal rights and equal privileges securely established for all the men and women of this country. We declare, therefore--

Union of the People

1. That the union of the **labor** forces of the United States this day consummated shall be permanent and perpetual; may its spirit enter into all hearts for the salvation of the republic and the uplifting of mankind!

2 Wealth belongs to him who creates it, and every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery. "If any will not work, neither shall he eat." The interests of rural and civic labor are the same; their enemies are identical.

3. We believe that the time has come when the railroad corporations will either own the people or the people must own the railroads; and should the government enter upon the work of owning and managing the railroads, we should favor an amendment of the Constitution by which all persons engaged in the government service shall be placed under a civil-service regulation of the most rigid

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character, so as to prevent the increase of the power of the national administration by the use of such additional government employees.

#### The Question of Finance

We demand a national currency, safe, sound, and flexible, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and that without the use of banking corporations; a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people, at a tax not to exceed two per cent. per annum, to be provided as set forth in the sub-treasury plan of the Farmers' Alliance, or a better system; also, by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of sixteen to one.

We demand that the amount of circulating medium be speedily increased to not less than \$50 per capita.

We demand a graduated income-tax.

We believe that the money of the country should be kept as much as possible in the hands of the people; and hence we demand that all state and national issues shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government, economically and honestly administered.

We demand that postal savings-banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the earnings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

### Control of Transportation

Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people.

The telegraph and telephone, like the post-office system, being a necessity for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

### Reclaiming the Land

The land, including all the natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes, and alien ownership of land should be prohibited. All land now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs, and all lands now owned by aliens, should be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only.

Resolved: 1. That we demand a free ballot and a fair count in all elections, and pledge ourselves to secure it to every legal voter, without federal intervention, through the adoption by the states of the unadverted Australian ballot secret system.

Resolved, 2. That the revenue derived from a graduated income-tax should be applied to the reduction of the burdens of taxation now levied upon the domestic industries of this country.

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Resolved, 3. That we pledge our support to fair and liberal pensions to ex-Union soldiers and sailors.

Resolved, 4. That we condemn the fallacy of protecting American labor under the present system, which opens our ports to the pauper and criminal classes of the world and crowds out our wage-earners, and we denounce the present ineffective law against contract labor, and demand the further restriction of undesirable immigration.

Resolved, 5. That we cordially sympathize with the efforts of organized workmen to shorten the hours of labor, and demand a rigid enforcement of the existing eight-hour law on government work, and ask that a penalty clause be added to the said law.

Resolved, 6. That we regard the maintainance of a large standing army of mercenaries, known as the Pinkerton system, as a menace to our liberties, and we demand its abolition; and we condemn the recent invasion of the Territory of Wyoming by the hired assassins of plutocracy, assisted by federal officers.

Resolved, 7. That we commend to the thoughtful consideration of the people and the reform press, the legislative system known as the initiative and referendum.

Resolved, 8. That we favor a constitutional provision limiting the office of President and Vice-President to one term, and providing for the election of senators of the United States by a direct vote of the people.

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Resolved, 9. That we oppose any subsidy or national aid to any private corporation for any purpose.

<sup>1</sup> According to a news dispatch of the time, the platform "was received with tremendous enthusiasm and was read and adopted almost before the people knew it was read. Instantly there was enacted the mightiest scene ever witnessed by the human race. Fifteen thousand people yelled, shrieked, threw papers, hats, fans, and parasols, and gathered up banners. Five minutes passed, ten minutes, twenty, still the noise poured from hoarse throats. <sup>2</sup> After forty minutes the demonstration died out and the convention was ready to proceed with the nomination of a presidential candidate."

<sup>2</sup> Before the convention the leaders of the People's party had alarmed the old parties by announcing that Judge Walter Q. Gresham of Indiana, would be offered the nomination. He was very popular with the people of the country, and the old parties were afraid of the outcome if he were nominated. After the platform had been adopted, <sup>3</sup> Judge Gresham announced that he would accept a unanimous nomination. This was unobtainable, so his name was withdrawn. The field was then left to General James B. Weaver of

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1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 144  
2 " " " " " " p. 145  
3 " " " " " " p. 146

Iowa and Senator James H. Kile of South Dakota. Weaver represented the more conservative element of the Populist party. The following table gives the results of the first ballot:

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Candidates for President	
James B. Weaver, of Iowa	995
James H. Kyle, of South Dakota	265
Mann Page, of Virginia	1
Leland Stanford, of California	1
---- Norton,	1
Whole number of votes,.....	1263
Necessary to a choice.....	632

<sup>2</sup> The campaign opened with a considerable following in the West and South. In several of the western states the Democratic party supported it with fusion tickets. The following article will show the electoral ticket:

<sup>2</sup> The Democrats named no electoral tickets in Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, North Dakota, and Wyoming, but voted for the People's party electors with the object of taking those states away from the Republicans. They put out an electoral ticket in Nevada, but still voted mostly for the populist electors. In North Dakota, also there was a partial fusion between the Democrats and the People's party, and in Minnesota a part of the Weaver electoral ticket was accepted by the Democrats. In Louisiana there was a fusion of the Republicans and the People's party, each nominating half of the eight electors. In Alabama

1 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms p. 280  
2 Annual Cyclopaedia 1892 p. 775

there was a fusion of some of the Republicans with the People's party. In Texas a Republican ticket called the Lily White was set up, which differed from the regular ticket. In Michigan a new electoral law, which was declared constitutional by the United States Supreme Court on October 17, 1892, provided for the separate election of a presidential elector in each Congressional district, and in consequence the electoral vote of the state was divided. In Oregon one of the four electors on the People's party ticket was also placed on the Democratic ticket. The presidential election took place on Tuesday, November 8.

The force of the new party alarmed the old parties.  
1 The Boston Herald of 1892 said, "The Republicans retain party name, but retain nothing else that was characteristic of the Republican party at the time it was organized." This accusation had been caused by acts the Republican party had passed which disappointed the people, and by a period of hard times.

Both the old parties tried to throw a sop to the elements that composed the new party.<sup>2</sup> Both took up the financial question, and tried to prove that their theory was exactly the same as the new party's demand on that

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1 Public Opinion 14:167

2 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 147

subject. The Republicans tried to win the labor vote by favoring restriction of immigration and laws for the protection of employees in dangerous occupations and to the farmer by pronouncements against trusts, for extended postal service, and for the reclamation and sale of arid lands to settlers. The Democrats went further and demanded the return of "nearly one hundred million acres of valuable land" then held by "corporations and syndicates, alien and domestic."

General Weaver proved to be a good political leader. He toured the country, accompanied by General Field, when he was in the South, and by Mrs. Lease when he went to the Pacific Coast. Numerous other men and women addressed the thousands who attended the meetings all over the country.

In spite of the fact that the Populist and Republican ran on fusion tickets in the South, the outcome was the choice of Cleveland electors throughout the South. In the West and North the new party united with the Democrats. <sup>1</sup> "The effort was so successful that in Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Nevada, and North Dakota, the new party swept the field with the assistance of the Democrats. In South Dakota and Nebraska, where there was no fusion, the Democratic vote was negligible and the Populists ran a close second to the Republicans."

The following tables will show the outcome of the

election in all the states where the third party was important.

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Actual Populist Vote in 1892

West			South		
State	Percent.	Actual Vote	State	Percent	Actual Vote
Colo.	44	40,000	Texas	23	99,688
S. Dak.	37	26,544	Miss.	20	10,256
Kan.	36	115,000	Ga.	20	42,937
Neb.	31½	61,326	N. Car.	16	44,736
Idaho	28	4,865	Ala.	18	43,600
Wash.	22½	19,165	Fla.	12	4,843
Ore.	20	15,000	La.	11	13,281
N. Dak.	20	7,000	Tenn.	9	23,477
Nev.	19	2,000	Ky.	7	23,500
Mont.	16½	7,334	Ark.	7	11,831
Minn.	12	29,313	Va.	4	12,275
Calif.	10	25,352	S. Car.	3	2,407
Mo.	7½	41,213	W. Va.	2	4,166
Wyo.	6	41,213			
Iowa	5	20,595			
Ind.	4	22,208			
Mich.	4	19,892			
Ill.	2½	22,207			
Ohio	1½	14,850			
Wis.		9,909			
New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland					33,881
Territorial vote					4,348
Total					879,469

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Results of Elections in the States

Fifty-third Congress

Senate		Democrats (round numbers)		220
Democrats	45	Republicans	" "	130
Republicans	39	Populists		6
Populists	4			

The following governors were elected:

State	Name	Party
Florida	H.L. Mitchell	Democrat
Connecticut	L. B. Morris	"
Idaho	W.J. McConnell	Republican
Illinois	John B. Altgeld	Democrat
Indiana	Claude Matthews	"
Kansas	Abraham W. Smith	Republican

11 Quarterly Journal of Economics Vol. 10:278

2 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 151

(Continued from p. 58)

State	Name	Party
Mass.	William Eustis Russel	Democrat
Mich.	John T. Rich	Republican
Minn.	Knute Nelson	"
Missouri	William J. Stone	Democrat
Montana	J.E. Richards	Republican
Nebraska	Lorenzo Crounse	"
N. H.	John Butler Smith	"
N. J.	George T. Werts	Democrat
N. Car.	Elias Carr	"
N. Dak.	E.C.D. Shortridge	Populist
S. Car. -	Benjamin Ryan Tillman	Farmer's Alliance
S. Dak.	Chas. H. Sheldon	Republican
Tenn.	Peter Turney	Democrat
Texas	James Stephen Hogg	Democrat
Wash.	John H. McGraw	Republican
W. Va.	William A. McCorkle	Democrat
Wis.	Geo. W. Peck	"

The Populists were very much encouraged by their success. A week after the elections General Weaver announced that the Populists had succeeded far beyond their expectations. He said, "The Republican party is as dead<sup>1</sup> as the Whig party was after the Scott campaign of 1854 and from this time forward will diminish in every state of the Union and cannot make another campaign... The Populist will now commence a vigorous campaign and will push the work of organization and education in every county in the Union."

1. Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade

### Chapter III

#### Convention of 1896

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On March 4, 1893, President Harrison was willing to turn over the responsibilities of the office of president of the United States to Grover Cleveland. For months Harrison had exercised all his powers to prevent a financial crash, while the Republican party was in power. The party knew the effect that the coming financial depression would have on any party, so was anxious that the enemy bear the burden. It had been found that the redeeming of the greenback, the paying of great sums in pensions, the spending of enormous amounts for national improvements, and being responsible for the notes that were issued to buy 4,500,000 ounces of silver each month, was more than the usual supply of gold in the treasury could furnish.

<sup>1</sup> Harrison left a depleted Treasury, although the reserve was slightly above the statutory minimum, but owing to the drain of gold to meet the daily demands, the amount of gold in the treasury in April, was below

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1 J.F. Rhodes History of the United States V.8 p.396

one hundred millions. <sup>1</sup> A rumor obtained currency that the Secretary of the Treasury would avail himself of his legal option and redeem the Treasury notes issued under the act of 1890 in silver. The Secretary of Treasury denied the truth of the rumor, but this only seemed to give credence to it. The president came to the front in a public utterance and declared specifically that the notes of 1890 should be redeemed in gold. The president and Eastern financiers were convinced that the repeal of the Silver Purchase act of 1890 was absolutely necessary for relief.

<sup>2</sup>  
On July 5, 1893, Cleveland called for a special session of Congress to meet on August 7, 1893. The issue of the proclamation was the signal for great excitement among the Populists and the silver-producing circles.

A Silver Convention was called to meet in Denver, July 11, 1893, and another was held in Chicago, August 2, 1893. At these conventions addresses were made and resolutions adopted denouncing any proposition to repeal the Sherman Silver Purchase Act of 1890 without some provision for the free coinage of silver. Some asserted that the financial crisis had **been** deliberately devised by British and American bankers, with President Cleveland

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1 J.F. Rhodes History of the United States V. VIII p. 397  
2 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 8:770

as their ally, to bring about the exclusion of silver from use as money.

The special session of Congress met on August 7, 1893. The President's message on August 8, put the silver question before Congress. The message embodied an exposition of what Mr. Cleveland considered the evils of the Sherman act. He recommended that this act be repealed at once. He advised Congress to postpone the action on tariff, until they could settle the silver question. At once the silver men in Congress, without reference to party lines, took an energetic resistance to any project for the unconditional repeal of the purchase clause of the Sherman act.

Conferences between the different factions were held. Finally arrangements were made for the House of Representatives after due debate, to vote on it, directly. On August 11 a bill was introduced by Mr. Wilson, of West Virginia, repealing the purchase clause, but renewing the pledge to maintain the parity of gold and silver coin at the existing or some other ratio. The order of procedure that was adopted provided for a debate of fourteen days, followed by voting, first on amendments establish-

<sup>1</sup>

1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 8:771

2 Message Papers of Presidents, Richardson V. IX, p. 401-6

ing free coinage at the present ratio and at ratios running up to 20 to 1, then on the proposition to revive the Bland act, and finally on the bill itself. Votes were taken August 28, 1893.<sup>1</sup> All the amendments were rejected, but the bill passed by a vote of 240 to 110.

In the Senate the president's policy was not accepted as it was in the House. When the Wilson Bill came up from the House, it became the formal subject of discussion, but no agreement could be reached as to when a vote should be taken, but finally on October 11, a continuous session for voting on the subject was called. It lasted for forty hours, but the act could not be passed. Finally, after there seemed to be no way of solving the question, the silver Senators gave up the struggle and accepted the bill as the Senate had agreed on it, by a vote of 43 to 32. It was then sent to the House where it was adopted by a vote of 192 to 94.<sup>2</sup> The president accepted it and it became a law November, 11, 1893.

The attitude of the American people to the McKinley tariff act of 1890 was shown by the crushing defeat of the Republican party at the election immediately after it was passed. During the next two years the tariff was

1 Congressional Record 1893, H.R. Bill I, passed H. 1008  
2 " " " " Approved by President, p.3100

debated by the people, and opposition grew against it, especially among the masses. The results of the election of 1892 convinced the Democrats that they should revise the tariff to meet the demands of the majority of the people.

<sup>1</sup>  
While in session, the Democratic members of the House Committee on Ways and Means began the preparation of a tariff bill. The Wilson bill was the outcome of their efforts. The characteristic features of the bill were: "The adoption, whenever practicable, of ad valorem instead of specific duties; the freeing from taxes of those great materials of industry that lie at the basis of production."

The bill was brought up before the House on January 8, 1894. The greatest general interest was excited by the progress of the internal revenue bill, the chief feature of which was a proposition for an income tax. The income tax measure immediately aroused the opposition of a number of Eastern Democrats, headed by the New York Congressmen, but it was adopted by the Ways and Means Committee, mainly through Southern and Western votes. <sup>2</sup> There was a heated discussion of the bill in the House, but it passed by a vote of 204 to 140, sixteen

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1 Congressional Record, 1893 H.R. Bill 4864  
2 " # " pp. 951, 1079, best found on  
index to Record p. 223

Democrats and one Populist going with the Republicans in the negative.

In the Senate the bill suffered numerous changes. Many Democratic Senators were seriously dissatisfied with the schedules affecting the industries of their respective states. It was debated by the Senate until July 3, 1894, when it passed by a vote of 39 to 34. Six hundred and thirty-four amendments had been added to the Wilson bill that had been passed by the House. A joint conference of the Committees of both houses was called, but they failed to agree. Cleveland entered into the dispute, and attempted to show that the position of the House was right, but it didn't have any effect on the attitude of the Senate. Another joint conference was called, and after several weeks more of debating, the House was forced to <sup>1</sup>yield. Without discussion the bill passed the House by a vote of 181 to 105. It was sent to the president, but he did not sign it, but it became a law August 28, 1894.

The serious panic of 1893, the silver question debate, and the Wilson-German Tariff act, which kept industry uncertain during the long debate, had disturbed Labor

and created an army of unemployed.<sup>1</sup> A peculiar outcome of the conditions was the organization of various Armies of the Unemployed for the purpose of marching to Washington and petitioning Congress for aid. Coxey of Massillon, Ohio, was the originator of the idea. He announced that he would lead an army of unemployed to Washington to proclaim the wants of the people on the steps of the Capital on May 1. He called for all unemployed and honest laboring men to join him.

At the same time a man by the name of Frye of Los Angeles, California, announced that he would lead an army to Washington for the same purpose as Coxey's. Another band under the leadership of a man by the name of Kelley started from San Francisco.<sup>2</sup> The efforts of the armies were lost as they accomplished nothing. They found that they had little influence on Congressional legislation. The "armies" then scattered to all parts of the country. Their only work had been to show the people the condition of Labor and to increase the dissatisfaction with the government, which always gets the blame for the troubles of all.

<sup>3</sup> By the summer of 1894 Cleveland's party was split beyond repair and his friends were mostly among the

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1 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 9:361  
2 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 9:771  
3 Paxon The New Nation

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Republicans. During the election campaigns of 1894,  
the National questions were kept continually before the  
people throughout the country. Almost every state party  
platform contained declarations on federal legislation.  
The campaign was conducted with special interest for a  
Congressional election,<sup>2</sup> Every month the Populist party  
increased in strength, while the East watched it with  
mingled fear, contempt and ignorance. Both the old par-  
ties found it necessary to adopt a silver plank.

The party managers' tactics varied from state to  
state. In some places local questions pushed to the  
front and took precedence of the tariff and money ques-  
tions, in others local matters were almost wholly neg-  
lected and free silver and tariff engrossed the topic  
of the campaign debates. Each section had its own  
attitude toward the questions. In New England national  
subjects were given first importance, and the elections  
returns would indicate that the Democrats stayed away  
from the polls in order to rebuke their party. The New  
England legislatures were overwhelmingly Republican. In  
New York national politics played a prominent part. Through-  
out the state Republican success was practically com-  
plete.<sup>3</sup> New Jersey sent a solid Republican delegation to

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1 Review of Reviews Vol. 10:621  
2 Paxon The New Nation  
3 Review of Reviews Vol. 10:622

Congress. In Ohio the silver question became prominent chiefly, because of the dissention in the Democratic ranks. In this state the Populists made large gains at the expense of the Democrats; the total Populist vote being 50,000 as against 15,000 the previous year. Indiana sent a solid Republican delegation. In Illinois the Republican majority was large. In this state the Populist party made slight gains. Wisconsin and Michigan both sent Republican representatives to Congress, and elected Republican governors. The Populist party made large gains in the number of votes cast.

In Minnesota and the two Dakotas the Populists took the place formerly held by the Democratic party. There was a large gain in votes cast, but the Republicans were able to elect the governors, and to send Republicans as representatives to Congress. James B. Weaver, the Populist-Democrat was defeated. In Missouri the Democrats lost nine of their Congressional delegation.

In Kansas the Populist-Democratic fusion ticket was certain it would win, but they only elected the governor, while the state legislature and Congressional delegation went to the Republicans. In Colorado the Populist government had been on trial for two years. The people were dissatisfied with Populist rule, so gave one of the two Congressmen the Republican vote; also the state legislature

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had a majority of Republicans.

Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming sent solid Republican delegations to Congress. California took up state issues entirely. She elected a Democratic governor, but she chose a Republican legislature. In California the Populist vote nearly doubled that cast in 1892. Washington and Oregon sent Republican delegations to Congress. In these states the Populist vote was large. In Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia the contest was on the national issue, the tariff question. In these states many Republicans were elected to Congress, which was a new thing for the Old South. North Carolina sent Republicans, fusing with Populists. South Carolina was able to retain the Democratic delegation to Congress and state legislature, but the Populist vote was an important factor in the election. In Georgia and Texas the Populist vote made great gains, but the Democrats were able to keep the same delegation in Congress. Kentucky and Tennessee fought over state issues in their campaigns. Tennessee elected a Republican governor and representatives to Congress. Kentucky was barely able to get a Democratic majority for her Congressional representatives. In Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas the elections were confined to representatives in Congress, and solid

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Democratic delegations were returned from each state. The close election and small majority for the old parties in the state delegations, were due to the growth in the Bopulist party, which seemed to be gaining in strength every day.

<sup>1</sup>  
Between 1894 and 1896 the financial and business situation became steadily worse. Each reacted upon the other, The lower duties imposed by the new tariff were not followed by a great increase of importations, so there was a loss of revenue. Foreign nations distrusted the stability of our affairs, so withdrew their investments. This caused a heavy exportation of gold, which was drawn from the Treasury.

The period of depression followed by the exportation of gold, caused the silver question to become the most important topic of discussion by the American people.

<sup>2</sup>  
William H. Harvey's "Coin's Financial School" converted many to silver who had been arguing for gold. Besides publishing many articles in favor of free silver, Mr. Harvey found time to deliver many addresses on the subject of silver, and thus increased the silver advocates' ranks.

<sup>3</sup>  
In February 1895—a conference of Bi-Metallists was

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|---|---------------|------------------------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | Stanwood      | A History of the Presidency. | Vol.I | p. 525 |
| 2 | Solon J. Buck | The Agrarian Crusade         |       | p. 161 |
| 3 | Wm. H. Bryan  | The First Battle             |       | p. 252 |

held in Washington, D.C. At this meeting the silverites decided they could expect little **Help** from the Republican and Democratic parties, so would organize a party with the money question as the sole issue. Most silver men felt that they must make a fight to save their industry, for the price of silver bullion was declining every day. During the next two years several conferences were held where the silver question was discussed. Every man felt that silver would be the leading subject in the coming campaign. The Populist party always had a money plank, so they began to win followers that previous to this time refused to leave the old party. The Populists had a number of advanced reforms or ideas to offer, but they were not attracting the attention of the public.

<sup>1</sup> The Populist and Democrats seemed to be drawing together, in spite of active minorities in both parties, making every effort to keep the identity of each party.

When the time came for the presidential nominating conventions of 1896, the monetary issue had already dwarfed all other political questions. The Republican party would probably have been wrecked by it if it had not been guided by the strong hand of <sup>2</sup> Marcus A. Hanna. He was a staunch friend of the gold standard, but he was too clever to alienate the sympathies of the Repub-

<sup>1</sup> Paxson The New Nation

<sup>2</sup> Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade

lican silverites by supporting the nomination of a man known to be an uncompromising advocate of gold. He chose his friend, William McKinley, who was known as a friend of protection of industries by the <sup>1</sup> tariff act that bore his name. The East approved of this, and he had said nothing about the currency question that would offend the West. McKinley could not be induced to commit himself in regard to the silver question, but stated that he would abide by the declarations of his party. The party met the question by stating, <sup>2</sup> "The Republican party is unreservedly for sound money...We are, therefore, opposed to the free coinage of silver except by international agreement with the leading commercial nations of the world, which we pledge ourselves to promote, and until such agreement can be obtained, the existing gold standard must be preserved."

<sup>3</sup>  
This was called the gold plank by its enemies. Thirty-four of the delegates withdrew and advised all Republicans who believed in free coinage of silver to support the Democratic ticket. William McKinley was nominated for president on the first ballot by 661½ votes. The vice-president, Garnet A. Hobart, was also nominated on first ballot by 535½ votes.

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1 J. F. Rhodes History of the United States. V.VIII p.361  
2 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms p. 301  
3 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 174

The Democrats did not have a complete program planned when they met at their convention in Chicago.<sup>1</sup> The Northeastern states sent delegates in favor of the gold standard, but the delegates from the other states were in a majority and were silver advocates. The money plank in the platform was a subject of heated debate. It was at this convention that William J. Bryan made his famous "Cross of Gold" speech. In the address he appealed to the emotions of the people more than to reason. The Assembly went wild with enthusiasm for Bryan, as he closed his speech by saying,<sup>2</sup> "If they say bi-metallism is good, but we cannot have it until other nations help us, we reply that, instead of having a gold standard because England has, we will restore bi-metallism because the United States has it. If they dare come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we will fight them to the uttermost. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation and the world, supported by the commercial interests, the laboring interests, and the toilers everywhere, we will answer their demand for a gold standard by saying to them: 'You shall not press down upon the brow of Labor the crown of thorns, you shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.'<sup>3</sup>"

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1 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms p. 298  
2 Wm. J. Bryan The First Battle p. 206

After this speech the platform that had been debated seriously and was in danger of being lost was adopted by a vote of more than two to one. The Democrats had at last announced their position on silver when the silver plank stated; <sup>1</sup> "We demand the free and unlimited coinage of both silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the aid or consent of any other nation. We demand that the standard silver dollar shall be a full legal tender, equally with gold, for all debts, public and private, and we favor such legislation as will prevent for the future, the demonetization of any kind of legal-tender money by private contract."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> William J. Bryan, the leading silver advocate, was nominated for president on the fifth ballot. The vice-president, Arthur Sewall of Maine, was nominated on the fifth ballot.

Many of the Democrats who were opposed to free silver refused to support Bryan. <sup>3</sup> Consistent Democratic journalists proclaimed in emphatic terms their determination not to continue their support of the party, and some boldly advocated the election of McKinley.

<sup>4</sup> The Populist party held its convention after the two main parties, because they believed that the old

1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency p. 524  
2 T. H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms 290  
3 Stanwood A History of the Presidency 550  
4 Review of Reviews Vol. 14:298

parties would be under the thumb of the trusts and the "gold bugs". The Populist party would then have the easy task of gathering into its ranks the bolting silver and anti-monopolist Republicans and Democrats, and thus increase the two million votes to the five and a half million that would put it into the White House. They found that they had been mistaken in their calculations, for both the old parties had discussed the silver question. The Democrats had stolen its loudest thunder.<sup>1</sup> The question now for the delegates to decide was whether they put their organization behind the Democratic nominee, or preserve intact the identity of the Populist party and thus split the silver vote. The majority of the delegates believed that the Democratic party had been imbued with the idea of reform.<sup>2</sup> The party was composed altogether of men who had already had the self-discipline of giving up party for the sake of principle; so they were ready to cooperate with the Democrats.<sup>3</sup> An active minority was opposed to any sort of fusion or cooperation. To them an alliance with the Democratic party meant a surrender to the enemy, to an enemy with whom they had been struggling for four years for the control of their state and local governments. The convention was persuaded by a narrow margin to select the vice-president before the

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1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 182  
2 Review of Reviews Vol. 14:301  
3 Stanwood A History of the Presidency p. 551

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president. Thomas E. Watson of Georgia was nominated on the first ballot. It was practically a foregone conclusion before the meeting that Bryan would be nominated for president.

The platform of the Populist party was very similar to their demands of 1892. They only stressed certain planks, and introduced some new ones. The following platform gives the views of the dissatisfied and the group commonly called the radicals by the people of that time.

2  
As to Money, Bonds and Income-Tax

1 We demand a national money, safe and sound, issued by the general government only, without the intervention of banks of issue, to be a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and a just, equitable, and efficient means of distribution direct to the people and through the lawful disbursements of the government.

2. We demand the free and unrestricted coinage of silver and gold at the present legal ratio of 16 to 1, without waiting for the consent of foreign nations.

3. We demand that the volume of circulating medium be speedily increased to an amount sufficient to meet the demands of the business population of this country, and to restore the just level of prices of labor and production.

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1 Paxon The New Nation

p. 236

2 T.H. McKee National Conventions and Platforms

p. 306-10

4. We denounce the sale of bonds and the increase of the public interest-bearing bond debt made by the present administration as unnecessary and without authority of law, and that no more bonds be issued except by specific act of Congress.

5. We demand such legal legislation as will prevent the demonetization of the lawful money of the United States by private contract.

6. We demand that the government, in payment for its obligations, shall use its option as to the kind of lawful money in which they are to be paid, and we denounce the present and preceding administrations for surrendering this option to the holders of government obligations.

7. We demand a graduated income-tax, to the end that aggregated wealth shall bear its just proportion of taxation, and we denounce the recent decision of the Supreme court relative to the income-tax law as a misrepresentation of the Constitution and an invasion of the rightful powers of Congress over the subject of taxation.

8. We demand that postal savings-banks be established by the government for the safe deposit of the savings of the people and to facilitate exchange.

#### Government Ownership of Railroads and Telegraph

1. Transportation being a means of exchange and a public necessity, the government should own and operate the railroads in the interest of the people and an a

non-partisan basis, to the end that all may be accorded the same treatment in transportation, and that the tyranny and political power now exercised by the great railroad corporations, which result in the impairment, if not the destruction, of the political rights and personal liberties of the citizens, may be destroyed. Such ownership is to be accomplished gradually, in a manner consistent with sound public policy.

2. The interest of the United States in the public highways, built with public moneys, and the proceeds of extensive grants of land to the Pacific railroads should never be alienated, mortgaged, or sold, but guarded and protected for the general welfare, as provided by the laws organizing such railroads. The foreclosure of existing liens of the United States on these roads should at once follow default in the payment of the debt of the companies, and at the foreclosure sales of said roads the government shall purchase the same, if it become necessary to protect its interests therein, or if they shall operate said railroads as public highways, for the benefit of the whole and not in the interest of the few, under suitable provisions for protection of life and property, giving to all transportation interests equal privileges and equal rates for fares and freight.

3 . We denounce the present infamous schemes for refunding these debts, and demand that the laws now applicable

thereto be executed and administered according to their true intent and spirit.

4. The telegraph, like the post-office system, being a necessary for the transmission of news, should be owned and operated by the government in the interest of the people.

#### Lands, Homes and Pacific Railroad Grants

1. The true policy demands that the national and state legislation shall be such as will ultimately enable every prudent and industrious citizen to secure a home, and therefore the land should not be monopolized for speculative purposes. All lands now held by railroads and other corporations in excess of their actual needs should, by lawful means, be reclaimed by the government and held for actual settlers only, and private land monopoly, as well as alien ownership, should be prohibited.

2. We condemn the frauds by which land-grants to the Pacific railroad companies have, through the connivance of the Interior Department, robbed multitudes of bona fide settlers of their homes and miners of their claims, and we demand legislation by Congress which will enforce the exemption of mineral land from such grants after as well as before the patent.

3. We demand that bona fide settlers on all public lands be granted free homes, as provided in the national

homestead law, and that no exception be made in the case of Indian reservations when opened for settlement, and that all lands not now patented come under this demand.

Direct Legislation and General Planks

We favor a system of direct legislation through the initiative and referendum, under proper constitutional safeguards.

We demand the election of President, Vice-President, and United States senators by a direct vote of the people.

We tender to the patriotic people of Cuba our deepest sympathy in their heroic struggle for political freedom and independence, and we believe the time has come when the United States, the great republic of the world, should recognize that Cuba is and of right ought to be a free and independent state.

We favor home rule in the territories and the District of Columbia, and the early admission of the territories as states.

All public salaries should be made to correspond to the price of labor and its products.

In times of great industrial depression, idle labor should be employed on public works as far as practicable.

The arbitrary course of the courts in assuming to imprison citizens for indirect contempt and ruling by injunction should be prevented by proper legislation.

We favor just pensions for our disabled Union soldiers.

Believing that the elective franchise and an untrammled ballot are essential to a government of, for, and by the people, the People's party condemns the wholesale system of disfranchisement adopted in some states, as un-republican and undemocratic, and we declare it to be the duty of the several state legislatures to take such action as will secure a full, free, and fair ballot and an honest count.

Financial Question the  
"Pressing Issue"

While the foregoing propositions constitute the platform upon which our party stands, and for the vindication of which its organization will be maintained, we recognize that the great and pressing issue of the pending campaign, upon which the present presidential election will turn, is the financial question, and upon this great and specific issue between the parties we cordially invite the aid and co-operation of all organizations and citizens agreeing with us upon this vital question.

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The campaign of 1896 was given unusual attention by the entire nation. The period of depression and unsettled conditions had caused every man to look to the government to relieve the serious conditions. The silver question overshadowed all other issues. It had caused the Democrats and Populists to chose the same man for candidate

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for president. Because of the electoral system, the agreement of two parties to support the same candidate could have no effect, unless arrangements were made for fusion within the states. The Populist party was making the fight for its life. It knew if the silver question was lost it would lose its influence and identity as a party.

<sup>1</sup>  
The Republicans broke all previous records in the amount of printed matter which they scattered broadcast over the country. Money was spent freely. McKinley stayed at home and interviewed delegations that presented his ideas and principles to the people. Marcus A. Hanna carried the Republican campaign on in his efficient and businesslike manner.

Bryan, as the Democratic-Populist candidate, toured the country making addresses to millions of voters. All of his meetings received a great deal of publicity through the press, in spite of the fact that it was opposed to him.

As the campaign drew to a close it seemed to be a class contest. The Populist executive Committee believed it, such as is shown by an extract from one of its manifestoes:

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1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade

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"There are but two sides in the conflict that is being waged in this country today. On the one side are the allied hosts of monopolies, the money power, great trusts and railroad corporations, who seek the enactment of laws to benefit them and impoverish the people. On the other side are the farmers, laborers, merchants, and all others who produce wealth, and bear the burdens of taxation. The one represents the wealthy and powerful classes who want to control the government to plunder the people. The other represents the people, contending for equality before the law, and the rights of man. Between these two there is no middle ground."

The following tables will show the results of the campaign:

2

States	Popular Vote		
	William McKinley, Rep.	Wm. J. Bryan Dem.	W. J. Bryan Pop.
Ala.	54,737	107,137	24,089
Ark.	37,512	110,103	....
Calif.	146,170	121,629	21,744
Col.	26,271	158,674	2,389
Conn.	110,285	56,740	...
Del.	18,804	13,424	....
Fla.	11,288	30,683	2,953
Ga.	60,091	94,232	...
Idaho	6,324	23,192	...
Ill.	607,130	464,523	1,090
Ind.	323,754	305,753	...
Iowa	289,293	233,741	...
Kan.	159,345	126,660	46,194
Ky.	218,171	217,890	..
La.	22,037	77,175	...
Me.	80,465	32,201	2,487
Md.	136,959	104,735	..
Mass.	208,976	90,530	15,181

1 Solon J. Buck The Agrarian Crusade p. 190

2 McKee National Conventions and Platforms p. 326

States	William McKinley Rep.	Wm. J. Bryan Dem	Wm. J. Bryan Dem.
Mich.	293,582	236,714	...
Minn.	193,501	139,626	...
Miss.	5,130	56,363	7,517
Mo.	304,940	363,567	...
Mont.	10,494	42,537	...
Neb.	103,064	115,999	...
Nev.	1,938	7,803	575
N.H.	57,444	21,271	379
N.J.	221,367	133,675	...
N.Y.	819,838	551,396	...
N.Car.	155,222	174,488	...
N.Dak.	26,335	20,686	...
O.	525,991	474,882	26,015
Ore.	48,779	46,662	...
Pa.	728,300	422,054	11,174
R.I.	36,437	14,459	...
S.Car.	9,281	58,798	...
S. Dak.	41,042	41,225	...
Tenn.	148,773	163,651	4,525
Texas	167,520	290,862	79,572
Utah	13,491	64,607	...
Vt.	51,127	10,179	458
Va.	135,368	154,709	....
Wash.	39,153	51,646	...
W. Va.	105,368	94,480	....
Wis.	268,135	165,523	...
Wyo.	10,072	10,369	286
Totals	5,107,304	6,287,352	245,728

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Elections to the 55th Congress result were as fol-

lows:

Republicans 207  
 Democrats 137  
 Populists 13 --reckoning among the Populists

Mssrs. Hartman, (mont.) Newlands (Nev.) Shoforth, (Calif)

Jehu Baker (Ill). On the question of silver the divi-  
 sion is believed to be:

For Free Silver 153  
 Against Free Silver 204

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The following state governors were chosen:

State	Name	Party
Colo.	Alva Adams	Dem.-Rep. fusion
Conn.	Lorrin A. Cooke	Rep.
Del.	E.W. Tunnell	Dem.
Idaho	Frank Steunersberg	Dem.-Pop.
Ill.	John R. Tanner	Rep.
Ind.	Jas. A. Mount	Rep.
Kan.	J.W. Leddy	Pop.
Mass.	Roger Wolcott	Rep.
Mich.	Hagen S. Pingree	Rep.
Minn.	D.M. Clough	Rep.
Mo.	Lon V. Stevens	Dem.
Mont.	Robt. Smith	Dem.-Pop.
Neb.	Silas Holcomb	Dem.-Pop.
N.H.	Geo. A. Ramsdell	Rep.
N.Y.	Frank S. Black	Rep.
N. Car.	Russel	Rep.
N.Dak.	F.A. Briggs	Rep.
S. Car.	W.H. Ellerbee	Dem.
S. Dak.	Andrew Lee	Dem.-Pop.
Tenn.	Robt. Taylor	Dem.
Texas	C.A. Culberson	Dem.
Wash.	John R. Rogers	Dem.-Pop.
W. Va.	G.W. Atkinson	Rep.
Wis.	Edward Schofield	Rep.

The tables above show that Republican candidates won the election. There had been a reaction against the Democrats and Populist officials. The Republican victory meant that the free coinage of silver had been lost, and the gold standard would be established, the tariff law would be revised, and Republican doctrines would be supreme during the next presidential term.

PART III

DIFFUSION OF POPULISM

Chapter I

The Republican party came into power after the Democrats, under Cleveland, had ruled for four years. The panic of 1893 caused a period of depression. The farmers received very low prices for their products. Industry was hindered, so many laborers were unemployed. During the same period the <sup>1</sup> Wilson-Gorman tariff was passed. Depression continued, and the tariff was given the blame, so a Republican tariff was hailed as the <sup>2</sup> forerunner of prosperity. In his inaugural address President McKinley made it evident that he regarded a revision of the tariff as the immediate duty of the hour.

Finally after long discussion, especially in the <sup>3</sup> Senate, the Dingley tariff act was passed. Immediately the confidence of the people in their government was restored. The protection that the new tariff provided made it possible for manufacturers to run their factories to the full extent of their production. Then the armies of unemployed laborers were called into the shops and

1. Singley Since the Civil War p. 383
- 2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency V. 2 p. 3
- 3 Congressional Record 1897. signed by Pres. 2962

factories. Now everyone had something to do and was contented, so the cities became prosperous and the people happy. Because of the prosperity in the cities the farmers found a **ready** market for their products, so the price of agricultural products increased. Even the elements seemed determined to help the Republican rule to be a successful one. The Middle Western states had suffered from a lack of rainfall the two previous years, but in 1897 and 1898 there was plenty of rain and the farmers had good crops.

The silver question that had been of paramount interest in 1896 was not so important to the people with the return of prosperity. However, it would not have been forgotten, if a question of vastly greater importance had not come to the **front**.

<sup>2</sup> New insurrections in Cuba, and the sinking of the <sup>3</sup> United States battleship Maine in Havana harbor, brought about hostilities between Spain and the United States. Resolutions passed by Congress on April 20, 1898 was the **formal** declaration of war between the two countries. All the people of the country turned their attention to a successful execution of the war so every effort was put forth by a united political body.

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1 U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Year Book 1921 p. 509  
2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency V. 2 9  
3 Lingley Since the Civil War 388

<sup>1</sup>  
When the war was over and peace was concluded with Spain, the annexation of Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands brought up the new topic of "imperialism."

<sup>2</sup>  
The acquisition of the insular dependencies raised the question as to the power of Congress over the Islands. What to do about collecting a tariff on goods from Porto Rico became an important subject for discussion. Industries that were afraid of rivalry demanded that a tariff be collected, while others claimed that it was a part of the United States, so should not be charged tariff duties. Another problem before the United States was to decide the form of government that should be established over the new possessions.

<sup>3</sup>  
In 1900 these questions were found in the political demands of the parties. The Republicans, although the subject was distasteful to many of its old leaders, were forced to defend their imperialist policy. <sup>4</sup> When President McKinley was re-nominated by unanimous vote at the nominating convention in 1900, the leaders were assured that their policy was accepted by the majority of the party.

The Democrats at their convention in 1900 again chose Wm. J. Bryan as their leader. He was determined

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1 Congressional Record 1899 Senate 5594

2 Beard Contemporary American History p. 218

3 Review of Reviews Vol. 21: 3

4 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2/p. 5

<sup>1</sup> not to let the silver question sink into an early grave, and accordingly forced the adoption of a free silver plank, but anti-imperialism formed the leading plank in the platform.

The Populist party did not feel that its cause had been entirely lost in 1896 with the defeat of the silver question, in its advocate. <sup>2</sup> On February 6, 1900 the Supreme Council of the Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union met in Washington D. C. A platform of the party in 1892 and 1896 was adopted and a pledge was given to support the candidates to be nominated by the Democratic convention. <sup>3</sup> When the Populists' nominating convention met there were two factions, as there had been in 1896, but the outcome of the meeting was to indorse the action taken by the Supreme Council of the Farmers' Alliance.

Because of the new subject of "imperialism", the campaign of 1900 was of unusual interest. <sup>4</sup> Mr. Bryan, during his campaign tour, found that anti-imperialism was not so popular as he wished, so devoted a part of his speech to the question of trusts and the evils to which organized labor was subjected. He found that the silver question did not interest his hearers, so touched it only briefly, but emphatically.

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1 Review of Reviews Vol. 21:394

2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 p. 32

3 Review of Reviews 21:647

4 Lingley Since the Civil War p.407

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The Republican orators stressed the topic of imperialism. They also discussed the silver question; this soon showed them that the silver issue was of less importance than it had been four years before.

Many of the former Populists' voters went back to their old party in 1900 on order to take a stand on the subject of imperialism, so Mr. Bryan did not receive the support of the Populists as he had in the previous election. Mr. McKinley again won the election over Mr. Bryan.

The immense crowd that gathered at the capitol on Inauguration day was a testimony of the general support the people would give their president. Mr. McKinley began his second term under the happiest auspices. The Republican party was given the support of a prosperous and satisfied people.

During the campaign of 1900 the Republicans tested the feelings of the people toward the silver question, It had been a very important subject during the four years they had been in power, but there were too many silver sympathizers in Congress and the sentiment in favor of the free coinage of silver was too strong to allow the party to bring the issue to a vote. The great increase in the

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1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 P. 73  
2 Noyes Forty Years of American Finance p.261

World's production of gold had made gold more plentiful, so the margin between the value of gold and silver bullion had been decreased. <sup>1</sup> The prosperity the country was enjoying caused the people to forget the silver question, and leave the management of money questions to their officials. <sup>2</sup> After 1896 foreign exchange was in favor of the United States, so the gold reserve never fell below the \$100,000,000 mark that was the established minimum of the Treasury. The European countries had adopted the gold standard, so people dealing in foreign trade were anxious to have a gold standard established in the United States. <sup>3</sup> In 1900 the Gold Standard act was passed so the United States was put on a gold basis which strengthened her credit abroad, and satisfied financiers at home.

The money question was no longer discussed from a metallic basis, but an elastic currency and more credit were continual demands of the people, especially in the West, where great quantities of money were needed to develop the resources. During the harvest times money would be shipped to the West, but in order to get it, the farmers had to pay a premium in the form of a high interest. The money soon flowed back to the Eastern

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1 Noyes Forty Years of American Finance p. 254  
2 Holdsworth Money and Banking 66  
3 " " " " 34

cities to buy supplies,,so the West always felt a need of more money. The subject was settled by the passing of the Federal Reserve Banking Act in 1913.

New subjects in government came before the people, with the accession of Theodore Roosevelt <sup>1</sup> to the office of president of the United States, after the death of president Wm. McKinley. <sup>2</sup> President Roosevelt chose political issues which would make a wide appeal and which could be pressed quickly to a successful conclusion.

<sup>3</sup> In his message to Congress in 1901 he took up the subject of the relation of government and industry. The old populist demand for regulations of corporations had at last found a leader. Roosevelt believed in combinations, but thought they should be supervised and, within reasonable limits, controlled. President Roosevelt also began a campaign for the conservation of the National resources of the country. The people were satisfied with Roosevelt's policies, for they believed that at last a man was in the presidential office who was interested in the welfare of the masses, instead of Big Business, as other presidents had been accused of being.

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1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 p. 86  
2 Haworth The United States in Our Times 282  
3 Political Science Quarterly Vol. 17:351 .

When the time came for another presidential campaign, there was no doubt that Roosevelt would be the popular candidate of the Republican party.

A remarkable situation developed in the Democratic party.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bryan had twice been its candidate, and had been defeated, for he was the representative of an extreme radical policy. The conservatives demanded that the policies that had come into the Democratic platform by way of Populism be abandoned. The party leader Mr. Bryan, could no longer make his pet subject, the silver question, an issue, for it had been settled by the passage of the Gold Standard Act in 1900.

<sup>2</sup> The Populist party held its convention, but the delegates were very irregularly chosen, so were not representative of the party. The loyal members were very much opposed to an alliance with the Democratic party. The money question, always an important plank in the Populist platform, dealt entirely with the power of Congress alone to issue money and regulate its value. The reform planks were very ~~more~~ similar to the previous platforms.

<sup>3</sup> The results of the presidential election of 1904 showed President Roosevelt that he could carry out his program of government regulation and reform with the ir-

1 Review of Reviews Vol. 29:148  
2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2:119  
3 " " " " " " " " 2:141

resistible pressure of public opinion behind him.

<sup>1</sup>The people that had been discontented, especially in the Middle and Far West, saw that Roosevelt was their hope for champion, and gave him their instant and complete support. The people believed in him, and were glad to follow enthusiastically wherever he might lead them.

Other Republican leaders like LaFollette were demanding advance reforms in the state legislation, 'More power in the hands of the people' became the watchword of reformers. <sup>2</sup>Roosevelt always had a long list of reforms that he demanded. Congress to give immediate attention.

<sup>3</sup>He became famous for the numerous investigation committees that he set to work to learn the conditions in different industries, that laws might be passed that would be best for the majority of the People. Roosevelt's administration was a success because he kept his ear to the ground and listened for the demands of the masses, then introduced the measure without waiting to be forced to pass the required legislation.

The political campaign for 1908 began very early: President Roosevelt decided that his friend Wm.H. Taft, would be the best representative of the Republican party.

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1 Lingley Since the Civil War p. 471  
2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency V. 2 143  
3 Haworth The United States in Our Own Times 334

<sup>1</sup>  
The Democrats in their nominating convention, again gave the candidacy to their old leader, Wm/ J. Bryan.

<sup>2</sup>  
The Populist party held a convention in St. Louis Missouri. The delegates had been very irregularly chosen, so scarcely represented the feeling of the people of the nation in regard to the party. Some of the delegates, from Nebraska, were anxious to unite with the Democratic party, and again put their fate into the hands of Mr. Bryan, but the majority were opposed to the motion. The platform adopted again reaffirmed the declarations in regard to reform that had been stated in the convention in 1892. The leaders of the party remained true to populism; vowed that they could never again be drawn into fusion with another party.

Mr. Taft was elected, and all expected his term to be prosperous and successful, but in reality it was soon seen that his position was much more difficult than was popularly believed. <sup>3</sup> Within the Republican party there existed a progressive and conservative wing. The progressive upheld Roosevelt's policies, while the conservatives were bitterly opposed and were determined to put an end to them as soon as possible. President Taft hoped to steer a course which would enable him to obtain the support of both factions, but that proved impossible. He

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1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 p. 183  
2 " " " " " " " " 2 p. 154  
3 Haworth The U. S. In Our Own Times p. 352

soon showed that he was loyal to the conservatives of the Republican party, and <sup>1</sup> before a year had passed, it was clear that the party was facing a crisis. Demands were made for social and industrial reforms, and some even contended that the whole political system, even the Federal Constitution, needed overhauling. The critics said that the Constitution had been framed for a de-centralized and rural society, therefore it could not meet the needs of the complex and industrial society that had developed. The system of courts also received a share of criticism. They were accused of being too conservative, and too much in favor of the property class. Suggestions were made for improvements in the political conditions of the country. <sup>2</sup> Four devices were offered; namely: primary elections, the initiative, the referendum, and the recall.

All the demands for reforms helped to accentuate the differences between the conservative and progressive wings of the Republican party. <sup>3</sup> The people were anxious to have Roosevelt express his attitude toward the Taft administration, but he remained silent upon the subject of the breadth in the Republican party. It was noticed by leaders that his relations with the administration were slight, and that he advocated progressive measures.

The Congressional and state elections of 1910 attracted more than the usual attention. <sup>4</sup> LaFollette and Cummins

1	Haworth	The U. S. In <u>Our Own Times</u>	p. 355
2	Holcombe	State Government in the U.S.	pp. 130-34
3	Haworth	The U; S. in Our Own Times	p. 360
4	Baxon	The New Nation	329

were the avowed leaders of the progressive branch of the Republican party. They asked the country to believe that Taft had ceased to be progressive, and had become the ally of the stand-pat interests. The split in the Republican ranks enabled the Democrats to carry the country and obtain a large majority in the House of Representatives.

<sup>1</sup>  
During the final session of the sixty-first Congress, in January 1911, the National Progressive League was formed. Among its members and officers were nine senators, thirteen representatives, and five Western governors, all of whom were nominally Republicans. Its political program included the direct election of United States senators; popular primary elections in lieu of the caucus, direct election of delegates to national conventions, the initiative, referendum, and recall, and stringent laws against corrupt practices in elections. Most of the measures had been advocated by the Populist party previous to this time. The League made no secret of its opposition to Taft.

At the beginning of the year 1912 the situation in the Republican party seemed to be the worst. <sup>2</sup> Mr. La-

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1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 p. 233  
2 Review of Reviews Vol. 45:143

Follette declivered a series of speeches in which he advocated all the constitutional innovations which are distinctively known as "progressive" and assailed the president with virulence. By Jaunary, Mr. Roosevelt let it be known that he would not desert the progressive cause, and that he would be found fighting side by side with them to the finish.<sup>1</sup> On February 25, 1912, Mr. Roosevelt said, "I will accept the nomination, if it is tendered to me, and I will adhere to this decision until the convention has expressed its preference."

<sup>2</sup>  
The Republican convention was a scene of tumult; seats were contested, and many delegates refused to vote. Finally Wm.H. Taft was nominated for president.<sup>3</sup> The supporters of the progressive wing and their leader, Mr. Roosevelt, met and laid preliminary plans for the formation of a new party. A national nominating convention was called to meet in August. It was a foregone conclusion that Mr. Roosevelt would be nominated as president. The party demands were submitted to him for his approval before being read in the convention. The Platform that was adopted contained many of the principles and ideals of the Populists of previous years.

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- 1 Stanwood A History of the Presidency Vol. 2 p. 236  
2 Lingley Since the Civil War. p. 493  
3 Stanwood A History of the Presidency p. 285

Because of the split in the Republican party, every Democrat was confident of his party's success in the coming election. The party was better united than in the past, but in spite of this fact, there was a struggle between the conservative forces for Champ Clark and the Progressive for Woodrow Wilson.<sup>1</sup> The leaders of the party saw that progressive demands were the cause of the split in the Republican party, so they must select a progressive as their candidate if they would win the election. Mr. Bryan's influence caused the nomination of Woodrow Wilson.

Because of the three strong parties in the race, the campaign was of unusual interest. All the candidates made political speeches, and each advanced reasons more to the point why the others should not be elected, than why he himself should be.

<sup>2</sup> The results of the election had been generally foreseen, and the only occasion for surprise was the extent of the progressive inroad upon the Republican forces, and the insignificant electoral vote given to Taft. The political leaders of all the parties saw that in order to win the votes of the people they must pay attention to their demands. The Populists' demands for popular sovereignty, or the power of the people in government had been recognized by both the Democratic and Republican parties.

1 Review of Reviews Vol. 46:148

2 Stanwood A History of the Presidency V. 2 p. 304

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