

LIEBEL'S APPEAL TO DEMOCRACY

Will Unite the Party as National Committeeman.

Present State Organization Scathingly Arraigned for Incompetency and Inefficiency—Party Leaders and Rank and File Flocking to the Banner of the Erie Congressman—Will Carry the Fight All Over the State.

Philadelphia, May 3.—Congressman Michael Liebel, Jr., of Erie, whose candidacy for Democratic National Committeeman from Pennsylvania has been received everywhere throughout the state in the most friendly manner by the Democratic leaders and the rank and file as well, has succeeded in building up an organization which promises to sweep the state at the Democratic primary election on May 16. The Liebel Campaign Committee has opened headquarters in Pittsburgh to look after the western and northwestern counties particularly, while the Philadelphia headquarters, located in the Finance building, South Penn square, is making a most vigorous campaign in the middle west and in the eastern and northeastern parts of Pennsylvania.

The realization on the part of Democrats that National Committeeman A. Mitchell Palmer has lamentably failed as a leader has resulted in general support for Mr. Liebel, in the belief that he will organize the party, build it up and become the leader of a united and militant Democracy instead of only a faction thereof. The indictment brought against Mr. Palmer is that he has never striven to bring the contending elements together, but has been content to lead only one faction and that is the one that gave him his present position.

A severe arraignment of Mr. Palmer is found in the statement issued by Mr. Liebel, which reads as follows:

"My opponent, Mr. Palmer, seems to believe that he, and not the Democratic voters of the great state of Pennsylvania, is to determine who shall and who shall not be elected to office. And in persisting in this obsession he goes much further in his dictatorial attitude than was ever dreamed of in the history of Pennsylvania politics. Mr. Palmer says that, even should I be elected to membership in the Democratic National Committee, I will not be recognized.

Palmer Against Popular Rule.

"This statement alone, in my opinion, stamps Mr. Palmer as being totally unfit to represent the Democrats of Pennsylvania. When he says that the will of the Democratic majority of the state will be set aside by his mandate, he speaks as he feels, but he is wrong. Of course, Mr. Palmer believes that he is the Democratic party and naturally he is angry because there are some Democrats who believe in popular rule and who insist that the question of party leadership and party management should be left to the Democratic voters of the state to decide. If Mr. Palmer thinks that he is the owner of the party and the sole arbiter of its future, he is mistaken. He will find that on May 16 the Democrats of the state resent his bossism and will settle for all time the questions of party management by self-constituted bosses.

"It is not amiss to point out that Mr. Palmer, in his present attitude, repudiates every pledge and promise he made when he assumed active management of the party affairs. He rode into power on a popular wave that had for its object the obliteration of so-called bossism, and from the hustings he declared that henceforth the people must rule and that the affairs of the party would be left in the hands of the Democratic voters themselves."

Appeals Direct to Voters.

"His personally controlled state committee adopted a rule which made it mandatory, under the law, for candidates for the Democratic National Committee to go directly to the voters for indorsement. That is what I am doing; I am asking the Democratic voters of the state to elect me to the National Committee, so that they can be represented in party councils. But Mr. Palmer resents this; he declares that the voters of the state cannot be trusted to elect a member of the National Committee unless that member is himself. In effect, he says that the popular vote is a good thing if he is the candidate, but that it is wrong if he is to have opposition.

"The position that I have taken in this campaign is that the Democrats of the state should say who shall be the member of the Democratic National Committee and who shall be their choice for any other office that is to be voted for at the primaries. I contend that Mr. Palmer does not speak with authority when he says

that if I am elected I will not be recognized. I say that he has no right to say that the majority of the Democrats of the state, having registered their verdict, will be cast aside just because he says so. I believe that the Democrats of the state should be the only ones to say who shall be recognized, Mr. Palmer to the contrary notwithstanding.

Aims to Reunite Party.

"I have consented to be a candidate at the solicitation of many Democrats in every section of Pennsylvania for the purpose of uniting the Democracy and building it up in every county, so that we can make a hopeful fight for President Woodrow Wilson. I desire to restate, in part, my platform, as declared in my letter announcing my candidacy, as follows:

"If elected a member of the Democratic National Committee I shall recognize that I hold a trust for all of the party voters, and I shall hope to see disappear from our state politics the faction designations 'Reorganizers' and 'Old Guard,' and in their stead have the party known throughout all of its membership by the single honorable title, 'The Pennsylvania Democracy.' I shall solicit the votes of all who desire to bring about such a result."

The Liebel Campaign Committee has undertaken the great task of reaching every individual Democratic voter in Pennsylvania by a personal appeal through the mail, in which Mr. Palmer's failure is unmistakably proven and his total unfitness for the position is demonstrated by the committee's unanswerable charges.

Attention is called to the fact that when Mr. Palmer was a candidate for United States senator, two years ago, he received only 266,415 votes in the entire state, which was the smallest vote a Democratic candidate ever received in Pennsylvania, and which, in fact, is less than that polled by the Pennsylvania Democracy fifty years ago. At the same election, in his own congressional district, he received only 12,027 votes, while the Democratic candidate for congress in that district received 15,118 votes.

As proof of Palmer's growing weakness, attention is called to the fact that in the previous election Palmer polled for himself in his home district 18,201 votes.

Proof of Palmer's Weakness.

The appeal sent out by the Liebel Campaign Committee reads as follows:

"The present state organization, under the control of A. Mitchell Palmer, is woefully incompetent and inefficient. He promised at the time of his election four years ago to give to the nation an aggressive, vigorous fighting Democracy in Pennsylvania.

"Instead of keeping that promise, he and a few other men set up a personal machine which had for its purpose a position under the federal government for each of its members.

"Many of these men had been notorious party wreckers for years.

"Mr. Palmer at once became a boss, and the most arrogant and offensive one the Democracy of the state had ever known. He alienated and ignored hundreds of the best men of the party and drove them out of the organization.

"His personal friends, who constituted the so-called state organization, did not organize. They did nothing to unite the party or to harmonize its varied interests.

"Under his administration local party conditions have steadily grown worse: until in many counties there is also but a name no organization worthy the name.

"Palmer and his organization gave to President Wilson four years ago the smallest vote a Democratic candidate had received in Pennsylvania for years, although Taft and Roosevelt divided the Republican vote.

"Mr. Palmer has no elements of leadership in his make-up. He is not conciliatory. He is lacking in every essential that goes to make up the discreet, successful party leader.

"Hon. Michael Liebel, Jr., the Erie Congressman, who is a candidate against Mr. Palmer, is a man of far different mould. He is companionable and an aggressive and able organizer. Those who are for him now are for him because he will inspire a new life into our disrupted and disorganized party. His election to congress in the Republican district of Erie and Crawford counties, and his three times election as Mayor of Erie, demonstrates his standing and strength in the section of the state where he is best known.

"Mr. Liebel is a candidate in response to the appeal of hundreds of Democrats in all parts of the state, who are disgusted with the Palmer methods and who are seeking for new conditions and for a united Democracy.

"In announcing his candidacy, Mr. Liebel declared:

"If elected a member of the Democratic National Committee I shall recognize that I hold a trust for all of the party voters, and I shall hope to see disappear from our state politics the faction designations 'Reorganizers' and 'Old Guard,' and in their stead have the party known throughout all of its membership by the single honorable title, 'The Pennsylvania Democracy.' I shall solicit the votes of all who desire to bring about such a result."

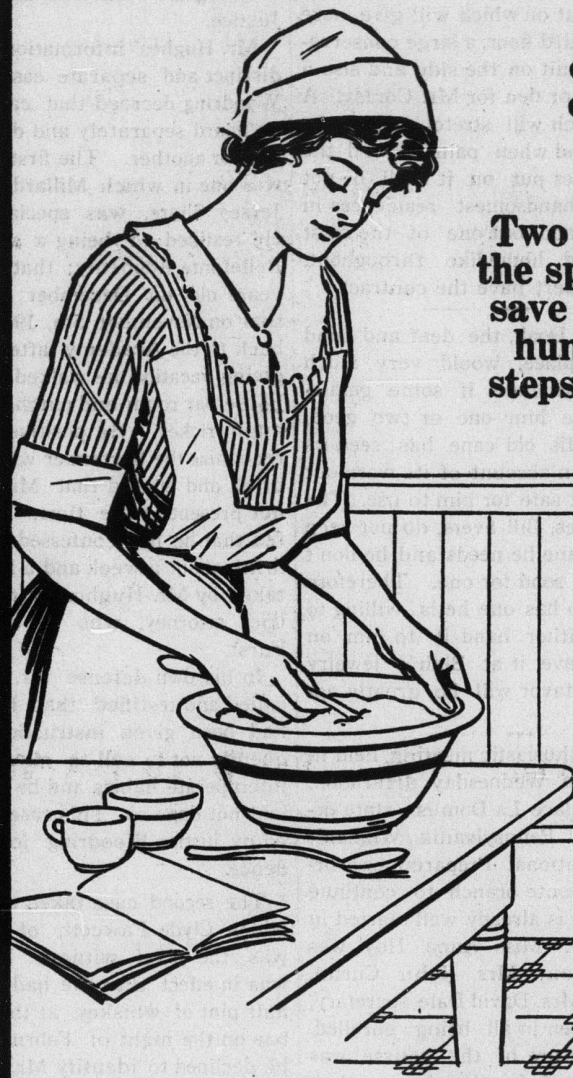
"Fellow-Democrats, this is an all-important matter. It concerns you. It concerns the party. It concerns the state.

"WALTER E. RITTER,
Chairman.
"JOHN J. CURLEY,
Secretary."

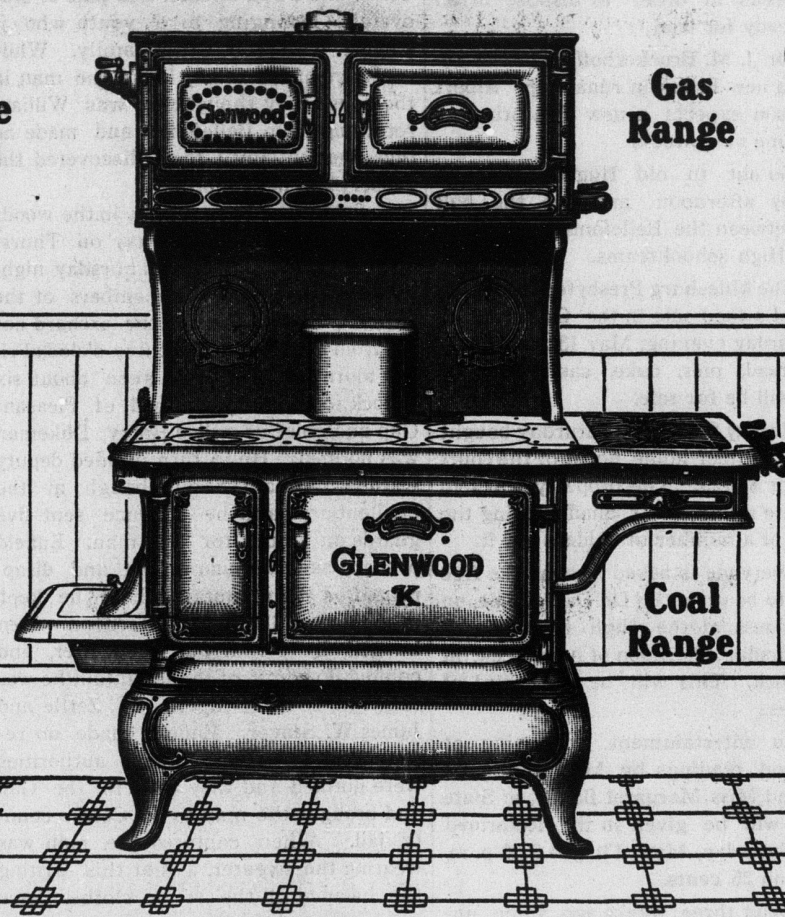
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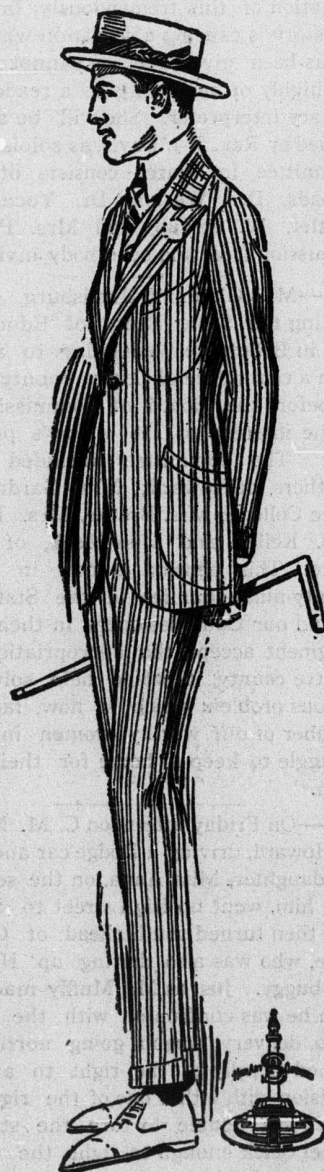
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