DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM

Houston, Texas—The text of the platform adopted by the Democratic national convention follows:

We, the Democratic party, in convention assembled, pause to pay our tribute of love and respect to the memory of him who in his life and in his official actions voiced the hopes and aspirations of all good men and women of every race and clime, the former President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson.

His spirit moves on and his example and deeds will exalt those who come after us as they have inspired us.

We reaffirm our devotion to the principles of democratic government formulated by Jefferson and enforced by a long and illustrious line of Democratic Presidents.

We hold that government must function, not to centralize our wealth, but to preserve equal opportunity so that all may share in our priceless resources, and not confine prosperity to a favored few. We therefore pledge the Democratic party to encourage business, small and great alike, to conserve human happiness and liberty, to break the shackles of monopoly and free business of the nation, to respond to popular will.

The function of a national platform is to declare general principles and party policies. We do not, therefore, assume to bind our party respecting local issues or details of legislation.

We therefore declare the policy of the Democratic party with regard to the following dominant issues:

States' Rights.

We demand that the constitutional rights and powers of the states shall be preserved in their full vigor and virtue. These constitute a bulwark against centralization and the destructive tendencies of the Republican party.

We oppose bureaucracy and the multiplication of offices and office holders.

We demand a revival of the spirit of local self government without which free institutions cannot be preserved.

G. O. P. Corruption.

Unblushingly the Republican party offers as its record: agriculture prostrate, industry depressed, American shipping destroyed, workmen without employment, everywhere disgust and suspicion, and corruption unpunished and unafraid.

Never in the entire history of the country has there occurred in any given period of time or, indeed, in all times put together, such a spectacle of sordid corruption and unabashed rascality as that which has characterized the administration of federal affairs under eight blighting years of Republican rule.

Not the revels of reconstruction, nor all the compounded frauds succeeding that evil era, have approached in sheer audacity, the shocking thieveries and startling depravities of officials high and low in the public service in Washington.

From cabinet ministers, with their treasonable crimes, to the cheap vendors of official patronage; from the purchases of seats in the United States senate to the vulgar grafter upon alien trust funds, and upon the hospital resources of the disabled veterans of the World war; from the givers and receivers of stolen funds for Republican campaign purposes to the public men who sat by silently consenting and never revealing a fact or uttering a word in condemnation, the whole official organization under Republican rule has become saturated with dishonesty, defiant of public opinion, and actuated only by a partisan desire to perpetuate its control of the government.

As in the time of Samuel J. Tilden, from whom the Presidency was stolen, the watchword of the day should be:

"Turn the rascals out." This is the appeal of the Democratic party to the people of the country. To this fixed purpose should be devoted every effort and applied every resource of the party; to this end every minor difference or nonessential issue should be put aside and a determined and united effort made to rescue the government from those who have betrayed their trust by disgracing it.

Economy.

The Democratic party stands for efficiency and economy in the administration of public affairs and we pledge:

(A)—Businesslike reorganization of all the departments of the government.

(B)—Elimination of duplication, waste and overlapping.

(C)—Substitution of modern businesslike methods for existing obsolete and antiquated conditions.

No economy resulted from the Republican party rule. The savings they claim take no account of the elimination of expenditures following the end of the World war, the large sums realized from the sale of war materials, nor its failure to supply sufficient funds for the efficient conduct of many important governmental activities.

Finance, Taxation.

(A) The federal reserve system created and inaugurated under Democratic auspices is the greatest legislative contribution to constructive business ever adopted. The administration of the system for the advantage of stock market speculators should cease. It must be administered for the benefit of farmers, wage earners, merchants, manufacturers, and others engaged in constructive business.

(B) The taxing function of governments, free of despotism, has for centuries been regarded as the power above all others which requires vigilant scrutiny to the end that it be not exercised for purposes of favor or oppression.

Three times since the World war the Democrats in congress have favored a reduction of the tax burdens of the people in face of stubborn opposition from a Republican administration; and each time these reductions largely have been made for the relief of those least able to endure the exactions of a Republican fiscal policy.

The tax bill of the session recently ended was delayed by Republican tactics and juggled by partisan considerations so as to make impossible a full measure of relief to the greater body of taxpayers. The moderate reductions afforded were grudgingly conceded and the whole proceeding in congress, dictated as far as possible from the White House and the treasury, denoted the proverbial desire of the Republican party always to discriminate against the masses in favor of privileged classes.

The Democratic party avows its belief in the fiscal policy inaugurated by the last Democratic administration, which has provided a sinking fund sufficient to extinguish the nation's indebtedness within a reasonable period of time, without harassing the present and next succeeding generations with tax burdens which, if not unendurable, do in fact check initiative in enterprise and progress in business.

Taxes levied beyond the actual requirements of the legally established sinking fund are but an added burden upon the American people, and the surplus thus accumulated in the federal treasury is an incentive to the increasingly extravagant expenditures which have characterized Republican administrations. We therefore favor a further reduction of the internal taxes of the people.

Tariff.

The Democratic tariff legislation will be based on the following policies:

1. The maintenance of legitimate business and a high standard of wages for American labor.

2. Increasing the purchasing power of wages and income by the reduction of those monopolistic and extortionate tariff rates bestowed in payment of political debts.

3 Abolition of log rolling and restoration of the Wilson conception of a fact finding tariff commission, quasi-judicial and free from the executive domination which has destroyed the usefulness of the present commission.

4. Duties that will permit effective competition, insure against monopoly and at the same time produce a fair revenue for the support of government. Actual difference between the cost of production at home and abroad, with adequate safeguard for the wage of the American laborer, must be the extreme measure of every tariff rate.

5. Safeguarding the public against monopoly created by special tariff favors.

6. Equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens of the tariff among all.

Wage earner, farmer, stockman, producer, and legitimate business in general have everything to gain from a Democratic tariff based on justice to all.

Grover Cleveland made the extension of the merit system a tenet of our political faith. We shall preserve and maintain the civil service.

Agriculture.

Deception upon the farmer and stock raiser has been practiced by the Republican party through false and delusive promises for more than fifty years. Specially favored industries have been artificially aided by Republican legislation. Comparatively little has been done for agriculture and stock raising upon which national prosperity rests. Unsympathetic inaction with regard to this problem must cease. Virulent hostility of the Republican administration to the advocates of farm relief, and denial of the right of farm organizations to lead in the development of farm policy, must yield to Democratic sympathy and friendliness.

Four years ago, the Republican party, forced to acknowledge the critical situation, pledged itself to take all steps necessary to bring back a balanced condition between agriculture and other industries and labor. Today it faces the country not only with that pledge unredeemed, but broken by the acts of a Republican President who is primarily responsible for the failure to offer a constructive program to restore equality to agriculture.

While he had no constructive and adequate program to offer in its stead, he has twice vetoed farm relief legislation and has sought to justify his disapproval of agricultural legislation partly on grounds wholly inconsistent with his acts making industrial monopolies the beneficiaries of government favor; and in indorsing the agricultural policy of the present administration the Republican party in its recent convention served notice upon the farmer that the so-called protective system is not meant for him; that while it offers protection to the privileged few, it promises continued world prices to the producers of the chief cash crops of agriculture.

We condemn the policy of the Republican party, which promises relief to agriculture only through a reduction of American farm production to the needs of the domestic market. Such a program means the continued deflation of agriculture, the forcing of additional millions from the farms and the perpetuation of agricultural distress for years to come, with continued bad effects on business and labor throughout the United States.

The Democratic party recognizes that the problems of production differ as between agriculture and industry. Industrial production is largely under human control, while agricultural production because of lack of co-ordination, making the 6,500,000 individual farm units, and because of the influence of weather, pests and other causes, is largely beyond human control. The result is that a large crop frequently is produced on a small acreage and a small crop on a large acreage; and measured in money value it frequently happens that a large crop brings less than a small crop.

Producers of crops whose total volume exceeds the needs of the domestic market must continue at a disadvantage until the government shall intervene as seriously and as effectively in behalf of the farmer as it has intervened in behalf of labor and industry. There is a need of supplemental legislation for the control and orderly handling of agricultural surpluses, in order that the price of the surplus may not determine the price of the whole crop. Labor has benefited by collective bargaining and some industries by tariff. Agriculture must be as effectively aided.

Pledges Adequate Laws.

The Democratic party, in its 1924 platform, pledged its support to such legislation. It now reaffirms that stand and pledges the united efforts of the legislative and executive branches of government, as far as may be controlled by the party, to the immediate enactment of such legislation, and to such other steps as are necessary to place and maintain the purchasing power of farm products and the complete economic quality of agriculture.

The Democratic party has always stood against special privilege and for common equality under the law. It is a fundamental principle of the party that such tariffs as are levied must not discriminate against any industry, class or section. Therefore, we pledge that in its tariff policy the Democratic party will insist upon equality of treatment between agriculture and other industries.

Farm relief must rest on the basis of an economic equality of agriculture with other industries. To give this equality a remedy must be found which will include among other things:

(A) Credit aid by loans to co-operatives on at least as favorable a basis as the government aid to the merchant marine.

(B) Creation of a federal farm board to assist the farmer and stock raiser in the marketing of their products as the federal reserve board has done for the banker and business man.

When our archaic banking and currency system was revised after its record of disaster and panic under Republican administrations, it was a Democratic congress in the administration of a Democratic President that accomplished its stabilization through the federal reserve act creating the federal reserve board, with powers adequate to its purpose. Now in the hour of agriculture's need the Democratic party pledges the establishment of a new agricultural policy fitted to present conditions, under the direction of a farm board vested with all the powers necessary to accomplish for agriculture what the federal reserve board has been able to accomplish for finance. In full recognition of the fact that the banks of the country, through voluntary co-operation, were never able to stabilize the financial system of the country until government powers were invoked to help them.

(C) Reduction through proper government agencies of the spread between what the farmer and stock raiser gets and what the ultimate consumer pays with consequent benefits to both.

(D) Consideration of the condition of agriculture in the formulation of government financial and tax measures.

Will Aid Co-Ops.

We pledge the party to foster and develop co-operative marketing associations through appropriate government aid.

We recognize that experience has demonstrated that members of such associations alone cannot successfully assume the full responsibility for a program that benefits all producers alike. We pledge the party to an earnest endeavor to solve this problem of the distribution of the cost of dealing with crop surpluses over the marketed units of the crop whose producers are benefited by such assistance. The solution of this problem would avoid government subsidy to which the Democratic party has always been opposed. The solution of this problem will be a prime and immediate concern of a Democratic administration.

We direct attention to the fact that it was a Democratic congress, in the administration of a Democratic President, which established the federal loan system and laid the foundation for the entire rural credits structure, which has aided agriculture to sustain in part the shock of the policies of two Republican administrations, and we promise thoroughgoing administration of our rural credits laws, so that the farmers in all sections may secure the maximum benefits intended under these acts.

Mining.

Mining in one of the basic industries of this country. We produce more coal, iron, and copper than any other country. The value of our mineral production is second only to agriculture. Mining has suffered like agriculture and from similar causes. It is the duty of our government to foster this industry and to remove the restrictions that destroy its prosperity.

Foreign Policy.

The Republican administration has no foreign policy; it has drifted without plan. This great nation cannot afford to play a minor role in world politics. It must have a sound and positive foreign policy, not a negative one. We declare for a constructive foreign policy based on these principles:

(a) Outlawry of war and an abhorrence of militarism, conquest, and imperialism.

(b) Freedom from entangling political alliances with foreign nations.

(c) Protection of American lives and rights.

(d) Noninterference with the elections or other internal political affairs of any foreign nation. This principle of noninterference extends to Mexico, Nicaragua, and all other Latin-American nations. Interference in the purely internal affairs of Latin-American countries must cease.

(e) Rescue of our country from its present impaired world standing and restoration to its former position as a leader in the movement for international arbitration, conference, and limitation of armament by international agreement.

(f) International agreements for reduction of all armaments, and the end of competitive war preparations, and, in the meantime the maintenance of an army and navy adequate for national defense.

(g) Full, free, and open co-operation with all other nations for the promotion of peace and justice throughout the world.

(h) In our foreign relations this country should stand as a unit, and to be successful foreign policies must have the approval and the support of the American people.

(i) Abolition of the practice of the President of entering into and carrying out agreements with a foreign government, either de facto or de jure, for the protection of such government against revolution or foreign attack, or for the supervision of its internal affairs, when such agreements have not been advised and consented to by the senate as provided in the Constitution of the United States, and we condemn the administration for carrying out such an unratified agreement that requires us to use our armed forces in Nicaragua.

(j) Recognition that the Monroe Doctrine is a cardinal principle of this government promulgated for the protection of ourselves and our Latin-American neighbors. We shall seek their friendly co-operation in the maintenance of this doctrine.

(k) We condemn the Republican administration for lack of statesmanship and efficiency in negotiating the 1921 treaty for the limitation of armaments, which limited only the construction of battleships and ships of over 10,000 tons. Merely a gesture towards peace, it accomplished no limitation of armaments, because it simply resulted in the destruction of our battleships and the blue prints of battleships of other nations; it placed no limitation upon construction of aircraft, submarines, cruisers, warships under ten thousand tons, poisonous gases, or other weapons of destruction. No agreement was ratified with regard to submarines and poisonous gases. The attempt of the President to remedy the failure of 1921 by the Geneva conference of 1928 was characterized by the same lack of statesmanship and efficiency and resulted in entire failure.

In consequence the race between nations in the building of unlimited weapons of destruction still goes on and the peoples of the world still are threatened with war and burdened with taxation for additional armament.

Water Power

The federal government and state government respectively now have absolute and exclusive sovereignty and control over enormous water powers, which constitute one of the greatest assets of the nation. This sovereign title and control must be preserved respectively, in the state and federal governments, to the end that the people may be protected against exploitation of this great resource and that water powers may be exepeditiously developed under such regulations as will insure to the people reasonable rates and equitable distribution.

We favor and will promote deep waterways and removal of discrimination against water transportation. Flood control and the lowering of flood levels are essential to the safety of life and property, and the productivity of our lands, the navigability of our streams the reclaiming of our wet and overflowed lands.

We favor expeditious construction of flood relief work on the Mississippi and Colorado rivers and such reclamation and irrigation projects upon the Colorado river as may be found feasible.

We favor the strict enforcement of the federal water power act, a Democratic act, and insist that the public interest in water power sites, ignored by two Republican administrations, be protected.

Conservation.

We shall conserve the natural resources of our country for the benefit of the people and to protect them against waste and monopolization. Our disappearing resources of timber call for a national policy of reforestation. The federal government should improve and develop its public lands so that they may go into private ownership and become subjected to taxation for the support of the states wherein they exist.

The Democratic administration will actively, efficiently and economically carry on reclamation projects and make equitable adjustments with the homestead entrymen for the mistakes the government has made, and extend all practical aid to refinance reclamation and drainage projects.

Transportation.

Efficient and economical transportation is essential to the prosperity of every industry. Cost of transportation controls the income of every human being and materially affects the cost of living. We must, therefore, promote every form of transportation in a state of highest efficiency.

Recognizing the prime importance of air transportation, we shall encourage its development by every possible means. Improved roads are of vital importance not only to commerce and industry but also to agriculture and rural life. The federal government should construct and maintain at its own expense roads upon its public lands.

We reaffirm our approval of the federal roads law, enacted by a Democratic administration. Common carriers, whether by land, water or rail, must be protected in an equal opportunity to compete so that governmental regulations against exorbitant rates and inefficiency will be aided by competition.

Labor.

(a) We favor the principle of collective bargaining and the Democratic principle that organized labor should choose its own representatives without coercion or interference.

(b) Labor is not a commodity. Human rights must be safeguarded. Labor should be exempt from the operation of anti-trust laws.

(c) We recognize that legislative and other investigations have shown the existence of grave abuse in the issuance of injunctions in labor disputes. No injunctions should be granted in labor disputes except upon proof of threatened irreparable injury and after notice and hearing, and the injunction should be confined to those acts which directly threaten irreparable injury.

Unemployment.

Unemployment is at present widespread, and increasing. Unemployment is almost as destructive to the happiness, comfort, and well being of human beings as war. We expend vast sums of money to protect our people against the evils of war but no government program is anticipated to prevent the awful suffering and economic losses of unemployment.

We favor the adoption by the government, after a study of this subject, of a scientific plan whereby during periods of unemployment appropriations shall be made available for the construction of necessary public works and the lessening, as far as consistent with public interests, of government construction work when labor is generally and satisfactorily employed in private enterprise.

Study should also be made of modern methods of industry and a constructive solution found to absorb and utilize the surplus human labor released by the increasing use of machinery.

Federal Employees.

We favor legislation making fair and liberal compensation to government employees who are injured in accident or by occupational disease and to the dependents of such workers as may die as a result thereof.

Federal employees should receive a living wage based upon American standards of decent living. Present wages are in many instances far below that standard. We favor a fair and liberal retirement law for government employees in the classified service.

Veterans.

Through Democratic votes, and in spite of two Republican Presidents' opposition, the congress has maintained America's traditional policy to generously care for the veterans of the World war. In extending them free hospitalization, a statutory award for tuberculosis, a program of progressive hospital construction, and provisions for compensation for the disabled, the widows and orphans, America has surpassed the record of any nation in the history of the world. We pledge the veterans that monetary benefits heretofore accorded by the Wilson administration and the votes of Democratic members of congress shall not be withdrawn, that these will be added to more in accordance with veterans' and their dependents' actual needs, generous appropriations, honest management, the removal of administration delays, and sympathetic assistance of the veterans of all wars is what the Democratic party demands and promises.

Women, Children.

We declare for equality of women with men in all political and governmental matters.

Children are the chief asset of the nation. Therefore, their protection through infancy and childhood against exploitation is an important national duty.

We favor an equal wage for equal service, and likewise favor adequate appropriations for the women's and children's bureau.

Immigration.

Laws which limit immigration must be preserved in full force and effect, but the provisions contained in these laws that separate husbands from wives and parents from infant children are inhuman and not essential to the purpose of the law.

Radio.

Government supervision must secure to all the people the advantage of radio communication and likewise guarantee the right of free speech. Official control in contravention of this guarantee should not be tolerated. Government control must prevent monopolistic use of radio communication and guarantee equitable distribution and enjoyment thereof.

Coal.

Bituminous coal is not only the common base of manufacture, but is a vital agency in our interstate transportation. The demoralization of this industry, its labor conflicts and distress, its waste of a national resource and disordered public service, demand constructive legislation that will allow capital and labor a fair share of prosperity with adequate protection to the consuming public.

Law Enforcement.

The Republican party, for eight years in complete control of the government at Washington, presents the remarkable spectacle of feeling compelled in its national platform to promise obedience to a provision of the federal Constitution which it has flagrantly disregarded and to apologize to the country for its failure to enforce laws enacted by the congress of the United States. Speaking for the national Democracy, this convention pledges the party and its nominees to an honest effort to enforce the Eighteenth amendment and all other provisions of the federal Constitution and all laws enacted pursuant thereto.

Campaign Costs.

We condemn the improper and excessive use of money in elections as a danger threatening the very existence of democratic institutions. We favor publicity in all matters affecting campaign contributions and expenditures. We shall, beginning not later than August 1, 1928, and every thirty days thereafter, the last publication and filing being not later than five days before the election, publish in the press and file with the appropriate committees of the house and senate a complete account of all contributions, the names of the contributors, the amounts expended, and the purposes for public inspection the books and records relating to such matters. In the event that any financial obligations are contracted and not paid, our national committee will similarly report and publish at least five days before the election all details respecting such obligations.

We agree to keep and maintain a permanent record of all campaign contributions and expenditures, and to insist that contributions by the citizens of one state to the campaign committees of other states shall have immediate publicity.

Recognizing the importance of the publicity of congress from participating in the sessions of congress by fixing the date for convening the congress immediately after the biennial national election.

Merchant Marine.

We reaffirm our support of an efficient, dependable American merchant marine for the carriage of the greater portion of our commerce and for the national defense.

We favor the transfer of these lines gradually to the local private American companies when such companies can show their ability to take over and permanently maintain the lines. Lines that cannot now be transferred to private enterprise should continue to be operated as at present and should be kept in an efficient state by remodeling of some vessels and replacement of others.

We are unalterably opposed to a monopoly in American shipping and are opposed to the operation of any of our service in a manner that would retard the development of any ports or sections of our country.

We oppose such sacrifices and favoritism as exhibited in the past in the matter of alleged sales, and insist that the primary purpose of the legislation upon this subject be the establishment and maintenance of an adequate American merchant marine.

Favors Help for Armenia.

We favor the most earnest efforts on the part of the United States to obtain the fulfillment of the promises and engagements made during and following the World war by the United States and the allied powers to Armenia and her people.

Federal Aid for Education.

We believe with Jefferson and other founders of the republic that ignorance is the enemy of freedom and that each state, being responsible for the intellectual and moral qualifications of its citizens and for the expenditure of the monies collected by taxation for the support of its schools, shall use its sovereign right in all matters pertaining to education.

Monopolies.

During the last seven years, under Republican rule, the anti-trust laws have been thwarted, ignored, and violated so that the country is rapidly becoming controlled by trusts and sinister monopolies formed for the purpose of wringing from the necessaries of life an unrighteous profit.

We demand the strict enforcement of the anti-trust laws and the enactment of other laws, if necessary, to control this great menace to trade and commerce, and thus to preserve the right of the small merchant and manufacturer to earn a legitimate profit from his business.

Honest business, no matter its size, need have no fears of a Democratic administration. The Democratic party ever will oppose illegitimate and dishonest business. It will foster, promote, and encourage all legitimate business enterprises.

Canal Zone Labor.

We favor the employment of American citizens in the operation and maintenance of the Panama canal in all positions above the grade of messenger and favor as liberal wages and conditions of employment as prevailed under previous Democratic administrations.

Territories.

We favor the development of Alaska and Hawaii in the traditional way, through self government. We favor the appointment of only bona fide residents to office in the territories. We favor the extension and improvement of the mail, air mail, telegraph and radio, agricultural experimenting, highway construction and other necessary federal activities in the territories.

The Filipino people have succeeded in maintaining a stable government and have thus fulfilled the only condition laid down by the congress. We declare that it is now our liberty and our duty to keep our promise to these people by granting them immediately the independence which they so honorably covet.

We favor granting to Porto Rico such territorial form of government as would meet the present conditions of the island.

Public Health.

The Democratic party recognizes that not only productive wealth of the nation but its contentment and happiness depends upon the health of its citizens. It therefore pledges itself to enlarge the existing bureau of public health and to do all things possible to stamp out communicable and contagious diseases, and to ascertain preventable means and remedies for these diseases, such as cancer, infantile paralysis and others which heretofore have largely defied the skill of physicians.

Indorse Flood Control.

Being deeply impressed by the terrible disasters from floods in the Mississippi valley during 1927, we heartily indorse the flood control act of last May, which recognizes that the flood water of the Mississippi river and its tributaries constitutes a national problem of the gravest character and makes provision for their speedy and effective control. This measure is a continuation and expansion of the policy established by a Democratic congress in 1917 in the act of that year for controlling floods on the Mississippi and Sacramento rivers. It is a great piece of constructive legislation and we pledge our party to its vigorous and early enforcement.

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