

Goldboro, N.C. Aug. 7/91

Col. Elias Carr,

Pres't N.C. Farmers State Alliance

Old Sparta, N.C.

Dear Sir & Bro:- I am as you know a member of the Alliance, and have been ever since its organization in this county. I believed there was good in and necessity for ~~the~~ the organization of and cooperation among farmers, and the purposes of the alliance as set forth in its declaration of principles and constitution seemed to be what was and I joined the

most heartily endorsing its prin-  
ciples and purposes as I under-  
stood them. From the beginning  
I have seen the need of con-  
servatism, and have done what  
I could to prevent the pre-  
valence of extreme views ~~and~~  
the ascendancy of rash leadership,  
and permit me to say that  
it was this view that made  
me vote for and rejoice in  
your election as president.  
I did not expect that all that  
the Alliance might do would  
meet my approval, because  
I know that where a large  
number of persons are as-  
sociated ~~together~~ for a common  
purpose there must be  
mutual concession  
to success and harm

although I have not always  
been able to ~~endorse~~ endorse all  
the methods and ~~demands~~ <sup>measures</sup> of  
the alliance I have felt it to  
be my duty, to acquiesce in  
silence <sup>in</sup> to the expressed will  
of the majority, even where  
I could not approve. But  
to this rule of conduct I have  
felt that there was an exception  
where any question affecting  
my political or religious views  
~~were concerned~~ arose, because  
the free and untrammelled  
exercise of these were left  
me by the terms of my  
obligation taken as a member.  
Therefore I have always felt  
that upon any ~~political or~~  
~~religious question~~ if such ~~other~~  
question I was in

manner bound to yield to  
the action of the majority.  
Secure in this view of the force  
of my obligation and duty I  
have, while differing in ~~just~~  
~~sent~~ opinion with the ma-  
jority upon certain methods  
and measures kept my place  
in the order, believing I did  
no wrong. The construction  
of <sup>late</sup> put upon the duty of mem-  
bers by the National Organ  
and the National President  
of the order are against this  
view, and as I understand  
their declarations they denounce  
as a traitor and unworthy of  
a place in the order every  
member who does not give  
his individual opinion to  
the decision of the majority.

questions even affecting his political views. Take for instance the sub-treasury plan. While it is a financial and economic question, it is certainly also a political one.

Certainly upon that and all other questions every member ought to yield due deference to the judgment of the majority and to acquiesce at least if he cannot heartily support their expressed will, unless in his conscience he is not satisfied that it is right, but if not so satisfied he ought not to be compelled to violate his conscience or have the alternative of being stigmatized as a traitor. Why is the purpose of the

as gathered from its declaration of  
principles is that it intends to  
bring men together and by inter-  
change of views and discussion  
upon questions affecting their in-  
terest with all the light they  
can get, to bring them by this  
process of education to an agree-  
ment in views, and thereby  
to cooperation in action. Certain-  
ly this must be the purpose  
as to those matters reserved  
to the individual member by  
his obligation, any attempt  
to coerce the minority upon  
these questions will it seems  
to me certainly destroy har-  
mony if it do not ~~for~~ create  
a serious breach in the ranks  
the order. Now, as to the  
Treasurer, plan: I have

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give it my hearty support.  
I have committed myself  
to it more than once, and yet  
the more I reflect upon it the  
less satisfied I am that it is  
safe or right. And my con-  
science is not satisfied to  
make it an ultimatum for  
political action. It is new  
and strange to the school of  
politics to which I have al-  
ways (simply as a citizen  
feeling the responsibility of  
his citizenship) belonged. I  
doubt not that it is as con-  
stitutional as much other  
legislation that has been done,  
(but which was done without  
my approval) ~~it~~ but it  
takes some fine special phre-  
nology that it is not clo-

lotion (which has been the curse  
of our country, and which threatens  
to be its ruin.) I do not pretend  
to know what its <sup>full</sup> effect would  
be, but I cannot be satisfied  
that it would be wise or safe  
to make this new departure  
in opening up this vast new  
field of government influence  
and patronage. I believe we have  
gone too far in that direction  
now. We are getting to be govern-  
ed over much, and I want  
to see the hand of government  
taken off the people and their  
concerns whenever possible  
and not reaching out con-  
stantly in new directions.  
I believe there is need for  
financial ~~reform~~ <sup>reform</sup>  
in a greater volume



but I believe it can be had  
in a ~~softer~~ softer and a less cum-  
bersome way. I am thus out  
of line with <sup>the</sup> expressed will  
of the order upon this meas-  
ure. I desire to say however,  
that while my judgment is  
against the plan, I have less  
objection to yielding to the  
judgment of the majority, and  
giving it a trial if we could  
than I have to the methods of  
the order for putting that and  
other political measures into  
effect. These methods are de-  
structive of the political freedom  
of the individual member, and  
compel him to do whatever the  
majority says shall be done on  
any question, regardless of his  
convictions, the ven-

denounced <sup>by our press</sup> those who yield  
obedience to the will of their  
Party. I do not believe any  
one class should be bound to-  
gether by a system which  
controls the political action  
of its members. I believe  
it is dangerous to our insti-  
tutions, which I believe the  
masses of the order are striving  
to preserve. Republican govern-  
ment cannot rest secure-  
ly on such a ~~basis~~ founda-  
tion. It is based on individ-  
ual freedom, and responsibili-  
ty, and ~~no~~ citizen has a  
right to surrender control of  
his political individuality to any  
organization, as our obligation  
wisely recognizes. With  
views, ~~seemingly~~ at

with the declared will and pur-  
poses of the order, <sup>of late,</sup> honestly and  
conscientiously entertained, I have  
for some little time past  
not felt very comfortable  
in my relations as a mem-  
ber. Not to my own conscience  
has there been any trouble how-  
ever, for I am satisfied then  
that I have a right to ~~my~~ re-  
tain my membership. But  
I do not wish to be in the  
least guilty, of <sup>the least</sup> ~~any~~ improprie-  
ty. I am certainly not consci-  
ously a traitor, nor do I  
desire to ~~occupy~~ any relation  
that could subject me to sus-  
picion. I had therefore re-  
luctantly concluded that I  
must in justice to my self  
the construction of

given by President Polk and  
the Editor of the Economist - and  
accepted by all the Alliance  
papers I read, give up my  
membership, and I was up  
the point of doing so, when the  
thought occurred to me to write  
a frank statement to you and  
get your views to guide  
me. I expected to see you at  
the meeting at Goldsboro,  
but I had down a lot of  
oats which I could not get  
taken up without staying by  
them, and hence could not get  
to the meeting, and I have been  
so busy that I could not  
write as fully as I wanted  
to write now. If it is proper  
for you to do so I would  
to know, in confidence

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it, for my personal guidance  
your opinion and advice upon  
my case. If the construction of  
referred to is correct, out of  
binding force of course I have  
nothing to do but withdraw. Is  
it correct, or is it of binding  
force under President Polk's  
proclamation. I have taken the  
liberty to write you thus be-  
cause of my confidence in  
your integrity and judgment.  
Would it be amiss for the  
State Alliance to pass upon  
the question involved and settle  
the question officially so far  
as this State is concerned?

Fraternally and Truly, Yours  
J. W. Bryan