



L. L. POLK,

President National Farmers Alliance and Industrial Union,

ATLANTIC BUILDING,

F STREET NORTHWEST,

Washington, D. C., March 24, 1892.

Mr. Elias Carr,

Old Sparta, N.C.

My Dear Sir & Bro:--

You ask why tariff was left out of the St. Louis platform. It was deemed essential that the platform should be as brief as possible, to embrace the three great questions of land, transportation and money. Everybody has come to understand that the two parties have been making a sham battle on the question of tariff. Both admit that the Government must have sufficient revenue to run, and that it must come through the tariff. The real and only fight between them, then, is not as to the principle involved, but as to who can gather the biggest steal from the tariff schedule. No one principle of the reform movement is better understood than that we are in favor of removing the tariff from the necessities of life and increasing it upon luxuries, supplemented by a graduated tax on incomes. This being understood, it was regarded as not necessary to declare it in the platform just as we omitted the election of United States Senators by the people, the limiting of the presidential term and declaring for economy in Government administration, etc. It was thought wise not to obscure the great financial question by surrounding it by a multiplicity of issues, on which our position was so well and thoroughly understood throughout the country. This, however, may be all changed at the convention at Omaha.

As to the ownership of railroads and telegraphs, it is the identical position we took in St. Louis in 1889, and upon which we fought the campaign of 1890. Almost every sub-alliance in the United States endorsed, unanimously, that position. And it was believed, (and I think, justly so) that a straightout declaration in favor of government ownership would be much stronger before the people of the country than a vague and indefinite expression as to government control, for, after all, everybody knows that control means nothing, and that its discussion would have to be abandoned in favor of government ownership. I favor adding to that transportation plank, these words: "Under such restrictions and limitations as will prevent the exercise of undue or dangerous powers by the Executive powers of the Government". Then I would add this: "To favor an amendment to the Constitution, limiting the office of president to one term or making him ineligible to succeed himself within four years

SECOND DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

Platform adopted by the Confederated Industrial Organizations at St. Louis, Mo., February 22-24, 1892.

PREAMBLE.

This, the first great labor conference of the United States and of the world, representing all divisions of urban and rural organized industry, assembled in national congress, invoking upon its action the blessing and protection of Almighty God, puts forth to and for the producers of the nation this declaration of union and independence. 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. Many of the States have been compelled to isolate the voters at the polling places in order to prevent universal intimidation or bribery. The newspapers are subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, our homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. The urban workmen are denied the right of organization for self-protection; imported pauperized labor beats down their wages; a hired standing army, unrecognized by our laws, is established to shoot them down; and they are rapidly degenerating to European conditions.

The fruits of the toil of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes, unprecedented in the history of the world, while their possessors despise the republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of governmental injustice breed the two great classes—paupers and millionaires. The national power to create money is appropriated to enrich bondholders; 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 is taking possession of the world. If not met and overthrown at once it forbodes terrible social convulsions, the destruction of civilization, or the establishment of an absolute despotism.

In this crisis of human affairs the intelligent working people and producers

of the United States have come together in the name of peace, order, and society to defend liberty, prosperity and justice.

We declare our union and independence. We assert our purpose to support the political organization which represents our principles.

We charge that the controlling influence dominating the old political parties have allowed the existing dreadful conditions to develop without serious effort to restrain or prevent them. 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 corporations, national banks, rings, trusts, "watered stock," the demonization of silver, and the oppression of usurers, may all be lost sight of. They propose to sacrifice our homes and children upon the altar of mammon; to destroy the hopes of the multitude in order to secure corruption funds from the great lords of plunder.

We assert that a political organization, representing the political principles herein stated, is necessary to redress the grievances of which we complain.

Assembled on the anniversary of the birth of the illustrious man who led the first great revolution on this continent against oppression, filled with the sentiments which actuated that grand generation, we seek to restore the government of the republic to the hands of the "plain people," with whom it originated. Our doors are open to all points of the compass. We ask all honest men to join with and help us.

In order to restrain the extortions of aggregate capital, to drive the money-changers out of the temple, to form a perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity we do ordain and establish the following platform of principles:

First—We declare the union of the labor forces of the United States this day accomplished permanent and perpetual. May its spirit enter into all hearts for the salvation of the republic and the uplifting of mankind.

Second—Wealth belongs to him who created it. Every dollar taken from industry without an equivalent is robbery. If any one will not work, neither shall he

eat. The interests of rural and urban labor are the same, their enemies are identical.

PLATFORM.

FINANCE.

First—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 2 per cent be provided, as set forth in the sub-treasury plan of the Farmers' Alliance, or some better system; also, by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

a. We demand free and unlimited coinage of silver.

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

c. We demand a graduated income tax.

d. 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 all national and State revenue shall be limited to the necessary expenses of the government economically and honestly administered.

e. 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.

LAND.

Second—The land, including all the natural resources of wealth, is the heritage of all 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.

TRANSPORTATION.

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

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

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