

WILSON AND ROOSEVELT AND THEIR MESSAGES

We wish that we had the space, and our readers the time, to make profitable the reprinting on this page the two speeches delivered within the last three days. We should like to place side by side the address of Governor Wilson in Philadelphia on Monday night and the address of Theodore Roosevelt last night in New York.

It is not that these utterances contain all that can be said on either side of the great contest now closing; neither of them had any such pretense. But the two speeches conveyed such vivid impressions of the purposes and characters of the two men; they brought into such clear relief their contrasting conceptions of public needs and their contrasting attitudes toward public affairs, that the voters choice might safely be made upon these two addresses alone.

Obvious differences between the personalities of the two men are not pertinent. The coldly correct bearing, the polished diction and the felicitous epigrams of Governor Wilson are just as attractive to the discriminating listener or reader as the warm earnestness and rugged simplicity of language of his opponent. Why is it, then, that the one chills while the other appeals? Why is it that the one speech merely commands admiration for its rhetorical skill, while the other conquers the mind by the sheer power of its message?

We have read and studied the addresses with care, and we think we know. It is because Governor Wilson spoke of abstract theories, and Colonel Roosevelt of men; because the one, restrained by the influence of long habit and fixed temperament, dealt in vague formulas, while the other, moved by the force of deep conviction, dealt in terms of life; because the one saw a problem of abstract principles and processes; while the other saw and spoke for the human factors in that problem.

If our meaning appears somewhat obscure, if it feebly suggests some of Governor Wilson's favorite involutions, we shall try to make it clear by an illustrative discussion of the two addresses.

Governor Wilson came to Philadelphia with the advantage of many weeks of preparatory explanation of his program and policies. The situation obviously suggested that he should round out his campaign and make his final appeal by a frank discussion of public problems and an explicit offer of his solutions for them; that he should descend at last from the clouds of disputation, stand face to face with the men and women of the nation, and give straight answers to their demands and aspirations.

We have read the full reports of his speech, not once only, not twice, but three times, and we declare that it leaves us hopelessly ignorant regarding his purposes; and not only that, but it leaves us depressed by its proof of his utter lack of understanding and sympathy with the humanity which he would apply his theories.

No public man, we believe, excels Governor Wilson in deft phrasing, in neat and supple turns of language, in the sheer graces of oratorical entertainment. As an equilibrist in debate he is unsurpassable. If the contest were in balancing a theoretical feather on a rhetorical nose, he would have no serious competitor, and his election would have to be unanimous. But if there are issues of moment in this campaign, if the successful candidate and party are to demonstrate fitness for dealing with concrete problems affecting the daily lives of men and women, then we say Governor Wilson offers no appeal to intelligent minds.

Let us examine his speech and see whether this criticism is justified. He opens with a refreshing promise of definiteness after his misty utterances on the stump:

Throughout this campaign I have insisted that it is not a comparison of persons, but of conceptions, of programs. You must vote next week according to what you want done, and what you regard as the most feasible means of getting those things done. We are now about to transact the affairs of America.

This is excellent. Let us compare purposes and programs. Let us transact the affairs of America. But not just yet. Governor Wilson digresses a moment to criticize—justly, too—the failure of the Republican party to redeem its pledges, and to ridicule fears of a panic in case he is elected. "Nobody seeking national office," he says, "proposes radical changes." Perhaps he thinks a Democratic tariff for revenue only as against protection implies no radical change, but he is wrong about the Progressive program, which assuredly does propose some very radical changes in government. But we must not delay his own program. He continues:

I want to ask you to face very frankly the actual circumstances in which we stand, and then ask yourselves what we ought to do.

Here is the referendum with a vengeance. Within a week of election day a candidate for the presidency asks the public what he is to do. But he does not wait for an answer nor supply one himself. He proceeds with a justifiable denunciation of a tariff "system of special favors," then, just when an explanation of his proposed plans are being considered by the public he decides them himself.

So far as it goes this is an accurate diagnosis. Something is wrong. Now for the remedy:

I heard a gentleman ask me just now how I was going to do it. I have said how I was going to do it in almost every speech I have made, but apparently my opponents do not read what I say. I would like to ask them, incidentally what they mean to do.

He's off again! We almost had it that time, but not quite. However he explains that both the Republican and Democratic parties propose to regular competition, while the Progressive party is "going to undertake to do things by government commission." This is correct. The Progressive program is control and regulation of trusts in the way that railroads are now controlled and regulated. But at last comes the definite announcement of the Wilson plan:

We are going to undertake to do it by the originaive independence of the American people. Safeguard American men against unfair competition, and they will take care of themselves.

There it is. There is the mysterious program in full. We are to deal with the trusts, not by means of a commission clothed with authority to stop abuses, to force open the channels of trade, to check and punish trickery and fraudulent underselling, but "originaive independence." There are to be safeguards against unfair competition, but what safeguards and how established and how enforced—these are secrets still lost in the nebous haze of Governor Wilson's unexplained ideas.

For he is explicit on one point: The government must safeguard "originaive independence" by doing nothing. He says:

I do not want a government that will take care of me. I want a government that will make other men take their hands off, so that I can take care of myself.

This is clear enough. Governor Wilson would dismiss the interstate commerce commission and let the "originaive independence" of the small shipper take care of him rate-juggling and rebating deals of railroads and powerful corporations.

He would "safeguard" interest commerce from interference by "sumug experts" and let the small business man and the consumer assert their "originaive independence" against the oil trust and the steel trust and the others.

He would "free industry" from the trammels of the national pure food law and give the housewife liberty to defend herself against the purveyors of doped and poisoned foods.

Lovingly he returns to his ideal of government, and each time he becomes more eloquent and more misty in his conception. Here is a picture for those who see great, threatening evils in this land and seek strong, efficient remedies therefor:

I want to see a government which is not pitiful but full of human sympathy; which does not condescend, but takes part in the

common life. I want to see a government that feels the thrill of the men who are struggling and does not lean down and lend them a helping hand, but walks with them in the common way and says: "Men and brethren it is a common life; we must live it together; we must do one another justice."

Government ought me to be a providence, but merely the expression of the common. It cannot lend a helping hand to mankind; it must speak for mankind. * * * What I urge upon you, therefore, is that as Americans we band ourselves together to restore America.

We have not the space and frankly, we have not the patience, to follow Governor Wilson further through the graceful involutions of his tripping figures. As he glides away, however, in a whirl of diaphanous metaphor we snatch at two fragments of thought he leaves behind.

His whole address, like all his other speeches, is a dissertation upon abstract principles, tenous theories, technical methods. He uses the word "processes" some score of times; he sees processes only; he is unconscious of men.

Second, his expressed ambition is to "free" the government, to "free" business, to "free" the citizen. He would free the government not only from evil influences, but from the duty of applying its functions to the needs of humanity. He would free business from that active, constant, efficient supervision which alone can restore and preserve economic justice.

And he would free men—free them to fight greed and cunning and poverty and old age, without the impertinent aid of a governmental "providence"; free women to continue ill-aided toil as beneficiaries of a glorious competition among themselves; free children, so that in the name of liberty and as a rebuke to such heresies as a national child labor law they may continue to sacrifice themselves to industry's "originaive independence."

To turn from this to the speech of Theodore Roosevelt is like stepping from a scented ballroom into the fresh air of an October morning. Instead of smooth but empty phrases there are straight-flung words of direct meaning; instead of foggy disputation, there is clear, explicit exposition, every sentence throbbing with heartfelt sincerity and feeling for humanity.

Yet this address in tone and purpose is unlike the Progressive candidate's earlier utterances. It is less of a fighting, crusading summons; more of a solemn appeal. Theodore Roosevelt has made his fight, he has kept the faith, he has carried the standard of the cause even through the valley of the shadow.

He seemed to speak last night less as a warrior than as a statesman and seer; as though his experience had lifted him for the time above the strife of the conflict and given him a broad, searching view of the great struggle and its meaning. It was not necessary for him to define evils and remedies; this is done in the Progressive platform, a contract with the people. But, with sober earnestness and in measured words, he put the issue fully before the nation in terms that burn with conviction:

Friends, perhaps once in a generation, perhaps not so often, there comes a chance for the people of a country to play their part wisely and fearlessly in some great battle of the age-long warfare for human rights. * * * Our sask is to profit by the lessons of the past and to check in time the evils that grow around us, lest our failure to do so cause dreadful disaster. * * * Woe to our nation if we let matters drift; if our industrial and political life we let an unchecked and utterly selfish individualistic materialism riot to its appointed end. * * *

We are proposing no new principles. The doctrines we preach reach back to the Golden Rule and the Sermon on the Mount—to the Commandments delivered at Sinai. Our purpose is to shackle greedy cunning as we shackle brutal force, and we are not to be diverted by appeal to the dead dogmas of a vanished past.

We propose to lift the burdens from the lowly and the weary, from the poor and the oppressed, to stand for the sacred rights of childhood and womanhood, to see that manhood is not crushed out of the men who toil. We are for human rights. Where they can be best obtained by application of the doctrine of states' rights, then we are for states' rights. Where it is necessary to invoke the power of the nation, then we shall invoke to its uttermost limits that mighty power.

We care for facts and not for formulas; we care for deeds and not words. We recognize no sacred right of oppression, no divine right to work injustice. We stand for the Constitution, but we will not consent to make it a fetich for the protection of fossilized wrong.

We have declared our position on the trusts and on the tariff, on the machinery for securing genuine popular government, on the method of meeting the needs of the farmer, the business man, the man who toils with his hands. There is not a promise we have made which cannot be kept. There is not a promise we have made that will not be kept. Our platform is a covenant with the people of the United States. We intend to strike down privilege, to equalize opportunity, to wrest justice from the hands that do injustice, to hearten and strengthen men and woman for the hard battle of life.

I believe we shall win; but win or lose, I am glad beyond measure that I am one of the many who in this fight have stood ready to spend and be spent, pledged to fight while life lasts the great fight for righteousness and for brotherhood and for the welfare of mankind.

We believe we speak the mind of patriotic Americans when we say that there spoke a great-hearted man, there spoke the leader of a cause whose advance can no more be stayed than the march of the centuries.

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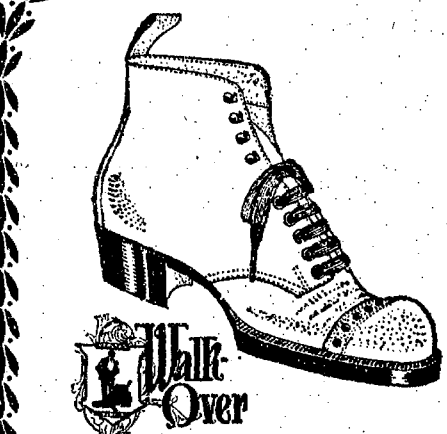
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VOL. V.

TAFT PROCLAIMS GIVING DAY

Washington, Nov. 28. President Taft today issued giving proclamation, aside November 28 for the day of that day. The proclamation follows:

By the President of the States of America:

"A proclamation: "A God-fearing Nation owes it to its sincere sense of moral duty to testify its devout gratitude to the donor of the count of that day. The year it has been the close of the year of national Executive to call fellow countrymen to call and thanks to God for fold blessings vouchsafe in the past and to unite est supplicant for their aid.

"The year now drawing close has been notably to our fortunate land, within and without free perturbations and calar have afflicted other people in harvests so abundant industries so productive, overflows of our prosperity advantaged the who strong in the steadfastness of the heritage of wisdom of our fathers; the resolve to transmit, unimpaired but improved by good use, to ren and our children for all time to come, this country have abundant for contented gratitude.

"Wherefore, I will and Taft, President of the States of America, in of long established response to the American people, may rejoice to this day the twenty-fifth month of November, private inscription, thanks to God for that have been given in humble prayer, mercies toward us.

"In witness whereunto set my hand and the seal of the United States, this seventh day of November, in the year of our thousand nine hundred and of the independence of the United States of America one hundred and thirty.

"WILLIAM H. TAFT, President; Adee, Acting Secretary of State."

Colt, Rhode Island

Providence, R. I. The next general assembly contain 85 Republican Democrats and Progressive Judge LeBarre Republican candidate. States senate, majority joint ballot. The R control both houses.

OFFICIAL RETURNS OF THE VOTE of Alamance County At Election Held November 5th, 1912

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Faucet
Graham
Albrig
Newlin
Saxap
Swaps
Mebar
Pleasant
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