

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM

We give below the corrected text of the National Democratic Platform, which in every paragraph was badly mutilated in its transmission by telegraph to all the eastern journals.

We, the delegates of the Democratic party of the United States, in National Convention assembled, do hereby declare the administration of the Federal Government to be in urgent need of immediate reform; do hereby adjourn upon the platform of this Convention, and of the Democratic party in each State, a zealous effort and on-ward to this end; and do hereby appeal to our fellow-citizens of every former political connection, to unite with us in this first and most pressing patriotic duty.

For the Democracy of the whole country, we do hereby reaffirm our faith in the permanence of the Federal Union, our devotion to the Constitution of the United States with its amendments, universally accepted as a final settlement of the controversies that engendered civil war, and do here record our steadfast confidence in the perpetuity of Republican Self Government.

In absolute acquiescence in the will of the majority—the vital principle of republics; in the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; in the total separation of Church and State, for the sake alike of civil and religious freedom; in the equality of all citizens before the laws of their own country; in the liberty of individual conduct, untrammelled by summary laws; in the faithful education of the rising generation, that they may preserve, enjoy, and transmit these best conditions of human happiness, and hope, we behold the noblest products of a hundred years of republican history; but while upholding the bond of our Union and great Charter of these our rights, it behooves a free people to practice also that eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty.

Reform is necessary to reëstablish and establish in the hearts of the whole people, the Union, eleven years ago happily rescued from the danger of a Secession of States; but now to be saved from a corrupt Centralism which, after inflicting upon ten States the rapacity of carpet-bag tyrannies, has honeycombed the offices of the Federal Government itself with incapacity, waste, and fraud; infected States and municipalities with the contagion of misrule, and locked fast the prosperity of an industrious people in the paralysis of "Hard Times."

Reform is necessary to establish a sound currency, restore the public credit, and maintain the national honor.

We denounce the failure for all these eleven years of peace to make good the promise of the legal-tender notes, which are a changing standard of value in the hands of the people, and the non-payment of which is a disregard of the pledged faith of the nation.

We denounce the improvidence which in eleven years of peace has taken from the people in Federal taxes thirteen times the whole amount of the legal-tender notes and squandered four times their sum in useless expense without accumulating any reserve for their redemption.

We denounce the financial imbecility and immorality of that party which, during eleven years of peace, has made no advance toward resumption, no preparation for resumption, but instead has obstructed resumption, by wasting our resources and exhausting all our surplus income; and, while annually professing to intend a speedy return to specie payments, has annually emitted fresh hindrances thereto. As such a hindrance we denounce the Resumption-day clause of the act of 1875 and demand its repeal.

We demand a judicious system of preparation by public economy, by official retrenchments, and by wise finance, which shall enable the nation soon to assure the whole world of its perfect ability and its perfect readiness to meet any of its promises at the call of the creditor entitled to payment.

We believe such a system, well devised, and, above all, intrusted to competent hands for execution, creating at no time an artificial scarcity of currency and at no time alarming the public mind into a withdrawal of that water machinery of credit by which 95 per cent. of all business transactions are performed, a system open, public, and inspiring general confidence, would from the day of its adoption bring healing to its wings to all our hampered industries, set in motion the wheels of commerce, manufacture and the mechanic arts, restore employment to labor, and renew in all its natural sources the prosperity of the people.

Reform is necessary in the laws and modes of Federal Taxation, to the end that capital may be set free from distrust, and labor lightly burdened.

to their tax gatherers more than three times the sum of the national debt, and more than twice that sum for the Federal Government alone. We demand a rigorous frugality in every Department, and from every officer of the Government.

Reform is necessary to put a stop to the prodigal waste of public lands and their diversion from actual settlers by the party in power, which has squandered 200 millions of acres upon railroad alone, and out of more than three times that aggregate has disposed of less than a sixth directly to tillers of the soil.

Reform is necessary to correct the omissions of a Republican Congress and the errors of our treaties and our diplomacy which have stripped our fellow-citizens of foreign birth and kindred race recrossing the Atlantic, of the shield of American citizenship, and have exposed our brethren of the Pacific coast to the incursions of a race not sprung from the same great parent stock, and in fact now by law denied citizenship through naturalization, as being neither accustomed to the traditions of a progressive civilization nor exercised in liberty under equal laws.

We denounce the policy which discards the liberty-loving (teeming and untold) the revival of the coolie trade in Mongolian women imported for immoral purposes, and Mongolian men hired to perform servile labor contracts.

Reform is necessary and can never be effected but by making it the controlling issue of the elections, and lifting it above the two false issues with which the office-holding class and the party in power seek to another for the people. The false issue with which they would entangle the people is in respect to the public schools, of which the establishment and support belong exclusively to the several States, and which the Democratic party has cheerfully from their foundation, and is resolved to maintain without prejudice or preference for any class, sect, or creed, and without largesses from the treasury to any.

The false issue by which they seek to light anew the dying embers of sectional hate between kindred peoples, once estranged, but now reunited in one indivisible republic and a common destiny.

Reform is necessary in the Civil Service. Experience proves that efficient, economical conduct of the governmental business is not possible if its civil service be subject to change at every election, be a prize fought for at the ballot box, be a brief reward of party zeal, instead of posts of honor assigned for proved competency, and held for fidelity in the public employ; that the dispensing of patronage should neither be a tax upon the time of all our public men, nor the instrument of their ambition. Here again promises made in the performance, attest that the party in power can work out no practical or salutary reform.

Reform is necessary even to the higher grades of the public service. President, Vice-President, Judges, Senators, Representatives, Cabinet officers, these and all others in authority are the people's servants. Their offices are not a private perquisite; they are a public trust.

When the annals of this Republic show the disgrace and censure of a Vice-President; a late Speaker of the House of Representatives marketing his rulings as a presiding officer; three Senators profligate secretly by their votes as law-makers; five chairmen of the leading committees of the late House of Representatives exposed in jobbery; a late Secretary of the Treasury forcing balances in the public accounts; a late Attorney-General misappropriating public funds; a Secretary of the Navy enriched or enriching friends, by percentages levied on the profits of contractors with his department; an Ambassador to England censured in a dishonorable speculation; the President's Private Secretary barely escaping conviction upon trial for guilty complicity in frauds upon the revenue; a Secretary of War impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors—the demonstration is complete, that the first step in Reform must be the people's choice of honest men from another party, lest the disease of one political organization infect the body politic, and lest by making no change of men or parties we get no change of measures and no real Reform.

All these abuses, wrongs and crimes, the product of sixteen years' ascendancy of the Republican party, create a necessity for Reform confessed by Republicans themselves; but their reformers are voted down in convention and displaced from the Cabinet. The party's mass of honest voters is powerless to resist the 80,000 office-holders, its leaders and guides.

Reform can only be had by a peaceful Civil Revolution. We demand a change of system, a change of administration, a change of parties, that we may have a change of measures and of men.

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