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A TERRIBLE PICTURE

The president paints a terrible picture of the demoralizing influence of ill-gotten wealth. He pictures the multi-millionaire who has grown rich by immoral means as "the least admirable of all our citizens, a man of whom it has been well said, that his face has grown hard and cruel, while his body has grown soft; whose son is a fool and whose daughter a foreign princess; whose nominal pleasures are at best those of a tasteless and extravagant luxury, and whose real delight, whose real life work is the accumulation and use of power in its most sordid and least elevating form."

And who is this man whom the president pictures? He is the beneficiary of privilege, the child of favoritism in government. And how does he secure privilege and favoritism? By contributing campaign funds to the party which will sell him the right to exploit the country. Which party has been doing this? The republican party, whose leaders are now conspiring to prevent any remedial legislation. These same influences are seeking to dominate the democratic party, but they find the democratic masses incorruptible and therefore their effort is frustrated.



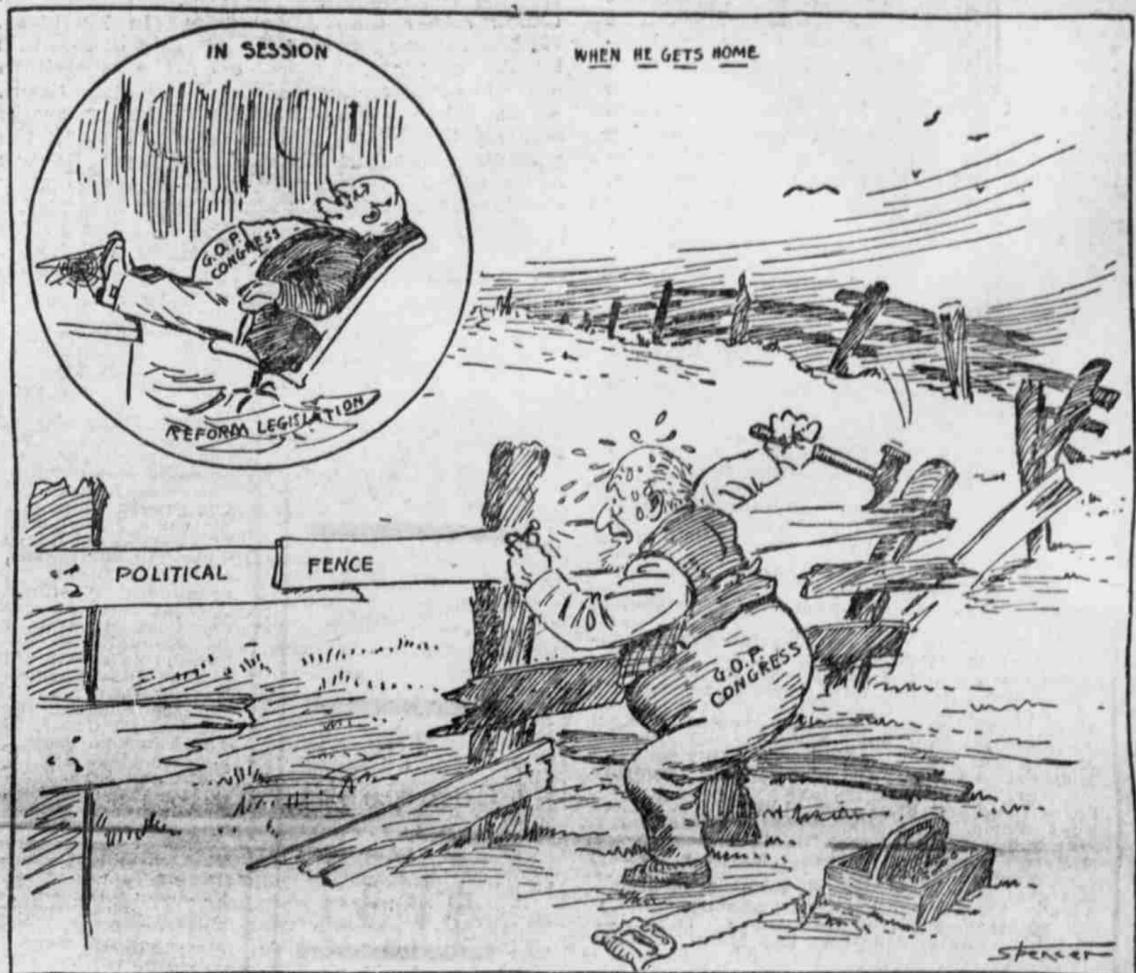
THE GREAT POLITICAL THOUGHT

The greatest political thought in the world is that embodied in the declaration of independence, namely, that all men are created equal. This is the basis of popular government, and popular government is spreading. It does not mean that men are, or will be, equal in physical strength, in intellectual ability, in moral character or in wealth—it simply means that God never gave to one human being a natural right that he denied to any other human being, and that in the contemplation of government, all must stand equal before the law. Out of this basic principle all other political principles grow and by it all methods of government and all policies must be measured.



WHERE?

The Springfield (Mass.) Republican prints this significant editorial: "On which side is the heart of the president in the party struggle in the house of representatives? Does he sympathize with the opposition filibustering to force action on his favorite measures, or with the republican majority fighting to dump them under a trap-door until the next session? Which is the president's party, anyhow?"



The gentleman doesn't seem to be worrying much now, but we venture the prediction that he won't be idle next summer.

President Urges Centralization

As The Commoner has commended President Roosevelt wherever he has recommended democratic reforms, it is the more free to criticize him when he recommends things undemocratic. One of the undemocratic things which he has recommended is the surrender of the right of the state to control commerce within its borders. He says that state commerce "forms but a small fraction of the commerce carried by the railroads through each state," and that "actual experience has shown that the effort at state control is sure to be nullified in one way or another sooner or later." He then proceeds to argue that "the nation alone can act with effectiveness and wisdom; it should have control of both, of the business and of the agent by which the business is done, for any attempt to separate this control must result in grotesque absurdity." Explaining this proposition he says: "This means that we must rely upon national legislation to prevent the commercial abuses that now exist and the others that are sure to arise unless some efficient government body has adequate power of control over them." In another part of the message he says that he believes that "ultimately we shall have to adopt a national incorporation law," but he recognizes that "this may be impossible at present."

We are thus brought face to face with a most serious proposition, namely, whether the dual character of our government shall be preserved as it is defined by the constitution, or obliterated as is proposed by the president.

What is the situation? Congress now has power which it has not exercised; it has all the power it needs. For ten years a railroad lobby

at Washington prevented the adoption of the recommendations of the interstate commerce commission, and while new legislation was prevented, the railroads continued to grant rebates and to make discriminations. The work of the lobby was open and notorious. It is less than three years since representatives of two of the leading railroads of the east used the lobbies of congress to bribe members into the support of appropriations desired by the railroads. These representatives did not disguise the fact that they kept a record of the votes cast by members and rewarded with passes, or punished them by withholding passes, according to their votes. The pass evil has at last been corrected, but it required a tremendous convulsion and all the influence that the president could exert through an aroused public opinion.

If the railroad influence has been so great when congress exercised control over interstate commerce only, what will be the influence when all regulation is centered at Washington and the railroads enter politics for the purpose of controlling the senate, the house, the interstate commerce commission, the president and the courts? Already there are indications that the railroads are planning for the coming campaign. One railroad attorney announces that the railroad employees must stand with the railroad managers against any party which attempts to antagonize railroads—and to antagonize the railroads means to antagonize the views of a few railroad magnates who aspire to control the railroad systems of the country. Another organization has been recently formed which announces that "railroad baiting" must stop—and "railroad baiting" can only mean the at-