

Meredith on Roads

Statement of E. T. Meredith, Democratic Candidate for Governor, on Good Roads.

I do not assume to anticipate the action of the Democratic State Convention which in July will express in its platform the crystallized sentiment of the Democracy of Iowa upon the question of good roads as well as upon other live issues; but as a candidate in the primaries for the office of Governor, I do wish to state my position that the people of Iowa may know exactly where I stand.

I am for better roads than we now have in Iowa, both because of what it means to the state in development along social lines, and because good roads are real money makers for the farmers who live upon them and bring a real advance in the value of lands adjacent to the highways.

I do not advocate that roads be built of brick, cement, asphalt or other costly materials, but I do urge the use of gravel whenever available or can be procured at a reasonable cost. I am in favor of having the roads so graded and surfaced that they may be traveled 365 days in the year.

As to paying for improved roads, I am not in favor of increasing our tax levies, local or state, a dollar. The money now paid in taxes will, if spent properly and under a comprehensive plan, pay for permanent roads without increasing the burdens of taxation.

The people of the communities to be served by the road must have a voice in determining by their votes first whether they want the improved road and second what kind of a road they shall have. I am not in favor of forcing improved roads upon any community that does not desire them. As to plan, I will agree to any feasible plan. I want a plan so fair and just to all that it will appeal to the people of every community and result in its acceptance by the people of every county in the state.

The Plain Dealer devotes considerable space this week to the Democratic candidate for governor and it is space put to a good use, and a perusal of Mr. Meredith's speech as temporary chairman of the Democratic state convention at Clinton last week, as well as his statement on the road question, will convince the reader that in Mr. Meredith the people of Iowa have a level-headed business man who would give a business administration. Republican politicians and newspapers, the contending candidates included, are flooding the mails with reasons—and good ones, we believe—why neither Harding, Cosson or Allen should receive the republican nomination, and are each day convincing the taxpayers of the state that on primary day they will vote for neither of the three but will endorse a real business man's candidacy by voting for Ed Meredith and then following up this vote by another for Meredith in the November election. Read Meredith's speech, it is a masterly setting forth of the splendid accomplishments of the Wilson administration, and his statement concerning good roads will meet with the approval of all who are endeavoring to have built "365-day-in-the-year roads" at a reasonable cost and of a character and expense to be determined by the votes of the people who foot the bills.

Treasurer

I hereby announce myself as a candidate for nomination to the office of Co. Treasurer, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the primary election June 5th. I greatly appreciate the kind support I have previously received, and if my work merits re-nomination and election I will be pleased to accept it; if a change is desired I will as gracefully retire.

A. L. WHITE,
Cresco, Iowa.

Auditor

I wish to take this occasion to announce that I will be a candidate for the Republican nomination for county auditor at the June primary. I appreciate the support my friends have given me in the past and hope to merit their support in the coming campaign.

E. A. HOOPMAN.

Announcement

I hereby announce myself as a candidate on the Republican ticket for the office of County Recorder, subject to the decision of the voters of Howard County at the primary election to be held June 5th, 1916.

W. B. DAVIS.

For Sheriff

I hereby announce myself as a candidate for the office of Sheriff of Howard County, Iowa, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the Primary Election to be held June 5th, 1916.

L. J. CAMERON.

"WHAT DO THE PEOPLE OF IOWA WANT?"

Speech of E. T. Meredith, Democratic Candidate for Governor, Before State Convention, Clinton, Iowa, Wednesday, May 10.

With the matters of world wide importance now engaging the attention of the country, these are not times to make partisan speeches. If ever the American people should stop and take stock, today is the day. Never since the Civil War has the country faced matters of so great moment or found itself with greater problems demanding solution.

This convention is assembled for the purpose of approving the delegates named to the Democratic National Convention at Saint Louis, and giving them instructions. This convention will deal with national questions, so I am going to confine what I have to say to national questions rather than to touch upon state matters.



HON. E. T. MEREDITH

In entering upon this campaign, it is highly important that each voter may seriously study the situation from his country's standpoint; that he should weigh men and judge them carefully. There is less and less of party spirit, less and less of the worship of party as time goes on, but there is yet too much of it. Just the other day, our own Senator Kenyon, a man whom I believe to be on the side of the people, a man who has proved many times by his votes that he is not so wedded to his party as are many, exhibited great glee because the democrats as a revenue measure had decided to leave a tax on sugar. Whether the action was right or wrong, it meets with Mr. Kenyon's views on the tariff. Then why not commend it? Surely he could not feel this action was an endorsement of his position on the tariff and an acknowledgment that after all the trust breeding tariff was the right idea. No. He was playing politics.

I am going to address myself to the question, "What do the people want?" in answering this, and then asking the further question, "How can they get it?"

For sixteen years, the republican party had undisputed control of our government and during that time there were many measures proposed which the people asked to have enacted into laws.

Tariff Reform.

One of the measures the people demanded was the revision of the tariff downward. This had been definitely promised and the promises broken. The "Iowa Idea" was popular over the whole country but no relief was had from a republican congress and a republican president, notwithstanding the fact the demand came with as such insistence from the rank and file of the voters in the republican party as in the democratic party. The election of President Wilson was a protest. Has he kept faith with the people on this question, or has he failed to give the people what the election clearly indicated they wished, as was done by the republican congresses and republican presidents? A bill reducing the tariff was introduced and passed very promptly by the democratic administration as an answer to the question "What do the people want?"

Another measure the people had long expressed a desire for was a revision of our currency laws,—something that would take away from the Wall street manipulators the control which they exercised over our currency, the life blood of American business. Something that would give us an automatic currency, expanding when the situation demanded and contracting when the necessity was over.

This was one of the first problems to which President Wilson gave his attention. His efforts resulted in the Federal Reserve banking system, a system under which the control of the currency is in the hands of the people, a system every voter should thoroughly understand. This was an accomplishment that bankers, business men, financiers, all over the country, men of all parties commend as the greatest piece of legislation enacted in many years. It affects directly every banker, every merchant, every laborer, every farmer, every manufacturer, every professional man. A turer, every professional man. You men, as democrats, should know the workings of this law that you may go out and tell every voter of the debt they owe a democratic administration. Let me point to one incident wherein it was of the utmost importance and service to Iowa the past season. All will agree that ordinarily a war in

Europe would cause men to be afraid to enter new ventures, to expand old ones, bankers would fear to loan, money would be tight and times panicky. Some may urge that munition orders are responsible for the good times experienced in this country. They are an incident and only an incident. They form a very small per cent of the great volume of business done in this country and without a stable currency system panics instead of prosperity would have been the order in the United States. In addition to the unsettled condition occasioned by the war, Iowa had a soft corn crop because of the wet season last year. This made it necessary to feed the corn in Iowa rather than ship it, and millions of dollars must therefore be invested in stock to which the corn might be fed. Farmers have been obliged to borrow what in the aggregate was a large sum of money for this purpose, but notwithstanding this unusual demand under already abnormal conditions the banks have taken care of all demands and you have heard nothing of tight money. Why? Simply because the fear of panic, the fear of tight money has been taken out of the banker's life. He need not keep on hand every dollar he has to guard against the days of panic. He need not pile up large reserves to protect his own institution in case of a storm. He can loan his deposits to business men, farmers, and others to keep the business of the state and nation going. And why can he do this today when he could not do so before? Because of the federal reserve law passed by a democratic president and a democratic congress in answer to the question, "What do the people want?" Because if today the banker's customers need money and the banker finds he has more demand than he can supply from his capital and deposits, he has only to send some of the farmers' notes he has discounted to his federal reserve bank and they will cash them for him with federal reserve currency. In other words, our bankers today have a never failing source of supply back of them and they need not depend upon New York bankers to say whether they may or may not loan to Iowa farmers money with which to buy stock to which they may feed our corn. We have gone through in Iowa what would undoubtedly have been a most serious situation except for this federal reserve law, and our people never realized it. What is true of the aid this law gives the farmer is as true in the case of the manufacturer. In the past, manufacturers have been fearful to borrow up to the limit of their credit because of the danger of being unexpectedly forced to pay. If a manufacturer was perfectly good for a line of credit of \$100,000.00 and could use this amount to advantage in his business, he would in order to be safe borrow but \$50,000.00 or \$75,000.00 because a demand for the whole \$100,000.00 might throw him into bankruptcy. Under the old system the banker many times had recourse except to force settlement in order to save the bank. All remember the bankers' panic of 1907. Many manufacturing and mercantile institutions during a money stringency have been forced out of business because the banker insisted upon having his money; and the banker had no other recourse. When a republican panic came along, the banker had to draw in his lines to protect his own depositors and stockholders. Today the fear is taken out of the heart of the manufacturer because he knows so long as his credit is good his banker can re-discount his notes with the federal reserve bank and there will be no necessity of forcing him to pay. He may, therefore, expand his business to the limit, use additional raw materials, employ more labor and thereby add to the volume of business done in the country. This is the reason for our prosperity. Industry has been released. That black spectre, panic, has been taken out of the finance of the United States, and no man is more grateful than the banker himself.

Who did this? President Wilson, in answering for himself the question "What do people want?" He knew of their wishes and heeded them, and remember that for sixteen years during four republican administrations the people had been demanding that something be done but nothing was done. If no other accomplishment was to the credit of this administration, this law alone should entitle President Wilson to an overwhelming re-election. Industry is free, panics eliminated and Wall street's grasp upon the business of the country shaken loose. Surely no Iowa voter knowing the facts will by his vote do other than commend such a law.

Income Tax.

The people wanted an income tax, that the burden of government might be lifted a little from the shoulders of those already bowed down and placed a little heavier on the shoulders of those well able to carry it. We all recognize today in America the justice of this, but it needs wait for a democratic administration to give to the people an income tax law. Another answer to the question "What do the people want?" You heard no demand by the excessively rich for an income tax. No, it was the people, the 99%, that demanded it; and under this administration that voice is heard and heeded rather than the voice of the one per cent.

The people have long demanded that there be some tribunal before which the business men of the country could appear to lodge complaint of unfair competition or protest because of an abuse of any kind in the conduct of the business of the country. The Sherman law was strengthened by this administration, but this

was not enough. Some place must be provided where one might file his grievance. The answer to this demand of the people was the establishment of the federal trade commission.

All are acquainted with the workings of the Inter-state Commerce commission before which the railroads may appear to get rulings as to what they may or may not do. Shippers may come to make complaint in regard to rates or service. Bankers have their Federal Reserve board. In like manner, the manufacturers and merchants are to be served by the Federal Trade commission. Manufacturers may complain of unfair competition, unfair control over raw products by any combination, anything they consider an evil, and the Federal Trade commission will make careful investigation and has power to order conditions changed. Statistics are being gathered by this commission to show why business men fail, what the average turn over is in retail establishments of the country; comprehensive bookkeeping systems are being worked out to show overhead costs, leaks, etc. All these suggestions are to be furnished to merchants throughout the country. Foreign markets are being investigated and foreign conditions and ways of doing business ascertained. This, then, is President Wilson's answer to "What do the people want?" as it pertains to better business methods, better commercial conditions, more scientific knowledge and a place where we may go to lodge our complaint or present our inquiry. Again, the people got what they wanted, and President Wilson was responsible. Every voter should know of the efficient work being done by this commission and the wonderful possibilities before it. Every democrat should know of it, and tell other voters, that they might know of the debt they owe this administration and endorse it by their vote, rather than, because of a lack of information on the subject, vote against the administration and thereby seem to disapprove of such measures.

Election of Senators.

The people wanted the election of senators by direct vote that they might have a real voice in the election of these representatives of the people rather than leave their selection to the old method of log rolling, bribery and deals. Notwithstanding years of agitation and repeated demands they did not get their wish under republican administrations, but President Wilson gave it to them at once.

Parcel Post.

The people wanted a parcel post law that the enormous profits and extortions of the express companies might be done away with. It seemed impossible to get this from a republican congress, but it did not take long to get it from a democratic congress because a democratic congress was anxious to give the people what they wanted.

Many more laws could be reviewed, but surely these are sufficient to prove the devotion of President Wilson to the policy of giving the people what they want. He has proven himself, and no voter who has carefully reviewed what has been accomplished can have anything but commendation for President Wilson and this administration.

More Reforms Wanted.

The people have not as yet, however, secured all they want. Many more reforms and progressive measures are desired, and we must determine now whether past performance counts for or against a man in our political life as in our personal business matters. No farmer needing the services of a hired man would discharge one who had performed every duty well, who had shown devotion to his employer's every interest, who had given the farmer just the service he had asked for, and hire over again a workman he had once had in his employ and discharged because he had not made good. He would stick to the man whom he had tried and found true.

No manufacturer would discharge a competent salesman, one who had given excellent service, performed every duty called for in their contract, and more, and hire another man because he was a loud talker and claimed to cover a lot of territory. No, not if he knew the facts. Neither would a voter do this if he knew the facts, and here lies the trouble. Voters vote tickets, they vote for parties, they vote prejudices, they do not scan carefully the performances of public men. It is a big task to be informed on these matters. Most of us are busy with our everyday affairs and while these governmental matters affect us very directly every day, they seem very far off from us. Our country is large, the problems are involved, but it is your duty and mine, first as American citizens with the love of country in our hearts and second as democrats to see that the people do know.

The people are demanding yet more advance along the line of beneficial legislation. Each one should stop and ask, "What do the people want?" "What do I want?"

Tariff Commission.

The people want a non-partisan tariff commission. They want the tariff taken out of politics. Too long have they been confused and misled over the tariff as a party issue and they are tired. Already there has been introduced by this administration a non-partisan tariff commission bill, contemplating a commission of six members, not more than three from any one party. Note it is not four from the side of the party in power but both sides evenly represented. Does that not show good faith? We cannot forecast what a republican adminis-

tration might do. Likely nothing, judging from past performance. But if they passed a tariff commission bill, would your guess not be that there would be seven members, four from the republican side and three from the democratic side? That might be a Republican view of a non-partisan commission but all will agree that a commission made up of one-half from each side is more fair and shows the good faith of the democrats.

Rural Credits.

The need of some properly worked out system of rural credits as an aid to farmers is generally recognized. Some system which will enable a young man to buy land, some plan of securing money which will assist the farmer during the first few years when he is getting established.

The farmers of the nation add nine billion dollars yearly to the country's wealth. They are doing this on borrowed capital amounting to over six billions of dollars, on which they pay an annual interest charge of five hundred millions of dollars. With commissions for securing the loans, frequent renewal charges and an interest charge that to say the least is high enough, the total cost is excessive. It puts a burden upon agriculture that it should not bear. The farmer's money is costing him more than that of the railroads, industrial corporations or municipalities, notwithstanding he has an unquestioned security. He of course borrows in smaller amounts and should likely pay a slight advance over rates paid by larger borrowers but today the difference between what he pays and many others pay is too great. The whole problem is one of vital importance to the individual farmer needing assistance and one of great moment to the country as a whole.

This is another of the measures the people want. It is receiving attention at the hands of President Wilson.

Merchant Marine.

One of the most urgent needs of the country is a merchant marine. Our wharves are piled high with unshipped products of farms and factories. Our railroad terminals are crowded with shipments for foreign lands. We have no boats to relieve the congestion and a practical embargo has been declared by leading railroads against further shipments of grain from the west.

Had the farmers themselves paid the \$50,000,000 from their own pockets and bought or built the merchant marine fleet asked for by President Wilson of Congress, they would have been millions of dollars ahead. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, Carl Vrooman, declares that the farmers could well have afforded to put up \$200,000,000 for a merchant marine and thereby saved the outrageous shipping charges imposed by the shipping trust, as well as have opened the markets of the world for the products now on dock in this country, glutting the markets and keeping prices down.

At the beginning of the war it cost about four cents a bushel to transport wheat from New York to Liverpool. The ocean freight rate now is 48 cents a bushel. You can readily see what this has cost our farmers.

The people have expressed themselves to the effect that they do not want and will not have ship subsidy. Private capital has failed to come to the relief of the shippers, so the call of the people is for a government operated or controlled merchant marine, useful in enlarging our markets in times of peace, and necessary as transports in times of war.

Will you put this problem up to republicans who have on other occasions favored subsidies, or taken no interest at all in the matter, or will you trust the working out of this measure to those who have shown their interest in it and their desire to give the people what they want?

The people want preparedness along reasonable lines. They want manufacture of war munitions so far as it is practical in government plants. President Wilson is on record for it.

European Policy.

The people want peace, and President Wilson is for peace, as has been demonstrated,—peace with honor,—but fight if we must and that is the position of all high minded citizens.

With all these important problems awaiting solution and completion,—with a president and a party in power who have been tried and found true to the will of the people,—who would for a minute think of changing the man at the helm? Service is what the people wish and not mere promises. They have had service at the hands of Woodrow Wilson and the responsibility is upon the democrats of Iowa to see that the people know the facts, and if you do, you need not fear the result.

I have tried to get a correct understanding of the position of those who complain of President Wilson's policy regarding the European situation. I confess I cannot learn just what it is.

For instance, I know a republican editor who is enthusiastically for Mr. Roosevelt because Roosevelt would "protect this country's interests," "he would be decisive," "he would allow no interference with the country's affairs," etc., yet this editor urges President Wilson to not press his demands in regard to the submarine policy of Germany and urges that President Wilson might be just a little more reasonable.

The Chicago Tribune represents a type of publication that is vicious in its attacks upon President Wilson. Nothing he can do is pleasing to them. His foreign policy is "weak," "all wrong," etc., but when he insists upon international law being upheld and American citizens safeguarded when traveling upon neutral ships, the

Tribune asks, "Are we to go to war simultaneously against both the central empires and the allies, for both sides have disregarded previously existing laws of the seas?"

No man, not excepting the editor of the Chicago Tribune, questions President Wilson's good faith and that his whole thought is of and for America. No one questions his honesty of purpose and his absolute neutrality and yet to create prejudice, to arouse suspicion, the Tribune goes so far as to cast reflection upon this government, which is as much the Tribune's government as it is President Wilson's, in the following taken from their columns: "If, however, the president's adamant stand towards Germany and flexible stand with the allies," etc. Shame on a respectable publication or an individual who will permit their partisanship to carry them so far. During months of patient negotiation when the president's whole purpose was to avoid war, avoid a clash with any and all of the belligerents, avoid being drawn into this awful world war that America's boys and America's resources might be preserved for purposes of peace, President Wilson has been accused of having no courage, charged with permitting insults and outrages upon our people, has been called puffy-footed and made subject to all manner of slurs and slander. Now after these months when he takes a position nothing like so aggressive as we have been told he should take, his position is termed "adamantine."

Preparedness.

The question of preparedness will enter into the campaign. My position is what I believe to be the position of all patriotic citizens, including both those who are for what is termed preparedness and those who are termed peace advocates. There are no peace-at-any-price people in the United States. There are but few who can honestly be called militarists. The American people are for a defense sufficient to protect this country against any invasion, to secure this country against any aggressor, whatever preparation may be necessary for that purpose. They are not for one ounce of powder nor a single gun to make war on any other nation, nor for the securing of a foothold in any other country. Granted this is the position of the American people, I am perfectly willing to leave the details, the working out of the plan, the perfecting of the whole scheme to any president the people of the United States may elect, be he democrat or republican. It becomes a practical matter for experienced men who have all the facts, a matter of experience and efficiency. My thought is that the \$250,000,000 per year we have been spending is sufficient. Possibly it will be found more money is necessary. If more money is necessary that we may be amply prepared to protect ourselves, the American people will gladly pay the bill, whatever it is, but they want nothing approaching militarism and they want one dollar in defense for each dollar spent. The purpose of the recent bill authorizing government manufacture of armor plate is to see the people get value received for money spent; another evidence of President Wilson's efforts in the people's interest and an answer to the charge that he is working for a program in the interest of the powder or armor ring.

Satisfy yourself from his past performance whether President Wilson is loyally serving you and every other citizen, and if you decide that he is, then trust him to do what in these matters he determines to be best for you and for me. We cannot have access to the information upon which he bases his actions. We cannot hope to give these matters the same close study, we cannot come in daily contact with the many departments manned by experts, as he does, so let's stand back of the president with full confidence that his every thought, every action, every impulse is to serve America and that means you and me. Ask the mothers of America if they approve President Wilson. How many of them, except for him, might be today in tears. It is easy to stand far off and criticize, but would you have had him do other than keep this country at peace? Every father and every mother in America today can well afford to stay a minute and send up a silent prayer in thankfulness for Woodrow Wilson and the fact that he has been at the helm in these troublous times. In the history of our country no other president has ever been obliged to carry a greater burden, if as great. Surely a divine providence rules in the affairs of this nation.

Let us weigh and value men and their motives and having tested them trust them. Let us not be influenced by partisanship; let us put country above party, and thereby serve that flag we love so well.

Let us in Iowa, when we view that flag, realize that each star represents a gem, a state in the great constellation of states. That it is not a piece of muslin alone, but that it stands for humanity, personal liberty, self-government, freedom. That one of those stars represents our own beloved Iowa,—that star which stands out a little brighter, a little warmer than all the rest. Let us see back of that star a myriad of bright lights, each light representing a fireside, a home in Iowa, hundreds of thousands of them, and let us do that thing which protects those homes, brings most of peace and joy, happiness and contentment, most of prosperity and good citizenship and an opportunity to grow in truth and right with proper regard for the rights of others and a determination to hold fast our own liberty.