

# The Responsibility Rests With You, Mr. Business Man

## A STRAIGHT TALK BY FRANK A. MUNSEY

The campaign is reaching the end. The issues are clearly and sharply drawn. You, Mr. Business Man, must line up either for good business or against it. There is no middle course. You cannot go on any longer balancing one problem against the other, or balancing prejudices against duty, and you have a very distinct duty to perform in this election.

For the most part, you of the business world are for Taft and the Republican party. For the most part, you of the business world are against Wilson and the Democratic party. You are for Taft and the Republican party because of your conviction that the Republican party stands for better business, safer business, and greater business confidence than the Democratic party. This is no new idea, no mere fancy with you. It has history to back it up, experience to back it up, and so you are justified in your attitude in this respect.

You want to see the Republican economic policies triumph in this election, and you want to see the Republican party triumph in this election. But you cannot have both. You can have the triumph of Republican policies, but you cannot have the triumph of the Republican party. It isn't possible this year. The question for you to decide is this:

Shall these policies be maintained through Roosevelt, or shall the election go to Wilson, with the destruction of these policies?

Your decision does not concern only you and your immediate interests. It concerns the interests and welfare and happiness of a hundred million human souls. It is a serious problem, which you cannot treat lightly if your citizenship means anything to you. I wish I could impress you with the measure of its seriousness.

The continuance in force of the economic policies of the Republican party, under which we have grown to be a great nation, means too much to be balanced against your likes or dislikes for any particular candidate—means too much, far and away too much, to justify you, Mr. Business Man, in contemplating their destruction that you may have your own way in this election, that you may vote for the man and for the party that suit your own particular preference, without regard to the effect on the country and the effect on all our people.

You must not forget that this is a bread-and-butter issue with the men less favorably situated in life than you are. You must not fool yourself into the belief that Taft can be elected. His election is out of the question.

If Mr. Taft had the great substratum of popular following that Mr. Roosevelt has, you could elect him. There can be no doubt of this. But he hasn't it. He has a top-heavy following, a business and professional men's following. The foundation of the party has slid out from under it. It stands today on stilts.

If Mr. Taft had had this popular following, there never would have been a contesting candidate in the field for the Republican nomination. It is because he did not have it, and because without it it was clear that he could not be elected, that some of us who wanted to see the economic policies of the Republican party maintained sought to put in nomination a man who could be elected.

This is the plain, straight fact about Mr. Roosevelt's coming out as a candidate. Any other version of the matter is without substance or foundation. Make no mistake about this.

Mr. Roosevelt has this foundational following in a greater measure than any other man in this country has it or has ever had it. Whether his following this year, independent of you of the business world, those of you who are opposed to him, is sufficient to elect him, is not yet certain. This vote cannot so easily be measured as the vote of the business world. But the popular sentiment for him, and indeed the intense belief in him and enthusiasm for him, are so great that it may be that in spite of all opposition they will sweep him into power. With your votes lined up for him, his election would be a certainty; without your votes it is not a certainty.

I want to emphasize the fact to my friends of the newspapers that I am not saying Mr. Roosevelt will not be elected. I don't know, and nobody does know at this time. My guess is, however, that he will be elected.

Mr. Roosevelt's election would mean the continuance in force of the best policies of the Republican party, would mean the establishment of a right tariff that will protect American industries, that will protect the American wage, and that will protect the American markets against invasion from abroad.

Of course I know you want this protection, of course I know you want good business and abundant prosperity, and of course I know you would like to see this country move forward in governmental efficiency rather than go backward. But the question is this:

Do you want these more than you want your own way?

With some of you business men with whom I have talked, and with whose views I am familiar, protection to our American industries and intelligent political progress mean little, in your present frame of mind, as compared with going through to the end on the Taft trail. Is this the best example of citizenship, Mr. Business Man?

I can understand how disturbing it is for a man

to vote against his party. But in this independence of action lies progress. There can be no political progress without it. Isn't the wise and patriotic thing in this case to make sure of prosperity, though the victory come through Roosevelt instead of Taft?

If this victory could come through Taft, you would not be in the political dilemma you are in today. Inasmuch as it cannot come through Taft, and inasmuch as the only way it can come is through Roosevelt, you have no option in the matter. It is either Roosevelt with good business and governmental progress, or Wilson with bad business and governmental shilly-shallying.

Every day I hear business men talking as they talked nine months ago, with seemingly little appreciation of what has happened in nine months in this national political contest.

It was all right nine months ago to discuss, with regard to their nomination, the merits of individual candidates and our preferences for or prejudices against them. It was all right then to urge that Mr. Roosevelt was dangerous to business interests; that he was ambitious; that he was without sufficient regard for conventionality in government, and for our constitution in particular, or that in becoming a candidate he was unfair to Mr. Taft.

It was all right then to urge that Mr. Taft was entitled to a second term; that he had given a good administration; that he had shown a full and becoming gratitude to the man who made him president of the United States. It was all right, I say, to insist on these views nine months ago, if you honestly believed them, but they are not the issue of today. To hark back to them now and hang the decision of your vote on them doesn't show clear or sincere reasoning. It shows either illogical thinking or a purpose to deceive yourself, if not to deceive others.

In these nine months we have lived half a century, politically considered. Then there were two big political parties in the field; today there are three. Then the fight in the Republican party was between two members of that party, Mr. Taft and Mr. Roosevelt.

That fight is now a dead issue. It is history. It has no more to do with the real fight of the present campaign than if it had come off a quarter of a century ago. The fight now, for you who believe in Republican economic policies, is against Wilson and the Democratic party. The fight now is for good business and for policies that will mean good business. The fight now is against the destruction of these policies.

The great, stubborn fact that you must reckon with is that Taft cannot, under any circumstances, be elected. There isn't an intelligent man anywhere who doesn't realize that this is so. Every man who can see straight and hear straight, every man who isn't befogged in prejudice, knows that it is so.

Notwithstanding this fact, the Republican campaign managers, in their public utterances, are brazenly giving the lie to their own convictions in their claims, now frantically spread broadcast, that Taft can and will be elected.

If it were a matter of running for the presidency of a social club, or some other place of no consequence to the hundred millions of our people, something of no consequence to the business interests of the country, it would be one thing, but when false statements like these are put out to deceive voters, merely that the Republican organization may be kept intact, it is criminally dishonest.

Your concern, Mr. Business Man, has to do mainly with good business and general prosperity. To sacrifice these to a prejudice for a beaten leader and a broken party is to prostitute the responsibility of citizenship and disregard the interests of your fellow men.

The Democratic party opposes a tariff as a protective measure—opposes a tariff that protects our industries, opposes a tariff that protects the American wage, and asserts, as it has always asserted, that if we are to have a tariff it should be as a revenue-raising scheme rather than as a means of protection.

Moreover, not only is it opposed to a worthwhile tariff, and to the economic policies under which we have recorded such marvelous prosperity, but it is archaic to a degree. It doesn't fit the period. It holds sacredly to the antiquated states' rights ideas, and opposes whatever looks to national bigness and national power.

It is charged by Mr. Roosevelt's enemies that he did nothing, when he was president, to remodel the tariff and eliminate its abuses. This is true, and the reason for it is that Mr. Roosevelt was doing bigger things at that time.

We were in a period of great national prosperity under the tariff as it then existed. If Mr. Roosevelt had found the country in the soup-house condition in which McKinley found it on taking over the reins of government after four years of Democratic rule, he would have jumped in on tariff legislation, and there would have been something doing. But since this was not the urgent call of the hour, he grappled the things that were crying to heaven for reform. He awakened the nation to a sense of civic righteousness, and forced through an unwilling congress reforms of the most important and most far-reaching character.

### HERE IS THE EVIDENCE WHICH SHOWS WHY ROOSEVELT HADN'T THE TIME FOR REFORMING THE TARIFF:

#### ROOSEVELT'S ACHIEVEMENTS.

1. Dilliver-Hepburn Railroad act, enabling the interstate commerce commission to control railroad rates.
2. Extension of forest reserve.
3. National Irrigation act.
4. Improvement of waterways and reservation of water-power sites.
5. Employers' Liability act.
6. Safety Appliance act.
7. Regulation of railroad employees' hours of labor.
8. Establishment of department of commerce and labor.
9. Pure Food and Drugs act.
10. Federal meat inspection.
11. Navy doubled in tonnage and greatly increased in efficiency.
12. Battleship fleet sent around the world.
13. State militia brought into co-ordination with army.
14. Canal zone acquired and actual work of constructing Panama canal begun.
15. Development of civil self-government in insular possessions.
16. Second intervention in Cuba; Cuba restored to the Cubans.
17. Finances of Santo Domingo straightened out.
18. Alaska boundary dispute settled.
19. Reorganization of the consular service.
20. Settlement of the coal strike of 1902.
21. The government upheld in Northern Securities decision.
22. Conviction of post office grafters and public land thieves.
23. Directed investigation of the sugar trust customs frauds and the resultant prosecutions.
24. Suits begun against the Standard Oil and tobacco companies and other corporations for violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust act.
25. Corporations forbidden to contribute to political campaign funds.
26. Keeping the door of China open to American commerce.
27. Bringing about the settlement of the Russo-Japanese war by the Treaty of Portsmouth.
28. Avoiding the threatened hostility created by Pacific coast prejudice against Japanese immigration.
29. Negotiating 24 treaties of general arbitration.
30. Reduction of the interest-bearing debt by more than \$90,000,000.
31. Inauguration of movement for conservation of natural resources.
32. Inauguration of the annual conference of governors of states.
33. Inauguration of movement for improvement of conditions of country life.

#### POLICIES URGED BY ROOSEVELT.

1. Reform of the banking and currency system.
2. Inheritance tax.
3. Income tax.
4. Passage of new Employers' Liability act.
5. Postal savings banks.
6. Parcels post.
7. Revision of the Sherman Anti-Trust act.
8. Legislation to prevent overcapitalization, stock watering, etc.
9. Legislation compelling incorporation under federal laws.

This is a matchless exhibit. Apart from war measures and activities, no president since the formation of our government has a record of achievements one-quarter as big as this. It is not only a long list of achievements, but they are great, human achievements of the most far-reaching character, achievements of masterly statesmanship. They mark an advancement of half a century over the individualism in high places and capitalistic powers that controlled the nation before his presidency.

This great work that he did is an accomplished fact. It will not have to be done over. If elected again, Mr. Roosevelt will find much to do in the way of reform and in advanced legislation, but not so much that he cannot give his time and energy to the outworking of a just and right tariff.

It is interesting to look back over the last nine months and note the changes of viewpoint that have come about with some of you business men. Nine months ago you were mildly opposed to Mr. Roosevelt and mildly for Mr. Taft. You have in the meanwhile worked up an amazing case in favor of the latter and an amazing case against the former.

The case for Taft isn't worth discussing, because Taft no longer counts in this election. The case against Roosevelt is worth discussing, because it isn't an honest case. It takes no note of the merits

of Mr. Roosevelt, but condemns him on quibbles and petty nothings—petty nothings as compared with his great qualities and his great record of achievements.

Of course, Mr. Roosevelt has faults, of course he makes mistakes, but the honest seeker after accurate measurements does not condemn a man on his faults and his mistakes alone. He condemns him only when these faults and mistakes are greater than his virtues and his merits. If the latter are conspicuously greater than the former, the margin of difference in his favor must be taken as the value of the man.

I submit to you if this is not the fair way to measure a man; I submit to you if this is not the way you would like to be measured yourself; I ask you what kind of showing you would make if measured by any other method, if measured alone by your faults, your mistakes, your shortcomings, and you have them, Mr. Business Man, as well as Mr. Roosevelt and the rest of us.

When the policies of a nation are involved in your attitude, policies that mean so much to a hundred million human souls, you cannot afford, as a good citizen, to curse a man out and condemn him and the organization back of him on quibbles and petty nothings. You have got to be fair with him, or you are not fair with yourself, and you are not fair with the people of the nation.

Above and beyond everything else, above and beyond every other consideration, some of you are out to smite Roosevelt, no matter what the consequences. But if, in smiting Roosevelt, you smash your own face, is it worthy of you, Mr. Business Man? Would you respect or compliment a man who did this sort of thing, if it didn't happen to be the very sort of thing you were doing yourself?

The problems before us are big in their outreach, so big that you cannot afford to let your prejudices stand in the way of doing in this election what will mean the greatest good to the greatest number, and the greatest good to the greatest number, as a matter of fact, means the greatest good to you, Mr. Business Man, and to you, Mr. Professional Man. You can have no permanent and worth-while prosperity except the people as a whole are prosperous and content.

I have said you are chiefly concerned with what meant good business and general prosperity. But what makes for good business is so broad a question that it cannot be determined from any one angle. That sound economic policies are vitally important, it is certain, but it is equally certain that other factors at this present juncture enter very largely into the problem—such factors as industrial evolution, social justice, and wise laws that are in step with the progress of the age, that are in step with the best constructive governmental theories of any nation in the world.

With your mind bent on business, with your craving for good business, many of you look for it only along the direct route. But it comes as well in other ways, comes from these other contributory causes. To forget these causes, to be indifferent to them, is to be asleep at the switch at this particular time of social unrest.

Never before in the history of this country, never before in the history of the world, has this unrest manifested itself in anything like the measure in which it is manifesting itself today. It is more than unrest; it is evolution bordering on revolution, and in very great measure is absolute socialism.

In some of the test ballots we have had thus far in this campaign, the vote for Debs, the Socialist candidate, is well in excess of the vote for Mr. Taft, and this vote will be so recorded at the polls in November. The growth of the Socialist vote will make you sit up and think, Mr. Business Man, but your think will come too late. You will have put yourself on record, and the record cannot be changed, neither can the party you have put in power be changed.

The best friend you have in this situation, Mr. Business Man, is Theodore Roosevelt. He more than any other man, stands between you and socialism. Roosevelt stands between you and socialism through the Progressive party, which recognizes the necessity of social reforms, recognizes the necessity of industrial evolution, recognizes the cry of the masses for the square deal, and he stands between you and socialism with a moral and mental courage that marks him a giant.

A weak man, or a man dead to the temper of the people, or a man standing unyieldingly on antiquated policies, prating about the constitution and all that, cannot cope with the situation that confronts us today.

The iron hand is powerless against an awakened and insistent nation; the great, strong, human hand alone can control and bring order out of disorder, bring harmony and good feeling out of bitterness and danger.

To think of good business without thinking of these contributory causes to good business on the one hand, these dangers to good business on the other hand—to think of good business without thinking of social justice, industrial evolution, and the measure of socialism that is gripping our country today, is to view the situation with the complacency with which the monarchy and aristocracy of France viewed the situation before the outbreak of the French revolution.