

BRYAN ANSWERS PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 28.—Defending his knowledge of Governor Haskell against the charges which have been brought against him "until the charges can be examined in some court where partisanship does not bias," William J. Bryan, democratic candidate for president, on his way from Madison to this city, Saturday night, gave out for publication his reply to President Roosevelt's recent letter, in response to his telegram on the subject. The letter follows:

Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 26, 1908.
Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir: While I have not yet received your letter and shall not until I reach home next week, I have read a copy of it in the press and beg leave to submit the following reply:

Mr. Haskell having voluntarily resigned from the committee that he might be more free to prosecute those who have brought charges against him, I need not discuss the question of his guilt or innocence further than to say that the public service which he has rendered and the vote of confidence from the people of his state ought to protect him from condemnation until the charges can be examined in some court where partisanship does not bias and where campaign exigencies do not compel prejudgment. I would not deem it necessary to address you further but for the fact that you seize upon the charges and attempt to make political capital out of them. You even charge that my connection with Mr. Haskell's selection as a member of the resolutions committee and as treasurer of the committee raises a question as to my sincerity as an opponent of trusts and monopolies. As an individual, and as the candidate of my party, I resent the charge and repel the insinuation. I have been in public life for 18 years and have been sufficiently conspicuous to make my conduct a matter of public interest. I have passed through two presidential campaigns in which party feeling ran high and epithets were exhausted. I have no hesitation in saying that you cannot find an act, a word or a thought of mine to justify your partisan charge.

Knew Haskell Only as Good Man.

I have never been informed of any charge that had been made against Mr. Haskell connecting him with the Standard Oil company or with any other trust. I had known him as a leader in the constitution of Oklahoma and had known him as one of the men principally responsible for the excellent constitution which has since been adopted by a majority of 100,000 70,000 of which was furnished by republicans. I had known his election to the governorship of that great young state by a majority of some 30,000; I had known that the constitution was adopted and that Governor Haskell was elected in spite of the efforts of your administration and in spite of the speeches made in Oklahoma by Mr. Taft.

Why Didn't Taft Denounce Him.

You say that it was a matter of common notoriety that Mr. Haskell was connected with the Standard Oil company.

I have a right to assume that if so serious an objection had existed to Mr. Haskell's election and had been a matter of common notoriety in Ohio as you say, Judge Taft would have felt it his conscientious duty to warn the people of Oklahoma when he spoke there. If he did not have the knowledge, why can it be assumed that I had it? And if he had it, how can you excuse his failure to communicate the information to the people of Oklahoma? If you feel it your patriotic duty to denounce Haskell when he is only a member of the national organization, how much would Mr. Taft have felt it his patriotic duty to denounce Mr. Haskell when he was aspiring to be the chief executive of a great state?

I could have had no knowledge of the suit to which you refer when he was appointed chairman of the resolutions committee of the democratic national convention, because the suit was begun while he was at Denver and as a matter of fact I did not know anything of the nature of the suit until he was made treasurer of the national committee and no fair-minded person can decide upon the merits of your charge without an examination of the provisions of the enabling act passed by the republican congress, and the provisions of the license of franchises issued to the oil company by your administration.

Outlook Story Has No Weight.

I need hardly refer to the newly found evidence upon which you lay so much stress, viz: the article in the Outlook of September 5. My attention was never called to that article until I read the published copy of your letter, and while I have great respect for the Outlook and I suppose I have for the writer (although you do not give his name) I would hardly feel justified in deciding as promptly as you do, on an ex parte statement, without investigation.

Says Criticisms Are Unjust.

You present an indictment against our platform declaration on the trust question, but you do not refer to all of the planks and do not deal justly with those to which you do refer. Our platform declares in favor of the vigorous enforcement of the criminal law against guilty magnates and officials. Your platform does not contain any such demand. Will you say that your platform is better than ours in that respect? Our platform demands that corporations beyond a certain size be compelled to sell at the same price in all parts of the country, due allowance being made for the cost of transportation. Will you deny that this is in the interest of the consumer and in the interest of the smaller competitors? We present a plan under which no corporation will be permitted to control more than one-half of

the total product. It has been stated that the steel company with your express consent, purchased one of its largest rivals and thus obtained control of more than 50 per cent of the total output. Will you insist that in permitting this you showed less favor to the monopolistic corporations than I do in opposing them? You quote at length from a speech made by Governor Hughes in which he ridicules one of our anti-trust remedies. Is this the same Governor Hughes who was counted as one of the "allies" who endeavored to defeat Mr. Taft, when, as you insisted, Mr. Taft represented the "reformers" of your party and his opponents the reactionary element? Did not Governor Hughes have the support of the New York delegation in the convention and is not New York the home of many republicans most conspicuous in their connection with the law defying corporations? You are certainly aware of the fact that in the statement filed by George R. Sheldon, treasurer of the republican state committee two years ago, after Mr. Hughes' election, it appears that the following contributions were made to the campaign fund: J. P. Morgan, \$20,000; John D. Rockefeller, \$5,000; Andrew Carnegie, \$5,000; Charles M. Schwab, \$2,000; John W. Gates, \$2,000; W. E. Corey, \$2,000; W. Nelson Cromwell, \$1,000; W. F. Havemeyer, \$800; B. M. Duke, \$500. Several of these are known to be officially connected with the trusts. Would the fact that these gentlemen contributed to his campaign fund strengthen or weaken his testimony against the reasonableness of our anti-trust remedy?

You cannot have failed to notice that Governor Hughes in his speech assumed the role of the critic and not that of the constructive statesman. Any one possessing vivid imagination and a pen can find objections to remedial measures. Lord Macaulay is quoted as saying that eloquent and learned men could be found to dispute the law of gravitation if there were any advantage to be gained by it. But when "known abuses" are to be cured, an ounce of remedy is worth a pound of fault-finding.

As you quote from Governor Hughes, I take it for granted that Mr. Taft has not yet expressed himself in a satisfactory manner on the subject for you would naturally prefer to quote from the presidential candidate wherever possible.

Trusts Behind Taft.

You say, "let us repeat that no law defying corporation has any other reason to fear from you save what it will suffer in the general paralysis of business," etc. Referring to the last part of the sentence first, I might question your ability to act as an expert as to panic preventives, since you now have one on your hands, but as to your charges that no law defying remedies which I favor, permit me to suggest that your testimony on this subject is not conclusive. You are a witness, to be sure, but your interest in the result of the election must be taken into consideration in weighing your testimony. There is better evidence. The trust magnates know their own interests in the result of the election must be taken into consideration and they are supporting Judge Taft. Not one of the trust magnates helped to secure my nomination, while it is a matter of "common notoriety" that they were conspicuous in the republican convention and it is equally a matter of "common notoriety" that they are supporting your party in the campaign. If you will name a single official connected with "a law defying corporation," monopoly or trust, who has declared or will declare that he is supporting me, I will publicly warn him that I will enforce against him the present criminal law and will enforce against him also the laws demanded in the democratic platform as soon as these laws can be enacted.

Returns to Public Question.

But there is another fact that raised a presumption in favor of our party and against your party. I referred to it in my former letter to you, but you inadvertently overlooked it in your reply, and the members of your cabinet, called in for consultation, evidently did not notice it. I stated that we had not knowingly received a dollar from any official connected with a corporation known as a trust and that any money so received would be returned as soon as we received knowledge of the fact. I now remind you that your convention deliberately rejected, by a vote of 9 to 1, the plank favoring publicity as to campaign contributions. Mr. Taft has repudiated the action of the convention and rebuked the members of the convention by declaring himself in favor of a publicity law, but he favors publicity after the election, while we favor publicity before the election. Which do you regard as the better plan—to let the people know before the election what influences are at work or let them know after the election?

Will Not Before Election.

Are you willing to say that any public interest was served in 1904 by concealing until after the elections the contributions made to the republican campaign committee by Mr. Harriman and those collected by him from others? Are you willing to say that the publication before the election of the contributions then made would have had no effect on the election. As I have said, we shall publish the names of contributors above \$100. Will you ask your national committee to publish before the election the contributions above \$100? Or, if you regard this too small a sum, take contributions above \$1,000 or, if this also is too small, take contributions above \$10,000? If not, what reason can you give to the public for not doing so? I insist that our willingness to let the public know the sources from which we receive contributions raises a pre-

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