

# THE CAPITAL JOURNAL

L. HOFER, Ed. and Prop.

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### OUR NATIONAL TICKET

For President  
**WILLIAM H. TAFT,**  
 of Ohio  
 For Vice President  
**JAMES S. SHERMAN,**  
 of New York.

## THE OPEN FORUM

### Did Debs Say It?

Editor Journal:  
 In his Sunday morning sermon, one of our city ministers quoted Mr. Debs as saying, "Damn the American flag." When asked his authority for the allegation, the minister named another minister as his informant.

Now, having some personal knowledge of Mr. Debs, and being entirely familiar with the spirit of Socialism as voiced by him, I am quite prepared to challenge the statement. The thing is unreasonable. It is neither good sense, good policy, nor good Socialism; and Mr. Debs is not a fool.

Tell us, Mr. Accusing Minister, where, and when, and under what circumstances Mr. Debs cursed the flag—do this, or stand accused of a dastardly act.  
 Any cheap skate may circulate campaign yarns for political effect, but naturally we expect something better from a preacher. To use the pulpit to defame, and to destroy one's good name, is mean and cowardly in the extreme.

L. D. RATLIFF,  
 Salem, Oct. 11, 1908.

Editor Journal:

To you and through the medium of The Journal, this open letter is indited to the governor and people of Oregon.

When a small boy, I sat on the front seat in the Ridge school house in Illinois and listened, spell-bound as our star declaimed, Eddy O'Neil, with protruding eyes, dishevelled hair and clenched fists, recited Patrick Henry's address before the Virginia assembly, and when the climax, "Give me liberty, or give me death" was reached, how my young heart was thrilled! How proud I was that I was born in the land of liberty—"The home of the brave and the free." How I wished I could have been with those who led the charge at Bunker Hill or have had the glory of leaving the prints of my bloody feet with the heroes who froze and starved at Valley Forge. I then did now within myself fas you and all

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his slaves stood around below him crying: "Christmas gift, Masa! Christmas gift, Masa!" Was that picture a prophecy of us? Does the added toll on this year's apple crop inspire the governor with hope; or does the memory of our idle sawmills and men begging work last winter inspire him, caused by the simple fact that when the evil spirit came upon Saul all he had to do was to telegraph to his freight agent, raise the freight on lumber, and the busy hum of every sawmill was hushed? Or is it the manner in which he bids one man or firm do business while cars are denied his competitor, just because it suits his own good pleasure? Why this childish glee when some railroad magnate or one of his officials choose to make a trip through Oregon, and our papers, the moulders of our thought, proclaim with childish hope "Oh! I bet he has a railroad in his pocket for us." Just as my brother, sister and I used to swing on the front gate years ago waiting for our father to come home from town, and as soon as he came within hearing, greet him with "Oh, papa! have you some candy in your pockets for us?" "God helps him who helps himself" is fully verified by the owners of our railroads. Is it not time that we try to help ourselves and merit some of Jehovah's help? Governor, we have all been asleep. Let us wake up read Patrick Henry's speech and cry "To Arms! To Arms! Why stand we here like bloodhounds in the lurch." Is railroad building so momentous as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? You are in your exalted position not at the behest of any clique or faction, but because the people of Oregon irrespective of party, choose you to lead them, believing in you they had a champion worthy of the great country in which we live. The time is opportune, all conditions auspicious. Tell the people of Coos Bay, of eastern Oregon, of Idaho, aye, of all the northwest, "Be of good cheer." That hereafter we will bow the knee to none but our God; and with full reliance on his assistance and guidance we will build our own railroads.

Some timid person may ask "Can we do it?" I reply with the words of Eathan Allen at Ticonderoga, "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the state of Oregon—YES." If Harriman can do it, why cannot the state of Oregon do it with 650,000 people; with millions of acres, with billions of lumber, with billions of coal, grain, wool, fruit and everything that demands a railroad and makes a railroad profitable. If we build it for ourselves we do it as a legitimate and proper thing to do to make available the land we own and to enhance its value. As any thrifty property holder would improve his property. If Harriman builds from Coos Bay to Ontario, he will do it for the return it will bring in dollars and cents, not for any love of Oregon. If we build it, it will be for the good of and glory of Oregon, and to Oregon will recoup the benefits.

Let us look at my native state, Illinois, for example. In her infancy the farmers on her broad prairies could heap their granaries with grain, but it availed them nothing. Though Ireland might be starving for corn, the contents of the fat cribs of Illinois, could not be carried to them. At this juncture the state (led I believe by the power from on high—for the good of the words hungry millions) came to the help of the farmer and dug a canal from Chicago to the Illinois river, thus bringing the corn heaped on her prairies to the markets of the world. How Illinois has been blessed, I need not write. There came a time when the borrowed money must be returned. It was hard to raise and some of her so-called statesmen said "Because a state cannot be compelled to pay, we will repudiate our debt." Not so all her statesmen. A young man arose in the legislature and within inspired eloquence told of the benefits to Illinois and to humanity resulting from the canal; that the sons of Illinois, proud of their state and her honor would pay every cent. And she did. To her glory be it said she was the first state in the Union to be out of debt. He who so opportunely championed her honor, was honored by the proud state with every office in her gift, and he would have been honored by the nation with the presidency had not Illinois had another son who stood for a still larger meas-

ure of human liberty than did Douglas, "the little giant."

If Illinois could dig her canal, thus furnishing to the hungry millions of the world the bounteous providence of her fat prairies, why could not Oregon build her railroads from Coos Bay to Ontario, thus carrying to the freezing of eastern Oregon, Idaho and Washington who suffer for the want of fuel, the supply that an all-wise creator stored for them ages ago in Coos Bay?

Timid, weak-minded gentlemen might again interpose: "We are weak, too poor to build a railroad in opposition to the great railroad magnates." I reply: Sir, that is the very best argument that can be advanced for our build the road. If we are weak, it is because of inaction; if we are poor, it is because we have let others heap up the riches that might have been ours. But shall we become stronger by continued inaction? Shall we become rich by permitting all our rights and privileges to be usurped by others?

I repeat, the occasion is auspicious, time is opportune, Coos Bay, the valley eastern Oregon and Idaho all need this railroad. It parallels no other; the various portions of the territory to be reached mutually need what the others can supply. Then why hesitate? The products to be shipped and the markets for them are both in sight, to say nothing of the markets beyond our borders. It will cost millions, but what of that; it will be worth far more than it cost.

Governor, come to the help of the weak against the mighty; if necessary call an extra session of the legislature; get authority to build a railroad from Coos Bay to Ontario; others encouraged by our example will continue it ad infinitum. The tyrants will oppose you and do all the evil they can, as was done when Jackson took the United States' money from the rapacious National banks of his day. He succeeded, as right always will and must succeed; as you will succeed if you strike the blow.

The opportunity is yours, governor, lead the state of Oregon into the full light of state ownership of state utilities in behalf of and for the people of Oregon—not Oregon only, but the whole United States. Then that crown of glory that a ransomed nation affectionately placed on the head of the father of his country, that crown that so aptly became the brow of Lincoln, the restorer of his country, will be worn by you, the people's knight, who sword in hand, wrested from our barons the American magna charta, thus preserving to the people the liberties for which our fathers died.

Governor, shall we crown you?  
 J. S. TAIT.

### POLITICAL POTPIE.

The American electorate is not divided into groups to be handed over to candidates boldly by masters. That is true of the labor vote, the capitalist vote, the Jewish vote, the Christian vote, the negro vote, the white vote. There is no Pretorian guard on the quarter deck of our ship of state.

The explorations of Traveler Bryan into the enemy's country are giving him vivid impressions of its extent and hostility.

Bryan will be convinced for the third time in November that this country has got the habit.

"One step upon another and the longest walk is ended." The stony progress of Mr. Taft toward the White House, however, is quickening beyond the speed of a walk.

Georgians should vote for Bryan, even though they do not favor him personally, for the sake of the integrity of the Democratic party in this state.—Macon (Ga.) Telegraph. There is faint Democratic support for you!

Bryan cries out for the organization of Democratic clubs. There are precincts where they could not officer, much less man, such an organization.

A congressman returned to President Roosevelt a hat inadvertently borrowed, but Mr. Roosevelt is content, as is the country, that Mr. Taft shall step in his shoes.

Speech is silver, but the golden truths uttered by Judge Taft will maintain parity and maintain Republican doctrine as the sound basis of political value.

It is instructive to observe thousands of wage earners whose votes Gompers has assumed to "throw" to Bryan march in the Taft processions.

A murdering Filipino has been sentenced to pay a fine and to be executed. His feelings much resemble those of a Democrat asked for a campaign contribution.

Political revolutions cast shadows before. The Republican west, golden with sunshine and fat with harvests, throws no sinister portent of departure from its happy union with Ohio and New York.

Bryan is as shy about his abandoned issues as are some stars in the theatrical firmament about the matrimonial alliances they have severed.

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