

Platform written by
Willis J. Abbott.

This is the copy of platform
which was read by Lawson
Purdy Oct 5th 1897 at Cooper
Institute when Henry George was
nominated for Mayor -

Moved by Willis J.
Mr. Abbott

Recorded by Mr. ^{ag} Boulton
~~Mr. [unclear]~~

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRATS OF GREATER NEW YORK

WE, democrats of Greater New York, in mass meeting assembled do reaffirm our adherence to the creed of democracy as set forth in the platform adopted by the national convention of the democratic party in Chicago, July 9, 1896; we declare our allegiance to the principles enunciated in that document, pronouncing them the formal expression of the spirit of true democracy, and we point, in corroboration of this belief, to the fact that the mere promulgation of these doctrines drove from the democratic party those who, for corrupt, mercenary or ambitious ends, had striven to make it a menace to the rights and liberties of the people rather than their defender.

We declare that since the so-called regular democratic organizations of Greater New York have in defiance of precedent and in cowardly subjection to the undemocratic forces of monopoly and corrupt wealth, refused to reaffirm the Chicago platform, or to make a single reference to these cardinal principles of democracy which have obtained since the time of Thomas Jefferson, there is no regular democratic candidate for Mayor of Greater New York now in nomination, nor will be until after the candidate chosen by this meeting shall have accepted the trust which we shall lay upon him.

We send our greeting to the gallant leader of the democratic party, William Jennings Bryan, and we applaud the earnestness of purpose, the indomitable courage and the fidelity to the principles of his party which have made him a beacon to which democrats may turn with confidence for guidance and for light when leaders about them waver or desert.

We declare the true purpose of government to be the maintenance of that sacred right of property which gives to every one opportunity to employ his labor and security that he shall enjoy its fruits; to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak and the unscrupulous from robbing the honest; and to do for the equal benefit of all such things as can be better done by organized society than by individuals; and we aim at the abolition of all laws which give to any class of citizens advantages either judicial, financial, industrial or political that are not equally shared by all others.

We declare that the functions of street railway transportation, the lighting of the streets and homes of the people, whether by gas or electricity, the carriage of the people by ferries about the waterways of Greater New York, the facilitation of the interchange of speech by telephones or telegraphs, are all purely municipal functions, things which can better be done by organized society than by individuals; we insist that the present system of delegating these functions to corporations has resulted in a heavy sacrifice of public wealth and convenience, the practice of extortion upon citizens compelled to enlist the services of these corporations, and the creation of powerful monied interests which, enjoying rich public grants, systematically employ every art of corruption in politics to control the city government for their own profit. We declare it, then, essential to the purification of politics and to the protection of the citizen against taxation, which is none the less compulsory because collected by private corporations for private profit, that the street railways, gas and electric lighting plants, ferries, telephones and telegraphs of Greater New York should be owned by the people and administered by and for the people.

Recognizing the need for some immediate relief for the citizens from the extortions of corporations enjoying municipal monopolies, we demand the compulsory reduction by the law-making power of the State of the price of gas to one dollar or less per thousand feet, and of street car fares to a just and reasonable point.

Greater New York, stupendous in population, magnificent in wealth, enjoying a situation of unparalleled natural beauty, the gateway to a continent which is endowed with unsurpassed natural resources, should be in all respects worthy of its situation and its place among the great cities of the world. We hold it is the duty of the authorities of a municipality to make it beautiful as well as clean, safe and healthful. We point to the fact that if the city representing all the people is poorer by far than a few of its people, it is because from the public treasury has been diverted wealth which justly belongs to all, but which has unrighteously been given to the few. We believe that the reassumption of this wealth through wise, equitable and scientific taxation will provide a fund which may be employed

in the extension of the city's park area, in the beautifying of its water front, in the broadening and adornment of its streets, in the multiplication of its libraries, museums and institutions for the free education of its citizens. We declare that such a system of taxation will enhance the material prosperity of the individual citizen while vastly increasing the number of public conveniences which the people in the aggregate will enjoy. And we promise that the success of our nominee will mark the beginning of the effort to secure for all the people that access to beauty and to education now enjoyed only by the wealthy few, and the creation of a more wealthy, more refined, more beautiful and more contented, as well as a Greater New York.

Every denial to a municipality of the fullest right of self-government results in encroachment upon the liberties of the citizen. The evil of the domination of Greater New York by lawmakers who are not residents of that city, and by a legislative body which exists to govern a State and not a municipality, we emphatically denounce, and we point to the Raines excise law as a typical outgrowth of that evil. By that law the liberty of the citizen is invaded, gross discrimination is made between the rich and the poor, as liquor dealers and as liquor users equally, a premium is put on hypocrisy, and vice is encouraged. And demanding emphatically the repeal of this law, we demand equally the repeal of all laws which, like it, deny the fullest individual liberty to all.

Deploring with full hearts the massacre at Hazleton, Pa., of a score of workingmen who were shot down for exercising their natural right to use the public highways for orderly procession, we call the attention of the people of New York to the fact that the execrable perversion of law by which that bloody deed was given a hollow semblance of legality exists equally in this city. We demand recognition of the right of the people to assemble peaceably, to use the streets for orderly passage in throngs as well as individually, and to speak as they will the political convictions which possess them. And especially do we denounce the interference with these rights by the mandatory order of a court, issued after an *ex parte* hearing, and the disregard of which results in the denial to the citizen who has asserted his historic rights, opportunity to defend himself before a jury of his peers.

Whether exercised by a Federal or a State court, government by injunction is hateful, un-American, and in flagrant violation of the principles of individual liberty which our forefathers defended with their blood wherever despotism was combated with the sword.

And finally we declare that this mass meeting was made necessary by the denial to the people of the right of self-government by men who, having seized the machinery of the democratic party organization, believed themselves able to dictate to the citizens of Greater New York not only their rulers, but the very political questions with which they may occupy their thoughts. We are here to demonstrate that what democrats shall or shall not think and speak of is not to be determined on English race tracks, nor in secret conclaves of self-constituted bosses. We are here to declare that only by wresting control of the democratic party from the hands of the paid agents of monopolistic millionaires can the city control the corporations, and not the corporations the city. No ticket nominated in an undemocratic way can be a democratic ticket; no declaration of principles cunningly devised to meet the petty political needs of the moment can be democratic. We pledge ourselves to restore to the individual that right of political initiative and action which long has been denied him in this city, and we proffer our declaration of principles and our candidates as those of the Jeffersonian Democracy of New York.