

Chicago. April. 6/92

Hon. Albion W. Tourgee

Dear Sir

Kind. Enclosed. Clipping
Containing. Resolutions
and. Platform of Peoples
Party. You can see the
Good. work that was ac-
-complished at the St
Louis. Conference. Where I
Attended as. a. delegate
Representing my Local
Assembly. No 8286. Hgh
I have not wrote to you since
Receiving the. set of Resolutions
you was so kind to send
me. for which I am un-
-der many obligations to
you. I did hope that you
would have advised the

Colored people to join
The industrial movement
Mr. Youse. lecture here on
29th of last month. I
would have requested you
to have did so. But I
thought it would not
be proper for me to do so
I would like to hear from
you in regard to. inclosed
articles I send you
As a. Knight of Labor
as an Afro American
teetzer. as a lover of
the ~~illustrious~~.

Wm Lloyd Garrison
Who is our Patron Saint
Having named our
assembly in honor of one
of the many dependents of
My Race. Every Member
would be pleased to have

Your Views on the
Results of the Conference
So far as the Platform
And its Principles are
Concerned. of course
I know you are too
Staunch a Republican
To change your Political
Views. But on the face
of the Platform what
do you think of the
Republican Party

in hopes of hearing
from you soon. I
will close by

Remaining yours
in the cause of Finance
Land and Transportation
and Labor Reform

W. E. Turner. 44. n. State St.

PREAMBLE AND DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

OF THE

KNIGHTS OF LABOR

The alarming development and aggressiveness of the power of great capitalists and corporations under the present industrial system will inevitably lead to the pauperization and hopeless degradation of the toiling masses. It is imperative, if we desire to enjoy the full blessings of life, that unjust accumulation and this power for evil of aggregated wealth shall be prevented. This much-desired object can be accomplished only by the united efforts of those who obey the divine injunction: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Therefore we have formed the Order of the Knights of Labor for the purpose of organizing, educating and directing the power of the industrial masses.

It is not a political party, it is more—for in it are crystallized sentiments and measures for the benefit of the whole people; but it should be borne in mind, when exercising the right of suffrage, that most of the objects herein set forth can only be obtained through legislation, and that it is the duty, regardless of party, of all to assist in nominating and supporting with their votes such candidates as will support these measures. No one shall, however, be compelled to vote with the majority.

Calling upon all who believe in securing "the greatest good to the greatest number" to join and assist us, we declare to the world that our aims are:

I. To make industrial and moral worth, not wealth, the true standard of individual and national greatness.

II. To secure to the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create; sufficient leisure in which to develop their intellectual, moral and social faculties; all of the benefits, recreations and pleasures of association; in a word, to enable them to share in the gains and honors of advancing civilization.

In order to secure these results, we demand at the hands of the law-making power of State and nation:

III. The establishment of Bureaus of Labor Statistics, that we may arrive at a correct knowledge of the educational, moral and financial condition of the laboring masses.

IV. That the land, including all natural sources of wealth, is the heritage of all the people, and should not be subject to speculative traffic. Occupancy and use should be the only title to the possession of land. Taxes upon land should be levied upon its full value for use, exclusive of improvements, and should be sufficient to take for the community all unearned increment.

V. The abrogation of all laws that do not bear equally upon capitalists and laborers, and the removal of unjust technicalities, delays and discriminations in the administration of justice.

VI. The adoption of measures providing for the health and safety of those engaged in mining, manufacturing and building industries, and for indemnification to those engaged therein for injuries received through lack of necessary safeguards.

VII. The recognition, by incorporation, of orders and other associations organized by the workers to improve their condition and to protect their rights.

VIII. The enactment of laws to compel corporations to pay their employes weekly, in lawful money, for the labor of the preceding week, and giving mechanics and laborers a first lien upon the product of their labor to the extent of their full wages.

IX. The abolition of the contract system on national, State and municipal works.

X. The enactment of laws providing for arbitration between employers and employed, and to enforce the decision of the arbitrators.

XI. The prohibition, by law, of the employment of children under fifteen years of age; the compulsory attendance of school at least ten months in the year of all children between the ages of seven and fifteen years; and the furnishing of free text-books at the expense of the State.

XII. To prohibit the hiring out of convict labor.

XIII. That a graduated income tax be levied.

XIV. The establishment of a national monetary system, in which a circulating medium in necessary quantity shall issue directly to the people, without the intervention of banks; that all the national issue shall be full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private; and that the government shall not guarantee or recognize any private banks or create any banking corporations.

XV. That interest-bearing bonds, bills of credit, or notes shall never be issued by the government, but that, when need arises, the emergency shall be met by issue of legal-tender, non-interest-bearing money.

XVI. That the importation of foreign labor under contract be prohibited.

XVII. That, in connection with the postoffice, the government shall organize financial exchanges, safe deposits and facilities for deposits of savings of the people in small sums.

XVIII. That the government shall obtain possession, by purchase, under the right of eminent domain, of all telegraphs, telephones and railroads; and that hereafter no charter or license be issued to any corporation for construction or operation of any means of transporting intelligence, passengers or freight.

XIX. That all laws shall originate with the people and be voted on and approved by them before being finally passed upon by Congresses and Legislatures.

And while making the foregoing demands upon the State and national government, we will endeavor to associate our own labors:

XX. To establish co-operative institutions, such as will tend to supersede the wage-system, by the introduction of a co-operative industrial system.

XXI. To secure for both sexes equal rights.

XXII. To gain some of the benefits of labor-saving machinery by a gradual reduction of the hours of labor to eight per day.

XXIII. To persuade employers to agree to arbitrate all differences which may arise between them and their employes, in order that the bonds of sympathy between them may be strengthened and that strikes may be rendered unnecessary.

If you believe in organization, you are earnestly invited to join with us in securing these objects. All information on the subject of organization should be sent to JNO. W. HAYES, General Secretary-Treasurer, Lock Box 885, Philadelphia, Pa., who will have an Organizer visit you and assist in furthering the good work.

CHICAGO, Ill., December 19, 1891.

To All Honest Workingmen and Women, Greeting:

Believing that the time has come when experience has taught the workingmen and women of Chicago the need of compact and effective organization and the unwisdom of isolation and of spasmodic or disconnected efforts for the betterment of their condition, a number of earnest Knights of Labor have met and organized a Volunteer Board of Organization. The object of this Board is to lay before the workingmen and workingwomen of our city, in a plain, straightforward and truthful way, the need of organization and its benefits. Without seeking to detract from or disparage in any degree the efforts and work of other organizations, and without any wish or intention to antagonize or interfere with any other organized body, we believe we are justified by the facts and by the history of the labor movement in saying that the Order of the Knights of Labor has done and is doing more for the elevation of the workers and the betterment of their condition than any other movement by creating a healthy public opinion on the subject of labor.

On the other side you will find the Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the Order, and we invite your thoughtful consideration of the same. You will see that the Order recognizes that the causes which bring about the degradation of labor are deep-seated, and that consequently the ultimate cure for the evils of which we complain is only to be wrought out by the united efforts of good men intelligently directed. Mainly, this cure must be effected at the ballot-box and in the halls of legislation. The Order, therefore, though not a political party nor a partisan organization, is still in a very real and true sense political. It demands that moral worth and not wealth shall be the true standard of national and individual greatness. If you who read this should decide to join our ranks, you will be expected to come under our shield with an honest determination to hold the welfare of the working classes greater than the success of any political party. You are not asked to take any pledge which will interfere with or in any degree prevent the proper and conscientious discharge of your duties as a citizen or to religion, nor to do anything which honor and conscience will not approve. Politically, you will be expected to work for the enactment into law of such of the demands in our platform as are to be won by legislation. And you will be expected to do this in the way that the best judgment of yourself and your comrades will approve, but always as lawful and law-abiding citizens, as careful of the liberty of others as determined to maintain your own. But while, politically, we demand all the reforms that justice can ask for and all the justice that reform can give, the Knights of Labor are as earnest and as active in promoting the present welfare of those who work for wages. We do not approve of strikes and are loth to resort to the boycott to enforce our demands for justice and to resist oppression. We always stand ready to submit matters in dispute between ourselves and our employers to an impartial arbitration; but if occasion arises and peaceful means are ineffectual or impossible, our Order does not hesitate to use the power of its organization to secure justice for its members.

Capital has, and under the wage-system must ever have, advantages over labor. To capital idleness means only present loss, often certain to be made up in the future. To labor it means want, perhaps suffering and starvation. Such an advantage on the side of capital places the workers, if unorganized, or even if organized, in disjointed groups at the mercy of the employer. Only in organization of the wealth-producers, and that organization which embraces all trades and useful callings, can the workers find the strength necessary to meet capital on something like an even footing. Our system of Local, District, State and National Trade Assemblies, each absolutely self-governed, untrammled and uncontrolled in the conduct of its own affairs, but centered in a General Assembly, to secure united and concerted action, is beyond all dispute the best system of organization the world has yet seen to marshal the forces and render effective the strength of the workers. No organization has won for the working classes so much in the way of better remuneration and improved conditions, though it has been assailed with a virulence and a determination to destroy it such as no other organization has ever encountered. From every point of view the Knights of Labor plan is the most effective, and, as it is better understood, it will gain in favor and eventually gather to its standard the best in the land. Old-time remedies are powerless now, old-time conditions have changed, old-time systems have given way to new and more powerful ones. It is not in dividing off in separate camps we are to gain victories. We are living in the high-noon of the nineteenth century, and civilization is marching onward. We must go with it and utilize it.

In conclusion, there are two forces at work organizing this nation to-day—one is capital, the other industry. If the former succeed the latter will live in slavery and progress will end, for progress never yet came from the rich. If organized on industrial lines, capital will be safe and labor will be honored, for there will no longer be a labor question—the problem of industry will have been solved.

If you are prepared to do faithful, honest work on behalf of yourself and fellows, if you are prepared to be loyal and true to the great cause for which our noble Order stands, you will be welcomed to our ranks.

For information address:

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