Fred A. Thomas Esq

Dear Sir: I have your issue of the 17th. Allow me to thank you for your editorial — not for myself, for I am but an atom in the great of our citizenship whose rights and interest depend upon the people of the country taking earnest hold of the matter of self-government. The vitality of our American institutions is endangered by the shirking of responsibility on the part of the people and the assumption of power by little

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

~~groups~~ cliques in every town and neighborhood who assume to be licensed, ~~[illegible]~~ their neighbor political ~~thought~~ duty, authorized in the name of a party to restrain by any sort of trickery, dictation or corruption the free action of the people. ~~In my view, it is better that the people should be sometimes do wrong of their own motion than to sometimes achieve right, through such unworthy restriction~~. It is my opinion, however, that the will of

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

of the people is seldom wrong when it represents aggregate individual conviction; while when it is clamored and manufactured it is rarely right. ~~A citizen~~ A citizen may well bow to the will of a majority; but a manufactured opinion of party will secured by purchase or ~~manufacture~~ is entitled to only to the contempt and disgust which attends a purchased verdict.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

It is really the liberty and manhood of the citizen which the "boss" sells to the "little boss" and the "little boss" to the "big boss" and the "big boss" to the aspirant for power or plunder.

With such an overwhelming form of intelligence and conscience as we have in this community our political condition should be a model one for the whole country. I have no doubt it will be certain the individual manhood is awaken

to the fact that the partisan serves his party best who keeps it clean and true to those principles and earnest in the promotion of those tendencies which represent the ~~better~~ practical assertion of individual rights and the better=ment of universal conditions. A party is simply an instru=ment, for the expression of the individual will of its mem=bers; whenever that will is sup=pressed or falsified, it be=

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

the most dangerous of typ=
anies. Populism at the work
and independent political action
at the east, are in the main, an
expression of dissatisfaction with
the ~~suppressed~~ restraint of the voter
through organized "bossism" and
general conviction of the dangerous
tendency of present conditions.

~~I am not alone in the~~

As a Republican, I am clearly con=
vinced that it is my individual
duty to help uphold the rank
and file of ~~the~~ my party to the danger
likely to arise from these tendencies.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

I believe this a quicker and more effective method of securing such results than by resorting to a new party with its uncertain alliances which are always needful to give such a party control.

I am not alone in this conviction. While the spirit of unrest which is always the precursor of better things, is moving among the people, those who are the wisest and most far-sighted of Republican leaders are working not to the danger

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2015

to the party and the country, of
their tendencies. "Copeyism" with all
its absurdities, has opened many
eyes to the existence of strange
conditions. He will never ac-
complish anything, any more
than John Brown did at
Harper's Ferry, but it cannot
help but awaken others to the
need of doing those things which
will prevent its spread among the
people whose sympathy
is being stirred to approve of some
of its proposed objects, though they

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY

may ~~have no regard~~ regard with apprehension of its methods.

It may interest you to read an extract from a letter just received from a ~~men~~ Republican of prominence, ~~who has is a Member in a~~ who is a member of the National Republican Executive Committee in another State. I would like to give you his name, but though his letter is not marked confidential I presume it was intended to be so, and while I would not hesitate to show it to a friend I would not wish to make it public.

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

He says:

I fully agree with you that there is another irreprensible conflict before us. Populism in its essence is a protest against bonism and misrule. The wild ideas on the ~~[illegible]~~ money question are the result of ~~[illegible]~~ depression, harsh conditions, and the tendency of established parties to shirk ~~[illegible]~~ action on new questions.

(copy from a to b)

~~These ideas are not~~ He goes on to discuss the duty of the Republican party, as a party of the people, to find

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

remedies for these conditions which shall be just, easy and gradual in their operations rather than ~~that~~ permit discontent to ripen until knock and revolutionary ones are forced upon us.

The first step in any such movement in order to render it effective must be the emancipation of the voter from the dictation of the self-constituted managers of party. When such men recognize both the evil and its cure it is evident that the time is not far distant when an effective remedy will be found

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

and applied.

I must beg you pardon for addressing you so freely; but it is a time when earnest men should speak frankly to each other. I believe we are on the eve of a great revolution in public sentiment, in regard both to individual duty and party duty, and I believe it will be especially marked in this region because the evils of both have been peculiarly pronounced here. I hope it will not come by any change of parties. I look with

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

dread to such radical revolutions
and hurl it will come, instead,
through the emancipation of the voters
and the reawakening of the Republican
party to a new sense of our
~~duty~~ obligation to secure
the rights and ~~promote the~~ ameliorate harsh conditions.

Sincerely yours,

Albert J. Beveridge

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 20