

The New Emancipation: Campaign Speech
at the Hippodrome, New York City
(October 4, 1908)

How deeply I am touched by the kind and gracious and appreciative words which have been spoken by the comrade who has preceded me, and how fully I appreciate this very cordial reception and this splendid demonstration of good will, I shall not now attempt to say. There is nothing that is grander or more inspiring than the awakening of the working class.

We have a truly magnificent demonstration of it here this afternoon. This audience is so vast, this assemblage is so great that it is bewildering and overwhelming, and it seems almost like audacity to stand in its presence. But it is the same everywhere — the spirit of socialism is abroad in the land and rousing the people from their slumber. Two weeks ago we were on the Pacific coast and the outpourings there were so vast that the largest auditoriums had not half capacity to hold them.

A Marvelous Age

It is our good fortune, whatever our lot may be, to live in the most marvelous age known to history. The discovery of the power of steam and electricity and the application of this power to industry has revolutionized the modern world. The material achievements of the past century out-rival those of all preceding ages, and now for the first time in history it is possible to produce wealth in abundance for all. It is possible to abolish poverty and ignorance; to really civilize the human race.

The capitalist system, in which these gigantic productive powers have been developed and in which these mighty changes have taken place, has about run its historic course, and now the very forces which brought it into existence are operating to overthrow it. This system has broken down. Another period of industrial depression has set in. It is now writing its record in failures, in poverty and misery that defy the power of all language to properly describe.

Two Panics

The last panic, so-called, occurred under a Democratic administration in 1893. The Republicans were swift to exclaim, "Behold, the fruit of Democratic misrule!" They charged this panic upon the Democratic Party, and if you will read the Republican platform for 1896 you will find this charge made in specific terms.

Up to this time the working class had not yet learned to any great extent to think or to act for themselves. They were still responsive to the plea of the capitalist demagogue. Hundreds of thousands of them swept from the Democratic Party into the Republican Party, and that party went into power upon that issue.

In the meantime the panic had run its course, industry was in some measure revived, and the Republican Party took full credit for it and again exclaimed, "Behold, when the Republican Party goes into power prosperity comes to the country!" In 1900 the slogan of that party, coined by its chief prophet, was "Let well enough alone;" in 1904, "Stand Pat." In 1908 it is, "God knows."

There are at this very hour more idle and despairing men in the United States than ever before in all its history, and when this great army of the unemployed, which stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Lakes to the Gulf, when this great army turned to the chief standard-bearer of the Republican Party and asked him what they are to do when they are suffering, when their wives are in want and their children are about to be put upon the street, he meekly referred them to Jehovah — but he is completely willing to accept their votes by proxy.

Think of this just for a moment. Mr. Taft very frankly confesses that when large bodies of workmen are in enforced idleness and when they are tormented by hunger pangs he does not know what can be done for them; and yet he has the audacity to ask these same men to elect him president of the United States. Whatever may be said of Mr. Taft, there is nothing the matter with his nerve.

Theodore Roosevelt

What has the Republican Party ever done for the working class? What has it not done for the capitalist class? If you are a workingman and you are in that party you are as sadly out of place as John D. Rockefeller would be in the Socialist Party. You have been looking up to President Roosevelt as your friend and you have in your ignorance been waiting for him to do

something for you. As a matter of fact, President Roosevelt is the arch-enemy of the working class, and his record proves it. And when he graduates from the White House to the jungles of Africa, where he properly belongs, if he remains there he will have rendered his first distinctive service to the working class of the United States.

It is he who preaches political homilies, moralizes the people, spends his time talking about civic righteousness and political purity, [who was himself] elected by the aid of the biggest debauching fund in the history of American politics.

A Debauching Fund

It was the Standard Oil Company that dropped \$100,000 into his campaign fund when he wasn't looking. He said not a word about it until the discovery was made public, and then, as is his habit, he exploded in virtuous indignation. He said, "It's got to go back" — but up to date it hasn't gone back.¹

When that \$100,000 was contributed to his corruption fund it came so easily that Bliss² touched Rogers,³ or tried to, for \$200,000 more. Rogers objected, and then President Roosevelt took his pen in hand and wrote "My dear Mr. Harriman, come around to the White House in the dark of the moon. Help me write my message to Congress."

He said nothing about Harriman raising \$200,000 for him, or about \$240,000 more being stolen from the stockholders of the insurance companies, until the fact was made public, and then he turned on his boon companion, his political ally Edward Harriman, and denounced him as a liar and a scoundrel. He has a happy habit of kicking a man when he's down, but if he has any act of bravery, if he has any brave act to his credit besides shooting a Spaniard in the back, I have never heard of it.

Explaining Records

The workingmen of this country are just beginning to find him out. He's been given credit for settling the anthracite strike. He did, when it was practically won by the miners, and then he appointed a commission that turned the victory over to the anthracite coal companies.

He has nominated his own political successor, a gentleman who has won his distinction by issuing injunctions which have paralyzed labor

organizations. Mr. Taft never deigned to make any explanation of these until he became a candidate for president, and now he declares that the reason he issued injunctions was because of his interest in and love for the working class. But he never attempted to prove his love for the capitalists in the same way. He never enjoined them, nor did he ever send one of them to jail. And the reason for this is so simple and so self-evident that it suggests itself.

How can any workingman with ordinary intelligence, with all the facts before him, think of casting a vote for William Howard Taft? All I have to say is that if you are a workingman and familiar with his record — and there is no excuse for your not being — and still vote to make him president, you stand in need of a political guardian.

Old Parties Alike

There is absolutely no difference between the Republican and the Democratic parties so far as the working class is concerned. They are exactly alike. They are both committed to the capitalist system. They are both committed to wage slavery, and whether the one or the other wins, you workingmen always lose. Your condition remains the same.

You have tried these two capitalist parties over and over again, with the same inevitable result. The politicians who used you to vote to perpetuate the system in which you are slaves have no respect for you. They treat you with contempt. When the Republican convention met in Chicago there were no workingmen there.⁴ The voice of labor was not heard in its councils. This convention consisted of plutocrats, office-holders, politicians, and parasites. The Democratic convention consisted of the same element.⁵

The Socialist convention consisted of representatives of the working class, adopted a working class platform, and made its appeal to the working class of the United States.

A Cause for Shame

It's about this season of the year, or a little later, that the capitalist politician comes before you workingmen to tell you how delighted he is to have the opportunity of looking into your manly faces and telling you what bright and intelligent fellows you are. This is the politician who calls you the "horny-handed sons of toil," and would have you proud of you

misshapen hands, when as a matter of fact you ought to be ashamed of them. You ought to blush to look you hand in the face, and if you do, you find written in unmistakable characters an impeachment of your intelligence, an indictment of your manhood. If you would use your brains in your own interest you would not have to deform your hands in the interest of your masters.

“Oh, but,” you say, “I have grown wise his year, I am going over to the Democratic Party, over to Bryan and Haskell⁶ and Gompers this time. That’s a fine combination, isn’t it? That’s worse still, if possible.

In the “Solid South”

The Democratic Party — all I have to do in answer is point toward the “Solid South,” where the Democratic Party has reigned supreme for a century. Nowhere are wages lower, nowhere are industrial conditions more wretched, nowhere is the percentage of illiteracy so large; and the Solid South, ruled by the Democratic Party, has a system that makes men and angels weep.

In that part of the land, where men are out of work and wander hungry, and beg for bread, they are arrested and jailed as vagrants and then they are farmed out to heartless bloodsuckers; they are manacled together, and, as I have seen again and again, they are beaten and lashed into insensibility. All of the atrocities and all the barbarities of the Middle Ages are reenacted in the Solid South, ruled by the Democratic Party.

Only a little while ago the 17,000 miners in the Birmingham district went out on strike. Their wages were but 47 cents a ton, the lowest scale in the United States. These mines are owned by the Steel trust, which has been piling up hundreds of millions of dollars wrung from the sweat and blood of the working class, but these pirates were not yet satisfied.

A Democratic Governor

They knew that these miners were at their mercy. They ordered a final reduction that reduced the miners to a pittance that did not suffice to keep their souls within their ragged bodies. Seventeen thousand of them went out on strike, and when they did, Governor B. B. Comer,⁷ the Democrat, the millionaire who has made all of his money grinding the faces of

children, this savage, ordered out the militia, turned them on these famishing miners, and dispersed them.

They went to the fields that had been leased for them by their union. They had been provided with tents to shelter their wives and children from the elements, and this angered the Democratic governor, the political ally of William Jennings Bryan. He sent soldiers into those fields. Part of them took out their knives and cut those tents to shreds; the rest of them stood by with shotted guns, ready to murder these starving miners if they objected to having their wives and children exposed to the elements.

This is how the Democratic Party proves its friendship for the working class.

Mr. Bryan's Lost Opportunity

But you tell me that Mr. Bryan, the standard bearer, is the champion of the common people; he's the friend of the workingmen. And I deny it. Two years and a half ago Mr. Bryan had the supreme chance of his life. You remember when the officials of the Western Federation of Miners were seized and deported and thrown into the penitentiary. You remember this famous outrage that shocked the nation.

In this extremity the workers who had followed Mr. Bryan through two campaigns loyally and enthusiastically turned to him and said: "Mr. Bryan, speak for our leaders; save them from murder." But he turned a deaf ear to the working class. His lips were sealed. He was as silent as the Sphinx.

William Jennings Bryan couldn't speak without attacking the mine owners who had financed his campaign. After these men were tried and acquitted, then his lips were unsealed for the first time and he said he believed all the time that they were innocent. If he believed they were innocent, why did he not say so? In this hour Mr. Bryan forfeited forever the right to appeal to the working class.

Mr. Bryan's Friends

It was four years ago, if you remember, that Mr. Bryan denounced Alton B. Parker⁸ as the tool of Wall Street and said that no self-respecting Democrat could vote for him. The Democratic convention nominated Mr. Parker and then Mr. Bryan went out among the American people and used

all the powers of his eloquence to make this “tool of Wall Street” president of the United States.

Four years ago Mr. Bryan denounced Roger Sullivan, the Illinois corruptionist, as one who has secured his election as delegate by methods that would disgrace a train robber. Where is that train robber today? He is side by side with Mr. Bryan, one of his chief supporters. And only a few weeks ago this train robber was a Fairview, Nebraska, Mr. Bryan’s home, by his invitation, and by him was introduced to his family.

Four years ago Mr. Bryan denounced Tammany. This year he is hand in glove with Tammany, and here let me say, and I know it’s true, that Tammany is the vilest and corruptest political organization on the American continent. Tammany is a political leper. Tammany pollutes everything it touches. Tammany levies tribute upon your tenderloin. Tammany extorts from fallen women the proceeds of their shame. That is Tammany. And Mr. Bryan has compromised with Tammany and had Murphy at his Fairview home in order that he might carry New York and become president. I wouldn’t object to being elected president; but, upon my honor, I would never pay that price for that or any other office on this earth.

There’s nothing for you in these two corrupt and decadent parties. They have fulfilled their mission. They belong to the past. The Socialist Party is the party of the present and the future. Waste your time and your energy and your substance no longer. The Socialist Party is the only party that has a claim upon you, the only party in which you can stand in your true proportions, in which you can stand erect as becomes a man, in which you can do your work and in doing write your name in the deeds that live forever.

Woman Under Capitalism

I am indeed glad to see so many women in this audience, and here let me say that the Socialist Party is the only party that recognizes woman as a human being. It’s the only party that recognizes woman at all. In capitalist society you women have to obey the laws, but have no voice in enacting them, and if you are the daughters of workingmen you are economic menials, you are political nonentities. Under the present regime you are taught to look upon your husbands as your lords and your masters, and I want to say to some of you “lords,” how my heart does go out to the women!

In this system 8 million of your sex are in wage slavery, 8 million of them whose life is a continuous struggle all the year, from youth to old age, economic bondage, the victims of capitalism, in which private profit is vastly more important than human life.

What prospect is there for these women? None. All the doors are barred against them. Upon their heads society pours its garbage. They are social inferiors. They belong to the working class, and upon the brow of labor there is still the band of inferiority.

It is at this season of the year that you are called sovereign by the politicians, the politicians who insult your intelligence (if you have any) by flattering your ignorance. They tell you that you are intelligent to keep you ignorant; Socialists tell you very frankly how ignorant you are, that you may become intelligent.

The Abject Class

The workingmen produce all wealth. How much have you to show for it? You working men support all government. You workingmen create and conserve all civilization. Without you society would perish. Without you the whole fabric of our so-called civilization would collapse. And yet you are the lower class. You have always been the lower class — in the ancient world for thousands of years abject slaves, and then the serfs of the Middle Ages, and now the wage workers of modern society. Society has always been organized, and is today, upon the basis of exploitation and the degradation of those who toil.

In this country we have 30 million wage workers, 18 million of them men, 8 million women, 4 million children, who have no tools of their own to work, and never will have under the administration of either the Republican or Democratic parties. No matter which of these is in power, no matter if the tariff be high or low, if we have the gold standard or free silver, or what our domestic policy may be; since these 30 million workers have no tools of their own with which to work, they will be in a state of slavery and their lives will be broken. They will die wretched failures. If now and then there is one who escapes it is simply the exception which serves to prove the rule.

Merely “Hands”

What is the status of the workingman in this system? The truth is that he is not a man at all, and the terminology of capitalism proves it. When the capitalist wants him he calls for a “hand” — a factory hand, a mill hand, a shop hand, a fam hand. Hand, hand, hand. That’s what you ae in capitalism — simply a hand. You have been putting a boycott on your brain, you have been putting a boycott on your head.

Nor has anyone been doing it, putting it there for you; you do it yourself. There’s nothing I can do for you. There’s nothing you can’t do for yourselves. You have an overwhelming majority of the votes. Surely it should require but little intelligence to teach you workingmen that you have got to unite economically and politically; act together. From the hour you do this, this earth is yours.

When you workingmen stand forth in solid, class-conscious array there’s nothing between this earth and the stars that can stand between you and emancipation. You have but to develop your economic and your political power.

Where Did He Get It?

Your interests are diametrically opposed to the interests of the capitalists who exploit you of what you produce. Let me give you just one concrete illustration. It applies to every department of industrial activity. A few weeks ago John D. Rockefeller, who is a fully developed capitalist, who is ripe and therefore a profit-taker and a parasite — for no ripe capitalist has any function that is useful to society — he was on the witness stand in a federal court at Chicago in the trial of that \$29 million joke,⁹ and he was asked certain questions about the Standard Oil Company.

His answer was that he knew nothing about the Standard Oil Company because he had had no connection with it for seven years. And yet during these seven years he received from the Standard Oil Company in the way of dividends, profits, an average of \$5 million a month, \$60 million a year, \$420 million in all. According to his own confession he had absolutely nothing to do with the production of this wealth, and yet he took it all. And that is what you vote for every time you vote the Republican ticket or the Democratic ticket.

How did Rockefeller come into possession of this vast amount of wealth produced by the working class? By the mere fact of his privately owning the great storehouses of nature, the sources from which the raw

materials are drawn, and the social machinery with which these raw materials are transmuted into the finished product called wealth.

He produces no oil. Carnegie produces no steel. Havemeyer and Spreckels¹⁰ produce no sugar. The working class do all of this — produce all the wealth — but the capitalists, who own the resources from which the raw materials are drawn, and the machinery, come into possession of it all.

Capitalism's Ending

The 30 million wage slaves can't work without tools. The tools belong to the capitalists. The 30 million wage slaves have to sell their labor-power to the capitalists, and when they have done it the wealth that is produced by that labor-power belongs to the capitalists and not to themselves. And every few years they have produced so much more than can be consumed, the markets are glutted, the mills are closed, industry comes to a standstill, hundreds of thousands of workers are idle and suffer in the presence of the very abundance their labor has created.

This simply proves that capitalism has fulfilled its mission, that the capitalist class can no longer control the productive forces, that the capitalist class can no longer manage industry, can no longer give employment to the workers. And so the historic mission of this movement is to abolish the capitalist system based upon private ownership, and recognize society upon a basis of collective ownership of the means of production and distribution.

And this change is coming just as certainly as I stand in your presence this afternoon. It will come as soon as you are ready for it, and you will be ready for it just as soon as you understand what socialism means. The trouble with most of you is that you know but little about it and that little is not true. You have read that in capitalist newspapers and they tell you that in socialism you will be reduced to a dead level of degradation.

You are there now.

Individuality

I was in the bread line in New York last winter. They don't tell you anything about that. They tell you that socialism will destroy your individuality. You haven't got any. The wage slave has no individuality.

What is individuality? It is the expression unhampered of the individual's mental and moral and spiritual qualities. It is the human being in full bloom. But the 30 million wage workers who are dependent upon the capitalist are walking apologies, most of them. They have hinges in their knees, they doff their hats in the presence of a two-by-four boss. They may be discharged. They are repressed and cramped and their aspirations are stifled, because they have got to beg for work and therefore they have got to beg to live, and they have no individuality.

Untrue Charges Against Socialism

Then they tell you that in socialism you will have no incentive to work. You are exploited of nearly all you produce today and you are supposed to have great incentive to work, but if — as in socialism — you will get all you produce, then you will throw down you tools and starve to death. They won't do that to you, that will happen under socialism.

And then they tell you that socialism is going to break up the family, and that would be too bad. There are only 80,000 divorces a year in capitalism. The family? Why, capitalism destroys the family all over the country in all the circling hours of the day and night.

How about the families of the 5 million who have no work — who have got to leave their families and their huts or their hovels or their lairs in a vain search somewhere else for other masters? After they reach a point four or five hundred miles away from their home and their last penny is gone and their clothes are seedy they receive a letter from home. Observe them closely as they read it; you will find the tears coursing down their cheeks. The wife reports that the rent is due and she is about to be put upon the street. The children are hungry. These men become tramps. Their lives are destroyed, their homes are wrecked, and the happiness of all these people is wrecked.

All of these charges against socialism are untrue. Every one of these things is true of capitalism.

The Fruits of Capitalism

In this system that has run its course, one-sixth of the entire productive capacity of the nation is paralyzed. One out of every six workers is idle.

There are over a million human degenerates called tramps. Over 800,000 thieves, burglars, and convicts. About 600,000 fallen women.

Prostitution is a fixed, permanent, increasing factor in capitalist society. In every so-called civilized community there is a red-light district, and this is recruited from the working class. The daughters of the rich may be immoral, but they don't have to go to the slums.

All of our jails are packed, and all of our penitentiaries crowded, and all of our insane asylums overflowing, and suicide is increasing at a startling rate. Every issue of every capitalist newspaper is a chronicle of vice and immorality and crime. Pick up any New York newspaper tomorrow morning and then blue-pencil the graft and the corruption and the thieves and the hold-ups and the revelations of all descriptions and the hunger and the rape and the vice and the murders. Eliminate these and there's hardly anything left. This is capitalism.

Nothing is certain in this system except uncertainty. You may have \$50,000 and die in an almshouse and sleep your last sleep in a potter's field.

Destroying the Girls

If you are a workingman and you have a little girl of eight or ten and your wage is small or you are out of a job at the very age when this child ought to be under the care of a loving mother and have a comfortable home and be out in the sunlight and have wholesome food — and nothing is so easily produced — this child is under the hunger-whip of capitalism, and at eight or ten she has got to go to the mill or factory and she stands beside the machine all day long.

She feeds the machine. The machine starves her. She gets but a pittance. The air is foul, the environment is unsanitary, she inhales lint and filth and her lungs are diseased. Her blood is impoverished. She remains here until she is eighteen or nineteen. She approaches the marriage state. She assumes the functions of motherhood. She is unfit for them. Her nerves are worn out. Her tissue is exhausted, her vitality is spent. She has been fed, literally, to capitalism. Her offspring are born tired. That's why there are so many failures in capitalist society.

And here is another little girl of the same age and she is scourged by poverty and she has got to go to a department store and she gets \$3 a week. She has got to be neat and tidy and attractive, and in her infancy she is

subjected to a hundred temptations a day, and in an unguarded moment she takes her first misstep. It is fatal. She is then swept into that ever-broadening, ever-deepening stream that empties into the gulf of disgrace and despair and death.

This is capitalism. And if it be written in the book of fate that that blue-eyed child of yours that you love far more than you do your own life, if it be written in the book of fate that she shall perish in a brothel hell, I want you to know that you are responsible for it if you vote to perpetuate the capitalist system.

The Glorious Few

Upon this great issue, my friends and comrades, we are going to conquer, we are going to sweep into power. I appeal to you, workingmen, to come to the front in this campaign. Toe the mark of duty squarely. It is too late to any longer halt or hesitate. The call goes directly to you, and it is your duty to yourself, to your wife, to your child, to your class, to humanity — it is your duty to respond. Never mind what others may say or think or do; be true to yourself. You may be called an “undesirable citizen,” and this will be your glory.

Let me say that in every age of this world’s history the pioneers of progress, the pathfinders in the wilderness, the evangelists of civilization, the heralds of the dawn, have all been undesirable citizens.

One hundred and fifty years ago it was Jefferson who was a rebel, Adams an incendiary, Patrick Henry a traitor. You are teaching your children to revere the memories of these undesirable citizens, while all of the respectable majority sleep in oblivion.

So it was with the abolition movement. The respectable majority murdered Lovejoy, mobbed Garrison, persecuted Phillips, and hanged John Brown, the greatest liberator this country has produced. All of them were undesirable citizens. They all had the courage of their convictions. They all did their duty and placed their names where they will remain forever.

When great changes have occurred in history, when great principles have been involved, the majority have always been ignorant, reactionary, cowardly. The few have gone to the front, the few have paved the way to better conditions for the human race.

You and I who are on earth today are under great obligation to the splendid men, the magnificent women who made sacrifices that we might

enjoy some degree of liberty, some degree of civilization. We can only discharge that obligation by doing or trying to do something in the interest of those who are to come after us. It ought to be the high mission of every man to do something to make it possible for some child to come to his grave and place a flower where he sleeps and say, "This world is better for me because of his having been here."

A Worldwide Crusade

Another mighty crusade is organizing. It is spreading over the face of the whole earth. Already the millions that are to be found in all of the zones that belt this globe are keeping step to the inspiring music of the new emancipation. This is the call that goes out to you, and if you are true to yourself you will respond, you will take your place in the ranks, and then for the first time you will rise to your full stature, you will feel your heart throb to the first forward march, you will expand to your true proportions, you will feel the thrill of a newborn aspiration. If on account of this you are persecuted, all the better for you, because your latent powers will be developed, you will become stronger than you dream, and you will write your name in the deeds that live forever.

The Horrors of War

When this great party sweeps into power here in New York, in the United States, in all other nations, war between nation and nation will be ended forever. Why should the working class of one country murder the working class of another country in the interest of the capitalist class that exploits the working class of all countries? Civilized nations would not murder one another.

I remember not long ago reading the description of a battlefield in the Russian-Japanese War, of the 20,000 who lay dead on a single field, men mutilated and gasping. If you have but a bit of imagination you can see them. You can see that some of them are writing in their death agonies, heart-rending, as the last despairing sigh is wrung from them. You can see far, far away, the loved ones. Yes, and you can see the silver-haired mother bowed in her last great sorrow when she hears that the boy she loved is killed.

When I think of a cold steel bayonet being pushed into the white, soft and quivering flesh of a human being, I recoil with horror. The socialist movement is doing what lies in its power to hasten the coming of that day when war shall curse this earth no more. With the end of industrial and commercial competition comes the end of war, and with the beginning of worldwide cooperation comes the inauguration of the reign of peace on earth and goodwill toward all men.

So that when this movement sweeps into power and establishes an industrial democracy, every man will have the inalienable right to work, will receive what he produces, may stand forth a free man, enjoy the fruit of his labor, have a comfortable home, a happy wife, his children at play or in school; in that hour the badge of labor will be the only badge of honor.

Then another proclamation of emancipation will be issued. We will fill this land with wealth. We will abolish poverty as it now scourges the ace, and all of its brood of concomitant ills. And then we shall reduce the workday in proportion to the products of invention, until every man may have leisure so that he may cultivate his mind and give his heart a chance so that he may enjoy the comradeship of his fellow men.

Then our economic interests will be mutual, and instead of clutching at each other's throats we can work together side by side in the true spirit of humanity. Remember that until then you have a duty.

It was Lowell who said:

He's true to God who's true to man; wherever wrong is done,
To the humblest and the weakest, 'neath the all-beholding sun,
That wrong is also done to us; and they are slaves most base,
Whose love of right is for themselves, and not for all the race.¹¹

Published as "Unparalleled Socialist Greeting to Eugene Debs Astounds New York" in *New York Call*, vol. 1, no. 110 (Oct. 4, 1908), pp. 1, 5. Reprinted as "Debs' Speech at the Hippodrome" in *New York Socialist* [formerly *The Worker*], vol. 18, no. 28 (Oct. 10, 1908) pp. 7-8, 10-11.

¹ Reference is to a financial scandal of the 1904 presidential campaign, during which a six-figure donation by the Standard Oil Trust to the Republican Party became public knowledge.

² Cornelius N. Bliss (1833-1911) a prominent figure in the Republican Party of New York, was treasurer of the Republican National Committee during the election of 1904.

³ Henry Huddleston Rogers (1840-1909) was a financier who was a top decision-maker in the Standard Oil Company from the 1870s. He was the conduit for financial contributions by the Standard Oil Trust to the Republican Party during the 1904 general election campaign.

⁴ The 1908 Republican National Convention assembled at the 11,000 seat Chicago Coliseum, located on Wabash Avenue between 14th and 16th Streets, from June 16-19.

⁵ The 1908 Democratic National Convention was held from July 7-10 at Denver, Colorado. It was the first major party presidential nominating convention held west of the Mississippi River.

⁶ Charles N. Haskell (1860-1933) was an oilman who was elected the first governor of the new state of Oklahoma in 1907. Haskell was the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee during the election of 1908.

⁷ Braxton Bragg Comer (1848-1927) was a plantation owner with investments in cotton mills and his brother's mining operation near Birmingham. He was elected governor of Alabama in 1906. In July 1908 District 20 of the United Mine Workers of America went out on strike throughout the Birmingham district, a bitter conflict in which black and white miners acted in concert against mine owners and marked by the lynching of one black striker in the town of Brighton. Comer ordered out the national guard in August, which wiped out the strikers' tent colony and hastened the end to the two-month strike.

⁸ Alton B. Parker (1852-1926) was the conservative judge nominated by the Democratic Party for president in 1904. His nomination over the semi-populist William Jennings Bryan was instrumental in the Socialist Party's comparatively strong showing in that campaign.

⁹ Reference to the 1908 court decision by Judge Kennesaw Mountain Landis fining Standard Oil Company of Indiana \$29.24 million for violating anti-trust law through its shutting down of the Chicago & Alton Railroad to its competitors. Regarded as a sensationally large fine at the time, the award was overturned on appeal.

¹⁰ Henry Osborne Havemeyer (1847-1907) and Claus Spreckels (1828-1908) were rival magnates in the heavily trustified sugar industry.

¹¹ From "On the Capture of Fugitive Slaves Near Washington" (1845) by James Russell Lowell (1819-1891).