

# The End of a Magnificent Campaign

## (November 3, 1908)

Terre Haute, Ind., Nov. 3, 1908

The campaign is ended and my very first thought is of the kindness shown me and the loyal support given me in every part of the country. While at times the exactions were trying I was sustained every hour by the loving care and unflagging support of comrades. To me this was the most beautiful and satisfying feature of the campaign. It expressed the true spirit of socialist comradeship which is the making of our movement and which will sustain it through every ordeal till it is finally triumphant.

The one incident we all deeply regretted was the illness of Comrade Ben Hanford.<sup>1</sup> With all his heart he yearned to be where he always has been, in the thick of battle, but he had given himself too freely all his life, utterly forgetful of self, until at last his physical powers succumbed and he was compelled to see others on the firing line while he was reserved for less strenuous service that he might have some chance for physical recuperation. His very illness bears testimony to his many years of service in the past when it required courage and sacrifice to be a socialist, and all of us join most fervently in the hope that he may recuperate his impaired powers and again take his wonted place in the activities of the movement.

Truly this has been a magnificent campaign for the Socialist Party. Our meetings from coast to coast have been the marvel of all, and such enthusiasm has never been displayed in any political campaign.

The hundreds of young, forceful, and effective orators, both men and women, who have taken part in this battle have been developed mainly since the last national contest and their magnificent work contributed tremendously to the success of the campaign. The Socialist papers all did their best and are entitled to the largest measure of credit. Through our papers we were able to checkmate every attempt on the part of the capitalist press to deceive the workers and no such attempts were made along that line as were made in previous campaigns.

The national office in all its departments was most efficiently organized, and under its supervision the most effective work was done in

promoting a uniform and vigorous educational propaganda throughout the country.

As for the Red Special, I prefer that its work shall speak for itself. I only wish to say that I feel deeply indebted to each and every member of it for the faithful service and personal devotion of which I was the recipient from the first to the last hour of its journey. Each member of the crew discharged his duty faithfully and to each and all I owe a debt of personal gratitude I shall never be able to repay.

The Red Special Band was an invaluable accessory of the Red Special tour and a decided factor in its success. At many points it was just what was needed to kindle enthusiasm and round out the meeting and give it the power needed to stir the crowd into action.

If it were possible to keep a Red Special moving constantly it would hasten by many months the development of the movement and the overthrow of capitalist misrule. Since this can not be at present, perhaps steps might be taken to have a socialist car built and kept moving over the country the year around, making its stop at each point long enough to thoroughly stir up the community and sew the seeds of socialist thought and activity.

At this time I have no idea of what our vote is, but I have no doubt it will be equal to all reasonable expectations. The country knew this year for the first time that the Socialist Party was a factor to be reckoned with in the campaign. We have every reason to congratulate ourselves upon the success of the campaign and to face the future with renewed assurance that the day of victory is drawing near.

Comrades, one and all everywhere, again I thank you and salute you!

You have fought a magnificent battle and now you are to prepare without loss of time for the next. Let the campaign of 1912 be opened all along the line. There is no reason why it should halt. The capitalist enemy may now for a brief time riot in its spoils, but for us the struggle must be continuous until that enemy is driven from the field and a triumphant working class proclaims the socialist commonwealth.

Yours for the next battle,

*Eugene V. Debs*

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<sup>1</sup> Stricken with cancer, 1904 and 1908 Socialist Party vice-presidential nominee Ben Hanford would survive for more than a year, dying in New York City on January 24, 1910.