PLATFORM ADOPTED BY THE MARYLAND DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION, SEPTEMBER 18, 1930

We, the representatives of the Democratic Party of Maryland, in Convention assembled, believe that the problems and conditions which confront the people of Maryland can be better met and solved through the agency of the Democratic Party than through any other.

National Republican Administration

In the national field, the tragic collapse of Republican promises of continued prosperity, of their claim of entire credit for good times, their boast of wise financial policies and strong national and international leadership is seen, first of all, in the present condition of unemployment. By platform and in the speaches of its accepted leaders the Republican Party maintained that the election of its national ticket would assure four additional years of unparalleled prosperity.

Yet today unemployment is greater than it has ever been in the history of the country. The wages of those fortunate enough to keep or get employment are generally lower than before, and the Republican administration seems helpless to deal with the situation, which is daily growing worse and worse.

A nation with millioms of unemployed is a nation bankrupt of its most valued asset. Of what avail is it that our country is dedicated to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" if our men and women are without the employment which is necessary for food, lodging and self-respect? Many of our boys and girls who left high school last year are unable to realize the opportunities for which they have studied and worked, because employment does not exist for them.

Before the 1928 election, the Republicans boasted of the replacement in industry of men with machines, and claimed that the resulting flow of more and more goods from our factories would not cause unemployment or over-production, because the surplus would be absorbed by our constantly increasing export trade.

But in place of an increase in our export trade everything that could well be imagined to destroy it has been done. A tariff wall has been erected, which by no stretch of imagination could avoid injury to our foreign trade, and on no conceivable theory could aid it. There has been a rapid decline of our export business and the consequent flooding of our domestic market with an unmanageable surplus, which has seriously impaired industry and swelled the ranks of unemployment to unprecedented numbers. The thing is even more far-reaching than this, because there has also been a rapidly increasing migration of American industries abroad, and reprisals and retaliations from other nations with which we trade, and whose friendship and good will we ought to have.

The farmer was promised relief through a tariff bill which would give him equality with industry. Against an overwhelming clamor of economic protest the bill was passed, and what it actually did was to increase the price of what the farmer buys until his basic relative condition has been depressed to its lowest ebb, and the prices of his principal cash crops are the lowest in decades.

The marketing plan which was to solve the farm problem materialized in the Federal Farm Board. It does violence to all those fundamental economic polities which were expressed before the 1928 election in high Republican sources, who denounced the invasion of private enterprise by government and the fixing of prices by government. On the subject of sound economic principles, the inability of the Federal Farm Board to put the farmer on his feet was foredoomed from the start.

All this cannot fail to be a tragic disillusion to the farmers of our country, who see a farm outlook which is perhaps the darkest in all our history.

The field of finance, too, has been subjected to a cross-fire of Republican blunders. Absence of determined financial leadership was clearly evident. The people had a right to expect from the Republican administration such economic and financial leadership as would have adopted at least some kind of positive or corrective measure. Instead of that the Republican administration began a series of inflationary statements and actions which incited the inevitable crash in 1929. Before the debris from that could be cleared away, the administration followed it up with unsupported and misleading statements promising an early, if not an immediate, return to prosperity, which has failed to materialize.

In the face of such a record, we assert that the National Republican Administration cannot avoid direct responsibility for the unfortunate conditions which exist today in unemployment, industry, finance and agriculture, and as the best means of assuring such relief from these conditions as government can afford, we commend to the people our Democratic candidates for the Congress of the United States.

The Spirit of Maryland Democracy

Tife most priceless traditions of the people of Maryland, are, first, tolerance in all things and to all people; secondly, ordered liberty for the individual and the recognition of his right to pursue his own happiness and enterprise in his own way so long as he does not interfere with the like rights of others or with the sanctions of society; and, thirdly, the idea of a self-governing State, free and obligated to settle its local problems in conformity with the needs of its people, who should be unhampered by an excess of government from within and by undue Federal or supervision from without.

We believe the principles to be the political inheritance of the people of Maryland, and they are the creed and the gospel of the Democratic party in this State.

Sincerity of Democratic Pledges

We ask the people to recall the sincerity with which our party promises have been fulfilled. They have been made clearly and simply. They were made to keep and they have been kept. In no case have we promised more than could be done, and in every case we have done what we promised. Through a long series of constructive measures and policies, covering every field of governmental activity, we have placed our State in a position second to no other both governmentally and in political ideals and practices. The sincerity with which we have kept these past pledges is the best evidence that we will sincerely keep those which are made in this platform.

Public Schools

The phenomenal progress of the Maryland public school system during the past ten years has been acknowledged throughout the entire country. The keynote of this progress has been the equalization of educational opportunities and educational burdens throughout the State. Under Governor Ritchie's leadership there has been provided teacher and class-room supervision, which has been characterized by Professor Thomas H. Briggs, of Teachers' College, Columbia University, as the best and most effective system of supervision in the country; a minimum salary schedule, carrying salaries sufficiently large to attract trained teachers; and a State Equalization Fund, which has made it possible for the less densely populated counties to finance the State's minimum educational program without having unduly high county school taxes.

The Legislature of 1927 established a teachers' retirement system on a sound actuarial basis, which now includes in its membership over 91 per cent. of the county teaching staff. This has brought a feeling of security and stability to the teachers, and has improved the schools by enabling the retirement of old and disabled teachers with an allowance sufficient to afford them comfortable living conditions.

The Maryland public school system as it has developed under the thoroughly capable direction of Dr. Albert S. Cook, has been described as follows:

Dr. T. H. Harris, Superintendent of Schools in Louisiana, said:

"Maryland is ahead of any State in the country in its system of class-room supervision."

Professor William C. Bagley, the leading educator in the country in the field of teacher training, said:

"Maryland undoubtedly leads the States in the high qualifications of its teaching staff."

Professor Mabel Carney, leader in the field of rural education and head of the Department of Rural Schools, Teachers' College, Columbia University, said:

"Maryland rural schools have, in my judgment, made the greatest progress during the last five years of any system of schools in the United States today."

Professor Carney has asked for detailed information about the Maryland system for the forthcoming Year Book of the National Education Association, "because of Maryland's outstanding leadership among the States in the matter of teacher qualification."

Dr. Frank T. Bachman, who surveyed Maryland schools in 1915, and made another survey in 1925, said:

"I believe that Maryland has the best legally established, the most unified, the most efficient and the most professional State school system in America."

Dr. Fletcher Harper Swift, Professor of Education in the University of California, considers the Maryland equalization plan as "perhaps the most far-reaching and scientific method from the standpoint of equalizing revenues of any State in the Union."

The Legislature of 1929 made an appropriation of $10,000 for the education of physically handicapped children. As substantial a beginning of this work as this fund permits is being made under the direction of the State Supervisor of Vocational Rehabilitation. This great problem should receive the study it merits, to the end that provision be made to deal with it and to solve it effectively.

We pledge our party to continued and adequate support of every needed kind to the public school system of the State, so that Maryland public schools may not only keep the position they are now recognized to have attained in the front rank of the public school systems in the country, but may progress and advance still further.

Public Health

The development and activities of public health services in this State have been notable, and it is appropriate to quote from a statement made publicly by Dr. William H. Welch, the foremost physician of the World, as follows:

"I am in a position to know that this remarkable progress is attributable in large measure to the lively and intelligent interest of Governor Ritchie in the prevention of disease and protection of the health of the people, and to his active support of all appropriate measures designed to attain this end through governmental agencies."

Dr. Welch then went on to say:

"The housing, the organization, the equipment and the personnel of the State Health Department have been greatly improved during the last ten years, and now compare favorably with those of the best in the country. Thereby the department has been enabled to improve and extend previous work and to initiate new and important activities, notably in the prevention of material and infant mortality, provision for enforcement of the pharmacy laws, the establishment of an agency to provide dental care in rural districts, the establishment of branch bacteriological laboratories to aid physicians in diagnosis, the State-wide distribution of so-called biological products to aid in the prevention and cure of infectious diseases, improved medical inspection of school children with provision for correction of physical defects, installation of many water supply and sewerage systems, control of milk supplies and purity of other foods, and in many other ways.

"The department has been active in education of the public to the demands and results of modern public health activities."

We pledge our party to the continued support of the work of the State Department of Health and of the other official public health agencies of the State, and, among other things, we specifically favor the following:

1. Amendments to the present Sanitary District Law to provide for the establishment of twenty-three Sanitary Districts which will follow county lines.

2. Extension of the system of full time county health departments in response to local demand, and aid to county and town governments in order to secure for them the benefits of this modern and effective method of local sanitary control.

3. Increased facilities for the bacteriological labatory of the State Department of Health in order to better assist practicing physicians of the State in the diagnosis and treatment of certain diseases.

We recognize the vital importance of the practicing physician in our community life, and we pledge our support to the formulation of a program of activities for the official public health agencies of the State which will provide a proper and necessary degree of sanitary control in the interest of the public health, but under which the professional and economic status of the practicing physician will at the same time be maintained.

Care of the Tubercular

The State facilities for the hospitalization of tuberculosis persons, both white and colored, are among the finest in the country. They consist of four splendid institutions, the State Sanatorium at Sabillasville, the Eastern Shore Tuberculosis Sanatorium at Salisbury, Mt. Wilson, and the institution for the colored at Henryton. The three last were built under Governor Ritchie's administration. It is a rare thing for any institution to combine both economy in operation and excellence in treatment. Maryland has earned that distinction in the care of her tubercular.

Not only does no State in this country, but no country in the world, save possibly New Zealand, furnish as adequate institutional care for the tubercular as Maryland does. The death rate from tuberculosis in 1919 was 165.8 per 100,000 population. In 1929 in the face of increased population, it was 104.9 per 100,000, a reduction of 37 per cent. in ten years. The principal cause of this largely decreasing death rate is undoubtedly due to the splendid hospitalization facilities which Maryland provides, and to the instruction of the patients in personal hygiene.

We pledge our party to the maintenance and furtherance of this great work.

Mental Hygiene

The State hospitals for the insane are being administered with a high degree of efficiency. New wards and buildings have been added until now Maryland has reached the enviable position of being able to give institutional care, without overcrowding, for all of its dependent insane citizens who apply.

We pledge our party to the maintetions to the State hospitals for the insane, both white and colored, as may be necessary, and to increased facilities at the Rosewood State Training School for white feeble-minded, and also to the construction of a new building or institution for the care of the colored feeble-minded. We will extend the after-care of those who are discharged from the State hospitals for the insane.

State Roads, Bridges and Grade Crossings

Maryland was a pioneer State in the construction of improved roads. Since Governor Ritchie's first administration the road mileage has more than doubled. In 1920 there had been constructed 1511 miles, and now there are 3200 miles. This construction represents approximately 22 per cent. of the total road mileage of the State. Only one other State has so high a percentage of State roads completed.

The extent to which the benefits of the State Roads system to the people have increased is perhaps best indicated by the fact that in 1920 less than 56 per cent. of the area of the State was located within two miles of a State road, whereas now almost 81 per cent. of the State's area is so located. Expressing the same differently, in 1920 over 44 per cent. of the State's area was more than two miles removed from a State road, whereas now less than 20 per cent. is that far removed. In terms of the State's population, only 4.4 per cent. of the people live in localities which are more than two miles distant from a State highway.

The Legislature of 1929 provided the most expensive program of road construction ever undertaken in this State. Arterial highways as well as lesser roads of importance have been constructed, and others have been widened. Bridges have been constructed and an extensive grade crossing elimination program is under way.

We pledge our party to the continuance and extension of this notable highway improvement program.

In the expenditure of all the millions of dollars which have gone into the construction and maintenance of Maryland's fine State road system, there has only been one incident of an unfortunate character.

A considerable shortage in the funds of the State Roads Commission was discovered in January, 1928. It was handled vigorously and expeditiously.

Governor Ritchie apponted a commission which investigated every aspect of the affair, and disclosed every circumstance to the public. This commission consisted of one Democrat, Mr. J. J. Nelligan, President of the Safe Deposit and Trust Company, one of the leading citizens and financiers of the State, and three Republicans, Mr. Edwin G. Baetjer, a lawyer of national distinction; Mr. George M. Shriver, Senior Vice-President of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, and Mr. Jonathan K. Voshell, Manager of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. This commission found that the thefts were confined to a group of inside employees. Their method was similar to that perpetrated in a number of banking institutions, and consisted in enlisting in the conspiracy each employee whose duty it was to check the accounts of the others. This made detection difficult, but the discovery was followed by the prompt prosecution of every person concerned, and every guilty man was convicted and sent to prison.

The report of the Nelligan Commission has been widely circulated. It is a public document, on file in the State Library in Annapolis, and copies can be secured by communicating with the Executive Offices there. The report deals fully with every aspect of the occurrence, and from the many findings we quote the following, confirming the general integrity of the State Highway Department:

"We find no evidence of any interest or participation, directly or indirectly, by any member of the Commisison in the business or profit of any contractor or of any improper allowance or concession to any contractor or any other improper relation with any of them, and no justification for any such inference. . . . The main funds of the State Roads Commission, including the far greater part of the sixty-six million dollars expended, was subject to the check of the Chairman. Out of this fund the contractors' bills and all checks over $1,000 were paid. The integrity of this fund is unimpaired."

The members of the present State Roads Commission, Messrs. G. Clinton Uhl, Howard Bruce and John K. Shaw, constitute as able, honest and fearless a commission as could possibly be secured.

Finance

The insurance, auditing, banking, purchasing and tax assessment departments of the State are now all assigned to the Department of Finanical Review and Control, thus coordinating all agencies relating to the financial activities of the State.

Revenues coming to the State departments and institutions from sources other than State appropriations, such as fees, tuition, Federal appropriations and the like, are all now required to be accounted for to the Comptroller and disbursed through his office, so that no department or institution any longer receives or spends money which does not pass through the State Treasury.

A uniform fiscal year has been established in all State departments, conforming with the State's fiscal year, thus making possible a complete statement of the State's financial affairs at any given date.

There has also been established a department of license inspection, which collects the revenue due from all classes of business requiring State licenses, and in the administration of the State license laws in a manner fair to all.

The administration of the gasoline tax has been placed under this department, and the same is being efficiently handled.

The history of the finance department during the past several administrations, under the direction of the present competent Comptroller and State Treasurer is the story of continuous improvement in the proper, accurate and expeditious handling of State funds, and of the recording of all financial transactions in the manner approved by the best authorities on governmental accounting.

We favor the adoption by the people of the constitutional amendment (Act, 1929, Chapter 133) which will be submitted to them at the November election, and which will make possible legislation by the General Assembly of 1931 which will equip the department still better to perform its greatly increasing duties, and we pledge our party to maintain this department on a par with similar departments in the best managed private institutions.

State Law Department

The State Law Department was organized by Goveror Ritchie when he was Attorney General in 1916, and it has taken over the legal work of all State departments, boards, commissions and institutions, with the exception of the Public Service Commission, which, because of the volume and character of its work is required to have its own General Counsel. Although the legal work of the State has more than doubled, it has been handled by this department without any increase in cost to the taxpayers. The present Attorney General is one of the foremost lawyers of the State, and under him and his extremely capable staff of assistants the department has been administered in a thoroughly efficient and effective manner.

Penal Institutions

We pledge our party to a progressive administration of its penal affairs, as well from the standpoint of the management of existing institutions as in the planning of additional plants and units to properly house and train the inmates.

We have recently embarked on an extensive penal program under the direction of one of the foremost authorities in the country. A tract of approximately 1,000 acres has been purchased in Western Maryland, and a new prison will be erected there. This will not only relieve overcrowding at the Penitentiary and the House of Correction, but it will be the means of inaugurating the most modern system of prison management and control. The program will include the proper segregation of criminals, so that each may receive the kind of care and treatment which his individual needs and classification require. The methods used will, of course, be safe and humane, and such as experience has shown to be effective, keeping in mind at all times the protection of the public and of society.

Parole System

We believe the parole system to be an invaluable agency in reestablishing prisoners as useful and self-respecting citizens, and as enabling them to fulfill again their responsibilities towards their families and to society. The proper exercise of this system is also an economic benefit, because the expense per capita of suprevising those on parole is, of course, less than the expense of maintaining them in prison.

The parole system in this State has been well, effectively and impartially administered, but recent experience shows that the facilities of the Parole Commissioner for investigating cases should be increased, and that more extensive provision should be made for the supervision and following up of those who are on parole.

We, therefore, pledge our party to such extension of the parole system in this State as may be necessary to assure the greatest possible measure of benefit from it.

Social Welfare

Our Departments of Health and Education have been so scientifically and practically developed, and so wisely and efficiently administered, that this State stands in the very forefront in its acomplishments in these matters which are so vital to all of the people of our state.

We appreciate the great importance to our well-being of intelligent and sympathetic social welfare work among those, particularly children, who are dependent, feeble-minded, disadvantaged and delinquent; and we recognize the ills that flow from the disintegration of families and the economy of preventive work in the handling of these problems.

There is a close relationship between health, education and social welfare, and it is essential that there should be close cooperation in these fields and a coordination of effort.

We in Maryland are convinced of the advantages of allowing our private charitable and social agencies and our local communities to handle these problems, but we recognize that it is the duty and obligation of the State, and to its best interests, that it should assist and cooperate with its counties and private agencies in every possible way through scientific study of social problems, practical recommendations, coordination of effort and adequate appropriation of funds; and we pledge our party to this paramount work on behalf of our citizens.

Delinquent Boys and Girls

We recognize the State's obligation to care and provide for juvenile delinquents and to use its best efforts in developing them into useful citizens.

The best preventive of adult crime is to be watchful for and to correct wrongul tendencies in the young.

To this end we pledge our party to the establishment of an adequate and comprehensive juvenile court system in the counties of the State, and to such extension of the scope and facilities of existing juvenile courts as may be advisable.

Recognizing that juvenile delinquency is an educational and not a criminal problem, the two State institutions for white juvenile delinquents have been assigned to the Educational Department of the State Government. These institutions are the Maryland Training School for Boys, and Montrose, which is a similar institution for girls. We pledge our party to the maintenance and further developments of both these institutions.

Colored juvenile delinquents are now cared for at the House of Reformation, which is the institution for colored boys situated at Cheltenham, and at the Industrial Home for Colored Girls, which is situated at Melvale. Neither of these institutions is owned by the State, but both are State-aided. The need of a reorganization of the Industrial Home for Colored Girls has recently become apparent, and we pledge our party to accomplish that task in whatever way a study now being made may show to be most effective, and we pledge our party also to any additional measures which may be necessary for the proper care of the colored delinquent boys at the House of Reformation.

Dependant Aged and Infirm

Pursuant to joint Resolution of the Legislature of 1929, Governor Ritchie has appointed two commissions, one for the Eastern Shore and the other for the Western Shore, to report on the advisability of establishing one institution on each shore for the dependent aged and infirm residents of the counties, in place of the county almshouses which now exist. It is not yet known what the recommendations of these commissions will be, but they will be given most earnest consideration, to the end that the proper measures may be taken to assure adequate and humane care for the dependent aged and infirm.

Agriculture

It is manifestly impossible even to outline all the work now being carried on to establish agriculture in this State on the soundest possible economic basis. The regular agricultural activities, such as county demonstration, extension service and experiment service, have been supplemented by the State Departmnt of Markets for the study of improved marketing methods, the development of cooperative marketing; special aid to the dairy industry; demonstrations of improved agricultural methods; seed certification work; home demonstration work; rural women's short courses at College Park; the eradication of tuberculosis among cattle, and numerous other undertakings for the benefit of agriculture.

In the field of research more than 250 different projects are under investigation. All are of direct interest to the farmer. One of these, for example, is the study of 100 farms to determine whether a leasing system can be developed, which will be more equitable for both landloard and tennant. Another one of these projects aims to ascertain some way by which the tax burdens of the farmer may be lightened.

The situation created by the Japanese Beetle has been studied and handled intensively and the vigorous action of Governor Ritchie in holding off Federal quarantine is estimated to have saved growers not far from $500,000.

Two of the strongest and soundest cooperative organizations in the country are to be found in Maryland, namely, the State Dairymen's Association and the Maryland Tobacco Growers' Association.

We pledge our party to the continuance and proper extension of the State's agricultural activities in all their branches.

Forestry

We pledge our party to the continuance and the reasonable extension of the reforestation policy, which was inaugurated by the Legislature of 1929.

Some years ago Maryland took the lead in fire prevention work when the first Interstate Fire Prevention Conference held in the country met in Maryland at the call of Governor Ritchie, and this resulted in permanent committees in this and other States, and in a national conference and nation-wide movement against fire loss. In accordance with this established policy of the State, we pledge our party to a more extended program for protection against forest fires which have occurred during the past Spring and early Summer.

Drought

For several months the farmers of this State, as elsewhere, have been suffering from the consequences of an unprecedented drought. In some localities the situation has assumed almost disastrous proportions, and it is feared that it may grow worse as winter comes.

The State administration has been keenly alive to these conditions, and has been devoting every effort to alleviate them.

The State is utilizing every opportunity it has for extending employment, and is making special study of the possibility of employing farm transportation and labor for winter hauling and other feasible work connected with the 1931 road construction program. Our agriculatural authorities at College Park have been constantly active and alert, and instrumental in securing reduced freight rates in many counties for certain

©Maryland State Archives msa_sc3326_scm8226-0349