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## The Cummins Leadership

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### THE IOWA REBELLION

The background of the man who became the leader in the struggle to regain Iowa's lost political freedom and who was powerful enough to overthrow its marvelously fortified abductors, is interesting.

Albert B. Cummins was born amid humble surroundings near the village of Carmichaels, Pennsylvania, in the year 1850. His scholastic attainments were derived from attending an academy and a small college in his native state. At the age of nineteen he came to Elkader in northeastern Iowa. For one year he was employed in the office of the county recorder of Clayton county. Then he took up his residence at scenic McGregor, in the same county, where he worked as clerk and messenger in the office of the United States Express Company for another year. The next year he spent in the

\*Mr. Bray, the attorney and long-time resident of Oskaloosa, Iowa, has been active for many years in political circles. He has written a book shortly to be published, entitled "Iowa's Rebirth of Freedom." In this he traces, with the discerning accuracy of a participant in the Progressive Republican movement during the colorful era at the turn of the century, the rescue of the party from control by selfish corporate dictators. With painstaking artistry, he portrays the individual as well as the collective characteristics of a large group of Iowans, the motives and influences that guided them, as well as their political alignment.

The value of the work is two-fold—first, as an authoritative historical treatise, and second, in its factual analysis of individuals active in that era. A condensed portion of Mr. Bray's vivid and revealing narrative comprising the accompanying article relates most particularly to Albert B. Cummins, who

state of Indiana working as a civil engineer for railroad corporations. At the end of that year, and when he had attained the age of twenty-two years, he entered the employment of a firm of lawyers in Chicago, and pursued the study of law for three years. He was admitted to the bar of the state of Illinois in 1875, and practised law in Chicago for three years. In January, 1878, he removed to Des Moines, which city continued to be his abode until July 30, 1926, when he entered eternal life.

He might have spent his life as a civil engineer and achieved distinction in that profession. But something turned him in a different direction. Nature generously endowed him with rare and unusual talents which he utilized in a field of labor where they afforded him the greatest advantage. He was created to be an illustrious lawyer, and such he became with striking rapidity. Speedily he won the title of Iowa's foremost lawyer and one of the nation's very best. Few men anywhere ever attained the pinnacle of legal accomplishment occupied by him.

Cummins' great ability as a counselor and advocate was fully matched by the quality of his integrity. He was an ethical lawyer and the very personification of served Iowa with ability and distinction as governor and United States senator. His vigorous leadership contributed in large part to the success of the Progressive movement and the obtaining of salutary legislation correcting many evils previously suffered by citizens of this state. Jonathon P. Dolliver's late but valuable assistance after entering the Progressive ranks is credited as timely, particularly in respect to his joining in the assault in congress upon the citadels of special privilege by the "insurgent" senate leaders from the Middle West.

This recital now comes to largely a new generation of readers not privileged to have known many of the participants in that important epoch in Iowa history. And, had Mr. Bray not set himself to the task of recalling the incidents of the Cummins era in Iowa affairs, the story with all its significant implications could have been lost. It might later have been written by some individual not acquainted with the strong Cummins personality or familiar with what took place and the consequence to Iowans of the successful struggle for restoration of political freedom in the state accomplished through his leadership and of those in his councils. Thus we would have been deprived of much of the force and accuracy characterizing its fortunate present presentation.—Editor.



honesty and square dealing. His work was absolutely good; his promise was always kept. So in him there was present that grand combination of rare ability, un-failing uprightness and vigorous industry. And also, in and about him, there was always present that degree of humility which is a definite manifestation of greatness.

He had a way that inspired and retained one's confidence. He possessed a ready command of language and the forensic power to use it persuasively. Attractive in personality, scholarly, magnetic and convincing, he was not only a top-notch lawyer and polished orator, but he had administrative and executive ability of a high order. To express it tersely, he had everything that was needed to constitute him a magnificent leader.

His family life was in keeping with his professional standing. In 1874 he married Ida L. Gallery, daughter of James and Eliza Gallery, of Eaton Rapids, Michigan. She departed this life in Washington, D. C. in 1918. One child resulted from this union, a daughter, who became the wife of Hollis Rawson of Des Moines. Mrs. Cummins was an attractive, delightful woman, and a helpful wife to her illustrious husband.

During his years of active practice of law, Cummins participated in the trial of many important cases. He represented corporations, including railroads, and insurance companies, as well as myriads of private clients. They all had the benefit of his splendid services, but none of them ever acquired ownership of him.

#### VICIOUS PRACTICES OF MONOPLIES

No one was more familiar with the vicious methods employed by monopolies to stifle competition and plunder the people than he. The crusading spirit against monopoly and injustice was not a sudden impulse with him, for one phase of monopolistic oppression had come sharply to his attention in the earlier years of his law practice.

One of the larger problems confronting the agricultural industry in Iowa when the land in its unfenced natural state and being transformed into farms was

the scarcity of fencing material. In due time barb wire was invented, and its production was looked upon as a solution of the difficulty. A patent, known as the Glidden patent, was issued to the inventor, and a corporation in the state of Illinois obtained the patent and engaged in the manufacture of the wire on a large scale. There was a ready market for millions of tons of the product. It was attractive business and numerous factories were equipped to manufacture and sell the wire, only to be taken over or exterminated for patent infringement by the company holding the patent, which claimed that its patent included the general plan of putting barbs on the wire instead of one method of placing the barbs.

When production of this new and needed fencing material was centered in one company, and competition had disappeared, the price of barb wire per pound quickly ascended to dizzy heights. Here was monopoly arranged in all its glory, plundering the farmers who had to have the wire, and doing it in a perfectly legal way, because the lawmakers believed what was good for monopolies was good for all the people.

The oppression of this monopoly was so terrific that antagonism could not be suppressed. A number of Iowa farmers and business men organized a corporation called Farmers Alliance to fight this monopoly. A small factory was set up in Des Moines, and there wire was being barbed by a somewhat crude hand system. Quickly what was deliberately invited happened. The monopoly instituted suit in a federal court to enjoin the farmers from making any kind of barb wire. Cummins was appealed to for legal aid in defending this suit, and he agreed to undertake the task, although he was unfamiliar with patent law. (Patent law is a special branch of the law practised exclusively by specialists in that field, and not by general practitioners.)

In preparation for the trial of that case he showed up at the little factory one morning in overalls and blouse, and told the manager that he desired to know all about the making of barb wire. He spent many

hours in the factory, working like any hired employee. He thus acquired the knowledge that was necessary for him to use at the trial of the case.

When the case came to trial in Kansas City, Cummins was faced with a battery of able lawyers well versed in patent law, but not one of them had ever placed a barb on a piece of wire. Cummins won the case. He disabled the barb wire monopoly. Competition was restored, and the selling price of barb wire receded to about a third of the monopoly charge. That victory was worth millions to middlewestern farmers.

When the litigation was over, one of the executives of the defeated monopoly contacted Cummins and offered employment to him at a high salary. Cummins said to him, "No, I prefer to wear my own hat." He never did wear any one else's hat. And, during the period of his public service, he enabled great numbers of men in high places to exchange some one else's hats, which they were wearing, for their own hats.

It was a high privilege to know and be associated with Albert B. Cummins, and it was fortunate for the masses of humanity that such a leader was available to them. One of his intimate friends defined him as "A man of Action, Courage, Conscience and Great Ability."

#### SOUGHT ONLY THE SENATORSHIP

Albert B. Cummins had no desire to hold any political office other than that of United States senator. After his failure to be elected to that office in 1900, he was willing to and did remain the leader of the Progressive forces, and he generously lent his talents to a strengthening of the organizational structure. This was to be accomplished by exerting more and more effort to elect Progressives to fill the state offices, as legislators, and as members of the Republican State Central Committee, and to procure the enactment of anti-railroad pass, primary election, delegate proxy abolition, and other reform laws. Also an important part of the program was the expansion of knowledge of caucus and convention procedure, for it was necessary to

have a larger number of voters equipped with the ability to establish majority rule at the precinct meetings and county conventions and prevent minorities from stealing convention delegates.

Cummins was willing to give everything he had in the way of oratory and industry to the promotion of the cause, but he wanted no office. All of his close friends knew what his attitude was concerning office holding for himself. They respected his disinclination to "run for office," but they felt that it was imperative that he become a candidate for governor. Considerable headway had been made in building precinct organizations. Men had learned how to operate caucuses in a large number of the counties outside of the Reservation, (as a large portion of southern Iowa was known) and now and then a caucus inside the Reservation would go Progressive. It happened many, many times that the Progressives were conquered in the county conventions even though they had elected more than half of the assembled delegates, because between the caucus date and the county convention date enough of the delegates would be changed over by one devious way or another, usually by a seductive railroad pass, to give the Standpatters a majority in the convention. For this reason failure after failure had been met in obtaining control of the legislature.

It was obvious that the difficulty in holding delegates in line would continue to be an almost insurmountable obstacle until the issuance of these political railway passes was stopped, that it could be stopped only by sending to the legislature a sufficient number of paying-for-their-own transportation members to enact anti-pass legislation, and by having a governor who would not veto the bill when passed. It was equally obvious that there was a slim chance of electing that kind of legislature and governor while the pass system remained in operation.

It was the conviction of the crusaders that the only way to get around the pass barrier was to get the governor elected first and use his influence to nullify



enough railroad pass pressure to win majorities in the two lawmaking bodies.

As Cummins was the one man who had all the requisite qualifications for the successful leadership of the crusade, likewise he was the one man who had the governorship ability that was needed. He could not say "No" to the men who were waging this battle for freedom and he reluctantly consented to undergo a great personal sacrifice and become a candidate for nomination and election to an office which he had no desire to hold. His consent to be drafted, however, was conditioned upon his followers making the same sacrifice by enough of them becoming candidates for legislative seats to constitute a majority in the next General Assembly.

These legislative jobs were no more attractive to those who would be called upon to seek them than the job of being governor was to Cummins. The legislature then, as it is now, was overridden by lobbyists seeking special legislation and having the financial ability to pay whatever price might be exacted. Men who would accept free railroad transportation could not be expected to decline other proffered gifts, and to such the legislative job was attractive. But to the type of men who were unpurchasable legislative service was not only unattractive but highly sacrificial. . . .

#### RAILROAD OPPOSITION ENCOUNTERED

The two men selected by the railroads to build and operate their political organization in Iowa were Joseph W. Blythe and Nathaniel M. Hubbard. They were remarkable men. Both of them excelled in political adeptness. The political machine which they put together was not surpassed in any other state. Their activities were not confined within the border lines of this commonwealth. They were recognized throughout the nation as operators of unusual ability, and their assistance was repeatedly sought by other political magnates.

They helped set up the organization that took over and controlled the Federal government. They sent to

the national capitol, as representatives of the state of Iowa, senators and congressmen in whom the monopolies could place entire confidence and many of whom became outstanding leaders and national figures. They also sent to national political conventions delegates who saw eye to eye with the dictators of government and who voted as they were directed by their masters. Whenever and wherever superior political skill was needed these two political dictators were able to furnish it, and they were called upon to do so.

Both of these men stood well in their respective communities, were good husbands and fathers, were active in civic affairs, were generous in their donations to worthy causes, were likeable, and were well liked and respected by their neighbors. If one possessed greater qualities of leadership than the other, Blythe was that one, but giving him that rating constitutes no disparagement to the political ability of Hubbard. They were two of the greatest political strategists that ever operated in Iowa or elsewhere. . . .

The announcement that Albert B. Cummins would be a candidate for governor before the Republican state convention to be held in the summer of 1901 took the railroad's political managers by surprise. They anticipated he would again seek the United States senatorship by opposing Allison in 1902, but they never thought he could be induced to seek the governorship. They did not want him in that place either. His determination to seek the office was an attack upon their political citadel which must be repulsed.

Immediately the battle was furiously waging. The dictators still had full control of the State Central committee, the members of which would fix the time and place of holding the state convention and select its temporary officers, as directed by their masters. The dictators ordered the convention to be held in Hubbard's own city of Cedar Rapids, an invulnerable Standpatter stronghold. They ordered their ablest and most popular men to become favorite son candidates for governor in several counties where the Progressives

were known to have numerical strength. It was customary for counties which had a candidate for governor or congressman to permit him to select the delegates to the nominating convention. It was expected that the several candidates announced for governor would be accorded the right to select the delegates from their home counties, and that by such means Standpat instead of Progressive delegates would be sent to the state convention by those counties. The candidates themselves understood that they were running for governor only for the purpose of stealing delegates away from the Progressives.

The caucus handlers and pass distributors were designing new ways of controlling the caucuses. The system's newspapers were making vicious and lying attacks on Cummins and his friends. Money was freely used. The campaign was bitter. Cummins went into action on the stump, and his speeches won delegates for him. After all the county conventions were held, a majority of the delegates selected to attend the state convention were in the Cummins camp.

During the intervening time between the county conventions and the state convention, every known trick and subterfuge was resorted to for the purpose of stealing Cummins delegates. The address of the temporary chairman of the state convention was devoted to the accomplishment of the same purpose, but to no avail. This time the line held, and when the smoke of battle had arisen, Cummins had the nomination for governor. The Progressive candidates for the legislature did not fare so well. Many of them failed to get nominated by the county conventions before which they were candidates.

The nomination of Cummins for governor was a bitter pill for the Standpatters. Believing themselves to be the genuine Republicans and that the Progressives were a bunch of fanatics attempting to wreck the party, they were terribly wrought up and irreconcilable. They could not vote for such a visionary radical. Men who had previously boasted that they would vote for a yel-

low dog if he was on the Republican ticket now noisily asserted that they could not vote for Cummins. Hordes of them voted for the Democrat candidate for governor. The Democrats resented this intrusion, and enough of them voted for Cummins to offset the Standpatter defection.

The principal reason why the Standpatters despised Cummins was his vandalism in advocating doing away with the railroad pass system. They believed he would do it if he had the power, and their fears were well grounded.

#### ABLE STATE ADMINISTRATION

Despite the Standpatter desertion from the ticket at the election, Cummins received enough votes to elect him, and he was inaugurated and became governor in January, 1902, for a term of two years. However, the Standpatters elected a majority of the members of the Legislature, which convened at the same time, and prevented the adoption of the reform measures desired and needed by the Progressive to successfully continue the struggle for the recovery of political freedom.

In his 1902 inaugural address the governor said: "Wealth, and especially incorporate wealth, has many rights; but it should always be remembered that among them is not the right to vote. Corporations have, and ought to have, many privileges; but among them is not the privilege to sit in political conventions or occupy seats in legislative chambers. Corporations, as such, should be vigorously excluded in every form from participation in political affairs. Here at least the rich and poor, as individuals, should meet upon a plane of absolute equality. The conscience and intelligence of the natural man must be the sole factors in determining what our laws shall be and who shall execute them." Thus was aptly expressed the Progressive doctrine, the Thomas Jefferson doctrine, the Abraham Lincoln doctrine, and good religion. But it was anathema to the Standpatters.

Cummins was magnificent as governor. He proved himself to be an able administrator. The state was for-



tunate to have its foremost citizen in the governor's chair and was enriched by the high quality of his services. He made a lot of changes which increased government efficiency and honest administration. He manned the various commissions, boards and departments having to do with state government with incorruptible men. With the assistance of Progressives serving as the other state officers, who went into office with him, he succeeded in establishing values of property owned by railroads and the other utilities, for tax assessment purposes, which were fair and equitable. The law required such valuations to be fixed by the state executive council, then composed of the governor, secretary of state, state treasurer and state auditor. The railroads and other utilities had used the executive council to evade taxes, and they were much disgruntled over the loss of this valuable asset.

The governor was unable to put into effect the major reforms which required legislative action. While the Progressives had elected a goodly number of capable men to both houses of the legislature, who put forth gigantic efforts to legislate the railroads out of politics, they lacked the required number of votes to pass any of the bills which would have broken the shackles.

After two years of successful state administration, the Progressives were more resolved than ever before to establish their legislative program. In the hope of accomplishing it through the next election, the governor became a candidate for renomination. Hubbard had been removed from politics by death in the year 1902, and Blythe was now sole ruler of their political empire. He had built up a lot of adoration for the two-term rule and hence was not in a very good position to oppose it. He deemed it unwise to take any chances on losing control of the legislature by a division of energy in attempting to prevent the renomination of Cummins for a second gubernatorial term. So he issued the order to let the governor have a renomination without opposition, and confine the contest to the make-up of the general assembly. The strategy of this directive was

this: if the Standpatters brought out a candidate for governor, it would make the Progressives more active in garnering delegates at the precinct caucuses than they would be if no fight was being made on the governor's renomination, and in such circumstances the Standpatters might lose both the governorship and control of the general assembly, while without such a convention contest the Progressives might not be so interested in the caucus results and there might be a better chance to pick delegates who would support Standpatter candidates for the legislature at the county conventions.

#### CUMMINS GIVEN SECOND TERM

So Cummins was renominated for governor by the state convention without outward opposition by the Standpatters. That convention had the appearance of amicability, but it was a false face. The Standpatters were on their good behaviour that day because Blythe had told them to be. However, the rabid ones, and there were hordes of them, were resolved to scalp Cummins at the election.

The pre-election campaign was ugly and extremely bitter. The vast army of leaders in the railroad organization and their subsidized newspapers urged the governor's defeat. It was the third major scrimmage in the war to rescue political freedom. The governor was compelled to make speeches in all parts of the state, and this he did most effectively. He had made a record as governor that would bear the closest kind of scrutiny, and no one could point to a blemish in it. He was not attacked upon his official acts and conduct because he could not be. The burden of the onslaught was that he was not a Republican, that he was advocating socialism, that he was a dangerous man to be at the head of the state, and that he was destroying the Republican party. Both Democrats and independent voters rallied to the governor's support and accomplished his re-election.

He was inaugurated governor a second time in January, 1904, for a two-year term. But again he was without a majority of the members of the newly elected

general assembly. His followers in the law-making branch of the state constituted the ablest minority ever known in any legislature, but they did not have quite enough votes to overthrow the strongly entrenched pass system, and put into effect election and other vital reforms.

During the governor's second term the Titus amendment of the state constitution, substituting biennial for annual elections, became effective. That dispensed with an election in the year 1905, and therefore the terms of all state officers elected in 1903, were extended for an additional year, or until January, 1907. During that period of time all of the state boards and commissions were being administered by appointees of Governor Cummins. This was helpful to the Progressives. Complete control of the executive branch of the state government increased their political power and was heartening. Yet other situations were disheartening. Not only the failure to place a majority of free members in the general assembly but other happenings such as President Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of former governor Leslie M. Shaw as secretary of the treasury were exceedingly 'discomfiting'. The victories gained were only partial ones. The railroad dynasty had been disabled but not yet destroyed.

Hence the situation of the Progressives was not too rosy as the governor's second term was approaching its end, especially in view of the fact that their undaunted leader felt the necessity of retiring to private life to make provision for the restoration of depleted financial resources.

Both the Progressives and Standpatters were convinced that with Albert B. Cummins out of politics Blythe would quickly recapture the executive branch of the government and become and remain unassailable.

#### NATIONAL PROGRESSIVE SENTIMENT

Contemporaneously with the election of Albert B. Cummins as governor of Iowa, Theodore Roosevelt accidentally became president of the United States. The growth of Progressive sentiment within the Republi-

can party had attracted his attention and he aligned himself with the movement. He was in full sympathy with its program, and announced his determination to break the monopoly stronghold, tame the railroads, and bring the government back to the people. His intentions were excellent, but his performance was nil.

The members of congress in control of that law-making governmental branch had not been selected to do such things, and they balked. The president coerced, but to no avail. Then he pressured by using what he termed a "Big Stick" without results. Then he urged the public to petition congress for redress, and this was attempted on a large scale, but without immediate success.

The members of congress who constituted its voting strength were too well fortified and too thoroughly entrenched in their positions to be bluffed, scared or coaxed, and they would not desert their benefactors. The president fumed and stewed, but made no impression on the recalcitrants. He did, however, become the recipient of much popularity with the masses and became so strong that his nomination for a full four-year term could not be prevented without utter destruction of the party. So the bosses, *ex necessitate*, and in expectation of successfully continuing their dogged resistance to him, permitted the convention delegates to nominate him. A few Progressives reached the halls of congress through the 1904 election, but their presence made no change in the monopoly control of either senate or house.

At the opening of the congress in 1905, a bill requested by the president and afterwards known as the Roosevelt bill, was introduced to amend the Interstate Commerce Act by clothing the commission with adequate power to regulate railroads engaged in interstate commerce, fix fair and reasonable rates, and terminate freight rebates and discriminations. The bill was respectfully consigned to its supposed deathbed in a committee room. The president was still wielding his "Big Stick" but he was not able to swat a single railroad pass.



In great despair he again appealed to the public for help, and in response to that appeal an organization was formed to persuade congress to resurrect and pass that bill.

#### SENATORS BY DIRECT VOTE

When railroads began absorbing government, the champions of political freedom inaugurated a movement to amend the federal constitution so as to permit the election of U. S. senators by direct voting. Governor Cummins was the foremost promoter of this reform. In 1906, he called and organized an interstate conference to put pressure into the movement. The conference was largely attended and furnished the requisite impetus. At the conclusion of the meeting the governor was quoted as saying:

I believe we are a long step nearer the election of senators by direct vote than we were before the interstate convention was held. In so saying, I assume the obvious truth that a large majority of the people of the United States favor the change. It must be manifest to the most conservative mind that the selection of legislators should be removed as far as possible from the influence of interests strong in wealth and powerful in combination, which must be restricted, controlled and regulated by law; and while the people in their primary capacity are not infallible, they constitute the safest tribunal that can be devised, when they act individually and directly.

A few years later an amendment to the Federal constitution was adopted changing the method of selecting United States senators from election by state legislatures to direct election by the voters.

This activity of the governor did not win the friendship of the Standpatters. They termed it more socialism, and they despised it. They wanted Blythe to continue selecting the senators from Iowa. They had implicit confidence in his judgment and undying gratitude for his generosity. . . .

#### THE PROGRESSIVE CRISIS

As Cummins was approaching the end of his fourth year in the governor's office, he decided that he would not again seek or accept public office, but would return

to the practice of law at the expiration of the term he was then serving. By that time, he would have spent five years as the state's chief executive. . . .

In view of the unsuccessful efforts to elect enough members of the General Assembly to insure interruption of the distribution of political railroad passes, the governor was convinced that any further activities in the direction of the United States senate would be futile. Before the governor announced his determination to retire from office-holding politics, his active followers had been advocating a third gubernatorial term for him, without consulting him about it. The mere mention of a third term was desperation for the Standpatters, and the news that the governor had disapproved it was belated cause for Standpat hilarity. . . .

#### THIRD TERM CANDIDACY A NECESSITY

There was no other man as well qualified as Cummins to lead the Progressive warriors to victory. To continue this struggle without his leadership was unthinkable and the Progressives were not willing to abandon the idea of making him the servant of all the people by sending him to the United States senate. Allison was well-advanced in years, was beginning to show signs of feebleness, and his current senatorial term would expire at the end of 1908.

If Cummins would accept a nomination and election for a third term as governor, there was now a better chance than ever before to elect a legislature that would cooperate with him by outlawing the political railroad passes and replacing the disgraceful caucus system with a primary election law, and he would be sure to obtain in 1908 the nomination for senator to succeed Allison. . . .

All of these things persuaded the governor's friends and active supporters that the war was not lost but could be won by one more well-fought battle, provided, of course, Cummins would stay with the governorship another term and lead the attack. . . . The next important step in the Progressive freedom campaign was the retention of its irreplaceable leader. . . .

Cummins' supporters were the type of men who get things done. It was their sincere conviction that Cummins was then so strong politically that his re-election as governor would be sure to give the Progressives a majority in both houses of the legislature, and produce the needed reforms which were obtainable only through legislative action. One by one and in groups they presented the matter to the governor. . . . Finally, the announcement was made that he would be a candidate for the gubernatorial nomination before the Republican state convention to be held in the summer of 1906.

#### CHOOSING THE OPPOSING CANDIDATE

The earlier announcement that Cummins would not consider a third term nomination for governor had convinced Blythe and his Standpat followers that their troubles were over, and they anticipated that no difficulty would be met in retaking the executive branch of the state government with Cummins out of the picture. A slate of candidates for the statehouse jobs was made up, but not yet published. When the news was flashed that Governor Cummins had been persuaded to stand for re-election on a platform demanding primary elections, a nationwide Standpatter panic ensued. All the leaders were jittery; the pass holders were frantic; the editors of the enslaved newspapers were horrified over the suggestion of a third term. . . .

The slate of candidates for the offices of state was junked. The favorite-son candidate trick was discarded. This time there would be only one candidate put up to oppose the renomination of the governor. It was compulsory that the candidate should have unusual qualifications. He must have a record free from blemishes. he must have ability as an orator; he must appear to be free from monopoly taint; and he must, if possible, come from territory where Cummins had the greatest strength.

The Cummins candidacy quickly became a national threat to monopoly complacency. . . . The national political headquarters of the railroads was established in

Chicago, and was directed by a man named J. S. Runnells, a former citizen of Iowa. Even Blythe, who needed no political mentor, took orders from Runnells, who was then at the head of the Pullman Company, a sort of railroad overlord. These conferences on choosing a governor for the people of Iowa were held in Runnells' office.

At the first meeting of the conferees, the names of all possible prospects were eliminated except that of George D. Perkins. He resided at Sioux City, in the 11th Congressional District. His location was perfect. He was editor of the *Sioux City Journal*, a strong newspaper with a wide circulation, and one of the principal mouth-pieces of railroad politics. That was excellent. He had represented his district in congress before the Progressives learned how to conduct precinct caucuses in that district. As a congressman he was a dependable ally of Blythe and Hubbard, and he was still fond of Blythe. That was essential. He had made many political speeches and was rated as one of the better stump speakers. Forensic ability was indispensable. There remained one very necessary qualification, which was "How well would he run?" As an aid in determining this qualification, it was determined that soundings should be made. Accordingly, the railroads hired a former Sioux City newspaper reporter to make a tour of Iowa to find out how Perkins stood. This was done, and the report was favorable.

Then Perkins was summoned by Blythe to meet him at Runnells' office in Chicago, and he went. There he was interrogated by Runnells and Blythe and his examination brought out an abiding hatred of Cummins. That was splendid. His selection as the opposing gubernatorial candidate was then and there solemnly agreed to. Senator Allison happened to drop in on the meeting and he added his sanction. It was decided that Perkins could win by not too much stressing opposition to the reforms that had been demanded. In fact, it would be good campaign tactics for him to give lip support to the whole Progressive program in a modified



form. It would not estrange the Standpatters because it would all be explained to them, and it might attract the support of Progressives opposed to a third term.

The grand scheme was to have the home city friends of Perkins propose him as a harmony candidate who would unite the factions of the Republican party, and thereby disassociate him from all railroad influence and make it appear that he was being drafted as a candidate for governor by both former Standpatters and former Progressives. In due time the announcement was made in the *Sioux City Journal* that its editor had been induced to become a candidate for governor by friends and neighbors who recognized his peculiar fitness to efficiently perform the duties of that high office. The scheme was a plausible one, but it did not click. The mask was quickly torn from Perkins' face, and he was correctly branded as Blythe's candidate for governor to perpetuate railroad government.

#### UNUSUAL CAMPAIGN METHODS

Now began the greatest political battle ever fought in Iowa or elsewhere. Every known implement of such warfare was used—money, newspapers, oratory, trickery, misrepresentation, alcohol and free railroad transportation. Passes were as thick as flies in midsummer. Political stooges roamed over the state, disbursing money, peddling whiskey, circulating falsehoods, cajoling voters and laying groundwork for capturing the precinct caucuses.

Newspapers and handbills vilifying Cummins and falsely accusing him of having committed high crimes and with all sorts of corruption, were distributed through the mail and by hand from house to house day in and day out. Also, the active supporters of the governor were viciously attacked. . . . The speaking campaign against Cummins was of the same type as the newspaper disparagement, and was carried on extensively by numbers of railroad orators.

The precinct caucuses were replete with strife and discord, and often were attended by more voters than resided in voting precincts. Wandering bands of illegal

voters traveled from caucus to caucus, forced their way into the meeting places and sometimes were able to vote not only once but several times at the same caucus. No act was too reprehensible to be employed by the Blythe associates at these caucuses. . . .

Fortunately for the Progressives, many of them had become familiar with caucus ways during the preceding years of the struggle to unhorse the railroads, politically, and quite frequently they overmatched the Standpatters in the pursuit of county convention delegates. Their great handicap was in not having anything to overcome the free passes which were offered to the delegates as soon as they were named.

Also, Progressives had mastered county convention tactics, where minorities had often prevailed through the craftiness of their leadership, and in this campaign they succeeded in choosing Cummins delegates to the state convention wherever they had a majority of the delegates in the county convention. So, all the way up from the precinct caucuses to the state convention there was war aplenty and the number of casualties was great.

#### ADVANTAGE WITH PERKINS

Perkins had the advantage of more support from newspapers than Cummins had, of the expenditure of an inexhaustible supply of money in his behalf, of the activity of more experienced politicians, and of the tremendous influence of free railroad passes upon the political thinking of men.

On the other hand, Cummins was in every way superior to his adversary. Not only was he more effective as an orator, but he had something worthwhile to talk about. He was the champion of political freedom and liberty. He was a crusader in pursuit of the recovery of the lost right of self-government. He was unselfishly devoting his great talents to the establishment of reforms which would bring the government back to the people and make it possible for them to keep it. His cause was eloquently presented. His logic was unanswerable. Wherever he spoke, capacity

audiences greeted him and were convinced by his arguments. But he was fighting an organization of unlimited resources of money, well-trained men and all the sinews of political warfare, an organization entrenched in the government and using the government to perpetuate itself and willing to resort to and employ the foulest methods known to warfare.

Perkins had abandoned the idea of pretending to be a pseudo-Progressive. He had no program to offer except the unwisdom of a third term. The burden of his talk was vituperation. His speaking campaign was not helpful to him, except to hold in line and kindle the enthusiasm of pass holders and re-intensify their bitter hatred of Governor Cummins.

#### CUMMINS LED IN DELEGATES

In spite of their great handicap, the Progressives were ahead of the Standpatters in state convention delegates after most of the county conventions had been held. In an effort to wipe out this lead and acquire control of the nominating convention, the resourceful Mr. Blythe resorted to the strategy of selecting fake contested delegations in a number of counties where conventions had not been held, among which were Dallas, Audubon, Scott, Carroll, Wapello and Jasper.

Such contests would be decided in the first instance by the members of the state convention credentials committee and finally by the convention itself, and no contested delegate would be permitted to vote until the contest was determined. By thus preventing regularly elected Progressive delegates from voting before the fake contests were determined, the Standpatters might be able to elect a majority of the Credentials, Permanent Organization and Resolutions committees, in which event it might further be possible for them to have the contests decided in their favor and steal the convention.

It was a bold adventure, grounded in desperation, but its appeal would be irresistible. The loss of free railroad transportation would be a dire calamity, and any kind of a preventive measure, no matter how unscrupulous, was considered legitimate. Political freedom had

been in the discard for so long that it was entirely out of date. The folks who were trying to bring it back were undesirable citizens striving to rob the pass-holders, and therefore it was perfectly right to steal their convention seats. At any rate, there was no law prohibiting such vandalism.

Consequently, when the direction came from headquarters to elect contesting delegates in the counties where the Progressives were in the majority, every freerider, otherwise honest, wholeheartedly sanctioned it without a pang of remorse. So, during the remaining days of the pre-convention campaign hostility was intensified, and no act, however disreputable, was left uncommitted that it might save the passes from destruction.

#### TRUMPED-UP FAKE CONTESTS

The plan to have minority delegates in county conventions meet separately from the majority delegates and name Standpat delegates to attend the state convention to usurp the seats and prevent the voting by the regularly selected Progressive delegates was seized upon with the greatest enthusiasm and avidity. Of course, it was wholly indefensible and shockingly disgraceful, but it was prosecuted nevertheless. In each of the counties above named the groundwork was laid for these fake contests. The Standpatters were organized to promote them. They were thoroughly indoctrinated with the strategy. They were assisted by manpower, money, liquor and newspaper publicity. The activity was about the same in all of the counties where the plan was employed. . . .

The Progressives had fairly won the state convention, and were ready to defend their rights by whatever kind and quantity of force might be required to do so. . . . This leaked to some of the Standpatters, including the nominees for congress, and they were greatly disturbed over the outlook. Many of the delegates arrived in Des Moines three days in advance of the convention date. Several of the congressional candidates, in an effort to pour oil on the troubled waters and keep the



party intact, to make possible their continuance in office, hit upon the novel device of having the State Central committee investigate the merits of the contests. The committee agreed, and the contesting delegates were summoned to appear before the committee, one county at a time, and present evidence justifying their contentions. They all appeared except the contestants from Scott and Carroll counties.

The State Central committee listened to the contestants from Audubon, Dallas, Jasper and Wapello counties for two days and one night without accomplishing more than to subdue the Scott and Carroll county contestants.

Fortunately for the Progressives, they had a majority of the uncontested delegates in the state convention, due to the fact that they had carried some county conventions held during the latter part of the campaign, where the Standpatters felt so sure of selecting the delegates that they failed to arrange for fake contests until it was too late to do so. Fortunately, too, the uncontested Progressive delegates were so located geographically as to probably give the Progressive caucus control in a majority of the eleven congressional districts, now reduced to eight districts.

#### PROGRESSIVES CONTROLLED CAUCUSES

Then as now, delegate caucuses were held, on the morning of the convention, for each congressional district, composed of uncontested state convention delegates from that district. Each of the district caucuses selected a member of the State Central committee for the ensuing biennium, and a member of each of the following convention committees: Credentials, Permanent Organization and Resolutions.

When these district caucuses adjourned, the Progressives had six of the eleven members of these three committees. This was bitter medicine for the Standpatters, but they would not give up. Their chief strategist Blythe, never publicly displayed, was on the job directing operations from his private headquarters. The Standpatters were confident he would yet discover some way to get control of the convention.

Notwithstanding the pleading of the placating congressmen, the contesting delegates from Audubon, Dallas, Jasper and Wapello counties appeared before the Credentials committee and insisted that the Standpat members of the committee present a minority report to the convention, seating them. The fake character of their contests was so overwhelmingly established that the five Standpat members of the committee could not go along with that proposition. They merely recorded their dissent from the majority report seating the Cummins delegates.

Concerning these contests, the *Des Moines Register and Leader* in its issue of August 2, 1906, stated:

To the surprise of the committee the Scott county Perkins outfit did not have the nerve to present their contest. Nor was Carroll represented, so hard had the State Central committee even at its factional and partisan hearing of the two preceding days hit this fake that it was not even suggested to the State Central committee. The Credentials committee got the facts in about three hours. It extracted all the facts from the persons appearing so quickly and completely and Chairman Healy so promptly laid bare the fake character of a lot of the contests that the Standpatters had nothing to do but to acknowledge that they were impossible of support. In Jasper county the examination of Henry Siwold (one of the contestants) disclosed the fact that the organization of the Perkins convention there was irregular and without force or effect. The Cummins convention was regular. While the Standpat members of the committee made the record show their dissent from the majority report seating the Cummins delegates, yet they would make no minority report.

#### CONTESTANTS DESPERATE

The Credentials committee decision did not settle the contests; nor were the congressmen able to pacify the contestants. The fight was renewed in the convention. When the Credentials committee report was presented, the lid blew off. If it was approved by the delegates eligible to vote upon it, the jig would be up for Blythe and Perkins and free riders on railroad trains, for the full membership of the lower house and half of the membership of the upper house of the next General Assembly had been nominated at the county and

senatorial district conventions, and if the nominees were elected the Progressives would have a majority in the legislature for the first time since the rebellion started. Even so, a Standpat governor could prevent reform legislation by the exercise of the veto power. With both a Progressive legislature and a Progressive governor, the caucuses, proxies and railroad passes would be outlawed.

The fight for a Standpat governor must be carried on. The situation was now more desperate than it had been at any time during the pre-convention campaign. The Standpatters realized their predicament and could not conceal their emotions. They were faced with certain defeat, but they could not give up. They hollered and yelled and excitedly waved their arms. They hurled damnatory epithets at their Progressive brothers. They were ferocious and infuriated.

When the motion was made and seconded to adopt the report of the Credentials committee, their leaders demanded a roll call vote. As the secretary started to call the roll of the 99 counties, there was some cessation of clamor, but when the vote of two-thirds of the counties had been announced, it was evident that the Progressives would have the decision, and then occurred a fresh outbreak of disorder. A majority of the delegates voted for the adoption of the report.

#### CUMMINS DELEGATIONS SEATED

When the result of the balloting was announced and the contested Cummins delegates from Audubon, Carroll, Dallas, Jasper, Scott and Wapello counties entered the hall and occupied their convention seats, a scene challenging adequate word description took place. The fake delegations from Jasper and Wapello counties, with all hope of survival gone, were in the throes of desperation. They had been delegates to Republican state conventions for many, many years, and now they were pitiable castaways, discredited and humiliated. If their vandalism had been sustained, as they were assured it would be at the time the fake contest program was inaugurated, they would have been glori-

fied heroes. Since, instead, they were rejected, they were suffering the ignominy of being caught in the act of committing a heinous offense. It was terrible and unbearable. Their anguish was all the greater because they hailed from Blythe's impregnable Reservation, where it was almost a crime not to be a Standpatter.

The legitimate Standpat delegates displayed their compassion for their unfortunate rejected brothers by giving free reign to their tempers and making the convention auditorium a reservoir of threatened violence. Such misbehaviour far surpassed any previous departure from orderly conduct ever experienced in a Republican state convention.

Beaten as they were, the remaining Standpat delegates maintained unabated opposition to the work of the convention. Everything possible was done by them to cause delay and inconvenience. The rancor did not ameliorate; the noise did not moderate. The permanent chairman of the convention was fully equal to the exigencies of the occasion and skillfully controlled the effort of the Standpatters to break up the convention.

Amid the tumult, roll calls were made for the nomination of candidates for state officers. The first roll call was to nominate a candidate for governor. The Standpatters voted for Perkins, the Progressives for Cummins, who won. When the chairman announced the result of the vote and declared Governor Cummins the nominee, the Standpat fury was increased. The customary motion to make the nomination of the winner unanimous was not made.

On the next roll call Warren Garst, a Progressive, was nominated lieutenant governor. On the succeeding roll calls Progressive candidates for the remaining state offices were nominated. Still more Standpat dissatisfaction was evinced.

#### STRONG REFORM PLATFORM ADOPTED

Then came the report of the committee on Resolutions, signed by the six Progressive members, presenting a platform containing planks endorsing the state



and national administrations, calling for the election of all Republicans nominated for public offices, and urging the enactment of primary elections, delegate proxy abolishment, political railroad pass suppression, passenger fare reduction, anti-monopoly, and other reform laws, and demanding that the federal constitution be amended to permit the election of United States senators by direct vote.

When this report was adopted, the Standpat delegates were still more infuriated. Three of their congressmen insisted on making speeches, and were given opportunity to do so. Their utterances were vitriolic. They condemned everything the convention had done. They denounced the nominated candidates as un-Republican and socialists. They refused to be bound by the new platform. They urged their followers to bolt the ticket.

One of these heart-broken congressmen, in a burst of explosive oratory, called Progressives "rodents of reform." These ugly speeches had a temporary soothing effect on the rioting Standpat delegates because their mouthpieces had correctly expressed their own sentiments.

During this lull in the storm Governor Cummins, responding to a chorus of calls for a speech, and manifesting his usual serenity, addressed the assembled delegates, and in that speech he said:

The hope that is nearest my heart is the continued supremacy of the Republican party. It has written the most brilliant pages in the annals of American history. It has done more for humanity than any other organization which ever came together for the betterment of mankind and the government of society. I intend to contribute what little I can and to play an inadequate and humble part in assisting the party to write into law in the future the same sound principles of government for which it has stood in the past. The Republican party stands like adamant for the wonderful and unexampled material prosperity that now blesses the American people, but high above everything else it has stood in the past and will stand in the future for the individual rights of man.

The Republican party, under monopoly captivity, had become the bulwark of plunder and the protector of

special interests. As reconstructed by its captors, it had forsaken humanity. It had surrendered its custody of the "individual rights of man" and was the willing tool of those who had compelled it to betray mankind.

The governor's speech at the convention was the crowning event of a series of victories which assured the release of the Republican party in Iowa from its monopoly captors and its re-establishment as the promoter and protector of human rights.

The Standpatters did not applaud this speech. It was not the expression of their political philosophy. They did not want the party to take the direction the governor had indicated it must travel. They were not mollified by the declaration of this brand of Republicanism. To them it was merely despicable Progressive claptrap. What the Progressives had done to them and were certain to do when the legislature convened was unbearable and unforgivable.

The routing of the Standpatters was the death knell of party harmony. The Republican party in Iowa was now split into two hostile branches—the jubilant Progressives and the bereaved Standpatters. The Standpatters voted with the Progressives to adjourn the convention, but vowed to resume and continue the fight through the election campaign. . . .

#### THE PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The battle fought in the caucuses, county conventions and state convention was not concluded by the renomination of Governor Cummins. The Progressives had made a clean sweep at the state convention. Every nominated candidate for a state office was a Progressive. A sufficient number of Progressives had been nominated for assemblymen to constitute them a majority in both houses of the legislature to be convened the following January, if elected. A majority of the members of the State Central committee were Progressives, and the election of Frank P. Woods, of Estherville, a Progressive, as chairman of that committee, and manager of the election campaign, resulted.

The Progressives now were in complete control of

the Republican party in Iowa, and the only way to prevent them from carrying out their reform program was to defeat them at the election. Both state and national monopoly control of government would be in jeopardy unless this were accomplished.

Outraged Standpatters needed no persuasion to induce them to bolt their ticket. The rabid ones—and many thousands of them were that way—felt wholly justified in voting against the nominees on their own party ticket. Some of the congressmen who had pleaded for harmony at the state convention were no longer striving for harmony.

The very suggestion of the possibility of a primary election law, the abolishment of delegate proxies, and the loss of railroad passes, was horrifying. Life without the passes would be a wretched existence. Furthermore, the Progressives were not real Republicans. If they were elected, the party would be destroyed anyway. If they were defeated, the party would be out of power, but there would be a chance for reconstruction if the Progressives were properly discredited.

So, there was no satisfactory alternative but to purge the Progressives by throwing the election to the Democrats. The bolting program was aided and abetted by the national railroad political organization. The state crowd of railroad politicians eagerly seized it, and it was put into operation.

A well-financed headquarters was set up. The first bivouac with the Democrats was at their state convention held at Waterloo, not long after the Republican state convention adjourned. A delegation of Standpatters there proposed to Democratic leaders that if they would nominate Claude Porter, a favorably-known, popular man, as their candidate for governor, they would deliver 40,000 Standpat Republican votes to him. Porter was reluctant to become the candidate because he was in sympathy with the Progressive movement, but he finally went on the ticket. The promised bolter votes were delivered to him, but they were offset by Democratic votes for Cummins.

## VICIOUS AND DECEPTIVE TACTICS

The sixty-day duration of the campaign was even more bitter than any preceding one had been. The Standpatters used a speaker's bureau, a literary department and a whispering squad. Denunciation, villification, and unmitigated lying were the weapons employed by the bolting renegades. The orators were vicious; the captive newspapers were defamatory; the whisperers were deceptive. All of them together produced enough malignity to be utterly destructive of any character not fortified by all the known virtues.

The attack was limited to Governor Cummins and the other Progressive candidates and Progressives generally. The Standpatters running for congress and the ones who had been nominated for the legislature were played up as unblemished, simon-pure Republicans upon whose election the future existence of the nation depended. These congressmen were as strongly anti-Cummins as their masters were. They were bolting, also.

It was a gloriously mixed-up campaign. Democratic nominees for congress adopted a hitherto unknown and unheard of type of campaigning. They actually invited Republicans to vote for them so that they could uphold President Theodore Roosevelt, who was being violently opposed and obstructed by the Standpat members of congress, including most of the Iowa incumbents in that body.

At that time the Iowa Democrats were largely in favor of the Progressive program. Most of them had voted for Teddy Roosevelt in 1904, and in 1906 they were supporting Governor Cummins and the Progressive candidates for the legislature. For the same reason that they voted Republican on the state ticket, they voted for their own candidates on the congressional ticket. They were not voting to keep Republican Standpat congressmen in Washington. Also, there had come into being in Blythe's Reservation a sizeable block of independent voters—former Republicans refusing to bow to the will of Blythe.



## CONVERTED BY CUMMINS' SPEECHES

In the last two weeks of the campaign Cummins invaded the Reservation. The speeches he made there were convert-winners and vote-makers. The Progressives had less newspaper support in that section than in other parts of the state, and consequently had suffered more misrepresentation there than elsewhere. When the dwellers in the Reservation became conversant with the Progressive program, it was exactly what they wanted and they embraced it. Before that, they had been led to believe that Cummins was a wild-eyed fanatic at the head of a bunch of outlaws who were trying to get laws made that would permit them to rob the taxpayers. This time the Reservation voted for Cummins.

In one congressional district largely within the erstwhile Reservation, the Republican re-nominee for congress was one of the most vindictive Standpatters. He was anti-Roosevelt and anti-Cummins. Of course he was also a bolter, and he was a formidable adversary. He carried the gospel of hate to every nook and corner of his seven-county district. While he was maliciously influencing his Standpat friends to vote against Cummins and the other Progressive candidates, his Progressive constituents were equally busy showing their friends how to mark their ballots so that their votes would elect Cummins and defeat the congressman, his mortal enemy. This congressman failed to receive a majority of the votes cast at the election.

The villification of the governor increased rather than diminished his crusading powers. He convincingly presented to the voters a program that offered them a means of escape from political bondage. There was no effective answer to his eloquent advocacy of the passage of a primary election law to replace the disgracefully conducted precinct caucuses, or a law making it impossible to steal conventions by abolishing delegate proxies, or a law making it a crime for railroads to furnish free transportation to any person not an actual full-time employee—all for the purpose of restoring to the voters the right to govern themselves as guaran-

teed to them by both the federal and state constitutions.

It was not uncommon for holders of passes to return them to the railroads after listening to one of the governor's speeches and being forcibly reminded of their credulity. Not only was he pointing the way to the recovery of lost self-government, but he was also reinstating the lost self-respect of many men who had been accepting and using railroad passes without appreciating the serfdom feature of the transaction.

The campaign was a war of secession and rebellion within the confines of a political party, with men obsessed with bitter aversion on one side pitted against men determined to break the fetters of slavery on the other side. The battalions of hatred were flanked with inexhaustible supplies of money and unlimited free transportation and led by the most skillful strategist known to political endeavor. The rescuers of political freedom had no such weapons, but they were fired by the zeal of crusaders, they were battling for the supremacy of human rights, and they too were led by a peerless leader.

The entire campaign was of terrific onslaughts, one after another. There was no cessation of attack until the last voter's ballot was counted on the night of election day. When the statewide election returns were compiled, Cummins had a comfortable majority. All of the men on the ticket were also elected. In the early days of January, 1907, he was inaugurated governor a third time, and he was assured of the adoption of his legislative program, for there were more dependable Progressives than Standpatters in the new general assembly.

#### THE REBIRTH OF FREEDOM

With the re-election of Governor Cummins and a Progressive legislature, the rebirth of political freedom, which also meant the restoration of economic freedom, was now nearly accomplished in Iowa. It only remained for protective legislation, which was certain to be enacted, to make the victory a lasting one. Under lead-

ership of Cummins railroad control of the state government had been extinguished, but legislation was necessary to make its revival an impossibility, to make it certain that its banishment would be perpetual.

The character of the deposed opposition, its resources and determination to overrule the expressed will of the majority indicated the character of the perils to be overcome. To meet this situation statutes had to be enacted that would permit the will of the majority to prevail in nominations as well as in final elections, by providing for the legal expression of that will under conditions which would make stolen caucuses and conventions, trick contests and irregular participation of others than members of a political party impossible, and secure to all members of a party an opportunity to express a choice of candidates and have that choice fairly counted.

This decisive victory was not looked upon by Governor Cummins as his own, but rather the triumph of a cause. The cause was the freedom of the people of Iowa. They had seen their political freedom usurped by a dominating influence powerful enough to control their state and national public officers. They had seen their civic leaders corrupted by railroad passes. They had seen the veterans of the civil war, who were looked up to and respected, also come under this dominating influence, often themselves suffering enslavement as public officials, looking for guidance to the ruling corporate dictators rather than to the people. They realized that self-government had vanished, and they were helpless.

The emancipated voters considered their liberation Governor Cummins' personal triumph, and they were right. Without the leadership which he furnished, resumption of self-government would have been more difficult and uncertain. As truly as a general successful in a battle is entitled to honor for the skill, courage, devotion and ability which he manifested in leading his army to victory when to thousands all seemed lost, so upon a leader like Governor Cummins the lovers of

freedom were bound to bestow high rewards in the form of undying gratitude and enlarged confidence.

It was a great battle, a triumphal victory. The stakes were high. Humanity was in the balance. Oppression was rampant. Human rights had been bartered away for railroad passes of insignificant money value. Self-government had been dethroned. Political freedom had lapsed into political slavery. And now, after a lengthy and desperate struggle, characterized by many vicissitudes, a decisive victory had provided the means of exiling the conqueror and setting the people free. The rebirth of freedom long despaired, at last was a reality.

#### A PROGRESSIVE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The victories won by the Progressives in the county and state conventions and at the general election in 1906 insured the adoption of laws which would ultimately drive the railroads from the government of Iowa and restore political freedom. For the first time in a quarter of a century the railroads did not control the legislature—the 32nd General Assembly. Not only had the voters nominated and elected a majority of the members in both houses of the legislature who were anti-railroad politically, but the caliber of the men who were elected made it certain they would not be tempted by free rides on passenger trains; on the contrary, they were bent upon destroying the temptation.

In January, 1907, when this general assembly was convened, the message of Governor Cummins advocating the adoption of laws providing for state-wide primary elections, the outlawing of delegate proxies, the prohibition of the issuance of railroad passes to persons other than full-time employees of railroads, the reduction of railroad passenger fares, the furnishing of freight cars to all shippers, the making of reports to the state executive council for tax assessment purposes, limiting hours of continuous rail labor, equitable freight rates, further insurance regulations, amendments to the pure food act, and other reforms,



was jubilantly received by the Progressive members of the legislature and emphatically rejected by the Standpatters. . . .

#### FIRST STATE-WIDE PRIMARY

The first election to nominate candidates for public offices, under the new state-wide primary law was held in the month of June, 1908. The sixth term of Senator William B. Allison, who had represented Iowa in the United States senate since the year 1873, was then approaching its end. . . . Allison was nearly eighty years old, had become physically and mentally feeble, and was suffering from illness from which there was little prospect of recovery. Therefore, it was taken for granted that he would not be a candidate for re-nomination.

The railroads had been shorn of political power by the acts of the 32nd General Assembly. Their precinct caucuses had been outlawed, their pass system had been destroyed, and delegate proxies were no more. They were no longer controlling any branch of the state government. Their ability to select and control public officials appeared to be ended.

Governor Cummins, who had successfully led the long struggle for the recapture of political freedom, and concededly Iowa's most outstanding citizen, possessed every requisite qualification for a senatorial candidate. His candidacy was announced with the emphatic approval of the Progressives, and, of course, with the vehement disapproval of Mr. Blythe and his well disciplined Standpatters.

The nomination of Cummins for United States senator looked like a certainty. There was no man then in Iowa who had any chance of defeating him in a primary election contest. The Progressives were jubilant. The Standpatters were resurgent. Separated from their free passes, they despised the governor more than ever before.

The railroads viewed the situation with the utmost alarm. Cummins was now a national menace to them. The damage he had inflicted upon them in Iowa was

bad enough, but if he ever got to the United States senate, he would be a decided hazard to the whole monopoly system. Hence this Iowa primary election became an event of national proportions. By destroying the political power of Cummins, not only would a national disaster to monopolies be averted, but the damage to the system in Iowa would be repaired. The hope of repealing the reform laws and regaining control of the state government had not been abandoned.

The railroads had some resources left, and Blythe, the master mind, began calculating how they could successfully be used. Available to him were at least eight of the eleven congressmen and Senator Dolliver, a large number of influential newspapers and hordes of former pass-holders. The congressmen were resentful of the loss of free transportation, and they hated Cummins enough to do anything to him that would not involve them in criminal proceedings. Blythe knew their want of affection for the governor. They could be relied upon for unlimited assistance. Dolliver knew that he obtained his senate seat from Blythe. He could furnish flawless oratory, and he could not refuse to take whatever role would be assigned to him. The newspaper folks, although now bereft of free passes, still had the postoffice contributions, and they could be counted on to supply helpful publicity.

#### ALLISON'S NAME AN ASSET

And then there was Allison, sick in Washington, but still alive. His name would be a magic asset in making the attack upon Cummins. The aged senator had not been in Iowa very recently, and most of the voters were not personally acquainted with him, but he had been in the senate so long that his name was familiar to almost every man of voting age, and knowledge of his incapacity had not been conveyed to the home folks.

The reasons why the name of Allison might be capitalized were numerous. He had been elected to the senate time after time without opposition, after sev-

eral years of service in the lower House of congress. He had made political speeches all over Iowa. He was affable and agreeable. He made no enemies. He expressed no opinions or convictions that aroused hostility toward him. He spoke guardedly. He was completely regular at all times. He never leaped before looking. He first located the line, and then he was its adherent. When his party was taken over by predatory interests, he registered no disapproval. No matter how high tariff schedules were being boosted, he offered no resistance. While his party clung to the silver issue, he was a silver money champion. When it wisely discarded silver in 1896, and switched to the gold standard, he at once became an exponent of the gold standard. He was never at odds with his party on any issue. He was a good citizen, a good politician, a good statesman and a good political strategist. He was thoroughly dependable. His senate associates were fond of him, and made him one of the leaders of that body. He was recognized throughout the nation as a statesman of high rank. He was a formidable candidate for the presidential nomination before the Republican national convention in 1896. . . .

Such was Senator Allison in the days of his health and vigor, but not in 1908. Every Iowan in the national capital knew that Allison was in his dotage, bedfast with serious illness, and utterly incapable of future service in the senate. Blythe was entirely familiar with Allison's collapse, but he had at his disposal the facilities with which to camouflage it. Every newspaper reader had frequently gazed upon photographic likenesses of Senator Allison portraying him as he was in health. These pictures plus repeated assurances from Allison's secretary, Senator Dolliver, the congressmen, and Washington newspaper reporters that the senator was in the best of health and being detained in Washington in the performance of important senate duties, would convince voters that whoever said the senator was sick was an unmitigated prevaricator. . . .

Blythe decided that the form of attack should be deception, and this was the trick to be used: the railroads would acquiesce in their political retirement, and avoid all appearances of political activity; Allison, pointing with pride to years of public service, would ask to be nominated as a candidate to succeed himself (the newspaper articles would make it so appear); the announcement of his candidacy, accompanied by an assuring photograph, would be inserted in every Republican newspaper aligned with monopoly politics; petitions would be circulated by the Senator's friends to obtain the required signatures to place his name on the primary election ballots; newspapers would be filled with Allison eulogies and Cummins denouncements; a literary bureau would be established to handle advertising and disburse legal tender; newspaper advertising would be purchased by the page, regardless of cost; pamphlets and handbills displaying the Allison photograph, proclaiming his indispensable services to the nation, and portraying Cummins as an enemy of the people, would be distributed by being deposited in vehicles and mail boxes and at entrance doors of homes; congressmen would be requested to write to their constituents, informing them that Allison was well and vigorous and actively performing his senate duties; Dolliver would be brought home for a state-wide speech-making tour to tell the voters in his convincing way about Allison's marvelous health and the valuable work he was doing in Washington for his beloved Iowa, and also holding Cummins up to public scorn for attempting to usurp Allison's senate seat; and Allison himself would be seen only by doctors and nurses.

#### TRICKERY DECEIVED VOTERS

The trick was clever, was enthusiastically approved as designed, was put into operation, and was orderly executed. The announcement that the senator desired renomination and was a candidate was given to the press as a news item, under a Washington, D.C., date line, ostensibly from Senator Allison's office, but



actually from patronage dispenser Blythe's office in Burlington, Iowa. . . . The congressmen did valiant service. Senator Dolliver obediently left his senate seat and came home to politically destroy Governor Cummins. He made many powerful speeches. In them he praised Allison's long and faithful service to his fellow men, eulogized the high quality of his statesmanship, characterized the attempt to unseat him as dastardly, and cautioned the voters not to commit a traitorous act by withholding support from their great senator, venerable in years but still youthful in vigor. His praise and eulogy of Allison was intermingled with sarcastic and opprobrious thrusts at Cummins, which were severely damaging. Thousands of voters who greatly admired the governor and deeply appreciated his untiring efforts in their behalf, were captivated by Dolliver's pungent oratory and induced to join Blythe's Allison ranks.

Cummins and his friends knew that Allison's health was irretrievably impaired, but they were unable to establish the true facts. With Dolliver and the congressmen and the newspapers and the output of the literary bureau all testifying to Allison's good health and his desire to be renominated, and their oft repeated assertions that he was being detained in Washington in the performance of urgent senatorial duties, the rank and file of the voters could not believe that there was anything wrong with Allison's health. His good health was overwhelmingly established by the great weight of evidence, and far more voters than Blythe needed became convinced that the supporters of the governor were conducting a campaign of misrepresentation and that the governor was doing the wrong thing in opposing the senator's renomination.

On primary election day the voters flocked to the polls. For many of them it was their first opportunity to have anything to do with the nomination of candidates for public office. In availing themselves of this new instrumentality, created to enable them to govern themselves, more than half of them voted (in effect)

for its repeal. They mistakenly believed they were voting for Senator Allison. Actually they voted to restore Blythe's political power and keep the monopolies intact. When all the votes had been counted, a far greater number had been cast for Allison than were needed to nominate him. It was a landslide for Blythe's candidate and a decisive defeat for Cummins. . . .

It was the greatest blow suffered by the Progressives since the re-election of John H. Gear to the United States senate in 1900. It was a crushing disaster. Most of the active supporters of Governor Cummins were of the opinion that the long battle to regain political freedom, thought to have been won, was now lost, that the railroads would soon be running the state again, that the people preferred railroad government, and that the recently enacted law establishing state-wide primary elections, preventing the use of convention delegate proxies, and abolishing railroad passes, would be repealed. . . .

#### FIRST NON-PROXY CONVENTION

In 1908, the Republican state convention was called for the third Thursday following the primary election (the earliest date possible) to be held at Waterloo in the northeastern section of the state. Allison had carried fifty-five of the ninety-nine counties at the primary election, and in those fifty-five counties, delegates chosen by the Standpatters had been elected to the county conventions. Consequently the Standpatters were certain that they would have complete control of the state convention, and the Progressives were of the same opinion.

The Progressives had been thoroughly trounced at the first election held under the new primary law, and their organization was demoralized. Therefore, they foresaw that the state convention would witness a political come-back for the railroads and be a gala day for the Standpatters. Resolutions censuring Cummins for his brazenry in attempting to unseat the venerable Allison and demanding repeal of the primary law, the anti-pass law and all of the other Progressive measures

enacted by the 32nd General Assembly, were being prepared and made ready for inclusion in the party platform to be adopted by the convention. Great efforts were being put forth to insure a rip-roaring Standpat celebration of the overwhelming victory at the primaries. The crucial affronts heaped upon the Standpatters at the 1906 state convention were now to be avenged. The anticipation was wonderful, but, alas, it did not ripen into realization.

The Standpat leaders were so busy building a program for a jubilant state convention and so sure that it would be controlled by them that they were careless about looking after any county conventions where they could have had solid Standpat delegations and they completely over-looked the new non-proxy law. Also, they were fully aware of the down-heartedness of the Progressives, from whom they had no reason to expect further activity. Quite understandingly they became overconfident.

One of the reform laws enacted by the 32nd General Assembly in 1907 that attracted scant attention at the time, was the provision in the primary law prohibiting delegate proxies at conventions and authorizing the delegates present to cast the full vote to which the precinct or county was entitled. The effect of this provision was not fully appreciated until after the political conventions held in 1908 had become history. It was entirely overlooked by the Standpatters, and was the one thing that spoiled their contemplated celebration at the state convention.

After the primary defeat Governor Cummins was politically vanquished and it was obvious that the railroads would regain full control of the state government unless they could be defeated at the Waterloo convention. On the basis of the primary returns this could not be accomplished by an open fight. The first use of the primary election law had made political outcasts of the men who had struggled for years to obtain its enactment. The only weapon left was the anti-proxy law. . . .

## PROGRESSIVES ELECTED AS DELEGATES

In some counties where the Standpatters had elected their delegates at the primary, the Progressives succeeded in electing half of the delegates to the state convention. In other counties the local Standpat leaders conceded one or two delegates to the Progressives. There were no longer any railroad passes for convention delegates. Every delegate was "on his own." Waterloo was far and expensively distant for many of these counties. Without the free passes the trip to Waterloo seemed unnecessary to most of the Standpat delegates, and many of them failed to show up at the state convention. Every Progressive delegate arrived there the day before the convention. They were mostly men who had not previously been active in a political way, they were not widely known to be Progressives, and their presence did not cause any alarm.

Blythe and his capable leaders were putting the finishing touches upon the anti-Progressive platform which they intended to adopt, picking the man to act as permanent chairman of the convention, agreeing on the man to be elected chairman of the Republican State Central committee, and putting together the final details of the Standpat celebration scheduled for the following day. . . .

When the district caucuses were convened and our program became known and was being carried out, it was then too late for them to do anything about it. They were completely surprised, frustrated and thrown into disorder. The Progressives won seven of the eleven district caucuses, and had control of the committees on permanent Organization and Resolutions, and the State Central committee. They selected the permanent convention chairman, composed the party platform, substituted their own delegation for the one which the Standpatters had pre-arranged, and elected the chairman of the State Central committee.

The Standpatters opened the convention with a temporary chairman of their own selection, who denounced Cummins and his friends and all the Progressives as



loathsome creatures, but that is as far as they got. At the conclusion of the temporary chairman's fiery speech the chairman of the Permanent Organization committee announced the name of the Progressive permanent convention chairman who was approved by the delegates, and then the Progressives took over and controlled the convention proceedings.

After the address of the permanent chairman, adequately depicting the demise of railroad government and splendidly eulogizing Governor Cummins and the achievements of the 32nd General Assembly, the governor was called upon to address the convention. He delivered the greatest speech ever heard in any convention, and it was wholly extemporaneous. . . . Cummins was again in the ascendancy and once more on his way to the United States senate. Blythe and his whole Standpat aggregation were again vanquished, this time for keeps. Thereby a demolishing primary defeat was turned into a smashing convention victory for Cummins and the Progressives as the result of the abolishment of delegate proxies at conventions. . . .

#### CUMMINS SUCCEEDED ALLISON

Shortly after the 1908 Republican State Convention adjourned, Senator Allison passed to his eternal reward. The senatorial vacancy created by his death could have been filled by Cummins resigning as governor and taking an appointment from Garst, who would then succeed him as governor. But Cummins was a consistent advocate of primary elections, and since there was no longer a Republican primary nominee for senator, he reconvened in special session the 32nd General Assembly, for the purpose of providing means of enabling the voters to express their sentiment concerning the candidate to be elected, the same legislature that had passed the primary election and other reform laws at the general session held in 1907.

At the reconvened session a special law was enacted requiring a primary election to be held on the day of the general election in November, 1908, to nominate a candidate for United States senator. At this primary

election the names of two Republican candidates appeared on the ballots, Albert B. Cummins and John F. Lacey. Lacey was a Civil war major and had represented the then Sixth district in congress for many years. He was an irreconcilable Standpatter. His frantic effort to defeat Cummins in 1906 cost him a re-election to congress that year. Cummins won the primary nomination. The Federal constitution requirement that United States senators be elected by the state legislatures had not yet been changed by amendment, as was done later.

At the time the Thirty-second General Assembly met in special session to provide a primary election for the nomination of a senator, it did not adjourn but recessed until November 24, 1908, a date subsequent to the day designated for the primary to be held. On that day it reconvened and balloted for the election of a senator. Cummins received the vote of every Republican member of the legislature and was declared elected senator. After expressing deep appreciation of the honor conferred upon him, and paying tribute to friend and foe, he said there was no "tinge of ill will" toward those who differed with him. In that speech before the joint meeting of the Assembly, he further said:

Without in the slightest degree disparaging the wonderful work done in each decade of the century and a half which practically covers our national life, yielding to the men of former times the extreme tribute that can be rendered to patriotic greatness, I think it still may be said that the decade immediately before us will be crowded with issues more vital, and with problems more perplexing than any which have heretofore absorbed the energies of student or statesman. We are already far out on a new and troubled sea, but we have not yet discarded clearly the port of rest and safety. We know that in the field of private industry, the corporation, which is but another term for combined wealth, skill, genius, power, and experience, must be controlled, to the end, first, that it shall not dominate the government, and to the end, second, that it shall not destroy the force of healthy, reasonable competition, upon which alone those who deal with it must depend for protection from unjust exactions.

So saying he carried the flag, under which he had so

many times marched, sometimes to defeat and sometimes to victory, to the seat of the Federal government where he never wavered in his steadfast adherence to the principles that make for better government and a better life.

November 24, 1908, was a glorious day for every lover of freedom and liberty, as well as for Albert B. Cummins. The great battle for political freedom was now definitely won. The railroads were no longer in control of any part of the state government. Invisible government was completely eradicated. Men desiring to become candidates for public office were now free to do so, and voters were free to select their own candidates. A new charter of political freedom had been ordained, and was firmly anchored.

Blythe's death occurred the following year. He had no successor. The powerful, political organization which he and Hubbard constructed, and which he maintained single handed after the latter's death, did not survive him. It soon became impotent. As it crumbled, the organized opposition to Senator Cummins dwindled, and most of the Standpatters became Republicans.

#### SENATE ENVIRONMENT

Upon being elected senator, Cummins resigned as governor and immediately went to Washington to be sworn in and take his seat in the senate. His record in Iowa was well known to everybody connected with the Federal government. Consequently he was cordially disliked by those then in control of the houses of congress, and was most unwelcome as a new senator. He was circumscribed in other ways.

While President Teddy Roosevelt was a Progressive, and treated almost contemptuously by Standpat statesmen and politicians, he, too, was resentful of Cummins' election to the senate. Cummins, as the acknowledged leader of the Progressive wing of the Republican party throughout the Middle West, was looked upon by the president as a menacing competitor rather than a helpful cooperator.

Cummins was fully aware of the Roosevelt jealousy. His appointment of former Iowa governor Leslie M. Shaw as Secretary of the Treasury, a Cummins foe, was a clear indication of the President's hostility. It was regarded by both Progressives and Standpatters as a slap at Cummins, and an attempt to discredit him.

Furthermore, William H. Taft, who had been elected president a short time prior to Cummins' election to the senate, was not overly pleased with the senator's presence there. The nomination of Taft for the presidency had been forced by Roosevelt. . . .

After Taft had been inaugurated as president, and had surrounded himself with a Standpat cabinet, Roosevelt disowned him and became a candidate against him for the nomination in 1912. That year Taft won a renomination by himself operating the same steam roller that Teddy had taught him how to run in 1908. . . .

The monopolies had been and still were in control of both houses of congress. Senator Nelson Aldrich of Rhode Island was ruling the senate, and Congressman Joseph G. Cannon of Illinois, as speaker, was running a one-man house of representatives.

#### DOLLIVER DISAPPOINTED ALDRICH

Aldrich and his associates extended their political power by taking over the executive branch of the federal government after Taft was inaugurated. A Progressive victory at the Republican national convention ripened into a Standpatter victory at the election, and that situation made the standing of a Progressive in the United States senate even more precarious than it had previously been.

Such was the environment of Senator Cummins as he entered upon the performance of his duties in the United States senate. Not only was his arrival there bitterly resented by Aldrich and his followers, who included most all of the senators, but his Iowa colleague, who previously had been decidedly unfriendly, would likely add to his discomfiture. Aldrich decreed that Cummins should be made so miserable that he would



soon retire, and he counted on Dolliver to help do the job. . . .

Cummins courageously determined to battle it out. His Iowa experience in opposing railroad tyranny afforded him the right kind of equipment for this new undertaking. He was again being attacked by the same kind of foes whom he had conquered at home, and his present engagement was merely a continuation of what he had been going through for eight years. He was now confronted with the necessity of performing a task which Teddy Roosevelt had tried and failed to do during his seven years in the presidential office.

Monopoly control of the Federal government and Senator Cummins could not both survive. One or the other must surrender. The fight was bound to be a terrific affair, but the senator was equal to it.

As Aldrich and his cohorts were developing their plot to destroy him, and while the new senator from Iowa was constructing a plan to subdue his plotters, an unlooked for event happened. Senator Dolliver decided to forsake Aldrich and take his stand with Cummins. By his overthrow of the railroad government in Iowa, Cummins had delivered Dolliver from political captivity along with all the other voters, and Dolliver looked upon Cummins as his deliverer.

Once emancipated, Dolliver himself became an emancipator. When he joined Cummins, the task of regaining national political freedom became less difficult and nearer at hand. It was a happy day for all America, except the beneficiaries of monopoly.

#### RESCUE OF NATIONAL FREEDOM

The attempt of Senator Aldrich to drive Cummins from the United States senate was not only unsuccessful, but was disastrous to Aldrich. The attack made by the Iowa senators upon Aldrich's tariff bill, while not accomplishing its defeat, was sufficiently effective to build up a huge amount of prestige for the attackers. Before Dolliver died, late in 1910, a lot of progress had been made in the fight to recover the Federal govern-

ment from the "sordid private interests" that had "usurped" it.

As time went on, Cummins made great strides in attracting a senate following and in expanding his influence. As he gained strength the power of Aldrich waned. By the year 1912, Cummins was the most powerful man in the senate. In the Republican national convention that year with Taft, then an unquestioned Standpatter, seeking the customary renomination for a second term, and Theodore Roosevelt, still looking upon himself as the leader of the Progressives, also striving for the nomination, seventeen delegates voted to make Cummins the nominee for president, although his name had not been presented to the convention as a candidate. . . .

#### IOWA'S ABLE SENATORS

The majestic state of Iowa had not only regained political freedom for its enlightened citizenry, but it was now contributing to the nation at large statesmanship that would restore that same freedom everywhere. Its two senators were working in unison for the common welfare, and very quickly they came to be recognized as the nation's foremost statesmen. . . .

Aldrich was enraged over this turn of events. Instead of one he now had two senators to purge. Castigation was first attempted. "Progressive" was too mild a word for such menacing individuals as were now acting as senators from Iowa. So Aldrich branded them with others as "Insurgents" and they cheerfully accepted that classification.

Their first great senate battle was over the tariff. President Taft, who, during the election campaign, had repeatedly endorsed the tariff revision downward plank in his party's platform, called congress into special session to redeem that pledge, but in his message to the congress he made no recommendation concerning it. Immediately there was introduced, referred to committees and reported back for passage the Payne-Aldrich bill revising the tariff schedules, not downward, but substantially upward. The president retreated. Cum-

mins and Dolliver did not retreat. They realized that special interests were grasping for more tribute, and they resolved to oppose it with every morsel of strength which they possessed. With them were aligned a determined group of valiant midwestern and western senators having the same objective.

Dolliver discussed the cotton and Cummins the woolen schedule of the revising upward bill. Dolliver's attack upon the cotton schedule was among the greatest of senate debates. In that memorable oration he said:

From this time on I'm going to be independent. I am going to judgment in the next twenty years, and I'm going so that I can look my Maker in the face. I do not have to stay in public life. I can take my books, my wife and children, and if I am dismissed from the public service for following my convictions, I will go out to my farm and stay there until the call comes.

In that speech he also said he would take his orders from his constituency and not from Aldrich. Concerning that speech one commentator wrote:

There Dolliver stood in a hostile chamber, pouring forth such a withering fire of facts and figures as to indict the whole system. So devastating was the onset that one by one the members of the Finance Committee left the floor. It was then that Aldrich took sanctuary in the cloak room. When Dolliver finished, there was not a senator or a correspondent in the gallery who did not know that he had heard one of the most memorable orations ever heard in the American senate, and the cotton schedule was a stench in the nostrils of the nation.

In Cummins' attacking speech, he said:

. . . In my judgment the people at the last election did not vote for any such distorted revision of the tariff as is now presented for our adoption. They wanted a reduction of duties in order to prevent combinations at home from exacting exorbitant prices and thereby extorting excessive profits and accumulating piratical fortunes. They wanted a reduction of the duty on every commodity to the point of fair, decent protection, and if upon investigation it was found that any article is produced here as cheaply as it is abroad, they wanted the duty entirely removed from that article. . . .

There were enough "kept" senators and representa-

tives in congress to pass the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill. Its passage was heralded as a triumph for Aldrich, but it proved to be the forerunner of the revolt which mangled the Republican party in the year 1912. . . .

At the Republican state convention in 1910, Cummins was the temporary and Dolliver the permanent chairman. In the address he delivered as temporary chairman Senator Cummins said:

I do not pretend to be able to look far through the mists and uncertainties of the future and mark with precision the path in which the party will walk; but remembering that it came into existence as a protest against the inaction of the Whigs and the medieval tendencies of the Democrats, and remembering too that for more than half a century it has been the Progressive party of the Union, I cannot permit myself to doubt that the party of Lincoln, of Grant, of Blaine, of Garfield, of McKinley, of Roosevelt, will rise triumphantly above the clouds of its civil war and be in the future, as it has been in the past, the best hope of mankind, the progressive party, not only of the nation but of the world. . . .

Speeches made by Cummins during his battle for the supremacy of human rights, and the aforesaid extracts from speeches made by Dolliver after Cummins became a member of the United States senate, overwhelmingly establish the commanding presence of Senator Cummins and the powerful influence generated by him, not only over a gladiator like Senator Dolliver, but also entrenched financial wizards of the Aldrich type, concerning whose capture mention will be made later.

When it is recalled that Dolliver was elected to congress in 1888, that he would have been elected vice president in 1900 if Theodore Roosevelt had not been a menace to Boss Platt in New York, that he was appointed United States senator later in 1900 at the request of Blythe and Hubbard, and that he denounced Cummins during the 1908 primary election campaign when the railroads were using the Allison name to stage a political comeback, his transformation in 1909 is the weightiest proof of the extent of political servitude that existed at the time Cummins entered the political arena to combat it, and of the measure of poli-



tical freedom restored through his leadership in both the state of Iowa and the nation at large. . . .

#### CUMMINS' SENATE RECORD

The senator was the friend and champion of equal rights for all mankind. His senate record revealed, as all his associates well knew, that he was unwavering in his stand for individual rights for the man and not the machine, for competition as against socialism, in opposition to every form of private monopoly, for outlawing discrimination and all special privileges, for banishing favoritism from all public places.

There was no departure from these principals in his law-making activities. He gave American labor a charter of liberty by writing into the statutes the declaration that "the labor of a human being is not a commodity or articles of commerce." He strengthened the Interstate Commerce commission by procuring the enactment of a statute giving it power to adopt a uniform classification of freight, and a statute placing the burden of proof upon carriers in the matter of changing rail rates, and a statute making it unlawful for carriers to require livestock shipping contracts limiting their liability for loss.

He compelled an amendment of the postal saving bank law so as to require savings funds to be retained in the community where they are deposited. He fought for the modification of tariff schedules to make them conform to protective principles.

It was by his efforts and through his leadership that laws were enacted regulating corporations and preventing the formation of trusts and the stifling of competition. He drove monopolies out of the senate and restored commercial freedom. In one of his masterful orations he said:

The political power of the nation must be exerted through its men and women and not through its property and wealth. While the latter must feel that its rights and privileges will be safeguarded, it must also be known that the men and women who determine what our laws shall be, will courageously and righteously exert the full power of the Nation so that every human being will enjoy every farthing which he

has honestly acquired, but not a single farthing which justly belongs to another.

As a true servant of the people he was equally aggressive and effectual in the interests of the farmers, the wage earners, the manufacturers, the shippers and the tradesmen—in the interests of the many and not the few. He introduced, promoted and established a new brand of statesmanship in the United States senate.

In 1919, he was elected president pro tem of the senate, and from August 3, 1923, when Vice President Calvin Coolidge succeeded to the presidency because of the death of President Warren G. Harding, until a new president was inaugurated on March 4, 1925, Senator Cummins performed the duties and enjoyed the prerogatives of the vice president.

As to Cummins' eminence and ability as an attorney, former congressman Burton E. Sweet, of Waverly, asserted in an address to the Iowa Pioneer Lawmakers association meeting March 14, 1951: " I have this to say about A. B. Cummins. When I served in the house of representatives at Washington, he was in the senate. He was a faithful and honorable representative of Iowa at all times. Elihu Root once said that he was the greatest lawyer in the United States senate, and many of you know that Elihu Root was no slouch of a lawyer himself. A. B. Cummins was a very great lawyer."

Senator Cummins was both a statesman and an emancipator. For eight years he valiantly fought to regain political freedom in Iowa and succeeded in overthrowing and destroying a railroad political organization that had appropriated the state government. In a lesser period he rescued the Federal government from monopoly captivity, and became the leader of the United States senate.

He restored not only political freedom but also political morality in Iowa and in the nation. He rehabilitated and transformed an almost defunct political party. His public service during seven years as gov-

ernor of Iowa and almost eighteen years as a United States senator constitutes a record of accomplishment that is without parallel in the history of this Republic.

At the height of his public career Albert B. Cummins possessed more political power than any other American citizen. He could have used it to set up a political dynasty of his own but he did not. He had no personal political organization, and desired none. He was merely a great humanitarian who devoted the maturer years of his earthly life to serving his fellow humans, with the requisite ability to do the job.

#### CUMMINS AND DOLLIVER COMPARED

A comparison of the political careers of Jonathan P. Dolliver and Albert B. Cummins presents an interesting sidelight into paths that lead to greatness. Both of them were intellectual giants. Both of them were magnetic. Both of them were so constituted that escape from leadership was impossible. They were created to be benefactors of humanity and they fulfilled their destinies. They regarded monopolies and kindred things as oppression and inimical to the well-being of the people as a whole. Each of them had a passion for justice and economic equality.

Cummins without the aid of Dolliver and with his opposition for a time, and without money, railroad passes, or other material assistance, successfully attacked and finally subdued the monopoly stronghold in Iowa. Later Cummins and Dolliver together in Washington attracted a following of senators and congressmen which enabled them to break the strangle-hold upon the national government of what Dolliver termed the "sordid interests."

Dolliver's politics began in the national arena. He was never identified with state politics, other than as temporary chairman of a Republican state convention in 1884, until he entered the Allison-Cummins senatorial campaign in 1908. He was nominated and elected representative in congress from the old 10th Iowa district in 1888, and served in the lower house without opposition until 1900, when he was appointed senator,

and was elected senator twice without a contest. He died in 1910, at the age of 52 years. He was a famous orator. He had a commanding presence, a charming voice, a rich vocabulary, a fascinating humor, an inexhaustible supply of anecdotes and stories, a physical, mental and oral harmony, gorgeous rhetoric and oodles of wit. He had absorbed history, literature and philosophy. He could and did mingle praise and sarcasm, eulogy and opprobrium. He thrilled his audiences. He had all the equipment of a great orator, and he used it effectively. He was persuasive and convincing. The speaker's platform was his citadel.

Dolliver embarked upon his political career early in life, before he had achieved fame as a lawyer. He had a liking for politics and office holding. His political assets were abundant. He chose a route that was free from pitfalls and hazards. He knew that Blythe and Hubbard were kingmakers in Iowa. He did not antagonize them. He played the game with them. He was their bright boy, and they were squarely behind him. . . .

Allison had extended fatherly affection to him as a young senator, and he reciprocated that affection, but he knew that Allison was aligned with Aldrich, the generalissimo of what he termed the "sordid private interests that are seeking to usurp the government of the United States." In 1908, when he received the order to return to Iowa and help defeat Cummins, he was compelled to decide whether to obey or take the consequences of disobedience. If he broke with Blythe then, Aldrich would demote him and it would be political suicide. So there was no escape from joining in the fight against Cummins, even though Cummins was trying to prevent the "sordid interests" from "usurping the government." . . .

Dolliver's devotion to freedom and liberty sooner or later was bound to force him to denounce its betrayers. . . . When Cummins walked into the United States senate chamber, the real Dolliver escorted him to the vice-president's rostrum to take the oath of of-



fice, and right then he parted company with Aldrich and all that he represented. He was no longer held a captive by fear that he would be driven from public life if he did what he believed to be right. During the remainder of his earthly life he towered above the man who had formerly over-shadowed him, and was a statesman of renown.

#### CUMMINS' CAREER IN MATURITY

Cummins' political career was deferred until maturer years when he had become distinguished for his legal attainments, and state politics was the cradle of its inception. Cummins had about the same equipment that adorned Dolliver—a charming personality, a resonant voice, a never-failing command of language, unusual forensic power, touching pathos, and a convincing way. In addition to his oratorical resources he possessed high skill along the lines of bringing together men of varying outlooks who would follow his leadership wherever he chose to go; and it was a rare occurrence for any of his followers to desert him. He was the personification of honesty and integrity. He was endowed with spirituality. Devotion to high ideals, a sound code of morals and sternest rectitude were among his distinguishing features. All of these qualities, coupled with his intellectual vigor, made him a powerful leader.

Unlike Dolliver, he chose the hard path to political game. Instead of paying homage to Blythe and Hubbard, he opposed them. He could have been elected a United States senator in 1900 by joining Blythe and Hubbard. He knew this, but he would not be shackled. He preferred private life to captive official life. He fought his way into the United States senate, and he fought his way to leadership after he got there. This struggle was necessary because his political activity was not for personal aggrandizement, but to aid his fellow citizens by furthering justice and equality. They needed help, and he felt it was his duty to render assistance to them regardless of the consequences to himself. Otherwise he would have sought the friendship of Blythe and Hubbard, which would have been

readily available to him, and would have acquired a senatorial toga through their beneficence. In that event his presence in the senate would have been most welcome, and he would have loomed high as a possible future president. Furthermore, he would have reached the senate ahead of Dolliver and would have been a recognized senate leader when Dolliver arrived. But that would not have been the Albert B. Cummins that we knew and loved.

Viewed from any standpoint, it is interesting to reflect upon the lives of these two great men, and to recall the different methods employed by them to attain the dizzy heights of renowned statesmanship. Dolliver was subordinate until he reached a station where he could escape captivity and defy his captors, and he parted company with them after they had furnished him years of political quietude. Cummins was never subordinate, but always uncompromising and independent. He overtook Dolliver only by a tremendous expenditure of energy, directed by leadership ability of the highest quality. If Dolliver had been elected vice-president in 1900 and had become president on McKinley's death, would he have been able to depose the "leadership that has betrayed the people?" If Cummins had gone to the senate by the same route Dolliver took, and had become president, would he have been able to change his affiliations and restore the government to the people? If Cummins and Dolliver had both arrived at the United States senate by consent of Blythe and Hubbard, would either of them have become insurgents?

The answers remain unknown. Possibly the continuation of self-government in our country today is due to the fact that the mighty work which they performed as senators transcended what either of them could have done as president. They conferred upon majestic Iowa the distinction of being represented in the United States senate, at the same time, by two of the greatest senators who ever contributed to the grandeur of that august institution.

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