

A Statement by Carbon P. Dubbs, Candidate for Village President on the Public Welfare Party Ticket

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Now, I speak of this matter with a great deal of feeling. It is not today that I am talking about, but don't you see this, if men believe they are right, and this is the best policy, and do not put it up to the people, you are not going to promote good feeling; you are not going to promote cooperation, and any policy affecting the Village as a whole should be put up to the people.

Take these cases where we held public meetings and just analyze them a moment. Is it a progressive, definite way to handle it, or is it a case of confusion? You have got to bear this picture in your mind that I have. You are busy with your work; you come home, and you have men in there as representing you who are entrusted with your interests. It is sacred, and you expect them to take care of them just as you do in any corporation. If there is some question comes up that it is proper for the people to vote on, they can be informed and it is the officers' duty to so inform them. I think a hundred dollars worth of postage stamps will take it to every house and give them the opportunity to study it, consider it, and make their election.

When I refer to a referendum, it does not have to be strictly an order; there are many ways to do it, and you can obtain the opinion of the people and be guided accordingly, and I say that any procedure that is not along the lines of a referendum is not promoting the best harmony; it is paving the way for a great deal of misunderstanding, and it is probably going to involve a great deal of expense.

There are some improvements that have to be made that will harm a few, but those are rare, and you have got to bear this in mind. You cannot fairly say, when you take a man's property, or you are going to put an improvement through, that he has his day in court; what you really say to him is: "We don't care what you think; if you want to go to the expense of defending what you think is right, all right." At the same time you are adding to that man's taxes for the expense of fighting him. Now, what we stand for and what the Wilmette Welfare Party advocates is purely and simply a referendum on things affecting the Village as a whole. We do not mean that current Village affairs should be referred to referendum. It is the duty of the officers to discharge these matters efficiently and to the best of their ability.

I want you to think about that; I want you to get these points clear.

Would the World's War have existed had it been put up to a referendum of the people? I don't think it would have.

Now, as I said before, we are at a stockholders meeting here and I just want to make this remark in closing, that personally I would like to see Harry Miller continue in office. I think there is no better man, and I think he is entitled to a great deal of appreciation. (Applause.) And I do not mean in any way to reflect on Mr. Riley.

That is all that I will say at this time, and I thank you.

ADDRESS BY F. J. NEWAY BEFORE WILMETTE CIVIC LEAGUE, MARCH 27, 1931, AT THE BYRON STOLP SCHOOL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have been getting a little nervous for the last few minutes, or for the last half an hour or so because I thought with this great number of candidates, I was going to be lost in the shuffle.

I knew of a large political meeting in one of our large cities some years ago in which they had a great number of candidates such as we have here tonight, and every time a candidate would conclude his remarks, a big, burly Irishman would stand up in the rear of the room and cry, "We want Mr. Henry! We want Mr. Henry!" That proceeding continued for some time, and finally the Irishman got impatient, and he broke out in the midst of the speaker's remarks, "We want Mr. Henry! We want Mr. Henry!" whereupon the chairman stepped to the platform and says:

"Will you please be quiet; this is Mr. Henry." An expression of amazement came over the Irishman's face and he said: "Is that Mr. Henry? Why he is the guy that told me to yell."

Now, I seem to be the target; they picked me out as the target for this campaign, and I am perfectly willing to be the target, but I want to let them know right now that they have not hit the mark with any of the false ammunition they have shot so far.

I knew of a divorce case a little while ago where the husband was complaining that the wife had a very unseemingly habit of throwing things at him and on this particular occasion she had thrown a rolling pin and hit him in the eye, a very unpleasant experience, and the judge said to him: "Why man, couldn't you dodge?" and he said: "I did; that is how I come to get hit."

And I want to serve notice on the other side that I am not going to dodge; I am going to stand right up in this campaign, and I defy them to search the record of my public work from A to Z and find any ammunition that can hit the mark.

Now, we are hearing a lot about the plan. That is not the issue in this campaign; it is a false issue and it is being used to throw dust in the eyes of the voters. I am going to show you before I get through what the real issue is in this campaign, but let us take up the plan for a minute:

I want to emphasize the fact that the plan commission never advocated any program of street widening. It has absolutely no power to widen any street, that it is merely an advisory board. My opponents entirely misconceive the conception of the plan; apparently,

they don't know the first principle of town planning, and that is the trouble with their whole position.

The purpose of a plan is to forecast the future, or see what will be the natural and logical development of the village, and to indicate what streets may at some future time become heavily traveled, and if that condition arises, maybe at some future time, requiring widening, whether that be five years, ten years, fifteen years, or whether it will ever arise is a matter that only the future can determine, and every town that has had the progress in the last twenty-five years has had a village plan. For anyone to stand up today in this intelligent and enlightened age and condemn the town plan shows that they have never given the matter a moment's serious study. (Applause.) And then they come in and say it is a cloud on the title, and they didn't know the plan had been in effect for two or three years. Have they heard of anybody saying, when they tried to sell property in Wilmette, that there was a cloud on the title? It is vicious.* You can go down town and get any lawyer's opinion for any price who will say what you want him to. I am sorry to say that we have lawyers who will put out that kind of an opinion.

Chicago has had a plan for twenty-five years, and has anybody heard that a real estate deal has not gone through because of the Chicago plan? I don't know how they can hold up their heads in an intelligent community and ask them to believe such stuff.

If we ever have any widened streets, the plan commission will have nothing to do with it. It is under the control of the village council and before the village council can ever widen the streets they have to call you in and have a public hearing where you can express your views as to whether the time has arrived for the widening of the streets or not, but notwithstanding these facts, my opponents have seen fit to broadcast throughout the entire village that we were defending a program of widening the streets and unless everybody got up in arms their streets would be widening. They had the whole community, from Ashland Avenue, saying that we see you are going to widen the streets to eighty feet. When we asked them if they had ever stopped to find out the width of the street, if they didn't know their street is now eighty feet, and it has always been eighty feet, that the width of the streets are from lot line to lot line, which includes the pavement, and the sidewalks and about eighteen inches between the lot line and the sidewalk, and that nearly every street with the exception of Greenleaf and Washington are all eighty foot streets, yet they have been circulating that propaganda, getting everybody to believe that the streets will be widened. It is a false issue.

They know that they cannot win on their record; they have no record before the community. I am talking about a public record. You can search the public records from A to Z, and I don't think you can find one of my opponents has ever turned his hand over in a public way for the benefit of the village, but seeing that they have no record of their own to commend them, they think that they can get votes by casting discredit on a splendid group of men that for years have given their time unselfishly to the welfare of Wilmette without a penny of compensation, and then they get the ingratitude of a small element of the citizens.

If they had any serious objections to this plan, why didn't they bring them forth three years ago? At that time the plan commission was seeking light from every source from anyone who had any criticism or any suggestions of any kind. We held public hearings all over the community wherever we could get a crowd of citizens together, we explained the plan, and if they had any criticism to make we listened to them very carefully and gave their suggestions the most careful consideration; then they tried to make capital out of the fact that they recommended changes to the plan.

The plan commission has always tried to be responsive to the public will. We, long ago, learned the common sense of what the authorities on plans have all laid down, that the plan should proceed solely and only as fast as the people themselves show an interest in the development of the plan, and I say that when anybody has any objections to the plan, or any constructive criticism, we are always glad to listen to the suggestions and criticisms, and make a change in conformity with it, if there is any serious objection to the plan as it exists.

My friends themselves say they favor a plan; they cannot get away from it; they have got to favor a plan. If they take two or three hours' time and study the value that the plan is to Wilmette, they cannot take any other position than to favor a plan. They say that they do favor a plan, with one qualification, and what is it? Their qualification is, if you ever want to widen a public street, you must have a majority in each block voting. If that principle is sound, let us put it into operation.

The city of Chicago has just widened La Salle Street from the river to Lincoln Avenue, an improvement that has been of a great benefit to the entire city, and particularly to the property owners along that street. Put that principle into operation; the majority in each block must give their approval before that improvement can go through. Just look at the monopoly they are putting in the hands of a majority in one block. The majority in one block can hold up the entire improvement. It is a club that just a few people can hold over the entire city. It means stagnation in the matter of public improvements. There is not a public improvement could ever get through if the people in one block could hold up the improvement. But, as I said before, the plan is not the issue in this campaign. It

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