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THE JOSEPH FELS FUND OF AMERICA

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BISHOP CHARLES D. WILLIAMS

CINCINNATI, OHIO. May 25, 1914.

Mr. A.C. Pleydell,
29 Broadway,
New York City.

My dear Pleydell:

Yours 11th inst. was forwarded me. I have been away, and expecting to get to New York before returning, thought I might get in to see you again.

I wish I could bring you to believe that I have no feeling against Allen Ripley Foote, personally, and that whenever I have sent you anything about him, it was only with the thought of giving you and Purdy the evidence necessary to show how baneful an influence to right things Foote has ever been. Tom Johnson denounced him for the same reason, and in your latest defense of him I think you give another evidence of your not knowing as much about Foote as you think you do.

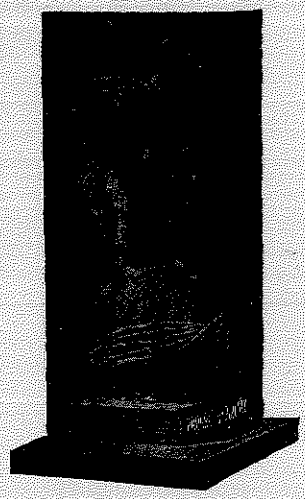
Have you seen a circular letter sent out by the Ohio State Board of Commerce, dated May 13, 1914. It is signed by the following signatures in this order:

George Beatty
Allen R. Foote
James J. Herlin
Samuel Scovel
C.A. Rich
S.C. Richardson, Jr.
J.C. Miller
G.N.E. Pomeroy
MEMBERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The letter asks for contributions for the campaign for the taxation amendment referred to in our Economic League Bulletins. If Foote is no longer connected with the Ohio State Board of Commerce, he should publicly disavow such unauthorized use of his name. If he does not see fit to do so, then if you know that such use of his name is unauthorized, we can feel free to make that statement and thus warn those who are being asked for subscriptions.

Attached to the circular from which this information

11480



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A.C.P.#2

was taken was a slip headed:

"Memorandum from Ohio State Board of Commerce
Columbus, Ohio. May 13, 1914."

It had also the name of the firm to whom sent, and a bill for "Contribution to one per cent tax limit and classification educational fund, $.... of the $.... is to be credited as a subscription to the Journal of Commerce".

That Mrs. Fels came personally to see you, must have been some evidence to you of her desire to harmonize Single Taxers when and where possible. She, as I do, feels that you and the Fels Fund Commission should be at one, and I ask you in all fairness, whether the facts herein related bear out your statement as to Foote. So ulterior, so far as I know anything of Foote, have been his purposes, whenever the interests of the people vs. those of privileged corporations are at issue, that the very absence of his name in this connection as you had apparently been made to believe, is suggestive, and suspicion results.

I think you were present in New York when Tom Johnson said, no matter what he himself did in matters concerning Public Service Corporations, up bobbed Allen Ripley Foote with something just a bit different.

And in all kindliness I want also to say that if you could divest yourself of the unreasoning prejudice you are possessed of against Mr. Bigelow, you would see what are undeniably the exact facts; that there was nothing sacrificed in the Initiative and Referendum amendment, and that the so-called inhibition contained therein was directed as much against such an amendment as the State Board of Commerce is now pushing as against Single Tax. Do you not see that the very fact that the

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A.C.P. #3

Initiative can be used as the State Board is now doing, disproves all that has been said about Bigelow's consenting to a sacrifice.

The enclosed Press Bureau articles were sent to every paper in the State of Ohio, were used by some. Copies went also to the Ohio State Journal of Commerce, and so far as I know, though we carefully looked for them, not a word in denial or by way of reply or comment has been printed.

It is also a fact that from no other than the columns of the Journal of Commerce and from Purdy and yourself havelever seen a word of defense for Foote, and the most that Purdy and you have ever said is that as your friend you will defend him.

This is a longer letter than the spirit of yours would have encouraged, but I hope I may have your indulgence for it.

Yours,

Daniel Kiefer

EF.