

C. C. F. Y.

June 8, 1911.

My dear Kiefer:-

Thank you for sending me the clippings. Its a pity you and your friends in Ohio use Mr. Foote's work and then attempt to block his efforts to render proper taxation possible. After several years' work he secured the submission of an amendment to the Constitution, which would have permitted the exemption of substantially all personal property and improvements on lands. By what seems to me your ill advised insistence upon the initiative and referendum at that time you brought about the repeal of the Longworth law and rendered the adoption of the amendment so difficult that it failed. After several years further work he brings about a constitutional convention. If you would co-operate with him you would almost certainly secure a wide-open constitution on tax questions. Instead of that you enter on a campaign which will oblige Mr. Foote to devote a considerable part of his time and energy to fighting you instead of accomplishing proper results in the constitutional convention.

Mr. Foote has devoted the best part of ten years to the service of Ohio, without reward, and I should think he could feel very bitterly toward those who sporadically come in at the 11th hour to spoil his work.

I know that this is not your point of view, or you would not be acting as you do, but I think it might be worth while for you to know how it appears to me, who have been intimately acquainted with the course of events for ten years.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) LAWRENCE DUDY.

Daniel Kiefer,
Cincinnati, Ohio.

June 11th, 1911.

Mr. Dawson Purdy,
New York City.

My dear Purdy:-

Yours dated the 8th, postmarked 10th - did not reach me until the 15th.

Your reliance upon your own judgment in this matter of Foote and your confidence in him are amusing, to put it mildly, to those of us, who live in Ohio and, have had enough to do with public affairs to be entitled to some opinion of our own with reference to Foote's alliances here and the part he has been playing in legislative matters in this State.

Possibly nothing I would say could shake your feeling that you, from your distance, are better able to judge than we are to what the situation is here and has been for years. You speak of the pity of our friends opposing Mr. Foote's work. Really, Purdy, your letter is an additional pitiful exhibition of your apparently to us, unaccountable obsession in this matter. You set Mr. Foote up as a patriot and sincere devotee of tax reform. We know him in Ohio as a despicable type of corporation tool whose influence has been a greater curse to the State of Ohio in the last ten years than that of any other single individual. It really is absurd for you at your distance to tell us about Mr. Foote. We know better what he is and what he is doing.

To single out one of the many misapprehensions in your letter, take your reference to the Longworth act. Mr. Bagelow who was at that Legislature almost constantly during its entire session surely had an opportunity to know Mr. Foote's attitude, and he tells me that he came in contact daily with Mr. Foote on the floor of the House and Senate and knows of his own personal knowledge that Mr. Foote was one of the active lobbyists in securing the removal of the Longworth act. In doing so he killed all chances of his taxation amendment. This, will likely prove to you nothing more than that we were misguided in our insistence on the Initiative and Referendum. It should prove to you what is a fact, that Mr. Foote is in the employ of the Franchise-Grabbing Corporations and was compelled to take a course which was fatal to his taxation amendment, because such course was in the interest of his secret employers.

You take us to task for what you call our ill advised insistence upon the Initiative and Referendum but you don't take Foote to task for his opposition to the Initiative and Referendum. But as I said before if you wish to know Foote I would suggest that you change your residence from New York City to Ohio and inform yourself of what everybody else who is at all informed upon public affairs here knows perfectly well; that every newspaper man in Columbus will tell you, that the members of the House and Senate of the last three legislatures have all perfectly understood that whatever Mr. Foote's views may be on taxation, he is first of all the agent of the big public enemies in Ohio, and it is regrettable to some of your friends to see you in such company.

A further indication that discussion between us on this subject is futile is the fact that you are so obsessed that you will

take this man's word against the word of men whom it would seem you have had better reasons to believe. You heard Tom Johnson last November tell of his experience with him. You listen to this in a letter from Fred Howe received today.

"You will make no mistake in fighting Allen Ripley Foote. Only the other day I met an old friend who had been very close to Foote for months and who knew exactly what he was talking about and he said that the Ohio State Board of Commerce and Foote were merely employees of Sam Secovil of the Cleveland Electric Illumination Co."

You refer to Foote's self sacrificing devotion and labor without reward. He tells that to everybody who goes to see in - he told it to Mr. Bigelow. Nobody believes it and considering the character of his services in the Legislature and how for years he has busied himself with doing the bidding of special privilege interests, if he has nothing it reflects upon his business shrewdness without in the least being a credit to his honesty of purpose and character.

If Mr. Foote were an avowed servant of these special interests, we could have no complaint. But he is a sneak and worse and bears that recognition universally in Ohio. He is the most discredited man at the State Capitol today. A few minutes conversation with any well informed newspaper correspondent at the State Legislature, would convince you that this is not our prejudiced statement but the prevailing opinion of those who are on the ground and in close touch with political manouvers. As for our unwillingness to work with Foote, your eliding comes with very poor grace since repeated efforts to co-operate with him have been made, always to find him untruthful and treacherous.

I am told that in Columbus he goes by the name of snake. We here don't blame ourselves for our inability to co-operate with a man of that character. I sincerely hope that you have not succumbed to the philosophy that the way to secure something for the people is to hire out under false pretences to the enemies of the people. Really Foote is not worth discussing. He's not going to have a feather weight in that convention. The people of Ohio know him. He is as I have said discredited except among a few high class thieves in Ohio and Mr. Dawson Turdy in New York.

Your reference to our spasmodic efforts in Ohio can only be excused on the ground that you believe Foote to be carrying out suggestions of yours as to tax reform. We can appreciate the interest you take in trying to reform Ohio's tax system from New York City but we don't approve of your selection of helpers in the State. The bitterness which you refer to, will probably have to continue as long as you are ill-advised enough to come to Ohio, to make alliance with the very worst influences in the State and then contend yourself in heaping reproaches upon the decent people of the State, because their opposition to the big grafters happens to interfere with the usefulness of your chosen Ohio associate.

And this on your part is additionally accentuated because of your as yet unexplained known indifference if not opposition to the acknowledged importance of the initiative and referendum as a first

step - a step that Henry George himself said would be the means by which our program was to be advanced.

I want to assure you of my regard for you and my appreciation of the important things you have done - and if I have spoken warmly in this it is because of that feeling and my inability to reconcile your ever readiness to defend a man of the "boot" stripe.

Yours truly,

(signed) DANIEL KIMMEL.