"An Ideal Republic"

William Jennings Bryan
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Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen of the committee, I can never fully discharge the debt of gratitude, which I owe to my countrymen for the honors which they have so generously bestowed upon me. But Sirs, rather it be my luck to occupy the high office for which the convention has named me or to spend the remainder of my days in private life, it shall be my constant ambition and my controlling purpose to aid in realizing the high ideas of those whose wisdom and courage and sacrifices brought this republic into existence. I can conceive of a national destiny surpassing the glories of the present and the past, a destiny which meets the responsibilities of today and measures up to the possibilities of the future.

Behold a republic resting securely upon the foundation stone, quarried by revolutionary patriots, from the mountain of eternal truth. A republic applying in practice and proclaiming to the world, the self-evident proposition that all men are created equal. That they’re endowed with inalienable rights. That governments are instituted among men to secure these rights, and that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Behold a republic in which civil and religious liberty stimulate *all to earnest endeavors*, and in which the law restrains every hand uplifted for a neighbor’s injury. A republic in which every citizen is a sovereign, but in which no one cares to wear a crown.

Behold a republic standing erect while empires all around are bowed beneath the weight of their own armaments. A republic whose flag is loved while other flags are only feared.

Behold a republic increasing in population, in wealth, in strength, and in influence, solving the problems of civilization, and hastening the coming of a universal brotherhood. A republic which shakes thrones, and dissolves aristocracies by its silent example, and gives light and inspiration to those who sit in darkness.

Behold a republic gradually, but surely, becoming a supreme moral factor in the world’s progress and the accepted arbiter of the world’s dispute. A republic whose history, like the path of the just, is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.