**Platform of the United Labor Party of New York, 1886**

1. Holding that the corruptions of government and the impoverishment of labor results from neglect of the self-evident truths proclaimed by the founders of this Republic that all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights, we aim at the abolition of the system which compels men to pay their fellow creatures for the use of God’s gifts to all, and permits employment, thus filling the land with tramps and paupers, and bringing about an unnatural competition which tends to reduce wages to starvation rates and to make the wealth producer the industrial slave of those who grow rich by his toil.

2. Holding, moreover, that the advantages arising from social growth and improvement belong to society at large, we aim at the abolition of the system which makes such beneficent inventions as the railroad and telegraph a means for the oppression of the people, and the aggrandizement of an aristocracy of wealth and power. We declare the true purpose of government to be the maintenance of that sacred right of property which gives to everyone opportunity to employ his labor and security that he shall enjoy its fruits ; to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, and the unscrupulous from robbing the honest ; and to do for the equal benefit of all such things as can be better done by organized society than by individuals ; and we aim at the abolition of all laws which give to any class of citizens advantages, either judicial, financial, industrial, or political, that are not equally shared by all others.

3. We further declare that the people of New York City should have full control of their own local affairs ; that the practice of drawing grand jurors from one class should cease, and the requirements of a property qualification for trial jurors should be abolished ; that the procedure of our courts should be so simplified and reformed that the rich shall have no advantage over the poor ; that the officious intermeddling of the police with peaceful assemblages should be stopped ; that the laws for the safety and sanitary inspection of buildings should be enforced ; that in public work that direct employment of labor should be preferred to the system which gives contractors opportunity to defraud the city while grinding their workmen, and that in public employment equal pay should be accorded to equal work without distinction of sex.

4. We declare the crowding of so many of our people into narrow tenements at enormous rents, while half the area of the city is yet unbuilt upon to be a scandalous evil, and that to remedy this state of things all taxes on buildings and improvements should be abolished, so that no fine shall be put upon the employment of labor in increasing living accommodations, and that taxes should be levied on land irrespective of improvements, so that those who are now holding land vacant shall be compelled either to build on it themselves, or give up the land to those who will.

5. We declare, furthermore, that the enormous value which the presence of a million and a half of people gives to the land of this city belongs properly to the whole community ; that it should not go to the enrichment of individuals and corporations, but should be taken in taxation and applied to the improvement and beautifying of the city, to the promotion of the health, comfort, education, and recreation of its people, and to the providing of means of transit commensurate with the needs of a great metropolis. We also declare that existing means of transit should not be left in the hands of corporations which, while gaining enormous profits from the growth of population, oppress their employès and provoke strikes that interrupt travel and imperil the public peace, but should by lawful process be assumed by the city and operated for public benefit.

6. To clear the way for such reforms as are impossible without it, we favor a Constitutional Convention, and since the ballot is the only method by which in our Republic the redress of political and social grievances is to be sought, we especially call for such changes in our elective methods as shall lessen the need of money in elections, discourage bribery, and prevent intimidation.

7. And since in the coming most important municipal election independent political action affords the only hope of exposing and breaking up the extortion and peculation by which a standing army of professional politicians corrupt the public whom they plunder, we call on all citizens who desire honest government to join us in an effort to secure it, and to show for once that the will of the people may prevail even against the money and organization of banded spoilsmen.