

Labor Apr. 5, 1941

Lonerган's Comment

Owen is "Only 92";
Never Failed Labor;
Democrats Celebrate
Big Local Victories

By RAYMOND LONERGAN

WHEN OKLAHOMA was admitted to the Union, 40 years ago, Robert L. Owen was chosen as one of the first Senators from the new state and remained in the Upper Chamber for 18 years.

There were giants in those days—William Jennings Bryan, "Teddy" Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, still president of Princeton; "Old Bob" La Follette at the zenith of his physical and mental powers.

The new Senator from Oklahoma ranked with the best of them and took a leading part in the enactment of the most significant reforms of those days—popular election of Senators, the initiative and referendum, so the people could write their own laws; the direct primary, enabling the voters to push the bosses aside and pick the candidates they desired; public ownership of utilities, laws curbing child labor.

"Only 92"



Robert L. Owen was chairman of the Senate committee which fashioned the Federal Reserve Act. He fought to make the system the servant of all the people, while Glass of Virginia, often referred to as "the father of the Federal Reserve," battled to make it a bankers' bill.

Checked Shylocks

Farmers have saved hundreds of millions, probably billions, in interest because of the Farm Credit Act, sponsored by Owen, which, for the first time in the history of this country, permitted Uncle Sam to step in between the farmers and the Shylocks who had been bleeding them.

And Owen never failed the working man, whatever the issue might be.

He's "only 92" now. His eyes are troubling him, but his voice still has the ring which stirred thousands in the old days and his body seems as robust as ever.

Sees a "World of Abundance"

A few days ago the Senators and Congressmen from Oklahoma arranged a luncheon in his honor.

When Owen got the floor, he talked about the subject so close to his heart—a global language, which he has perfected and which he believes will enable the native of any country to get a working knowledge of his own language and of English in a few weeks.

"The benefits of this world reform are beyond all present human calculation," declared the Senator.

"I believe the result would be to increase the production of the world a thousand per cent and make this a world of super-abundance, instead of a world of dire poverty."

Key to Happiness

"How is it possible for you to keep going at this marvelous pace at 92?" someone asked the Senator.

He was very grave when he replied: "Whatever I have I owe to the favor of God and the kindness of friends. Life is based largely on reciprocity. The kindness you may show to others will be returned a hundredfold."