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SOME CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN

SYDNEY ANDERSON

Member of Congress from
First Minnesota District

AND

O. M. LEVANG

His Former Political Manager

Respectfully Dedicated to the Sound Sense and
Fair Judgment of the People of the First
Minnesota Congressional District.



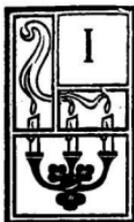
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A FOREWORD



IN 1910 the First Minnesota District was represented in Congress by Hon. James A. Tawney, undoubtedly one of the ablest men the State of Minnesota has ever sent to the national body of lawmakers. However, during the preceeding ten years Mr. Tawney had got more and more out of touch with the real sentiment of his district. In Congress he had affiliated with the Republican standpatters, who under the leadership of Speaker Joseph G. Cannon for years successfully blocked all progressive legislation. In fact, Mr. Tawney was known all over the country as Cannon's most trusted lieutenant and right hand man.

Slowly but surely the progressive tendencies of the Republican party had gained a strong foothold in Mr. Tawney's district. When the Payne-Aldrich tariff law was up for consideration in Congress the First Minnesota District, as well as all the other congressional districts in the state, was strongly opposed to that law. Therefore, when Mr. Tawney was the only one of the Minnesota delegation in Congress to vote for the passage of the Payne-Aldrich tariff law, that vote became the straw which broke the patience of the voters of his congressional district.

Consequently, in March 1910 a handful of progressive Republicans came together at Dodge Center to devise ways and means to oppose Mr. Tawney for reelection. A committee of five was appointed to find a congressional candidate willing to subscribe to the progressive policies and to contest with Mr. Tawney for the congressional nomination. The writer, Mr. O. M. Levang, was a member of this committee.

In the search for a candidate the district was gone over with a fine comb. Almost every prominent progressive Republican was approached and implored to make the run for Congress. But for some reason or other no one had the backbone to tackle a man of such national prominence as Mr. Tawney.

The search became a state-wide joke and the committee the laughing stock of the entire state. At a meeting of the committee late in the summer it was practically put up to the writer to furnish a candidate or make the run himself.

At the time it was the writer's firm conviction that it was absolutely necessary, to be successful in such a contest, that the candidate be an able and fluent public speaker. As a consequence of such conviction the writer himself was eliminated from consideration as a candidate.

To find a substitute with all the necessary qualifications seemed hopeless. However, in the writer's home town of Lanesboro was a struggling, young lawyer, who was a personal friend. This young man, hardly 28 years old, had a local reputation as a public speaker. Two years previously he had been defeated as a candidate for county attorney of Fillmore county. To consider him in the role as a candidate for Congress seemed preposterous. But someone had to make the race.

So Sydney Anderson was approached with the suggestion that he become the congressional candidate of the progressive Republicans. At first he met the suggestion with ridicule. But after many interviews he decided to make the run as—an advertising proposition. There seemed to be no future in Lanesboro for another lawyer. Through a contest for Congress, even if unsuccessful, he would gain desirable advertising and as a possible result be able to locate in a larger town with greater chances for an attorney.

Sydney Anderson announced himself as a candidate for Congress on August 1st, 1910. What followed is now ancient history and known to all in the district. At the primaries he defeated Mr. Tawney, and at the general election he was elected congressman from the First Minnesota District.

The management of Mr. Anderson's 1910 campaign naturally fell to the lot of the writer. Handicapped by

an entire lack of funds to pay for clerical help and printing, it meant months of most strenuous labor, writing thousands of personal letters.

When Mr. Anderson took his seat in Congress on March 4th, 1911, he appointed the writer his private secretary in recognition of services before, during and after the campaign of 1910. In December 1911 Mr. Anderson offered the writer the appointment as post-master at Lanesboro. This offer was refused for the reason that the writer knew the office previously had been promised to the old incumbent, and the writer did not desire to benefit by the congressman's broken pledge.

In the campaign of 1912 the writer again was Mr. Anderson's personal campaign manager as well as chairman of the First District Republican Congressional Committee. The work of that campaign was done almost entirely by the writer, Mr. Anderson being kept in Washington by his official duties until about a month before the primaries.

On April 1st, 1913, the writer was dismissed summarily as Mr. Anderson's secretary. Mutual friends of both are entitled to an explanation of this break between the congressman and his political manager. Such explanation can best be furnished by giving to the public the correspondence relating to the matter. This is being done in the following pages.

The writer believes that a congressman is the hired man of his district. He has no business to hide any secrets from his employers. His every action should be open and above board. His constituents are entitled to know everything about him. No honest and moral man has any dirty work to conceal. For that reason the writer begs leave to differ with Congressman Anderson's statement in his last letter that "the relation existing between a member of Congress and his secretary is personal and confidential and the reason for hiring or discharging such secretary does not concern the public."

In conclusion the writer wishes to explain that the secretary to a member of Congress can not properly be called an employee of the Government. A congressman's secretary is not on the Government pay roll. In addition to a salary of \$7,500 a year each congressman gets an additional \$1,500 a year for clerk hire. This

money is paid direct to the congressman, and the Government does not control or care how he spends it. Almost all congressmen pay this clerk hire to their personal campaign managers; a few pay a girl stenographer or two a small wage out of this clerk hire and add the balance to their own personal roll, or pocket the entire \$1,500 and add that much more to the yearly salary.

O. M. LEVANG.



THE CORRESPONDENCE

between

SYDNEY ANDERSON,

Member of Congress, First Minnesota District,

and

Q. M. LEVANG,

His Campaign Manager and Private Secretary.

ANDERSON TO LEVANG:

Washington, D. C., January 16, 1913.

Dear Levang:—

Yesterday Mrs. C.*) asked me for a raise of salary. This was coupled with the further suggestion that she hoped before long to be my secretary and draw the salary as such. I informed her of course that there was not even a possibility of her ever becoming my secretary or of getting a salary from me equivalent thereto. As to the other proposition I think she earns and is entitled to more money than she is getting. I do not feel that I can afford to pay her any more under existing conditions. In fact, I do not feel that I ought to be required to continue paying her out of my own pocket much longer. I want to be entirely just to you as well as myself. I realize that you can not afford to bring your wife here and live almost the year around as would be necessary. On the other hand I cannot afford to pay you for doing what needs to be done at Lanesboro as heretofore. I am not kicking about the amount of work you do. The simple fact is that it doesn't pay to address franks at \$125 per month. I

*) Mr. Anderson's Stenographer in Washington.

need someone to look after things at that end of the line. I would like to have you do it. I am willing to pay for having it done. But it must be apparent to you that the present arrangement cannot continue indefinitely.*) I don't know how you feel about it. I don't know what your plans may be. You have never said much about it. What is your idea?

I do not need to keep Mrs. C. I don't know that I can do so. She seems to think that she has enough experience to get a job as somebody's secretary. At least she thinks she can get more money than I am willing to pay her, and I am willing to let her try it. But one thing is absolutely certain:—I have got to have competent help in this office. As I have stated I don't know what you have in mind, but it does seem to me that with your office rent paid you ought to be able to make things go with what I can afford to pay you for looking after my interests. I had not expected to precipitate this matter at this time. Would not have done so but for the fact that whether I keep Mrs. C. or let her go, some other arrangement must be made.

I do not intend to dodge any obligations I may have to you. I want to be fair to you and myself. I want you to be fair to yourself and me. We have been very good friends. It seems to me that you ought at least to let me know your ideas, and that we ought to be able to get together somehow.

Yours

SYDNEY ANDERSON.

LEVANG TO ANDERSON:—

Lanesboro, Minnesota, January 20, 1913.

My dear Anderson:—

Your personal letter of the 16th Instant received.

Suppose, that before I answer same fully, you favor me with certain information on the matter. You say that you do not want to dodge any obligations that you may have to me. Therefore, such information as I desire, you can only give me by putting yourself in my place.

*) The spelling and grammar of all Mr. Anderson's letters are exact reproductions of the originals.

IF I WERE YOU AND YOU WERE I, WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT OF ME?

If I was the congressman and had gained such position through YOUR suggestion, by YOUR insistence to become a candidate, at YOUR sacrifice of personal ambition, at YOUR expenditure of ideas, time and labor,—what would you expect from me in return?

If I had been helped from practical poverty and a hard struggle for a living to financial independence and a brilliant future by YOUR assistance,—what would you expect me to do for you?

Try to put yourself in my place. If that is possible for you, your viewpoint will undoubtedly be changed. Then write me your ideas from this new viewpoint, and if they don't agree with those I hold, it will be because selfishness makes it utterly impossible for you to imagine yourself in some other man's place.

However, I want you to try the experiment. If it succeeds and your ideas agree with mine, good and well. If they do not, I shall certainly explain fully to you my views and ideas upon the subject.

Yours truly

O. M. LEVANG.

ANDERSON TO LEVANG:—

Washington, D. C., January 23, 1913.

O. M. Levang,

Lanesboro, Minnesota.

Dear Levang:—

Yours of the 20th received. I will not commence this letter with the expression contained in a recent one of yours. I AM surprised both at the contents and tone of your letter. I did not expect to argue the matter on the basis which your letter suggests but since you seem to wish it I will play the game your way.

I will not be hypocritical enough to pretend that I am able to place myself in your position or to reverse our positions. I may say however that were I in your position I would doubtless do as you are doing—try to make the most out of it that I could. I do not know tho that I should blame the other fellow for trying to be at least just to himself if not to me. Nor do I know

that I would fly off the handle and cry "Ingratitude" if the other fellow ventured to suggest that our relations were not altogether fair.

While we are on the subject of gratitude and since you insist upon paradeing my obligation to you (and I am quite willing to acknowledge it) permit me to say that in the transactions I have known you to be connected with I have not observed the gratitude flowing always in one direction—always from you never towards you. Since you insist that my present position of affluence(?) was the result of YOUR insistence and YOUR expenditure of ideas, time and labor, perhaps I may be pardoned for suggesting that on occasion I have helped you out of the hole; that but for my insistence you might once have suspended publication and that you might not have eventually gotten as much for your paper as you did. No, I am not trying to offset one obligation against the other. I am merely trying to demonstrate that it is no more possible for me to see things from your angle than it is for you to see them from mine. I apologize for having mentioned the matter at all. However I may say that it was not necessary to put your proposition in red ink or my obligation in CAPS. I would have understood the one and acknowledged the other just as readily anyway.

I gave you the best thing I had—the only thing I had. I was willing to give you the Post Office at Lanesboro but you didn't want it. I am willing to give anything I may have hereafter. I don't want to get rid of you but I confess that when you seem to insist that I ought to dig up \$50 or \$60 a month indefinitely in order to pay my obligation to you it is pressing the limit a trifle close. How long am I expected to hire some one to do the work here and let you stay at home in order to pay my obligation? That is what I want to know. Nor is that all. You know that a woman—a stenographer can't do the work here. You must know that the situation puts more on to me every day besides hampering and restricting the work I am trying to do. If you could double your salary somewhere else how long would the fact that I needed you deter you from accepting the proposition? Not a minute. Nor would I expect it to.

I am quite willing to pay you the salary—I am willing to do more. If you want to come down here and do the work; if you can relieve me of the necessity of

hiring a stenographer I'll pay your fare down here and pay you \$25 a month besides. Doubtless this was what you desired me to say in the first place and if so, I am pleased to add one more to the large list of those who have found me an easy mark. This proposition will be no picnic for either you or me. I do not expect it to be altogether timesaving or pleasing to either of us but I am in hopes I can stand it if I can once more have the benefit of "YOUR sacrifice of personal desires (Ambition)" and of "YOUR expenditure of ideas, time and labor" here where they might be of some use to me. Are you quite sure that in your calculations you have made due allowance for the fact that during the 500 days Congress has been in session in the last two years I have had the full benefit of YOUR ideas, time and labor less than ninety?

I can't say I find any special pleasure in writing in this tone or this vein but you force me to it. If you think you have a kick coming—kick. Don't squeal about ingratitude. Don't waste time trying to persuade yourself that you are getting the worst of it. Persuade me. But please don't do it in red ink. It reminds me of the war and I am trying to forget. And be sure you have hold of the right end of the gun before you pull the trigger.

I shall probably regret having written this letter but I have been trying to do the right thing so long and it has been such serious business that it is a relief to disregard my usual instinct of caution in this matter. Indeed I feel almost the villain your letter paints me—between the lines. Yes a little red devil—red as the ink you use to emphasize my ingratitude. Yet it was ever thus. Virtue scorned. Ingratitude the stepping stone to greater heights.

Do not let this gentle flow of passion prevent you from explaining fully your ideas and views upon the subject. But kindly spare my already lacerated feelings. No more "Et tu Brutus." It hurts. Also when you consider the glorious heights in which your (see I write it in small letters in token of my forgiveness) expenditure of ideas, time and labor have raised me, do not look to much upon the hare's tail at the end of the chase but consider also the hardships and difficulties of the chase itself.

Please preserve this letter. I shall probably never write another like it.

Yours prayerfully

SYDNEY ANDERSON.

LEVANG TO ANDERSON:—

Lanesboro, Minnesota, January 27, 1913.

Hon. Sydney Anderson,

Washington, D. C.

Yours of the 23d instant received this morning.

I did know that it was really too much to expect that it would be possible for you to look at the matter between us from any other viewpoint than your own. I had another letter written in answer to yours of the 16th instant. But before mailing same I decided to send you the one I did. I did so in the faint hope that, if it was put right up to you, you might possibly be able to look at the matter in the light in which it appeared to me.

Evidently such a course is absolutely impossible for you. A film of selfishness must have dimmed that otherwise bright brain of yours. That is the only way your taunting and sneering allusions to my connection with your rise in life and your present position can possibly be explained.

In view of the contents of your last letter the only choice left me is to mail you the letter I had originally intended to send. I do so herewith. It bears date of the 20th instant. I just desire in addition to say a few words regarding the following statement in your last letter:—

“Perhaps I may be pardoned for suggesting that on occasion I have helped you out of the hole; that but for my insistence you might once have suspended publication; and that you might not have eventually got as much for the paper as you did.”

In this connection allow me to remind you that for your professional services in that first instance you received a fee of \$50.00 and expenses. Your receipted bill for such fee lies before me now on the desk as I am writing. It is dated October 1, 1906. For selling

the newspaper you collected \$250.00, as you possibly will not deny. You were paid and paid well for getting me "out of the hole." These instances cannot, therefore, very well be classified as "friendly services."

I notice your proposition to increase my salary \$25 per month on certain conditions. I cannot consider such proposition. If there were no other reasons, the insinuation coupled with the proposition would make it impossible to consider same. I have no desire to qualify as one of those who have found you "an easy mark." I am not trying to dictate terms to you. I am but asking that you render me justice.

Verily, a great many big men have a good lot of littleness about them.

Yours truly

O. M. LEVANG.

Lanesboro, Minnesota, January 20, 1913.

Hon. Sydney Anderson,

Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Anderson:—

Your personal letter of the 16th instant at hand, I can say truthfully that it did not surprise me greatly. I had expected it. Straws usually indicate which way the wind is blowing. There have been several straws in the past two years indicating, that the climax arrived at in your letter would come sooner or later.

However, in view of your expressions in our talk the evening before you left for Washington I had not expected the climax to come quite as soon as it has. Time and again that evening you asserted, that as far as you were concerned I would continue to draw the salary as secretary indefinitely.

You say that you "had not expected to precipitate this matter at this time." That indicates that you had expected to precipitate it some time. But if you had not expected to precipitate it now, some one else must. Since Christmas it has been a common report among some of your most intimate friends, especially among the ladies, that "Levang was going to be fired by Anderson very soon." The rumor has been brought to me by several parties, but I have steadfastly refused even to discuss it. I did not believe, that even

if you felt so inclined, you would be so lacking in political sagacity as to let the news come to me second-hand.

There was a time, some four years ago, when I had almost come to the conclusion that no man existed who possessed the virtue of gratitude and lacked a spirit of smallness and penuriousness. However, I decided to try one more experiment to convince myself whether I was right or wrong in the conclusion I had come to. I picked you out as the exception to the rule. I felt more certain than I have ever done of anything in my life, that if I ever did you a good turn you would repay same not only with appreciation, but with substantial proofs of your gratitude. Trusting you to that extent I did not even think it necessary to insist upon a hard and fast agreement with you in case you succeeded in landing the big game I had induced you to go after against your own judgment.

That's where I made my mistake. I should have insisted in advance—as you did when you undertook to sell my newspaper—to have an understanding in black and white as to what my share would be in case of success.

If there was one thing I would have taken an oath on, then it was that there was absolutely no miserly smallness in your makeup. But I was soon—very soon, indeed—to find out that I was mistaken.

The first awakening came when you did not think it necessary to offer me a red cent for the months—from July to November 1910—in which I spent my entire time in the effort to make you a congressman. Certainly, I did get a fifty cents souvenir knife when you returned from Washington the following spring. I suppose you figured that that was all it was worth to be lifted from the foot to the top of the ladder in one jump.

Next came your failure to remember your promise about the life insurance. Sure enough, you did take out a policy for \$2,000,—but you had promised, in presence of witnesses, to make it \$5,000 if you were elected. And this fall when you saw your way clear to take out \$8,000 more life insurance, you evidently forgot entirely that your secretary was also soliciting insurance, and that he needed your business more and was more entitled to it than anyone else.

Your veiled intimations time and again that I should pay your stenographer's salary, I never paid serious attention to. I could not bring myself to believe that your penuriousness would go to that extent. And after our talk together the night before you left for Washington I blamed myself for misjudging you and was even ready to forget your slight in passing me up on the life insurance.

Certainly, I will give you credit for having on a few occasions advanced me small amounts of cash. These amounts have all been paid back. You have also once endorsed a few notes for me. But, as a friend, I would have done the same thing for you even if you were not a congressman and even if you did not own a cent.

The fact remains that for having put you in position to draw a salary of \$7,500 and some more per year,— I have received as my "commission," if it can be called so, a souvenir pocket knife and your permission to draw the salary of a congressman's secretary. I had worked for that salary even before I began drawing it.

And now you propose that out of my measly salary of \$1,500 a year I shall pay your office help at Washington, while you yourself draw over five times that much in yearly salary and do so, because I put you in position to draw it. Do you call that gratitude and paying off obligations? Why don't you just as well come out openly and above board and say that you have had all the use out of me that you expect to get,—and then kick me out without beating around the bush?

You say:—"The simple fact is that it doesn't pay to address franks at \$125 per month." I admit that. But is that what I am being paid for?

I had figured it out that I was being paid that salary for services rendered you, services of such value to you that they really could not be calculated in dollars and cents. Can it be possible that you have already forgotten those services? They loomed pretty big to you immediately after your first election. You were then frank to declare that those services were of such magnitude that you despaired of repaying them.

Do you remember that first Christmas after your election when you sent me a gift of a small box of

cigars? Inside the box you had slipped a card on which was written:—"Until you are better paid." That is over two years ago, and—I am still waiting for the fulfillment of that promise.

It was through me that you were suddenly lifted from struggling poverty to an independent financial position and affluence. I do not deny, nor even doubt, that with your ability and your talents you would some time have reached the top anyway. But if you are honest with yourself, you will surely admit that but because of my suggestion, my insistence that you should aim high, my goading you to take the leap, and my perseverance in boosting you,—you would still be a struggling lawyer in a small town somewhere.

By following my advice you gained in a couple of months a public and financial position which otherwise it might have taken you a quarter of a century to attain. Acting on my suggestion you were suddenly lifted out of debt and came into a large income. You were put in position to own your own home, to give your family luxuries which they had never even dreamed of, to satisfy almost any wish and desire you ever had. I know—and you will admit that truth in the innermost recess of your heart—that if I had come to you in the summer of 1910 and could have guaranteed you such a result, you would gladly and without hesitation have bound yourself to pay me most anything I demanded.

I did not do so, because I did not believe that you possessed a small soul. I felt convinced that you would do the right thing. I was the man who made you, by giving you the golden opportunity to make yourself. I had no suspicion that you would not treat me square. I may have expected too much, but I was promptly disillusioned. Soon I realized that I must limit my expectations to the acceptance of the offer to be your secretary,—because not a cent of that salary would come out of your pocket. If there is the least spark of gratitude and liberality in your system, you must have felt that I was at least entitled to that much as long as you were in Congress, if I desired it.

And now you tell me that "you cannot afford to pay me for doing what needs to be done at Lanesboro as heretofore." Can you afford to be known as a man who goes back on his best friend and benefactor and

as a man who is entirely lacking in gratitude? Ask your conscience that, also ask your good common sense.

In your letter you lay stress on the fact that "we have been very good friends." To me it seems that it has been a somewhat one-sided friendship. I wish you would point out to me a solitary friendly act that you have done me without being fully paid for it in the cash of the realm. In my troubles with the newspaper you assisted me, but I cannot remember a single time that you did not collect your fees or commission.

On the other hand, have you ever had a friend like I, doing you one good turn after another from the first day you came to Lanesboro, in most cases without looking for reward or reciprocity, and in all cases without demanding it? I may not have been drinking or carousing with you; but if you are just, you will admit that I have been more true-blue than all the rest of your friends combined.

You say that "you do not want to dodge any obligations that you may have to me." That word "may" indicates that you have your doubts that you are under any obligations whatever. This letter should certainly convince you that there are no doubts in my mind on the subject. And I don't believe that there is any doubt whatever in the minds of the many in the district who know and realize what I did for you in 1910.

You say:—"I want to be fair to you and myself. I want you to be fair to yourself and me." I defy you to put it up to all men who know the true conditions to decide who has been the fairest of us two. I firmly believe that the decision would be unanimously in my favor.

As I told you in our talk the night before you left for Washington, I have not intended to remain as your secretary indefinitely. I had planned for something better. I had hoped, however, that there would be no difficulty whatever in drawing the salary as secretary until such time as I could find something more profitable to do. But your letter smashed that hope.

I am glad you wrote me about this, because it gives me a chance to write you. I would have been at a disadvantage if we should have talked it over. Injustice and ingratitude goads me into quick temper, and then I say either too much or too little—usually

too little. To talk it over would have done no good, —possibly made it worse. By giving me the chance to write you have also given me the chance to relieve my mind of the bitter feelings which have brewed there for some time past. A letter also gives you the chance to digest my side of the question without any undue haste and an opportunity to consider same coolly and not on the spur of the moment.

Not that I have any misgivings whatever about the contents of your answer to this letter in view of what has passed. I have no hope of converting or convincing a man who lacks the right perspective,—a man who is sufficient unto himself. So whenever the notice comes which separates me from the salary as a congressman's secretary, I shall be ready to vacate your office.

Really, Anderson, the thing that will hurt me the most will be to hear from a certain person, dear to me, that old, old saying:—I told you so!

With a woman's never failing intuition she predicted years ago that this was coming, warning me that selfishness was the predominating trait of your character.

And was there ever a man who did not hate like sin to admit that his own judgment was at fault?

Yours truly

O. M. LEVANG.

ANDERSON TO LEVANG:—

Washington, D. C., February 16, 1913.

O. M. Levang,
Lanesboro, Minnesota.

Dear Levang:—

I have delayed answering your letter of the 20th and 27th of January until I could do so with some degree of freedom from the prejudice and resentment they were doubtless calculated to inspire. I wanted to write you after due and full consideration of the matter in all of its faezes, divesting my mind as far as possible of the ill feeling and bias which the unjust and unfounded accusations your letter contains necessarily produced.

I want to write rationally meeting the issue fairly and with perfect frankness, laying down such propositions as I shall make in such terms that my meaning will not be misinterpreted either in letter or in spirit.

This is by no means easy in itself but it is made doubly difficult by the fact that your letter proceeds upon no rational basis and its conclusions are based upon premises which are in large part mere half truths, unfounded accusations or false assumptions.

An argument based upon a false premise is as infirm and unstable as a house upon the sand. With considerable ingenuity you proceed to build a straw man and having fashioned it to your liking you proceed to knock it down and jump on it. This may be soothing to injured feelings but it does not lead to right conclusions.

The substance of your conclusion is that my proposition to you is unfair and unjust and tainted with ingratitude. This you base primarily upon the premise that my proposition was to immediately separate you from the salary as a congressman's secretary and incidentally separate myself from your services—in other words fire you outright and instantler.

This premises is false. I have never made either verbally or by letter such a proposition or suggestion. On the contrary I have over and over expressed my desire to retain your services. The most I have ever ventured to do even from this distance was to suggest that I did not think it was fair to retain them upon the present basis and to this statement I still adhere.

Nor can I see anything in this suggestion which should subject me to the accusations contained in your letter after you have enjoyed the salary of a secretary for two years with only a small share of the burdens, responsibilities and expences which usually go with the office. I am not kicking about those two years but I do feel that we are now at the place where it is proper to consider, at least, a new arrangement. Your work as my secretary if you stay at Lanesboro has not and will not require one-third of your time. You have been and will be practically free to pursue any other business which you could carry on if you were not my secretary at Lanesboro.

Again you do not base your insistance upon the continuance of the present arrangement that you earn

or can earn the salary at Lanesboro. This isn't your fault. The work isn't there to do—that is all.

Your premises—your claim is that I owe you the job and the salary as long as you want it for your services—your expenditure of time, labor and ideas in the campaign of two years ago. That to do otherwise than pay it to you regardless of whether you perform the full duties of the position or not is to be an ingrate is apparently your conclusion. Neither the premise or the conclusion is sound. If they were there would be nothing more to say.

There are a good many others who contributed either much or little to my success two years ago. And mark you that it is because I was successful that you insist upon your position. Had I been unsuccessful I should have borne practically all of the burden. These others are as much entitled to the rewards of gratitude as you are. To reward them on the same financial basis you insist upon would bankrupt a Morgan.

Your proposition, divested of all superfluities is that I owe you a living as long as you want it and I am a member of congress.

The mere statement of the proposition is its own refutation for it can be applied in a proportionate degree to every one who had any part in my nomination or election. You could with equal justice and propriety claim that I ought to turn over half the salary to you. My refusal to recognize such claim would give rise to equally as well founded a charge of ingratitude.

The matter cannot be settled upon the basis of gratitude or political indebtedness. Such a basis presents no rational premises from which a conclusion can be reached. You cannot measure gratitude or political service in dollars.

The true premises is that I desire to retain your services and your good will. The one is useless without the other. But I want to retain them upon a basis that is rational—based upon facts—not upon gratitude or political services the value of which no one can estimate or agree upon. This is fair—just—and ought not to expose me to a charge of ingratitude.

It is a fair assumption, I think, to start with that while I am doing the work of a Member of Congress I am entitled to the salary of that office and that when

you do the work of a secretary of a Member of Congress you are entitled to the salary of that office. I wish that it was more than it is. Neither of us is entitled to a part of the salary of the other when we are holding down our respective jobs. On the other hand you are not and as long as you stay in Lanesboro you cannot do the work a secretary is supposed to do—simply because the work is not there and can't be done there. There will be even less after March 4th. On the other hand I realize that you can't come down here and pay expenses on the salary the Government allows. It is a good deal cheaper to live in Lanesboro than it is here and you can make something on the side. If you intend to stay there it is fair that you should make some allowance to me in as much as I have to hire someone to do your work here. If you come here and relieve me of this expense I should pay you something in addition to the salary the government allows for I am willing to admit that you can earn more than that amount here and in addition stand a part of the expence of coming here if not all. This may not be gratitude but it strikes me as being just, fair and good sense.

In as much as you have prejudged my action in the premises and perhaps have already determined your own course I do not know whether or not I should make any further proposition or statement of my position. But I desire to say now that if you have received any second hand news of my proposed action it is like most second hand news—without foundation. I have not verbally or otherwise informed anyone of my purpose or intention for I have had no definite purpose except to insist upon some new arrangement.

As a basis of such new agreement I again submit the offer contained in my letter of January 23d divesting it of any insinuations with which it may have been coupled. The insinuations were not just but were justified by great provocation. On the other hand if you prefer to stay in Lanesboro you should contribute the other way. I am willing to pay you \$85.00 per month and leave you as free as I can to make what you can on the outside. Under either proposition I will contribute. You contribute only in the event you don't do the work.

If neither proposition is acceptable—in other words if you feel that you can better afford to cut loose from



me entirely—that you may make better for yourself that way I am willing you should draw the salary a reasonable time until you can make arrangements for a new deal with someone else. But, if it is your intention to cut loose you should say so now and fix a time when you intend to do it. That responsibility should be with you not with me. It is fair to all concerned that there should be something definite about it. The present arrangement is absolutely unfair in so far as it is indefinite in the respect referred to.

After two years both of us are familiar enough with all the facts to determine upon what basis we can continue our present relations or whether we can continue them at all or desire to do so. It is probably not necessary for me to state that I prefer to have our relations continue if that is possible upon a basis that seems to me to be fair but in order that there may be no mistake about it I repeat it now.

I have made no attempt to answer the several accusations contained in your letter or to recriminate or retaliate for I have neither the time or the patience to engage in a long distance epistolary duel. The accusations are not unanswerable but I could not answer them without departing from the spirit which has animated me in writing this letter. In their accumulation they doubtless constitute in your mind a formidable indictment. Perhaps I have not always done you full justice. Probably not. This is the province of angels not of men. If I have failed to do you full justice heretofore or in this letter it is not because of wrong intent but it has been the result in some measure at least of oversight due to the sudden thrusting upon my inexperience of many responsibilities and perplexities.

I have tried to be just—to myself as well as you. It is hardly fair to thrust the accumulation of whatever truth there may be in your eleventh hour accusations upon me at this late date when they can not possibly lead to righting any wrong that may have been done. You might have saved yourself some injustice perhaps had you made your protest before it was too late to do any good.

I am expecting to go to Panama between sessions. I should like to have this matter settled before I go. It is only fair that there should be some definite understanding before the next session begins. Therefore

I hope to have your definite conclusions at as early a date as possible.

Yours very truly
SYDNEY ANDERSON.

LEVANG TO ANDERSON:—

Lanesboro, Minnesota, March 1st, 1913.

Hon. Sydney Anderson,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Anderson:—

Yours of February 16th received. As an evasive document your letter is unexcelled. It dodges most artfully every question and argument presented for your consideration and answer in my letter of recent date.

You claim that "my conclusions are based upon premises which are in a large part mere half-truths, unfounded accusations or false assumptions." If such was indeed the case, it should be very easy for you to enumerate such "half-truths, unfounded accusations and false assumptions" and convince me of my errors. I am always open for conviction. But I notice that you evade very carefully that task, so it cannot be so very easy after all.

I shall take issue with but one of the many misstatements in your letter. You say: "There are a good many others who contributed either much or little to my success two years ago. And mark you, that it is because I was successful that you insist upon your position. Had I been unsuccessful, I should have borne practically all of the burden."

In this connection allow me to refresh your so conveniently defective memory. I desire to call your attention to the fact that on the night before the primary election in 1910, when you were very dubious about the outcome and worrying greatly because of the debts the campaign had brought on you, I unsolicited offered to pay half of your campaign expenses out of my very small pile in case of your defeat. I did so because of a feeling that having brought you into the fight, it was but fair that I should stand my share of the expenses of same in case of defeat.

If your statement that only “when I do the work of a secretary of a member of Congress I am entitled to the salary of that office,”—is true, and nothing else is to be considered in connection with the matter, then I am certainly not even entitled to receive the \$85 per month which you propose to pay me. My contention is that on the basis of other services and other obligations I am entitled to the full amount of the salary of the secretary, even if I am not actually doing all of the clerical work connected with the position. If my contention is wrong, then I am not entitled to a cent of the salary, and accepting all or part of it would be to accept charity. As yet I have not reached the point where I am forced to accept charitable donations. Unfortunately, there is no tribunal to which can be referred the decision whether my contention is right or wrong. In this matter you have autocratic power. All I can do is to appeal to your sense of justice and fairness, and such appeal has already proven fruitless.

At no time have I had the inclination or intention “to cut loose from you.” On the contrary, I have been planning for your political future, as you possibly are aware. Frankly, I had considered to “cut loose” from the secretary’s salary as soon as I could arrange for some other means of support. But it had never been in my thoughts to cut loose from you or your political future, even if I should voluntarily have ceased to draw the salary as your secretary.

That being the case, I absolutely shall refuse to accept the responsibility, which in your letter you try to force on me, of severing our connections. That is up to you. To resign from my position as the case stands now, is equivalent to admitting that I have not done my duty to you and therefore am not entitled to hold the position. It would also give you the opportunity to claim with some degree of truth, that you had fulfilled all your obligations to me and that the resignation was granted very much against your wishes. And that would certainly be creating a false impression.

Therefore I refuse to resign voluntarily. If you are satisfied in your own mind that I am not entitled any longer to draw the salary as your secretary, then it is in your power—and in yours only—to stop me from getting same. You have the privilege to dismiss me summarily at any time that you desire.

Awaiting your further pleasure, I am

Yours truly

O. M. LEVANG.

ANDERSON TO LEVANG:—

Washington, D. C. March 26th, 1913.

Mr. O. M. Levang,
Lanesboro, Minnesota.

My dear Levang:—

I was disappointed in not receiving your letter of March 1st before I left for Panama. The letter was mailed on the 3d instant and received here on the 5th, and consequently not delivered until after my departure for Panama.

Taking up the matter concerning which we have been corresponding relative to our relations in the future:

I stated to you in my letter of February 16th that I did not intend to answer the accusations made in your previous letter, and I reiterate the statement now with reference to the accusations contained in your letter of March 1st. I do so for the reason that an attempt to answer them, or to recriminate, could not in the slightest degree assist us in coming to an agreement. In order that there may be no misunderstanding as to the facts which induce me to take the action which I shall take, I will briefly recapitulate the situation as it now stands:

I designated you as my secretary two years ago in recognition of your services in the previous campaign. I expected that you would do the work connected with that position. I believe you expected to do it. As a matter of fact you have not done that work and I have been obliged to hire some one else to do it at my own expense while you have drawn the salary. The reasons why you have not done it are not material. The facts are that of the more than five hundred days Congress has been in session in the last two years you have been in Washington less than 90 days, and during those 90 days I employed and paid a stenographer out of my own pocket.

The situation continued during the whole of my first term. I felt that it could not, in justice to myself, continue indefinitely and suggested to you that if you did not intend to come to Washington and attend to your duties as my secretary, we should come to some other arrangement. I made you two propositions: First, if

you wanted to come here and do the work I would pay your traveling expenses here and \$25 per month in addition to the regular salary; or, second, if you preferred to stay at Lanesboro, I offered to pay you \$85 per month for doing such official work as I might have for you to do there. You declined to consider either of these propositions, your position being that in consideration of your political and other services to me you are entitled to the salary as my secretary whether you perform the duties of that office or not. The mere statement of this proposition is its own refutation. The salary which you claim to be entitled to if paid to you at all will be paid by the Government and not by me. If I am not entitled to your services, the Government is. I have only the right to say in what manner and to what persons the salary shall be paid. In directing the payment of the whole amount to you during the past two years under the circumstances which I have outlined, I have stretched the moral and ethical right which I have to direct its payment, to the limit, and I have done so simply because I have always hoped and expected that you would see your way clear to giving the Government the benefit of your services in consideration of the salary it was paying you, and because I was supplementing your failure to do the work by the service of other people whom I paid from my own funds.

I cannot longer continue this arrangement in justice to myself, or conscientiously in the performance of my obligations to the Government. I further suggested to you that if neither of the propositions I made to you was acceptable that I desired you to fix a time when your relation as my secretary should cease and that within reasonable limits I was willing that you should continue to draw the salary until you could locate yourself in some other line of employment. In addition to declining to consider either of the propositions you have also declined to take the responsibility for fixing the time when our relations should terminate. This responsibility, you say, should rest with me. In view of the obvious fairness of the propositions which I have made and your apparent disinclination to continue our relations upon any rational basis, I have no hesitancy whatever in accepting the responsibility. It is a necessary result of my accepting it that our relations should terminate at an earlier date than one which you would doubtless have fixed.

Upon receipt of this letter your relation to me as my secretary ceases. I have today written the Clerk of the House to take your name from the roll as my secretary. You will, upon receipt of this letter, kindly turn over possession of the office at Lanesboro, together with the official and campaign correspondence, to my father, C. B. Anderson, whom I have authorized to act for me.

Yours very truly

SYDNEY ANDERSON.

LEVANG TO ANDERSON:—

Lanesboro, Minnesota, April 1, 1913.

Hon. Sydney Anderson,

Washington, D. C.

My dear Sir:—

Your registered letter of March 26th received yesterday afternoon, March 31st.

This is to inform you that I shall vacate your office within a couple of days or as quickly as I can gather together my different papers and arrange for another office room. Having been kicked out of the position as secretary to the congressman from this district, I have no inclination to occupy his office any longer than absolutely necessary.

In conclusion I wish to serve notice on you that as soon as an appropriate time arrives, I shall take steps to give publicity to the correspondence between you and myself in regard to this matter. Mutual friends will be looking for an explanation of the break between us. Our respective letters will furnish such information.

Yours truly

O. M. LEVANG.

ANDERSON TO LEVANG:—

Washington, D. C., April 4, 1913.

Mr. O. M. Levang,

Lanesboro, Minnesota.

My dear Levang:—

I acknowledge receipt of your favor of April 1st in answer to mine of March 26.

I have no desire to prolong the correspondence; but I may perhaps be pardoned for suggesting that if any man ever invited and literally begged the result which you so inaccurately and graphically describe as being "kicked out of the position as secretary to the congressman", you are that man.

I do not think you will be able to make any one believe that the responsibility for this result rests upon any other shoulders than your own.

You say that you "wish to serve notice upon me that as soon as an appropriate time arrives you will take steps to give publicity to the correspondence between us in this matter." You will, of course, do as you think best in regard to publishing our correspondence covering the reasons for the result referred to. I am not concerned about that. If I had not believed that my position and action in the matter as outlined in the correspondence would be approved by the people of the first district, I would not have taken either. I have no doubt whatever about it now.

I wish to suggest, however, that the position of secretary to a member of Congress is a personal and confidential relation; that the services rendered are personal and confidential in their nature; and that the reasons for hiring a person for or discharging a person from such an employment are therefore personal and confidential and do not concern the public. I do not believe the publication of our personal correspondence will be of the interest to the general public you anticipate, nor do I think the public will entertain a very high regard for the rectitude of the purpose, position or action of a person who can justify such proceeding even to himself.

Yours very truly

SYDNEY ANDERSON.



O. M. LEVANG
LANESBORO, MINN.



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