

MUSIC UP: "ROCK OF AGES" OR ANOTHER APPROPRIATE METHODIST HYMN.

FADE IN:

EXT. NEBRASKA CORNFIELD - DAY

NEBRASKA, 1989. WE SEE A CHURCH ON THE PRAIRIE. WE PAN TO REVEAL THE SUN SETTING BEHIND A CORNFIELD. A WINDMILL CATCHES A BREEZE AND LAZILY TURNS IN THE DYING ORANGE LIGHT. MUSIC UNDER

ACTOR 1 (V.O.)

"The man who is tenacious of of purpose in a rightful cause is not shaken from his firm resolve by the frenzy of his fellow citizens clamoring for what is wrong, or by the tyrant's threatening countenance."

EXT. FAIRVIEW - DAY

1989. WE ARE OUTSIDE THE BRYAN HOME. WE CRANE DOWN ON THE BRONZE STATUE OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN.

A 1 (V.O.)

Over two thousand years later, these words of the Latin Poet Horace were echoed by a voice of conviction that burst out of the Nebraska plains like wildfire.

"The humblest citizen in all the land, when clad in the armor of a righteous cause is stronger than all the hosts of error."

THE CRANE DOWN IS COMPLETE. WE TAKE A HEAD AND SHOULDERS SHOT OF THE STATUE.

MUSIC OUT.

SUPFR CAMPAIGN BANNERS FROM THE SMITHSONIAN

A 1 (V.O.)

What drove this man to find solace in a record-setting three losses for the Presidency by saying " he truth, when crushed to the ground, will rise again."

PHOTOS OF THE SCOPES TRIAL

ACTOR 2

Who was this man, of whom H. L. Mencken wrote: "If the fellow was sincere, then so was P. T. Barnam... He was, in fact, a charlatan, a montebank, a zany without sense or dignity."

WWI FILMS

A 1 (V.O.)

What kind of man would resign as Secretary of State rather than send a message that he feared would bring war with Germany, but then try to enlist in the Army as a private when the war finally came?

INT. SILAS BRYAN HOME - NIGHT

1866. WE ARE IN THE SALEM, ILLINOIS HOME OF SILAS BRYAN AND HIS WIFE. THE TWO ARE SEATED AT A PIANO SINGING "BLESSED BE THE TIE THAT BINDS". WJB AND THE OTHER SIBLINGS SING ALONG AS WELL.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL ACTOR 1 IN FOREGROUND.

A 1

The seeds of hope were nourished here, on this small parcel of farmland in Salem, Illinois. Church and Law were wedded together in Silas Bryan. Willy Bryan's father was a moderately prosperous judge and opened each court session with a prayer. Willy was quizzed on the Scriptures every day after his chores of haying and feeding the livestock. Willy hated the work and called it "drudgery." Willy wanted to learn the piano but his father held the view that the boy had better make music with a hand saw. William Jennings Bryan blossomed and grew into a strong, handsome young man under his father's guidance.

THE SONG IS FINISHED. SILAS OPENS A LARGE FAMILY BIBLE AND STARTS TO READ. FADE VOICE UNDER.

A

Silas Bryan took his politics seriously too. An ardent disciple of Andrew Jackson, Silas imparted to young Willy a deep commitment to the Democratic Party. Like Jackson, Silas feared that government intervention in the economy was designed to benefit the few at the expense of many. "Too much government," Silas once said, "is the rock upon which epublics] founder."

INT. SALEM CHURCH - DAY

1989. THIS IS THE CHURCH IN WHICH WJB HAD HIS CONVERSION. WE SEE THE GLORIOUS SU" PULL THROUGH THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS.

A 1 (V O.)

Silas didn't drink, smoke, or curse. Willy later recalled that, when he joined the church, it made little difference in his personal behavior because he had followed his father's example from the start.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

A CLOSE-UP OF SILAS BRYAN'S GRAVE

A 2 (V.O.)

Silas Bryan died when Will was twenty. His passing was more than an emotional loss. Silas had been fattening thirty head of cattle to finance a year at Oxford University in England for Will, before he entered law school. With Silas's death, the family sold the steers to pay debts instead. One can only wonder what impact Oxford might have made on the man whose mind was described by one historian as resembling "cooked oatmeal."

PHOTOS OF A BEARDED BRYAN AND A YOUNG MARY BAIRD

A 1 (V.O.)

Before his father's death, Will found Mary Baird, who like him was valedictorian of her college class. There was an instant attraction. He took fifty dollars he won in a speech contest and put a gold garnet ring on her fourth finger. Mary's father was a tougher nut. As he would in later life, Will turned to the Scriptures to ease his cause.

INT. BAIRD HOME - NIGHT

WJB STANDS UNCOMFORTABLY IN FRONT OF MR. BAIRD. BAIRD SITS AND SLOWLY FILLS HIS PIPE WITH TOBACCO. WJB IS PORTRAYED BY AN ACTOR OTHER THAN ACTOR 1.

WILL

Mr. Baird, uh, Sir, I have been reading Proverbs a good deal lately and find that Solomon says "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favor of the Lord."

BAIRD NODS. HE TAMPES THE TOBACCO AND STARES AT WILLIAM. WILL SWEATS A BIT BUT DOES NOT BACK DOWN OR MOVE. BAIRD STRIKES A MATCH AND SUCKS THE PIPE TO LIFE. BAIRD LETS OUT A LONG STREAM OF BLUE SMOKE AND SLOWLY REPLIES.

BAIRD

Yes, I believe Solomon did say that Mr. Bryan. But Paul suggests that "H hat giveth her in marriage doeth well, but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better."

WILL

Solomon would be the best authority upon this point, I believe... Sir, because, uh, Paul was never married while Solomon had a number... of wives. Sir.

BAIRD SIZES UP WILL. WILL WAITS ANXIOUSLY. BAIRD LETS OUT A HEARTY GUFFAW, STANDS AND SHAKES HIS HAND. WILL IS HAPPY, BUT MOSTLY RELIEVED.

A 1 (V.O.)

Mary and Will were married four years later after Bryan had finished law school.

PHOTOS OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS AND LINCOLN, NEBRASKA THE WAY IT WAS IN 1887 WHEN WJB ARRIVED.

A 1 (V.O.)

Will studied law in Chicago and earned his way by working in the office of a lawyer who had been a friend of Silas. After a brief try at a law practice in Illinois, he decided there were more opportunities for a young lawyer further west, where there were fewer established competitors and everything seemed to be booming. Will arrived in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1887. He arranged for a house to be built for his growing family and a few months later, Mary, baby Ruth, and Mary's parents joined him.

DURING THE FOLLOWING, SOME GRAPHICS FROM THE PERIOD ARE SHOWN. WE SEE THE GRANGE CARTOON SHOWING PEOPLE AS RAILROAD TIES, THREATENED BY A MONOPOLY TRAIN. ALSO PHOTOS OF POPULISTS AND OF SOD-HOUSE FARMERS. WE ALSO SEE HEADLINES FROM THE LINCOLN ALLIANCE.

A 2 (V.O.)

Nebraska voters usually gave large majorities to the Republican party, but Will stuck to the Democratic beliefs of his father. The bright, young lawyer with the ready smile rose rapidly in the dispirited Democratic party. 1890 was a year of political upheaval in Nebraska and elsewhere in the central part of the country. Farmers, hard pressed by debt and low prices, broke with the two old political parties and formed a third, first called the Independents but soon known as the Populists.

The Farmer's Alliance, a newspaper published in Bryan's hometown of Lincoln, gave voice to the Populist's concerns:

"There is now being fought in Nebraska the fiercest political battle ever known in the history of the state... it is a conflict between plutocracy... and the people... Between millionaires and the masses... Between the insatiable greed of organized wealth and the rights of the Great Plains people..."

"The old parties have both passed beyond the control of the people into the hands of designing capitalists and corporations, whose end and aim in life is to control legislation in their own selfish interests.

A 2 (V.O.) Cont'd

[The Populist Party] is a great political protest from the masses of the country against the management of public affairs solely in the interests of the few.

PHOTOS OF RAILROADING, ETC.

A 2 (V.O.)

The Populists called for the government to take action to help farmers and workers. Giant corporations, especially railroads, had appeared during the previous fifteen years and now seemed to hold so much power that they threatened the ability of ordinary citizens to make a good life for themselves. The Populists boldly demanded government ownership of the railroads and government control of big business and they called upon the people to rise up, throw out the professional politicians, and replace them with ordinary citizens like themselves.

PHOTOS OF THE POPULIST CAMPAIGN IN 1890.

A 1 (V.O.)

In the midst of the first Populist campaign in 1890, the Democrats of Nebraska's first congressional district nominated William Jennings Brvan. The Populists pulled more votes from the Republicans than from the Democrats and Brvan was elected to the House of Representatives at the age of thirty.

PHOTOS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

A 1 (V.O.)

The silver-tongued boy Orator from along the Platte River was unique. He was quickly appointed to the House and Ways committee by the Speaker, but made his name on the floor of the House when he spoke on the tariff. Bryan's most attentive listener was Mary, perched in the Gallery within view of the floor. Her presence inspired Brvan, and her nods and signs were useful guides as he spoke.

CLOSE-UP BRYAN

A 1 (as Bryan)

Multitudes are ready to declare their allegiance to the cause of tariff reform. Why? Because, Mr. Chairman, we are demanding for the people equal and exact justice to every man, woman, and child. We desire that the laws of the country shall not be made, as they have been, to enable some men to get rich while many get poor.

A 2 V.O.)

The next morning the unknown man from Nebraska was famous up and down the Eastern corridor. "There was hardly anything else talked about except the wonderfully brilliant speech of the young Nebraskan of the House," The Washington Post reported. "The young man who today ceased to be a new and young unknown member," commented The New York Times, "and jumped at once into the position of the best tariff Congressman of Nebraska." "This speech has been a revolution," stated the New York World; "no new member has received such an ovation in years."

PHOTOS OF BRYAN ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL IN THE 1892 CONTEST. OUR NARRATOR HAS NOW CHANGED. MARY BRYAN HAS TAKEN OVER IN CLOSE-UP.

MARY

My husband was re-elected in 1892 with some support from Populists attracted by his stand on issues. Early in 1894, Mr. Bryan made what most have considered his finest speech while in Congress, on the subject of an income tax. The Democratic party was committed to cutting the tariff, and Mr. Bryan and others proposed to make up for the lost federal revenue through a modest income tax. President Cleveland was opposed to this, and his views were presented on the floor of Congress by Bourke Cockran of New York. Those who supported the idea of an income tax chose Mr. Bryan to respond.

PHOTOS OF COCKRAN AND BRYAN.

MARY

Mr. Bryan favored the income tax because it was the fairest way of collecting federal revenue. He said, in that speech, that "there is no more just tax upon the statute books than the income tax, nor can any tax be proposed which is more equitable." He was very persuasive.

ACTOR 1 AGAIN AS WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN. WE SEE HIM IN THE PERIOD CLOTHES AS HE GIVES THE INCOME TAX SPEECH IN THE HOUSE IN CLOSE-UP.

WJB

If taxation is a badge of free men, the poor people of this country are covered all over with the insignia of free men... They call that man a statesman whose ear is attuned to the slightest pulsation of the pocketbook, and they describe as a demagogue anyone who dares to listen to the heartbeat of humanity.

MARY

Mr. Bryan and the others supporting the income tax won, but the Supreme Court soon declared it unconstitutional. In 1894, Mr. Bryan chose not to try for a third term in the House of Representatives. Instead, he sought to run for the Senate, but the Republicans carried the day in a bitter, hard-fought campaign.

PHOTOS OF BRYAN AS EDITOR OF THE OMAHA WORLD HERALD.

MARY

My husband accepted the position of editor-in-chief of The Omaha World Herald in September 1894, while he was still in the House. There were few duties involved beyond writing editorials. But it gave him a way to keep his name before the people during the 1894 election, and an excuse to travel around the country to political meetings.

POLITICAL CARTOONS OF THE SUFFERING FARMERS AT THE HANDS OF THE BANKERS.

A 2

Bryan concluded that the struggle over the currency was partly a battle between the East and the West and in one speech he said, "We simply say to the East -- take your hands out of our pockets and keep them out." He believed that the value of the dollar could best be stabilized through coining both gold and silver dollars, but President Grover Cleveland proposed the opposite, that the currency be limited to gold only.

INT. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - DAY

THIS IS EXPRESSIONISTIC PORTRAYAL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. WJB IS AT A PODIUM. A CIRCLE OF LIGHT SURROUNDS HIM. THE REST OF THE AREA IS IN BLACKNESS. THE CAMERA TRACKS AROUND WJB IN A CIRCLE AS HE SPEAKS TO THE OTHER REPRESENTATIVES IN THE BLACKNESS.

WJB

Mr. Speaker, this cannot be done. A man who murders another shortens by a few brief years the life of a human being; but he who votes to increase the burden of debts upon the people of the United States assumes a graver responsibility. If we who represent them consent to rob our people, the cotton-growers of the South and the wheat-growers of the West, we will be criminals whose guilt cannot be measured by words, for we will bring distress and disaster to our people. In many cases such a vote would simply be a summons to the sheriff to take possession of their property.

PHOTOS OF THE REAL WJB IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MARY

When he spoke in Congress, Mr. Brvan did his best to make clear to ordinary people what the increasing value of the dollar meant to farmers in debt.

BACK TO LIVE ACTION OF WJB SPEAKING.

WJB

If [a man] should loan a Nebraska neighbor a hog weighing one hundred pounds and the next spring demand in return a hog weighing two hundred pounds he would be called dishonest, even though he contended that he was only demanding one hog -- just the number he loaned. The poor man who takes property by force is called a thief, but the creditor who can by legislation make a debtor pay a dollar twice as large as he borrowed is lauded as the friend of sound currency. The poor man is called a socialist if he believes that the wealth of the rich should be divided among the poor, but the rich man is called a financier if he devises a plan by which the pittance of the poor can be converted to his use.

PHOTOS OF THE DISADVANTAGED FARMERS STRUGGLING TO TILL THEIR LAND AND PLOW THE EARTH.

MARY

Toward the end of his last term in Congress, my husband made an especially moving appeal for currency stabilization through silver coinage.

LIVE ACTION OF WJB.

WJB

The time will come when the unjust demands and the oppressive exactions of our Eastern brethren will compel the South and West to unite in the restoration of an honest dollar -- a dollar which will defraud neither debtor nor creditor, a dollar based on two metals, "the gold and silver coinage of the Constitution." We seek to protect the debtor from the greed of the creditor; we seek to protect society from the avarice of the capitalist. We believe that in the restoration of bi-metallism we shall secure the re-establishment of equity and restore prosperity to our country.

CARTOONS OF THE SILVER ISSUE.

MARY

Mr. Bryan found eager allies in the South and the West. One of the most eloquent advocates of the time for bi-metallism was a lawyer named Clarence Darrow.

ACTOR 2 VOICE OVER AS DARROW.

DARROW (V.O.)

Up to 1873 gold and silver were coined on a ratio of 16 to 1; they should be restored to that basis. The silver dollar should be made larger and the gold dollar proportionately smaller until they circulate together.

PHOTO OF DARROW.

MARY

For that moment, Mr. Bryan had an eager supporter in Clarence Darrow.

1894 DEPRESSION PHOTOS.

MARY

Mr. Bryan set out to speak to the nation on the Silver issue in 1895. He wanted to stay in the political memory. An economic panic that spread the country helped his cause. There were riots, strikes, and unrest. When the Democratic convention came in 1896, people were clamoring for an answer to their troubles and William Jennings Bryan stood up and gave them a cause. It was the most eloquent speech of his career. It was an address he and few politicians then or since could ever equal. At 36 he had reached the peak of his life with "The Cross of Gold."

WE NOW HAVE AN ARTIST'S RENDERING OF THE 1896 DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION. WE SEE SEVERAL DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW AND RENDERINGS AS THE SPEECH PROGRESSES. NOW WE HAVE EITHER A PHOTO OF WJB OR A DRAWING AS WE HEAR THE REAL RECORDED VOICE OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN... TAKEN FROM THE RECORDING HE MADE OF THE SPEECH.

BRYAN'S REAL VOICE

The monetary issue is the greatest issue ever contested in the history of American politics. In this contest father has been arrayed against son and brother against brother.

SLOW DISSOLVE:

THE RENDERING OF BRYAN SLOWLY COMES TO LIFE AS ACTOR 1 IS NOW AN OLDER WJB.

WJB

The farmer who goes forth in the morning and toils all day - who begins in the spring and toils all summer - and who by the application of brain and muscle to the natural resources of the country creates wealth, is as much a businessman as the man who goes to the board of trade and bets on the price of grain.

The supporters of gold tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies. Burn down your cities and leave our farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country.

APPLAUSE

WJB

Our war is not a war of conquest; we are fighting in the defense of our homes, our families and prosperity. We have petitioned and our petitions have been scorned. We have begged and they have mocked when our calamity came. We beg no longer. We petition no more. We defy them. Bi metallism is the issue of 1776 all over again. We care not upon what lines the battle is fought. Having behind us the producing masses of this nation... we will answer their demands for a gold standard by saying to them: "You shall not press down upon the brow of labor this crown of thorns.

HE RAISES HIS HANDS TO THE SIDE OF HIS HEAD. AS HE SLOWLY SPEAKS THE FINGERS AND RAKES HIS NAILS ACROSS HIS FOREHEAD TO HIS TEMPLES. WE CAN ALMOST SEE THE THORNS PIERCING HIS BROW.

WJB

"You shall not crucify mankind on a cross of gold!"

WJB'S HANDS LEAVE HIS HEAD AND HIS ARM STICKS OUT AT RIGHT ANGLES TO HIS BODY LIKE A CROSS. HE STANDS THERE, THE CRUCIFIED MAN. THERE IS NO REACTION FROM THE CROWD OF 20,000. HE HOLDS THE POSITION FOR FIVE SECONDS. STILL NO RESPONSE FROM THE CROWD. HE LOWERS HIS ARMS TO HIS SIDES AND TAKES A STEP BACKWARDS. THE DELEGATES IN THE GALLERY ARE SILENT. THEY ARE MESMERIZED. WJB STARTS TOWARD HIS SEAT IN A PAINFUL SILENCE. WJB IS ALMOST TO THE FLOOR WHEN THE CROWD ERUPTS. THE FRUSTRATION OF SUFFERING SILENTLY FOR SO MANY YEARS IS RELEASED AND MULTIPLIED BY THE SCREAMING CHORUS OF 20,000 VOICES.

MARY

The "producing masses" had found a spokesman. Here was the gallant fighter that feared no one, who talked back to the rich and priveleged. After years of being trod upon, ignored, despised, ridiculed, here at last they had their champion -- The Great Commoner had arrived!

CARTOONS MAKING FUN OF THE "CROSS OF GOLD."

A 2

Although not everybody liked the "Cross of Gold" it was enough to give William Jennings Bryan the Democratic nomination for President in 1896 against William McKinley. Bryan went through twenty-six states and he spoke every time the train stopped. He covered eighteen thousand miles of track and spoke to over a million people.

PHOTOS FROM THE 1986 BRYAN CAMPAIGN.

MARY

In his wearying campaign, Mr. Brvan set the pattern to be followed for the next century. Later known as "harnstorming" the eager candidate offering himself to the people -- sweat, unpressed suits, resounding rhetoric and hope. Reaching out to the multitude without public address systems, in person, the Great Commoner spoke out to and for the Common People. The Republicans were given a challenge when the Democrats nominated my husband on a free silver platform. Mr. Bryan was dynamic, young and atop an apparent wave of enthusiasm for free silver. The Populists also nominated him because they embraced his policy of translating popular will into public policy.

LIVE SHOT OF ACTOR 1 INTERCUT WITH STILLS FROM THE CAMPAIGN OF 1896. WE SEE TRAIN DEPOTS WITH THOUSANDS OF CHEERING PEOPLE IN GOLDSBOROUGH, NORTH CAROLINA.

WJB

I want a dollar that will not be afraid to look a farmer in the face.

WASHINGTON, D.C. WE SEE HOPEFUL FACES AMONGST THE CROWDS THAT PRESS AGAINST WJB.

WJB

National character is being weakened and national independence threatened by servile submission to foreign dictation.

LIVE ACTION. WJB AT NIGHT, IN THE RAIN, WITH ONLY HIS FACE ILLUMINATED BY TORCHLIGHT. THE PLACE IS BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

WJB

We denounce the dollar under a gold standard as a robber.

FILM OF WILLIAM MCKINLEY CAMPAIGNING FOR PRESIDENT FROM HIS FRONT PORCH.

MARY

My husband's opponent, Mr. William McKinley said that "this is a year for press and pen." The GOP machine poured out two hundred million pamphlets that spoke against Mr. Bryan. A four million dollar war chest was raised. Mr. McKinley was the first presidential candidate to campaign on film and although he never left the front porch of his home in Canton, Ohio to barnstorm, he still made over three hundred speeches that reached over 750,000 people.

PHOTOS OF MCKINLEY; OF WJB ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL.

MARY

By October 1896 it was clear that the Democrats would lose. After his initial surge, Mr. Bryan encountered money problems, a split party when the gold Democrats bolted and difficulty in moving the appeal for free silver beyond its natural, rural base. In the East, which Mr. Bryan was fond of calling "the enemy's country" and among the working men and small businessmen of the midwest, Mr. Bryan did poorly. Urban areas gave no support to the inflationary appeal of free silver. The loss to McKinley was a heartbreak for Mr. Bryan and the six and a half million people that voted for him. Others rejoiced...

POLITICAL CARTOONS FROM THE NEW YORK TRIBUNE CELEBRATING BRYAN'S LOSS. WE SEE H.L. MENCKEN DIABTRIBES AS WELL. ACTOR 2 VOICES OVER THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL.

A 2 (V.O. AS MENCKEN)

"It has been defeated and destroyed, because right is right and God is God. Its nominal head was worthy of the cause. Nominal, because the wretched, rattlepated boy, posing in vapid vanity and mouthing resounding rottenness, was not the

A 2 (V.O. AS MENCKEN) Cont'd

real leader of that League of Hell. He was only a puppet in the blood-imbued hands of... other desperadoes. But he was a willing puppet, Bryan was, willing and eager. He goes down with the cause, and must abide with it in the history of infamy.

MARY

That was one of the first political death notices written for Mr. Bryan, but it would not be the last. Mr. Bryan's involvement in politics spanned nearly half a century. In that time the Democratic party evolved from an Andrew Jackson belief in minimal government to an advocacy of government action on behalf of farmers, workers and consumers. Mr. Bryan was a central figure in that transformation.

PHOTOS OF BRYAN AFTER THE DEFEAT AND ALSO SOME NEWSPAPER HEADLINES OF THE DEFEAT. ACTOR 1, AS HIMSELF NOW, READS THE VACHEL LINDSAY POEM IN VOICE OVER.

A 1 (V.O.)

"I brag and chant of Bryan, Bryan, Bryan,
Candidate for president who sketched a silver Zion,
The one American Poet who could sing outdoors,
He brought in tides of wonder, of unprecedented splendor
Wild Roses from the plains, that made hearts tender,
All the funny circus silks
Of politics unfurled,
Bartlett pears of romance that were honey to the cores,
And torchlights down the street, to the end of the world.

There were truths eternal in the gab and tittle-tattle.
There were real heads broken in the fustian and the rattle.
There were real lines drawn:
Not the silver and the gold,
But Nebraska's cry went eastward against the dour and old,
The mean and cold."

PHOTOS OF THE GIFTS GIVEN TO THE BRYANS BY SUPPORTERS. PERHAPS SOME OF THEM ARE STILL IN GOOD ENOUGH SHAPE TO BE SHOWN.

MARY

After our loss, Mr. Bryan wrote about it in his first autobiography, The First Battle. The book sold over two hundred thousand copies. I helped him edit the book. Gifts poured into our house on D Street; among them a large watermelon in a gilded laundry basket, scores of rabbit's feet, four live eagles, a mule and a stuffed alligator. One set of triplets were even named William, Jennings, and Bryan. One disgruntled voter lost his cow on an election bet and demanded that we pay him back with interest.

PHOTOS OF WJB IN FLORIDA WITH THE NEBRASKA REGIMENT DURING THE SPANISH AND AMERICAN WAR. MARY IS IN SOME OF THE PHOTOS.

A 2 (V.O.)

In 1898, President McKinley asked Congress to take action to secure the independence of Cuba, then in a state of rebellion against Spain. Spain declared war in return. Bryan had opposed recourse to war to settle the Cuban situation, but he now volunteered. The Populist governor of Nebraska appointed him Colonel of the Third Nebraska Volunteer Regiment.

Bryan wanted to see action in the war, but President McKinley did not allow him into battle. McKinley didn't want to run against "Bryan the War Hero" in the next election. Theodore Roosevelt, McKinley's next Vice-president in 1900, made his reputation in that war with his Rough Riders. Mr. Bryan said that he had "five months of peace in the Army and I resigned my commission to take part in a fight." He traveled to Washington, D.C. to do what he could to lobby the Senate to approve a treaty so the war would be over, and the people of the nation could then decide the great issue of what to do with the Philippines.

McKINLEY FILM FOOTAGE.

MARY

In 1900 the Democrats picked William Jennings Bryan once again as their presidential candidate. President McKinley was the choice once again for the Republicans and Teddy Roosevelt had been convinced to leave the governorship of New York to run as his vice-president. Mr. Bryan was against Imperialism in the Philippines. President McKinley supported American control, dominance and colonization.

ACTOR 2 AS McKINLEY IN VOICE OVER. WE SEE PHOTOS OF McKINLEY.

A 2 (V.O.)

I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you... that I went down on my knees and prayed to Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night it came to me this way -- I don't know how it was but it came... that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filippinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly.

MARY

Others pointed out that nearly all the Filipinos were already Christian and that they were in the process of creating a constitutional government. Mr. Bryan and his allies discerned other motives behind the decision to keep the Philippines. They looked to business interests in Asia as the motivating force behind expansion in the Far East.

FOOTAGE OF WJB

WJB (V.O.)

Our people... must defend themselves and their country against the colonial idea of European nations... greed has perverted the government... now the very foundation principle of our government is being assaulted. This nation cannot endure half republic and half colony -- half free and half vassal.

INTERCUT FOOTAGE OF TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND WJB.

MARY

Since President McKinley rarely left his front porch to campaign, it was left to Roosevelt to take on Mr. Bryan in town halls, train depots, and the rest of America's heartland. Bryan stuck to the silver issue again and Roosevelt went for the heart...

ACTOR 2 VOICE OVER AS ROOSEVELT.

ROOSEVELT (V.O.)

If the farmer, the businessman, and the wage-worker want prosperity to continue, they must make up their minds that the incoming of Mr. Bryan would mean terrible and wide-spread disaster.

MARY

Mr. Bryan struck out against Imperialism as a foreign policy and Roosevelt made Mr. Bryan out to be a man against American interests abroad.

ROOSEVELT

Don't haul down the flag!

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA PHOTOS OF WJB SPEAKING OUT.

WJB

If the Republicans are prepared to censure all who have used language calculated to make the Filipinos hate foreign domination, let them condemn the speech of Patrick Henry, "Give me liberty or give me death." Abraham Lincoln said that the safety of this nation was not in its fleets, its armies, or its forts, but in the spirit which prizes liberty as the heritage of all men, in all lands, everywhere, and he warned his countrymen that they could not destroy this spirit without planting the seeds of despotism at their own doors.

REACTION SHOT OF THE PHOTOS OF THE CHEERING CROWDS.

MARY

Mr. Bryan wanted independence for the Philippines. He wanted a stable government and protection from outside interference.

WJB CONTINUES HIS SPEECH.

WJB

Once we admit that some people are capable of self-government and that others are not and that the capable people have a right to seize upon and govern the incapable and you make force -- brute force -- the only foundation of government and invite the reign of a despot.

QUICK CUT TO PHOTO OF ROOSEVELT SPEAKING TO A CROWD.

ROOSEVELT (V.O.)

Don't haul down the flag!

WJB

We dare not educate [the people of the Philippines] lest they learn to read the Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States and mock us for our inconsistency.

PHOTOS AND FILM FROM THE 1900 ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND PHOTOS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE TIME: WORKERS, BANKERS, MINERS, FARMERS.

MARY (V.O.)

"And all the way to frightened Maine the old East
heard them call,
And saw our Bryan by a mile lead the wall
Of men and whirling flowers and beasts,
The bard and profit of them all.

MARY Cont'd

Prairie avenger, mountain lion,
 Bryan, Bryan, Bryan, Bryan,
 Gigantic troubador, speaking like a siege gun,
 Smashing Plymouth Rock with his boulders from the West,
 And just a hundred miles behind, tornadoes piled
 across the sky,
 Blotting out the sun and moon,
 A sign on high.

July, August, suspense.
 Wall Street lost to sense.
 August, September, October,
 More suspense,
 And the whole East down like a wind-smashed fence."

HEADLINES OF WJB'S SECOND LOSS.

MARY

This time Mr. Bryan even lost in Nebraska. The 1900 campaign wasn't much of a contest. The Republicans were more concerned with voter apathy than with my husband. At forty and with two major losses for President under his rather large belt, Mr. Bryan contemplated his future from our house on D Street in Lincoln. He had two daughters and a son to feed, so he set out on the Chautauqua circuit.

PHOTOS OF THE CHAUTAUQUAS

A 2 (V.O.)

The Chautauqua shows would travel from town to town and set up large tents so the townspeople could get some entertainment. Bryan was most popular and he demanded and got fifty percent of all admissions although he refused to allow more than fifty cents to be charged per person and urged twenty-five cents.

PHOTOS OF THE COMMONER

MARY (V.O.)

In 1901 Bryan founded a newspaper, The Commoner, that was published for over twenty-two years. It was really a personal journal, but circulation hovered around one hundred thousand. He used the editorial pages of The Commoner to advocate a variety of reforms: social justice at home and peaceful relations between nations. He championed the cause of the "w Woman" for educational and professional opportunities, saying...

WJB (IN CLOSE UP)

The world needs the brain of woman as well as the brain of man and even more does it need the conscience of woman.

FAIRVIEW PHOTOS OF IT BEING BUILT

MARY

Like his hero, Thomas Jefferson, in 1901 Mr. Bryan built a mansion in the country. While it was no Monticello, Fairview was a quiet retreat for us from the sleepless nights on the campaign trail and the noisy, fast-paced life in the city.

APPROPRIATE PHOTOS TO ILLUSTRATE THE FOLLOWING.

MARY

In 1903, with the last election fading into yellowing newsprint, Mr. Bryan set out with William Jennings Bryan, Junior, to tour Europe. I could not leave because my father was too feeble to be left alone. Twenty years after he was forced to cancel his anticipated trip to Oxford, my husband would finally at last see the world. He visited England, the Pope and Czar Nicolas II. But it was his meeting with the 74-year-old Count Leo Tolstoy that had an everlasting effect on Mr. Bryan. The 43-year-old Commoner would learn at Tolstoy's side the meaning of non-violence. Their meeting planted the seed of pacifism that would grow inside Mr. Bryan for a decade, blossoming during the First World War.

WJB ARRIVING AT TOLSTOY'S HOUSE IN LIVE ACTION. HE IS APPREHENSIVE.

MARY

Mr. Bryan loved a spirited dialogue. He wasn't sure he agreed with Tolstoy's fervent "doctrine of love," but he was prepared to put it to the test.

TOLSTOY OPENS THE DOOR. THEY SHAKE HANDS. THEY MOVE AND WE TRACK THEM TO THE SITTING ROOM AND THEY DRINK FROM CUPS.

WJB

Count Tolstoy, do you draw any line between the use of force to avenge an injury already received, and the use of force to protect yourself from an injury about to be inflicted?

TOLSTOY

No, instead of using violence to protect myself, I ought rather to express my sorrow that I had done anything that would make anyone desire to injure me.

WJB

Yes, but do you draw a line between the use of force to protect a right and the use of force to create a right?

TOLSTOY

No, Mr. Bryan. That is the excuse generally given for the use of violence. Men insist that they are simply defending a right when, in fact, they are trying to secure something that they desire and to which they are not entitled. Let us say that the use of violence is not necessary to secure one's rights; there are more effective means.

WJB PRESSES THE ISSUE

WJB

Do you draw any distinction between the use of force to protect yourself, and the use of force to protect someone under your care... a child for instance?

TOLSTOY STANDS AND LOOKS AT BRYAN, TRYING TO HAMMER HOME THE IDEA.

TOLSTOY

No, as we do not attain entirely to our ideals, we might find it difficult in such a case not to resort to the use of force, but it would not be justifiable, Mr. Bryan. And, besides, rules cannot be made for such exceptional cases! Millions of people have been victims of force and have suffered because it has been thought right to employ it.

BRYAN SMILES. THEY RAISE THEIR GLASSES IN A TOAST.

MARY

Count Tolstoy and Mr. Bryan spent several days together. Bryan called him "the giant intellectual of Russia, the moral Titan of Europe, and the most conspicuous exponent of the Doctrine of Love." Later, Count Tolstoy wrote to Mr. Bryan.

SHOTS OF THE ACTUAL LETTER. PHOTOS OF THE REAL TOLSTOY.

TOLSTOY (V.O.)

I wish with all my heart success in your endeavor to destroy the trusts, and to help the working people to enjoy the fruits of their toil, but I think this is not the most important thing of your life. The most important thing is to know the will of God concerning one's life, i.e. to know what He wishes us to do and fulfill it. I think that you are doing it and that is the thing in which I wish you the greatest success.

MARY (on camera)

Mr. Bryan left Russia and returned to Fairview after his European tour. He decided not to compete in the 1904 presidential election. Teddy Roosevelt won in a landslide over Alton B. Parker. In 1905 Mr. Bryan and I toured the world with our children, Grace and Will, Jr.

PHOTOS APPROPRIATE FOR THE FOLLOWING.

MARY

We traveled from Japan to the Philippines, where Mr. Bryan was greeted warmly, as the leading American spokesman for the cause of Philippine independence. What we saw in India reinforced my husband's distaste for imperialism. The itinerary included Egypt, the Holy Land, Turkey, and most of the capitals of Europe. In Norway, we watched the coronation of the king of the newly-created nation of Norway. While Mr. Bryan disapproved of monarchy, he acknowledged that the Norwegian people had chosen to have a king and thought that "people have a right to have whatever form of government they desire."

PHOTOS OF WJB'S TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, NEW YORK CITY.

MARY

The people of the United States, Mr. Bryan hoped, would soon desire a form of government in keeping with his own principles. Back in the United States, he spoke in Madison Square Garden and launched a third campaign for the presidency. Nominated by his party in 1908, he based his campaign on the slogan, "Shall the People Rule?" America in 1908 was in the mood for reform. Theodore Roosevelt, in seven years in the White House, had rejuvenated the Presidency and received a great deal of attention for his efforts to place limits on big business.

POLITICAL CARTOONS OF WJB AND HIS CONTINUING FIGHT WITH THE MONIED ELITE.

MARY

In his first two presidential campaigns, Mr. Bryan had run as the spokesman for the common people. He had attacked Eastern bankers and great corporations as threats to the ability of ordinary people to survive or succeed.

WJB

Shall the people control their own government and use that government for the protection of their rights and for the promotion of their welfare? Or shall the representatives of predatory wealth prey upon a defenseless public, while the offenders secure immunity from subservient officials whom they raise to power by unscrupulous methods?

SHOTS OF 1908 CAMPAIGN BANNERS AND BUTTONS.

A 2 (V.O.)

In 1908, Bryan faced a difficult problem. President Roosevelt had stolen some of his thunder. Bryan considered Roosevelt's reforms as too little, too late, and he compared them to a painkiller when what was necessary was surgery. Nonetheless, when the people spoke, they spoke their love for Teddy Roosevelt and they voted for his hand-picked successor, William Howard Taft. But with his strong personal following Bryan probably ran better than any other candidate the Democrats might've named; thus he saved statehouses, Congressional seats and local offices for his party in some close contests. In the House of Representatives, the Republicans lost three seats, while the Democrats gained eight. Even Nebraska went for Bryan and Democrats won the governorship, half the Congressional seats and majorities in the state legislature.

COMMONER CLIPPINGS

MARY

The 1908 loss was especially hard for Mr. Bryan to understand. He was confused and hurt. Searching for a reason for the third loss, he asked readers of The Commoner to let him know why they thought he had lost. He got answers ranging from the loss of the Catholic vote to the support Taft had from the liquor trade.

OLD FOOTAGE OF VOTERS, POLLING PLACES, APPROPRIATE GEOGRAPHIC VISUALS ON FILM.
ACTOR 2 IS NOW THE NARRATOR

A 2 (V.O.)

"Election night at midnight:
 Boy Bryan's defeat.
 Defeat of Western silver.
 Defeat of wheat.
 Victory of letter files
 And plutocrats in miles
 With dollar signs upon their coats,
 Diamond watch chains on their vests
 And spats on their feet.
 Victory of the custodians, Plymouth Rock,
 And all that inbred stock.

Victory of the neat.
 Defeat of the aspen groves of Colorado valleys,
 The bluebells of the Rockies,
 And bluebonnets of old Texas, by the Pittsburgh alleys
 Defeat of alfalfa and the Mariposa lily.

Defeat of the Pacific and the long Mississippi.
 Defeat of the young by the old and silly.
 Defeat of tornadoes by the poison vats supreme.

A 1

Defeat of my boyhood, defeat of my dreams."

DISSOLVE THROUGH TO ACTOR 2 OUTSIDE THE WHITE HOUSE FENCE IN 1989. THE WHITE HOUSE IS IN THE BACKGROUND.

A 2

In 1912, William Jennings Bryan finally made it to the White House. Not as President, but rather Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson. Teddy Roosevelt split the Republican Party that year, challenging his chosen successor, Taft. The Democrats wrangled over their own nomination for days. Bryan finally concluded that Woodrow Wilson was closer to his views on the issues than any of the others, and Bryan swung his support to Wilson. Wilson won the nomination and -- thanks to Roosevelt's third-party candidacy -- he won the presidency.

FILM FOOTAGE OF WILSON.

MARY

President-elect Wilson owed something to the man who had been leader of the Democratic party for the previous sixteen years and who had given him important support in the campaign. Wilson offered Mr. Bryan the most important position in his administration, the State Department. Mr. Bryan had only two

MARY Cont'd

concerns before he accepted. He wanted to be certain that it would be acceptable to the President if we chose not to serve alcohol at diplomatic dinners, and he wanted to launch an ambitious program to draft treaties that would provide an alternative to war for settling international disputes. Wilson agreed.

PHOTOS NECESSARY TO ILLUSTRATE THE FOLLOWING...

A 2 (V.O.)

Bryan had long been interested in some means of resolving disputes between nations without recourse to war. As early as 1905, he proposed a version of arbitration to accomplish this objective. Once he had Wilson's consent, Bryan worked to secure approval from the Cabinet and from key Senators, then he presented the proposal to the Washington diplomatic corps. Eventually the United States signed agreements with thirty nations, including most of the major powers of the world. The key feature of the Bryan treaties was a "cooling-off" period. If two nations had a dispute that they could not resolve through normal diplomatic channels, they agreed to seek outside fact-finding before resorting to arms. Bryan took great pride in the acceptance of his proposal by so many nations, and he had some old swords melted down and cast into paperweights shaped like plows. On each was engraved, "THEY SHALL BEAT THEIR SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES," and two of Bryan's own coinages, "NOTHING IS FINAL BETWEEN FRIENDS," and "DIPLOMACY IS THE ART OF KEEPING COOL."

PAINTING OF WJB WITH TREATY PAINTED WHEN HE WAS SECRETARY OF STATE.

MARY

Mr. Bryan felt the thirty cooling off treaties were the most significant accomplishment of his term in the State Department. He thought they were the "basis for an enduring peace." For his official State Department portrait, Mr. Bryan asked to be painted holding the peace treaty. He had not only understood Tolstoy's Doctrine of Love, but he adopted it and put it into practical use.

PHOTOS OF WWI. FILM FOOTAGE FROM OCEAN BATTLES. HEADLINES TRUMPETING THE LUSITANIA SINKING.

A 2 (V.O.)

Bryan's venture into peace-keeping failed. Even as he celebrated the signing of his treaties, the world was plunging into war. Wilson and Bryan prayed that the United States would not be drawn into the conflict. Both favored neutrality, but the warring nations of Europe made neutrality increasingly difficult to define and maintain. Germany, especially, drew the ire of many Americans by unleashing a new and terrible weapon, the submarine. On May 2, 1925, a submarine sank the English passenger liner Lusitania, killing 1,200 people. 128 were Americans. Investigation proved that the Lusitania had been carrying munitions.

Wilson wanted to take a hard line with Germany, but Bryan feared that the president might be so insistent on the rights of neutrals that he would be backed into a corner where he would have no recourse but war. Unable to convince Wilson to soften his tone toward Germany, unwilling to put his signature to an official communication that he feared might mean war, Bryan submitted his resignation.

PHOTOS OF THE UNIVERSITY CLUB IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

A 2 (V.O.)

After his last cabinet meeting, Bryan invited the members to share with him what amounted to a theoretical "last supper."

INT. UNIVERSITY CLUB - DAY

PRESENT ARE LANE, DANIELS, BURLESON, W.B. WILSON, GARRISON AND HOUSTON.

WJB

Gentlemen, this is our last meeting together. The President has had one view. I have had a different one. I cannot go along with him. I think it makes for war. I can do more on the outside to prevent war than on the inside. We both want the same thing, peace.

REACTION SHOT OF HOUSTON. HE NODS, BUT WE HEAR HIS VOICE OVER.

HOUSTON (V.O.)

One could drive a prairie schooner through any part of his argument and never scrape against a fact or a sound statement.

FAST CUT TO: LANE AS HE TURNS AND NODS TO WJB.

LANE

You are the most real Christian I know.

REACTION SHOT: WJB IS PLEASED. CUT TO: HOUSTON AS HE GIVES LANE A LOOK, THEN RETURNS HIS GAZE TO WJB.

WJB

The President has prestige and power on his side. I must act according to my conscience. I go out in the dark.

CABINET MEMBERS LOOK AWAY FROM WJB. THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE.

INT. FAIRVIEW - DAY

1989. ACTOR 2 IS IN THE PARLOR.

ACTOR 2

The days after his resignation were stinging. The press called him a coward for deserting the President, and Colonal House said...

PHOTO OF COLONEL HOUSE

HOUSF (V.O.)

I don't believe that anyone every succeeded in changing his mind. He feels that his ideas are God-given.

HEADLINES: THE UNITED STATES DECLARES WAR.

A 2

United States involvement in World War One did come as William Jennings Bryan feared it would. Wilson signed the declaration of war on April 6. Bryan sadly wrote to Wilson, offering his services.

LIVE ACTION. WJB ALONE AT HIS DESK. DARKNESS SURROUNDS HIM. A SMALL LIGHT SHINES ON HIM FROM A DESK LAMP. HE REREADS THE NOTE HE HAS WRITTEN TO WILSON. THE DISAPPOINTMENT IS CLEAR IN HIS FACE AND VOICE.

WJB (V.O.)

Please enroll me as a private whenever I am needed...
Until called to the colors I shall, through the Red Cross,
contribute to the comfort of soldiers in the hospitals and,
through the Young Men's Christian Association, aid in
safeguarding the morals of the men in camp.

BRYAN SIGNS HIS NAME TO THE LETTER AS ACTOR 2 MAKES A FINAL STATEMENT OVER THE
SCENE.

A 2 (V.O.)

Throughout the war, Bryan distributed copies of his
plowshare paperweight.

RESUME AT FAIRVIEW, 1989 WITH ACTOR 2.

A 2

Some critics say that Bryan was relieved when he resigned
as Secretary of State. But critics aside, William Jennings
Bryan was satisfied. He had kept the faith. Mary Bryan
was another story. She liked the stature they had enjoyed
in Washington, D.C. She felt Bryan belonged in the White
House and for the first time in her life she wept openly
in front of her husband when he made the decision to
resign. In 1916, the Bryans left Fairview for Florida.
Mary wrote in her journal...

PHOTOS OF THE FAIRVIEW MOVE AND MARY'S JOURNAL.

MARY (V.O.)

I shall never quite forget those days, quite as beautiful as
summer. The "fodder in the shock;" blue mist on the
horizon; a reddish-gold globe of a sun pushing through the
mist; frost on the freshly plowed fields; shivering weeds
by the roadside; rabbits running to cover. I saw and
loved them all.

RESUME FAIRVIEW. CAMERA MOVES THROUGH THE HOUSE REVEALING DETAILS OF
FURNISHINGS, ANTIQUES, ETC.

A 2 (V.O.)

As Bryan's political future grew dimmer, his past crusades
were meeting certain victories. The income tax, direct
election of U.S. Senators, woman suffrage, and prohibition
were all being embraced and fought for by others. Bryan's
most personal cause, prohibition, was threatened to be
weakened at the 1920 convention. Bryan showed up to fight

A 2 (V.O.) Cont'd

to keep the 18th Amendment strong. In 1920, at the Democratic convention in San Francisco, Bryan gave his "Mountain top" speech on prohibition. At sixty he was the grand old man of the Party. He dared the democracy to stand firm on prohibition. In his mind, it was better to "have the gratitude of one soul saved from drink than the applause of a drunken world." A reporter at the convention said,

REPORTER (V.O.)

"Bryan seemed like an elderly uncle in a black alpaca coat who comes to visit us. We give him the easiest chair; we treat him with affection; when he advises us about our affairs, we listen respectfully -- but we go our own way."

A 2 (V O.)

After the convention, Bryan's political influence was waning. More and more he turned to the Scriptures to focus his attention. He traveled on the Chautauqua circuit again and was quite popular. Bryan seemed to prefer being a Chautauqua speaker to being president, and this should tell us important things about his understanding of himself.

INT. CHAUTAUQUA TENT - DAY

WJB IS ON STAGE WAVING A PALM FAN TO COOL HIMSELF AS HE SPEAKS, A BLOCK OF ICE BEFORE HIM.

WJB

I commenced speaking on [politics] when only twenty, but commenced speaking in the church six weeks earlier -- and shall be in the church even after I am out of politics. Religion is the foundation of morality in the individual and the groups of individuals... There is a powerful restraining influence in the belief that an all-seeing eye scrutinizes every thought and word and act of the individual. I do not carry the doctrine of evolution as far as some do; I am not yet convinced that man is a lineal descendant of the lower animals. I do not mean to find fault with you if you want to accept that theory; all I mean to say is that while you may trace your ancestry back to the monkey if you find pleasure or pride in doing so, you shall not connect me with your family tree without more evidence than has yet been produced.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS NOD APPROVAL.

WJB

It is a dangerous theory... The Darwinian theory represents man as reaching his present perfection by the operation of the law of hate -- the merciless law by which the strong crowd out and kill off the weak. I prefer to believe that love rather than hatred is the law of development... The platform given to the world by the Prince of Peace is more far-reaching and more comprehensive than any platform ever written by the convention of any party in the country. When He condensed into one commandment those of the ten which relate to man's duty toward his fellows and enjoined upon us the rule, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," He presents a plan for the solution of all the problems that now vex society or may hereafter arise.

EXT. DAYTON, TENNESSEE - DAY

ACTOR 2 IS OUTSIDE THE FAMOUS COURTHOUSE. HE LEADS US INSIDE. WE TRACK HIM.

A 2

Dayton, Tennessee. 1925. It was a white-hot July. 110 degrees and no shade. William Jennings Bryan came to town to prosecute John Scopes. Clarence Darrow stood for the defense.

Darrow understood that the South clung to the hope of the Bible because it was the only solid part of their lives after their defeat in the Civil War. But when Scopes, a school teacher, was arrested for teaching evolution against a state law, Darrow saw the case as a question on the right of freedom of speech versus the right of parent's control over their children's education. The American Civil Liberties Union paid Darrow's fee.

PHOTOS OF THE TRIAL INCLUDING THE FAMOUS PHOTO OF WJB AND DARROW.

A 2 (V.O.)

Bryan had long feared that evolution would first undermine religion, then civilization itself. People treated each other decently, he believed, because of the threat of Divine punishment. If that threat were removed, then people became nothing more than brutes and force became the only means of deciding questions. The war had seemed to confirm these fears, for he considered the German barbarities to derive in some way from rejection of religion and embrace of science. Everywhere he looked in the early 1920's, Bryan seemed to see a decline in religious commitment and a corresponding rise in violence and brutality. More and more he opposed the teaching of evolution as fact. Finally he had found himself in Dayton, defending a Tennessee law that prohibited teachers from presenting evolution in the classroom.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

MARY

Clarence Darrow and Mr. Bryan were not enemies. In fact, Mr. Darrow had supported free silver in 1896. When a mutual friend died, Mr. Darrow gave the eulogy and Mr. Bryan spoke at the grave. Mr. Darrow's novel, Farmington, was even advertised and reviewed in The Commoner. All that was history now. It was simply man against man in the trial that would unfairly come to define both their lives. The Scopes Monkey Trial.

IT IS JULY 26, 1925. PEOPLE SEATED ON THE WOODEN BENCHES FAN THEMSELVES. WE CUT TO THE WITNESS STAND. WJB IS OLD, FRAIL, BUT STRONG IN SPIRIT, SITTING ON THE WITNESS STAND. ACTOR 2 HAS BECOME CLARENCE DARROW. DARROW CIRCLES WJB.

DARROW

Now, Bryan. You're on the witness stand as an expert on the Bible, right?

WJB

I have been a student of the Bible for many decades. Mr. Darrow, you fail to understand that this is not a trial between evolution and religion. The good people of Tennessee passed a law. The law was against teaching evolution in the classroom. This trial has Jeffersonian undertones. Shall the people rule? If so, then the people decided what they wanted, and John Thomas Scopes cannot go unpunished for his action. Shall the people rule or shall they rule only when Clarence Darrow and his Godless scientists allow it?

DARROW

You insult every man of science and learning because they don't believe in your fool religion! Admit that we descended from apes, not from mud, not from a rib! You believe that Jonah story? Living in the belly of a whale?

WJB

It was a big fish.

DARROW

Big fish, whale, what difference does it make? You believe the earth was made in six days? Or how Joshua could make the sun stand still? Answer any of these questions if you will.

WJB

I believe the Bible as it is.

DARROW

Don't you know that if the world stopped spinning around the sun we would all be converted into a mass of molten matter? The trees would become fiery matchsticks!

WJB

Nonsense.

DARROW

Was the earth built in six days then?

WJB

Not six days of 24 hours.

DARROW

Oh, so they weren't literal days? Remember, you're under oath.

WJB

God could make a day last six million years or six hundred million. It doesn't matter. They were periods, really.

DARROW

The sun wasn't created until the fourth day, right? So this creation you talk about could've been going on a long time?

WJB

Millions of years.

DARROW

Very good.

WJB

I believe the creation story as told. I accept it. You're off the subject, Mr. Darrow. We're not here to debate the Bible.

DARROW

I am here for the sole purpose of preventing bigots and ignoramuses from controlling the education of the United States.

WJB

Finally! The truth is extracted! You're not defending John Scopes! You're trying to show that the Bible is not true!

DARROW

Bryan, the one time sense of humor that softened your nature has been driven out by disappointment and vain ambitions... you are one who feels the injustice of many defeats and welcomes the change to get even with an alien world. You've always been conceited and self confident, but until now you've never been cruel or malignant. Your whole make-up has changed and now you're a foaming, wild animal. You don't think! You've reached a stage of hallucination that impels you to commit any cruelty that you believe will help your cause.

WJB

Quite finished, Mr. Darrow?

DARROW

Almost. Do you believe that after Eve gave Adam the apple God cursed her and from that time decreed that womankind suffer pain in childbirth? And that God also put enmity between woman and the serpent and decreed that man would rule over women? And that because the serpent tempted Eve he was thereafter made to "go on his belly?"

WJB

I believe the Bible as it is!

DARROW

Have you any idea how the snake went before that time? Must've been quite a sight to see a snake bounding around on his tail before Eve came along, eh?

DARROW LAUGHS. WJB LEAPS TO HIS OWN DEFENSE.

WJB

The only purpose you have is to slur the Bible! I want the world to know that you do not believe in God and...

DARROW

I object! I exempt you on your fools' ideas that no intelligent Christian on earth believes!

WJB

You agnostic snake!

DARROW LEAVES. WJB DROPS TO HIS KNEES AND PRAYS.

WJB

We must continue to have mercy upon our enemies...

SLOW DISSOLVE TO THE SAME NEBRASKA CORNFIELD USED IN SHOT #1. ACTOR 1 NOW AS HIMSELF AND NOT WJB. HE WILL STEP INTO THE SCENE.

ACTOR 1

Bryan and the prosecution won the Scopes Trial. Scopes was found guilty and fined. However, on the human level, the defendant wasn't Scopes, it was William Jennings Bryan. Darrow put on trial Bryan's faith in the Bible. But Darrow was also tried on a national witness stand. For if Bryan failed to meet the challenge of science, Darrow failed to meet the challenge of religion. In the end, the trial was a sterile thing, empty of positive gains, full of greys rather than of black and white decisiveness.

WE SEE A TRAIN PLATFORM. NO TRAIN. NO PEOPLE. EMPTY. DEAD. ROTTING.

ACTOR 2 (V.O.)

William Jennings Bryan once said, "A man is an atom; he is born, he acts and he dies; but principles are eternal." On July 26, 1925, a few days after the Scopes Trial, Bryan was found dead alone in his room. He was to ride the rails one last time. His funeral car started from Dayton, Tennessee and every time the train whistle called out a new stop, folks would turn out by the hundreds to salute the man who understood their plight. A trail of tears flowed all the way to the nation's capital. Most mourners along the route had bronzed faces, calloused hands and their heads were always bare.

MARY (V.O.)

This last journey is like the early campaigns, except that now there is sorrow on the faces that press against the windows.

PHOTOS OF CROWDS. WE SEE THE NEW YORK AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

A 2

In Washington, D.C. Bryan lay in state in the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, "the church of Presidents." Twenty thousand mourners paid last respects, one of them was Clarence Darrow. Less severe, Darrow admitted that he voted for Bryan for President twice and respected his sincerity and devotion.

LIVE ACTION. ARLINGTON CEMETARY WITH ACTOR 1. WE HAVE A WIDE SHOT.

A 1

For nearly thirty years, from his first presidential campaign in 1896 to his death, William Jennings Bryan was one of the most prominent political figures in the nation. He dominated the Democratic Party for much of this time, leading it through a transformation. He was born into a family committed to the ideals of Andrew Jackson, to the notion that government should not involve itself in the economy or in the lives of citizens. "That government is best," his father believed, "that governs least." William Jennings Bryan took a different view. He learned from his Populist neighbors in Nebraska. He came to view government as the common people's only ally against the power of giant corporations and powerful financiers. He gloried in the title "The Great Commoner," and he saw his role both as spokesman for the "producing masses" and as their mentor, who spoke to them in their own language about the issues of the day, explained solutions to current problems, and focused the people's good sense on public policy-making.

RECORDING OF WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN'S REAL VOICE. SLOW ZOOM IN ON ACTOR 1.

BRYAN'S REAL VOICE

There are two ideas of government. There are those who believe that, if you will only legislate to make the well-to-do prosperous, their prosperity will leak through to those below. The Democratic idea, however, has been that if you legislate to make the masses prosperous, their prosperity will find its way up through every class which rests upon them.

A 1

During his political career, Bryan stood among the most prominent proponents of a graduated income tax, a stable currency (subject to neither inflation or deflation), independence for the Philippines, the popular election of U.S. Senators, limitations on the power and influence of great corporations, guarantee of bank deposits, mediation of international disputes as an alternative to war, woman suffrage, and prohibition. Bryan took commonplace ideas and presented them dramatically and persuasively, he employed homey metaphors and anecdotes to simplify complex issues, and he occasionally concealed a lack of information with a cloak of sonorous rhetoric.

MEDIUM SHOT ACTOR 1 AT WJB GRAVESITE.

A 1

Much of the influence of his life can't be measured in newspaper columns or found in history books. William Jennings Bryan inspired people no matter how they felt about him. When he appeared, one third of the nation would remark, "He is a menace." Another third would cry, "He is a prophet." The remainder shouted, "Now here is a good show."

CLOSER ON ACTOR 1.

A 1

William Jennings Bryan was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

CLOSE SHOT OF THE GRAVESTONE.

A 1

By his own request, this man of peace was buried in a soldier's grave.

RESUME OPENING SHOT OF THE PROGRAM. THE WINDMILL IS STILL TURNING. THE CHURCH IS SERENE AND QUIET OFF TO THE SIDE. THE SUN IS BARELY VISIBLE IN THE PURPLE LIGHT OF DUSK. TIME GOES ON. OVER THIS BEAUTIFUL SHOT WE HEAR THE VOICE OF THE REAL WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN ONE LAST TIME.

BRYAN'S REAL VOICE

You may dispute whether I have fought a good fight, you may dispute whether I have finished my course, but you cannot deny that I have kept the faith.

WE SLOWLY FADE TO... BLACK... AND...

FADE OUT.