

## People's Party campaign poster, 1892

### Introduction

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In July 1892, the Populist Party (or People's Party), formed by farmers and labor supporters, held its first convention in Omaha, Nebraska. At that convention, the party created and ratified its Omaha Platform and nominated James B. Weaver, a party founder, for president and James Field, former Virginia attorney general and Confederate veteran, for vice president.

This 1892 presidential campaign poster featuring Weaver's and Field's images promotes the Populist Party as offering "Equal Rights to All; Special Privileges to None." The poster also features the full text of the Omaha Platform, which declares that "this Republic can only endure as a free government while built upon the love of the whole people for each other and for the nation." Weaver and Field ran on the Populist Party tenets of free silver, government control of national industries like railroads, and labor and civil service reform.

The Populists received 8.5 percent of the vote in the 1892 presidential election, more than might have been expected for a newly formed third party. Though defeated, it is likely that the Populists captured some of the Republican vote, allowing Democrat Grover Cleveland to be elected over incumbent Republican Benjamin Harrison.

### Excerpt

We demand a national currency, safe, sound and flexible, issued by the general government only, a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and that without the use of banking corporations; that a just, equitable and efficient means of distribution direct to the people, at a tax not to exceed two per cent. per annum, to be provided, as set forth in the subtreasury plan of the Farmers' Alliance, or some better system; also by payments in discharge of its obligations for public improvements.

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### Questions for Discussion

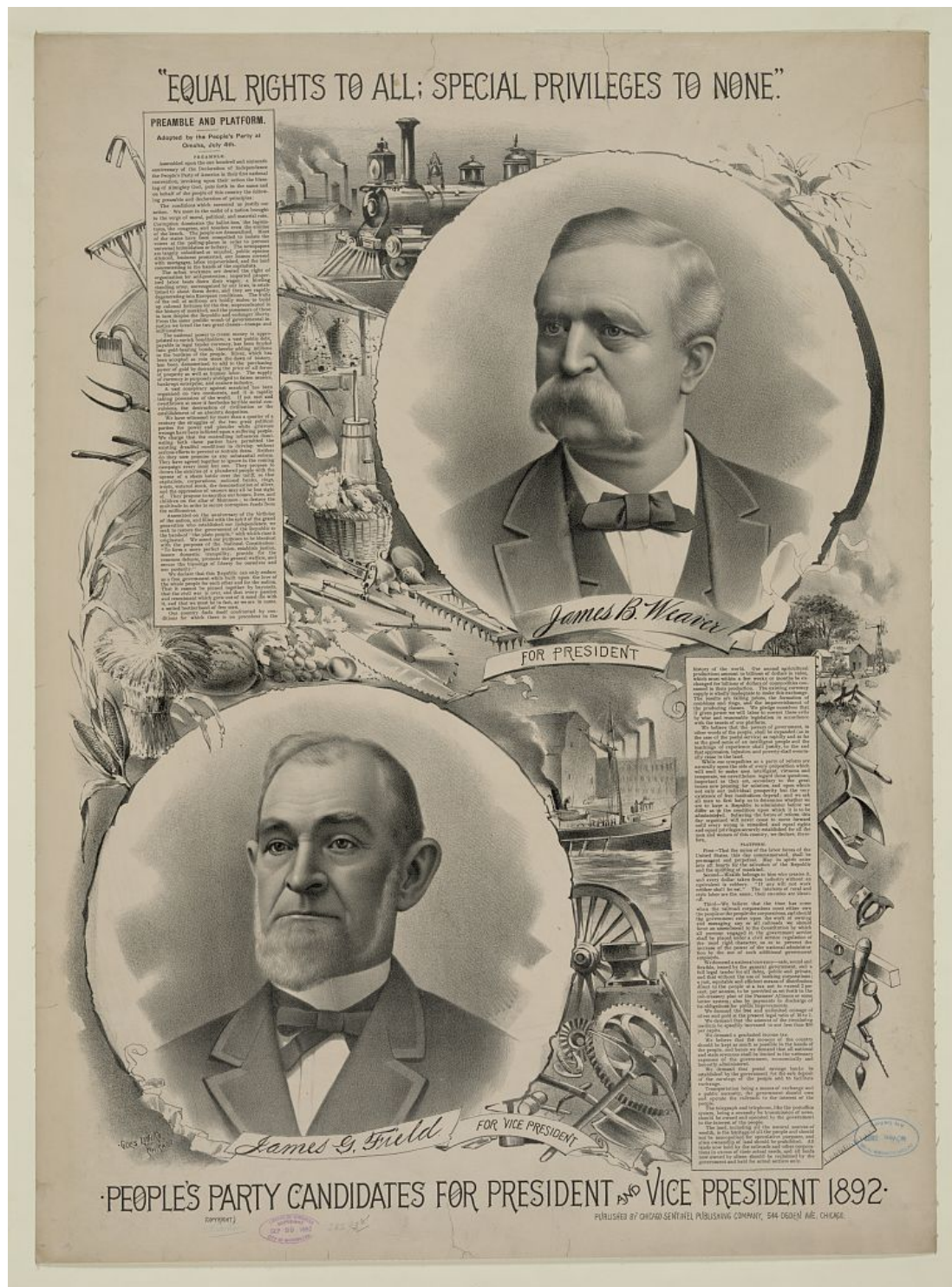
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Read the document introduction and transcript, examine the image, and apply your knowledge of American history in order to answer the questions that follow.

1. Create two columns. In one column identify specific complaints of the People's / Populist Party and in the other column list the remedies they suggested.
2. Describe items in this platform, written 120 years ago, that include complaints and recommendations heard in current political debates.
3. What arguments were used against the People's / Populist Party?

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## Image



People's Party campaign poster, 1892. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)



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### Image



Excerpts from People's Party campaign poster, 1892. (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division)