



SPEECH OF HON. WM. BIGLER, OF PENNA., ON KANSAS AFFAIRS.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE, DEC. 21, 1857.

On motion of Mr. Bigler, the Senate proceeded to the consideration of the motion of Mr. Douglas, to refer to some of the President's Message as relates to territorial affairs to the Committee on Territories.

Mr. Bigler. Mr. President: No one has resented more than myself that the discussion on Kansas policy of the administration has been carried out upon the Senate floor.

I think I am daily sensible of the important and delicate character of the subject to be discussed, and I am sure I never was more anxious to do my duty; never more willing to sacrifice pride of opinion, or to restrain passion and prejudice, in order to see clearly the public good.

The senator from Illinois has delivered what may be termed a great speech against the Kansas policy of the administration. No man who knows him will doubt his ability to make the most out of any state of facts and circumstances before him.

Now, sir, it would be idle to attempt to answer the senator's arguments, and controvert his conclusions, were I to concede the correctness of all his premises.

The senator from Illinois has delivered what may be termed a great speech against the Kansas policy of the administration. No man who knows him will doubt his ability to make the most out of any state of facts and circumstances before him.

Now, sir, it would be idle to attempt to answer the senator's arguments, and controvert his conclusions, were I to concede the correctness of all his premises.

The senator from Illinois has delivered what may be termed a great speech against the Kansas policy of the administration. No man who knows him will doubt his ability to make the most out of any state of facts and circumstances before him.

that he would seek to oppress any class of Kansas, or desire to impose upon government, should not be, and I will not, entertained in any quarter; the trifle with this, or any other great, that having recognized the validity in Kansas, and the right of the United States to make a constitution and State, next day, he does not discard that validity, but consistent with his character of purpose, and clearness of perception.

But what does the senator mean that the Kansas policy of the administration measure? Does the senator do not agree with me? I understand differently. Or, if the administration, having said they will hold that those who assume that policy do not oppose the Territory, how is the senator to discover from the message what that policy is?

Such, sir, were the facts and circumstances which led me to believe that the Toombs bill was to bring Kansas into the Union without a vote on the constitution.

In order to a proper understanding of the subject under discussion, it is necessary to start with a clear view of the domestic relations existing between the Territory of Kansas and the Federal Government.

Now I understand the senator from Illinois not only to deny nearly all the positions of the administration, and deny the right of the legislature to call a convention for the purpose of organizing a government, but also to deny the law for that purpose.

It is not matter of pleasure to me to recur to the unpleasant differences between the honorable senator and myself the day, touching the consultation of his residence, in July, 1856, on the subject of the Toombs bill; but however disagreeable the task, justice to myself requires that I do so, especially since the character of the senator's conduct has been misunderstood in quarters.

But what would the honorable senator say as to the views of the late President, who was not out of the country when the law passed, but participated in every step of the struggle that gave it existence?

The most earnest part of the senator's speech is that in which, whilst making a broad issue with the administration, he has attempted to show that the President's views sustain those expressed by himself.

indicated to the convention that the constitution should be approved by the people. The words "and ratified by the people at the election for the adoption of the constitution," had been stricken out. Who struck these words out, for what purpose they were omitted, is not for me to answer.

Such, sir, were the facts and circumstances which led me to believe that the Toombs bill was to bring Kansas into the Union without a vote on the constitution.

In order to a proper understanding of the subject under discussion, it is necessary to start with a clear view of the domestic relations existing between the Territory of Kansas and the Federal Government.

Now I understand the senator from Illinois not only to deny nearly all the positions of the administration, and deny the right of the legislature to call a convention for the purpose of organizing a government, but also to deny the law for that purpose.

It is not matter of pleasure to me to recur to the unpleasant differences between the honorable senator and myself the day, touching the consultation of his residence, in July, 1856, on the subject of the Toombs bill; but however disagreeable the task, justice to myself requires that I do so, especially since the character of the senator's conduct has been misunderstood in quarters.

But what would the honorable senator say as to the views of the late President, who was not out of the country when the law passed, but participated in every step of the struggle that gave it existence?

The most earnest part of the senator's speech is that in which, whilst making a broad issue with the administration, he has attempted to show that the President's views sustain those expressed by himself.

Topeka convention. I do not understand the honorable senator from Illinois to hold an enabling act to be indispensable in all cases. He cannot hold this in the face of the numerous precedents to the contrary; but he certainly does maintain that in the case of Kansas, all that the people have done shall be disregarded, not because they have done according to law, but for the reason that, in his opinion, they have not done it in the right way.

It has conferred upon the people not only all the powers of Congress possessed under the Constitution as to the kind of institutions which should be made, but also, and just as expressly, as to the mode, manner, and way of making them.

In order to a proper understanding of the subject under discussion, it is necessary to start with a clear view of the domestic relations existing between the Territory of Kansas and the Federal Government.

Now I understand the senator from Illinois not only to deny nearly all the positions of the administration, and deny the right of the legislature to call a convention for the purpose of organizing a government, but also to deny the law for that purpose.

It is not matter of pleasure to me to recur to the unpleasant differences between the honorable senator and myself the day, touching the consultation of his residence, in July, 1856, on the subject of the Toombs bill; but however disagreeable the task, justice to myself requires that I do so, especially since the character of the senator's conduct has been misunderstood in quarters.

But what would the honorable senator say as to the views of the late President, who was not out of the country when the law passed, but participated in every step of the struggle that gave it existence?

The most earnest part of the senator's speech is that in which, whilst making a broad issue with the administration, he has attempted to show that the President's views sustain those expressed by himself.

der acts of Congress; and that Vermont, Ohio, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Missouri, Arkansas, and Wisconsin, according to the best authority I can find, came into the Union under constitutions which had not been submitted to the popular vote.

Even the honorable senator from Illinois does not seem to have held the same views at all times on the questions under consideration.

It has conferred upon the people not only all the powers of Congress possessed under the Constitution as to the kind of institutions which should be made, but also, and just as expressly, as to the mode, manner, and way of making them.

In order to a proper understanding of the subject under discussion, it is necessary to start with a clear view of the domestic relations existing between the Territory of Kansas and the Federal Government.

Now I understand the senator from Illinois not only to deny nearly all the positions of the administration, and deny the right of the legislature to call a convention for the purpose of organizing a government, but also to deny the law for that purpose.

It is not matter of pleasure to me to recur to the unpleasant differences between the honorable senator and myself the day, touching the consultation of his residence, in July, 1856, on the subject of the Toombs bill; but however disagreeable the task, justice to myself requires that I do so, especially since the character of the senator's conduct has been misunderstood in quarters.

But what would the honorable senator say as to the views of the late President, who was not out of the country when the law passed, but participated in every step of the struggle that gave it existence?

The most earnest part of the senator's speech is that in which, whilst making a broad issue with the administration, he has attempted to show that the President's views sustain those expressed by himself.

It is recognized by the present Chief Magistrate of the Union, just chosen by the American people, and many of its acts are now in operation here by universal assent.

The government especially recognizes the territorial act which provides for assembling a convention to form a constitution, with a view of making application to Congress for admission as a State into the Union.

These quotations are full of striking ideas which invite special attention at this time. The first is the full recognition, by both the governor and secretary, of the validity of the law calling the convention; another is, that the convention, when formed, would have a right to make a constitution and submit it to a vote or not; and this is one of the reasons of the governor for urging the people to attend the polls and vote.

But he holds that when the people of Kansas move in the matter of establishing their government, that movement, though it may not be illegal, is irregular, and does not rise above the importance of a petition for redress of grievances.

Now I understand the senator from Illinois not only to deny nearly all the positions of the administration, and deny the right of the legislature to call a convention for the purpose of organizing a government, but also to deny the law for that purpose.

It is not matter of pleasure to me to recur to the unpleasant differences between the honorable senator and myself the day, touching the consultation of his residence, in July, 1856, on the subject of the Toombs bill; but however disagreeable the task, justice to myself requires that I do so, especially since the character of the senator's conduct has been misunderstood in quarters.

But what would the honorable senator say as to the views of the late President, who was not out of the country when the law passed, but participated in every step of the struggle that gave it existence?

The most earnest part of the senator's speech is that in which, whilst making a broad issue with the administration, he has attempted to show that the President's views sustain those expressed by himself.