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DURBORROW & LUTZ Editors and Proprietors. BEDFORD, Pa., FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1868. VOLUME 41: NO. 9.

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Bedford Inquirer.

SENATOR MORTON'S SPEECH, IN THE U. S. SENATE, JANUARY 24, 1868.

Mr. President—If I had not been referred to by my honorable friend from Wisconsin [Mr. Doolittle] in the debate yesterday, I should not desire to speak on this question, especially at this time. I fear that I shall not have the strength to say what I wish to.

The issue here to-day is the same which prevails throughout the country, which will be the issue of this canvas, and perhaps for years to come. To repeat what I have had occasion to say elsewhere, it is between two paramount ideas, each struggling for the Supremacy. One is, that the war to suppress the rebellion was right and just on our part; that the rebels forfeited their civil and political rights, and can only be restored to them upon such conditions as the nation may prescribe for its future safety and prosperity. The other idea is, that the rebellion was not sinful, but was right; that those engaged in it forfeited no rights, civil or political, and have a right to take charge of their State governments and be restored to their representation in Congress just as if there had been no rebellion and nothing had occurred. The immediate issue before the Senate now is between the existing State governments established under the policy of the President of the United States in the rebel States, and the plan of reconstruction presented by Congress.

When a surveyor first enters a new territory he endeavors to ascertain the exact latitude and longitude of a given spot, and from that can safely begin his survey, and so I will endeavor to ascertain a proportion in this debate upon which both parties are agreed, and start from that proposition. That proposition is, that at the end of the war, in the spring of 1865, the rebel States were without State governments of any kind. The loyal State government existing at the beginning of the war had been overturned by the rebels; the rebel State governments erected during the war had been overturned by our armies, and at the end of the war there were no governments of any kind existing in those States. This fact was recognized distinctly by the President of the United States in his proclamation under which the work of reconstruction was commenced in North Carolina in 1865, to which I beg leave to refer. The others were mere copies of this proclamation. In that proclamation he says:

"And whereas the rebellion which has been waged by a portion of the people of the United States against the properly constituted authorities of the Government thereof, in the most violent and revolting form, but whose organized and armed forces have now been almost entirely overcome, has in its revolutionary progress deprived the people of the State of North Carolina of all civil government."

Here the President may be allowed to speak for his party, and I shall accept this as a proposition agreed upon on both sides: that at the end of the war there were no governments of any kind existing in those States.

The fourth section of the fourth article of the Constitution declares that "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government." This provision contains a vast, undefined power that has never yet been ascertained—a great supervisory power given to the United States to enable them to keep the States in their orbits, to preserve them from anarchy, revolution and rebellion. The measure of power thus conferred upon the Government of the United States can only be determined by that which is requisite to guarantee or maintain in each State a legal and republican form of government. Whatever power, therefore, may be necessary to enable the Government of the United States thus to maintain in each State a republican form of government is conveyed by this provision.

Now, Mr. President, when the war ended and these States were found without governments of any kind, the jurisdiction of the United States, under this provision of the Constitution at once attached; the power to reorganize State governments, to use the common word, to reconstruct, to maintain and guarantee Republican State governments in those States, at once attached under this provision. Upon this proposition there is also a concurrence of the two parties. The President has distinctly recognized the application of this clause of the Constitution. He has recognized the fact that its jurisdiction attached when those States were found without republican State governments, and he himself claimed to act under this clause of the Constitution. I will read the preamble of the President's proclamation.

"Whereas the fourth section of the fourth article of the Constitution of the United States declares that the United States shall guarantee to every State in the Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion and domestic violence; and whereas, the President of the United States is, by the Constitution, made Commander-in Chief of the Army and Navy, as well as chief civil executive officer of the United States, and is bound by solemn oath faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States, and to take care that the laws be faithfully executed; and whereas, the rebellion which has been waged by a portion of the people of the United States against the properly constituted authorities of the Government thereof in the most violent and revolting form, but whose organized and armed forces have now been almost entirely overcome, has, in its revolutionary progress, deprived the people of the State of North Carolina of all civil government; and whereas, it becomes necessary and proper to carry out and enforce the obligations of the United States to the people of North Carolina in securing them in the enjoyment of a republican form of government."

I read this, Mr. President, for the purpose of showing that the President of the United States, in his policy of reconstruction, started out with a distinct recognition of the applicability of this clause of the Constitution, and that he based his system of reconstruction upon it. It is true he recites in this proclamation that he is the Commander-in-chief of the Army of the United States, but at the same time he puts his plan of reconstruction, not upon the exercise of the military power which is called to its aid, but on the execution of the guarantee provided by the clause of the Constitution to which I have referred. He appoints a Governor for North Carolina and for these other States, the office being civil in its character, but military in its effects. This Government has all the power of one of the district commanders, and, in fact, far greater power than was conferred upon General Pope or General Sheridan, or any General in command of a district; for it is further provided:

"That the military commander of the department, and all officers and persons in the military and naval service, aid and assist the said provisional Governor in carrying into effect this proclamation."

We are then agreed upon the second proposition, that the power of the United States to reconstruct and guarantee Republican forms of government at once applied when these States were found in a condition in which they were at the end of the war. Then, sir, being agreed upon these two propositions, we are brought to the question as to the proper form of exercising this power, and by whom it shall be exercised. The Constitution says that "the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican form of Government." By the phrase "United States" here is meant the Government of the United States. The United States can only act through the Government, and the clause would mean precisely the same thing if it read "the Government of the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican form of government."

Then, as the Government of the United States is to execute this guaranty, the question arises, what constitutes the Government of the United States? The President does not constitute the Government; the Congress does not constitute the Government; the judiciary does not constitute the Government; but all three together constitute the Government; and as this guaranty is to be executed by the Government of the United States, it follows necessarily that it must be a legislative act. The President could not assume to execute the guaranty without assuming that he was the United States within the meaning of that provision, without assuming that he was the Government of the United States, Congress could not of itself assume to execute the guaranty without assuming that it was the Government of the United States; nor could the judiciary without a like assumption. The act must be the act of the Government, and therefore it must be a legislative act, a law passed by Congress, submitted to the President for his approval, and perhaps, in a proper case, subject to be reviewed by the judiciary.

Mr. President, that this is necessarily the case, from the simple reading of the Constitution, seems to me cannot be for a moment denied. The President, in assuming to execute this guaranty himself, is assuming to be the Government of the United States, which he clearly is not; but only one of its co-ordinate branches; and therefore, as this guaranty must be a legislative act, it follows that the attempt on the part of the President to execute the guaranty was without authority, and that the guaranty can only be executed in the form of a law, first to be passed by Congress and then to be submitted, to the President for his approval, and if he does not approve it, then to be passed over his head by a majority of two thirds in each House. That law, then, becomes the execution of the guaranty and is the act of the Government of the United States.

Mr. President, this is not an open question. I send to the Secretary and ask him to read a part of the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Luther vs. Borden as reported in 7 Howard.

The Secretary read as follows:

"Moreover, the Constitution of the United States as far as it has provided for an emergency of this kind, and authorized the General Government to interfere in the domestic concerns of the State, has treated the subject as political in its nature and placed the power in the hands of that department.

"The fourth section of the fourth article of the Constitution of the United States provides that the United States shall guarantee to every State in the Union a Republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and upon the application of the Legislature or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic violence.

"Under this article of the Constitution it rests with Congress to decide what government is the established one in a State. For, as the United States guarantees to each State a Republican government, Congress must necessarily decide what government is established in the State before it can determine whether it is republican or not. And when the Senators and Representatives of a State are admitted into the councils of the Union, the authority of the government under which they are appointed, as well as its republican character, is recognized by the proper constitutional authority. And its decision is binding upon every other department of the Government, and could not be questioned in a judicial tribunal. It is true that the contest in this case did not last long enough to bring the matter to this issue: and as no Senators or Representatives were elected under the authority of the Government of which Mr. Dorr was the head, Congress was not called upon to decide the controversy. Yet the right to decide is placed there, and not in the courts."

Mr. Morton. In this opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, delivered many years ago, the right to execute the guaranty provided for in this clause of the Constitution is placed in Congress and nowere else, and therefore the necessary reading of the Constitution is confirmed by the highest judicial authority which we have.

Mr. Johnson. Do you read from the opinion delivered by the Chief Justice?

Mr. Morton. Yes, sir; the opinion of Chief Justice Taney. He declares that this power is not judicial; that it is one of the high powers conferred upon Congress; that it is not subject to be reviewed by the supreme Court, because it is political in its nature. It is a distinct enunciation of the doctrine that this guaranty is not to be executed by the President, or by the Supreme Court, but by the Congress of the United States, in the form of a law to be passed by that body and to be submitted to the President for his approval; and should he disapprove it, it may become a law by being passed by a two-thirds majority over his head.

Now, I will call the attention of my friend from Wisconsin to some other authority. As he has been pleased to refer to a former speech of mine to show that I am not quite consistent, I will refer to a vote given by him in 1864 on a very important provision. On the first of July, 1864, the Senate having under consideration, as in Committee of the Whole, "a bill to guarantee to certain States whose governments have been usurped or overthrown, a republican form of government," Mr. Brown, of Missouri, offered an amendment to strike out all of the bill after the enacting clause, and to insert a substitute, which I will ask the Secretary to read.

The Secretary read as follows:

"That when the inhabitants of any State have been declared in a state of insurrection against the United States by proclamation of the President, by force and virtue of the act entitled "an act further to provide for the collection of duties on imports, and for other purposes," approved July 13, 1861, they shall be and are hereby declared to be incapable of casting any vote for electors of President or Vice President of the United States, or of electing Senators or Representatives in Congress until said insurrection in said State is suppressed or abandoned, and said inhabitants have returned to their obedience to the Government of the United States, and until such return to obedience shall be declared by proclamation of the President, issued by virtue of an act of Congress hereafter to be passed, authorizing the same,"

Mr. Morton. The honorable Senator from Wisconsin voted for that in Committee of the whole and on its final passage. I call attention to the amendment, which declares that they shall be—

"Incapable of casting any vote for electors of President or Vice President of the United States, or of electing Senators or Representatives in Congress until said insurrection is suppressed or abandoned, and said inhabitants have returned to their obedience to the Government of the United States, and until such return and obedience shall be declared by proclamation of the President, issued by virtue of an act of Congress hereafter to be passed, authorizing the same."

Recognizing that a state of war shall be regarded as continuing until it shall be declared no longer to exist by the President, in virtue of an act of Congress to be hereafter passed, I am glad to find, by looking at the vote, that the distinguished Senator from Maryland [Mr. Johnson] voted for this proposition, and thus recognized the doctrine for which I am now contending; that the power to execute the guaranty is vested in Congress alone, and that it is for Congress alone to determine the status and condition of those States, and that the President has no power to proclaim peace or to declare the political condition of those States until he shall first have been thereunto authorized by an act of Congress.

I therefore, Mr. President, take the proposition as conclusively established, both by reason and authority, that this clause of the Constitution can be executed only by Congress; and taking that as established, I now proceed to consider what are the powers of Congress in the xecution of the guaranty, how it shall be executed, and what means may be employed for that purpose. The Constitution does not define the means. It does not say how the guaranty shall be executed. All that is left to the determination of Congress. As to the particular character of the means that must be employed, that, I take it, will depend upon the peculiar circumstances of each case; and the extent of the power will depend upon the other question as to what may be required for the purpose of maintaining or guaranteeing a loyal republican form of government in each State. I use the word "loyal," although it is not used in the Constitution, because loyalty is an inhering qualification, not only in regard to persons who are to fill public offices, but in regard to State Governments, and we have no right to recognize a State Government that is not loyal to the Government of the United States. Now, sir, as to the use of means that are not prescribed in the Constitution, I call the attention of the Senate to the eighteenth clause of section eight of the first article of the Constitution of the United States, which declares that:

"The Congress shall have power to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or any department or officer thereof."

Here is a declaration of what would otherwise be a general principle anyhow, that Congress shall have the power to pass all laws necessary to carry into execution all powers that are vested in the Government under the Constitution. As Congress has the power to guarantee or maintain a loyal republican government in each State, it has the right to use whatever means may be necessary for that purpose. As I before remarked, the character of the means will depend upon the character of the case. In one case it may be the use of an army; in another case perhaps it may be simply presenting a question to the courts, and having it tested in that way; in another case, it may go to the very foundation of the Government itself. And I now propound this proposition: *that if Congress, after deliberation after long and bloody experience, shall come to the conclusion that loyal republican State Governments cannot be erected and maintained in the rebel States upon the basis of the white population, it has a right to raise up and make voters of a class of men who had no right to vote under the State laws.* This is simply the use of the necessary means in the execution of the guaranty. If we have found after repeated trials that loyal republican State governments—governments that shall answer the purpose that such governments are intended to answer—cannot be successfull founded upon the basis of the white population, because the great majority of that population are disloyal, then Congress has a right to raise up a new loyal voting population for the purpose of establishing these governments in the execution of the guaranty. I think, sir, this proposition is so clear that it is not necessary to elaborate it. We are not required to find in the Constitution a particular grant of power for this purpose; but we find a general grant of power, and we find also another grant of power authorizing us to use whatever means may be necessary to execute the first; and we find that the Supreme Court of the United States has said that the judgement of Congress upon this question shall be conclusive, that it cannot be reviewed by the courts, that it is a purely political matter; *and therefore the determination of Congress, that raising up colored men to the right of suffrage is a means necessary to the execution of that power, is a determination which cannot be reviewed by the courts, and is conclusive upon the people of this country.*

The President of the United States, assuming that he had the power to execute this guaranty, and basing his proclamation upon it, went forward in the work of reconstruction. It was understood at that time—it was so announced, if not by himself, at least formally by the Secretary of State, Mr. Seward, that the governments which he would erect during the vacation of Congress were to be erected as provisional only; that his plan of reconstruction, and the work that was to be done under it, would be submitted to Congress for approval or disapproval at the next session. If the President had adhered to that determination, I believe that all would have been well, and that the present state of things would not exist. But, sir, the executive undertook finally to execute the guaranty himself, without the co-operation of Congress. He appointed Provisional Governors, giving to them unlimited power until such time as the new State governments should be erected. He prescribed in his proclamation who should exercise the right of suffrage in the election of delegates. And allow me for one moment to refer to that. He says in his proclamation:

"No person shall be qualfied as an elector, or shall be eligible as a member of such Convention, unless he shall have previously taken and subscribed to, the oath of amnesty, as set forth in the President's proclamation of May 29, A. D. 1865."—which was issued on the same day, and was a part of the same transaction—

"And is a voter qualified as prescribed the Constitution and laws of the State North Carolina in force immediately before the 20th day of May, A. D. 1861.

The persons having the right to vote must have the right to vote by the laws of the State, and must, in addition to that, have taken the oath of amnesty. The President disfranchised in voting for delegates to the Conventions from two hundred and fifty thousand to three hundred thousand men. His disfranchisement was by far greater than that which has been done by Congress. In the proclamation of amnesty he says:

"The following class of persons are excepted from the benefits of this proclamation."

He then announced fourteen classes of persons—

"1. All persons who are or shall have been pretended civil or diplomatic officers, or otherwise domestic or foreign agents, of the pretended Confederate Government."

* * * * * * *

"13. All persons who have voluntarily participated in said rebellion, and the estimated valce of whose taxable property is over $20,000."

And twelve other classes, estimated to number at least two hundred and fifty thousand or three hundred thousand men, while the disfranchisement that has been created by Congress does not extend, perhaps, to more than forty-five or fifty thousand persons at the furthest. These provisional Governors, under the authority of the President, were to call Conventions; they were to hold the elections, and they were to exercise all the powers that are being exercised by the military commanders under the reconstruction acts of Congress. After these Constitutions were formed, the President went forward and accepted them as being loyal and republican in their character. He authorized the voters under them to proceed to elect Legislatures, members of Congress, and Legislatures to elect Senators to take their seates in this body. In other words, the President launched those State governments into full life and activity, without consultation with, or co-operation on the part of Congress.

Now, sir, when it is claimed that these governments are legal, let it be remembered that they took their origin under a proceeding instituted by the President of the United States in the execution of this guaranty when it now stands confessed that he could not execute the guaranty. But even if he had the power, let it be further borne in mind that those Constitutions were formed by Conventions that were elected by less than one-third of the white voters in the States at that time; that the Conventions were elected by a small minority even of the white voters; and that those Constitutions thus formed by a very small minority have never been submitted to the people of those States for ratification. They are no more the Constitutions of those States to day than the Constitutions formed by the Convention now in session would be if we were to proclaim them to be the Constitutions of those States without having first submitted them to the people for ratification. How can it be pretended for a moment even admitting that the President had the power to start forward in the work of reconstruction, that those State governments are legally formed by a small minority, never ratified by the people, the people never having had a chance to vote for them. They stand as mere arbitrary Constitutions, established not by the people of the several States, but simply by force of executive power.

And, sir, if we shall admit those States to representation on this floor and in the other House under those Constitutions, when the thing shall have got beyond our keeping, and they are fully restored to their political rights, they will then rise up and declare that those Constitutions are not binding upon them, that they never made them, and they will throw them off, and with them will go those provisions which were incorporated therein, declaring that slavery should never be restored, and that their war debt was repudiated. Those provisions were put into those Constitutions, but they never have been sanctioned by the people of those States, and they will cast them out as not being their act and deed, as soon as they shall have been restored to political power in this Government. Therefore, I say that even if we concede that the President had the power, which he has not, to start forward in the execution of this guaranty, there can still be no pretense that those governments are legal and authorized, and that we are bound to recognize them.

The President of the United States, in his proclamation, declared that those governments were to be formed only by the loyal people of those States; and I beg leave to call the attention of the Senate to that clause in his proclamation of reconstruction. He says:

"And with the authority to exercise, within the limits of said State, all the powers necessary and proper to enable such loyal people of the State of North Carolina to restore said State to its constitutional relations with the Federal Gonernment."

Again, speaking of the army:

"And they are enjoined to abstain from in any way hindering, impeding or discouraging the loyal people from the organization of a State government as herein authorized."

Now, sir, so far from those Sate governments having been organized by the loyal people, they were organized by the disloyal; every office passed into the hands of a rebel; the Union men had no part or lot in those governments; and so far from answering the purpose for which governments are intended they failed to extend protection to the loyal men, either white or black. The loyal men were murdered with impunity; and I will thank any Senator upon this floor to point to a single case in any of the rebel States where a rebel has been tried and brought to punishment by the civil authority for the murder of a Union man. Not one case I am told can be found. These governments utterly failed in answering the purpose of civil governments; and not only that, but they returned the colored people to a condition of *quasi* slavery; they made them the slaves of society instead of being as they were before, the slaves of individuals. Under various forms of vagrant laws, they deprived them of the rights of freemen, and placed them under the power and control of their rebel masters, who were filled with hatred and revenge.

But, Mr. President, time passed on. Congress assembled in December, 1865. For a time it paused. It did not at once annul those governments. It hesitated. At last, in 1866, the Constitutional amendment, the fourteenth article, was brought forward as a basis of settlement and reconstruction; and there was a tacit understanding, though it was not embraced in any law or resolution, that if the Southern people should ratify and agree to that amendment then their State governments would be accepted. But that amendment was rejected, contemptuously rejected. The Southern people, counseled and inspired by the Democracy of the North, rejected that amendment. They were told that they were not bound to submit to any conditions whatever; that they had forfeited no rights by rebellion. Why, sir, what did we propose by this amendment? By the first section we declared that all men born upon our soil are citizens of the United States—a thing that had long been recognized by every department of this Government until the Dred Scott decision was made in 1857. The second section provided that where a class or race of men were excluded from the right of suffrage they should not be counted in the basis of representation—an obvious justice that no reasonable man for a moment could deny; that if four million people down South were to have no suffrage the men living in their midst and surrounding them and depriving them of all political rights, should not have members of Congress on their account. I say the justice of the second clause has never been successfully impugned by any argument, I care not how ingenious it may be. What was the third clause? It was that the leaders of the South, those men who had once taken an official oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and and afterward committed perjury by going into the rebellion, should be made ineligible to any office under the Government of the United States or of a State. It was a very small disfranchisement. It was intended to withhold power from those leaders by whose instrumentality we had lost nearly half a million of lives and untold treasure.

The justice of that disfranchisement could not be disproved. An what was the fourth clause of the amendment? That this government should never assume and pay any part of the rebel debt, that it should never pay the rebels for their slaves. This was bitterly opposed in the South. How could any man oppose that amendment unless he was in favor of this government assuming a portion or all of rebel debt, and in favor of paying the rebels for their slaves? When the Democratic party, North and South, opposed that most important and, perhaps, hereafter to be regarded as vital amendment, they were committing themselves in principle, as they had been before by declaration, to the doctrine that this Government was bound to pay for the slaves, and that it was just and right that we should assume and pay the rebel debt.

This amendment, as I have before said, was rejected, and when Congress assembled in December, 1866, they were confronted by the fact that every proposition of compromise had been rejected; every half-way measure had been spurned by the rebels and they had nothing left to do but to begin the work of reconstruction themselves; and in February, 1867, Congress, for the first time, entered upon the execution of the guaranty provided for in the Constitution by the passage of the first reconstruction law. A supplementary bill was found necessary in March, another one in July, and I believe another is found necessary at this time; but the power is with Congress. Whatever it shall deem necessary, whether it be in the way of colored suffrage, whether it be in the way of military power—whatever Congress shall deem necessary in the execution of this guaranty is conclusive upon the courts and States.

Sir, when Congress entered upon this work it had become apparent to all men that loyal Republican State governments could not be erected and maintained upon the basis of the white population. We had tried them. Congress had attempted the work of reconstruction through the Constitutional amendment by leaving the suffrage with the white men, and by leaving with the white people of the South the question as to whom the colored people should exercise the right of suffrage, if ever; but when it was found that those white men were as rebellious as ever, that they hated this Government more bitterly than ever; when it was found that they persecuted the loyal men, both white and black, in their midst; when it was found that Northern men who had gone down they were driven out by social tyrany, by a thousand annoyances, by the insecurity of life and property, then it became apparent to all men of intelligence that reconstruction could not take place upon the basis of the white population, and something else must be done.

Now, sir, what was there left to do? Either we must hold these people continually by military power, or we must use such machinery upon such a new basis as would enable loyal Republican State governments to be raised up; and in the last resort—and I will say Congress waited long, the nation waited long, experience had come to the rescue of reason before the thing was done—in the last resort, and as the last thing to be done, Congress determined to dig through all the rubbish, dig through the soil and the shifting sands, and go down to the eternal rock, and there, upon the basis of the everlasting principle of equal and exact justice to all men, we have planted the column of reconstruction; and, sir, it will arise slowly but surely, and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Whatever dangers we apprehend from the introduction of the right of suffrage to seven hundred thousand men, just emerged from slavery, were put aside in the presence of a greater danger. Why, sir, let me say frankly to my friend from Wisconsin that I approached universal colored suffrage in the South reluctantly. Not because I adhered to the miserable dogma that this was the white man's Government, but because I entertained fears about at once entrusting a large body of men just from slavery, to whom education had been denied by law, to whom the marriage relation had been denied, who had been made the most abject slaves, with political power. And as the Senator has referred to a speech which I made in Inniana in 1865 allow me to show the principle that then actuated me, for in that speech I said:

"In regard to the question of admitting the freedmen of the Southern States to vote, while I admit the equal rights of all men, and that in time all men will have the right to vote without distinction of color or race, I yet believe that in the case of four million of slaves just freed from bondage there should be a period of probation and preparation before they are brought to the exercise of political power."

Such was my feeling at that time, for it had not then been determined by the bloody experience of the last two years that we could not reconstruct upon the basis of the white population, and such was the opinion of a great majority of the people of the North; and it was not until a year and a half after that time that Congress came to the conclusion that there was no way left but to resort to colored suffrage, and suffrage to all men except those who were disqualified by the commission of high crimes and misdemeanors.

Mr. President, we hear much said in the course of this debate and through the press about the violation of the constitution. It is said that in the reconstruction measures of Congress, we have gone outside of the Constitution, and the remark of some distinguished statesman of the Republican party is quoted to that effect. Sir, if any leading Republican has ever said so he spoke only for himself, not for another. I deny the statement *in toto*, I insist that these reconstruction measures are as fully within the powers of the Constitution as any legislation that can be had not only by reason, but by authority. And who are the men that are talking so much about the violation of the Constitution and who pretend to be the especial friends of that instrument? The great mass of them only three years ago, were in arms to overturn the Constitution and establish that of Montgomery in its place, or were their Northern friends, who were aiding and sympathizing in that undertaking.

I had occasion the other day to speak of what was described as a constitutional Union man—a man living inside of the Federal lines during the war, sympathizing with the rebellion, and who endeavored to aid the rebellion by insisting that every war measure for the purpose of suppressing it, was the violation of the Constitution of the United States. Now, these men who claim to be the especial friends of the Constitution are the men who have sought to destroy it by force of arms, and those throughout the country who have given them aid and comfort. Sir, you will remember that once a celebrated French woman was being dragged to the scaffold, and as she passed the statute of liberty she exclaimed: "How many crimes have been committed in thy name;" and I can say to the Constitution, how many crimes against liberty, humanity and progress are being committed in thy name by these men who, while they loved not the Constitution, and sought its destruction, now, for party purposes, claim to be its especial friends.

My friend from Wisconsin yesterday compared what he called the Radical party of the North to the Radicals of the South, and when he was asked the question by some Senator, "who are the Radicals of the South," he said "they are secessionists." Sir, the secessionists of the South are Democrats to day, acting in harmony and concert with the Democratic party. They were Democrats during the war who prayed for the success of McClellan and Pendleton, and who would have been glad to vote for them. They were Democrats before the war, and the men who made the rebellion. These are the Radicals of the South, and my friend from Wisconsin, after all, is acting with that Radical party.

The burden of his speech yesterday was that the reconstruction measures of Congress are intended to establish negro supremacy. Sir, this proposition is without any foundation whatever. I believe it was stated yesterday by the Senator from Illinois [Mr. Trumbull] that in every State but two the white voters registered outnumbered the colored voters; and the fact that in two States the colored voters outnumber the white voters is owing to the simple accident that there are more colored men in those States than there are white men. Congress has not sought to establish negro supremacy nor has it sought to establish the supremacy of any class or party of men. If it had sought to esablish negro supremacy it would have been an easy matter by excluding from the right of suffrage all men who had been concerned in the rebellion, in accordance with the proposition of the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts, [Mr. Sumner,] in his speech at Worcester, in 1865. He proposed to exclude all men who had been concerned in the rebellion and confer suffrage only on those who were left. That would have established negro supremacy by giving the negro an overwhelming majority in every State, and if that had been the object of Congress it could have been readily done. But, sir, Congress has only sought to divide the political power between the loyal and the disloyal. It has disfranchised some fifty thousand disloyal leaders, leaving all the rest of the people to vote. They have been enfranchised on both sides, that neither should be placed in the power of the other. The rebels have the right to vote so that they shall not be under the control and power of the Union men only, and the Union men have been allowed to vote so that they shall not be under the control and power of the rebels. This is the policy, to divide the political power among those men for the protection of each. Sir, the charge that we intend to create a negro supremacy or colored State governments is without the slightest foundation, for it would have been in the power of Congress to have easily conferred such supremacy by simply excluding the disloyal from the right of suffrage—a power which it had the clear right to exercise.

Now, Mr. President, allow me to consider for a moment the amendment offered by the Senator from Wisconsin, and upon which his speech was made, and see what is its effect—I will not say its purpose, but its inevitable effect—should it become a law. I will ask the Secretary to read the amendment which the Senator from Wisconsin has proposed to the Senate.

The Secretary read as follows:

Provided nevertheless, That upon an election for the ratification of any constitution, or of officers under the same, previous to its adoption in any State, no person not having the qualifications of an elector under the constitution and laws of such State previous to the late rebellion shall be allowed to vote, unless he shall possess one of the following qualifications namely:

1. He shall have served as a soldier in the Federal army for one year or more.

2. He shall have sufficient education to read the Constitution of the United States and to subscribe his name to an oath to support the same; or.

3. He shall be seized in his own right, or in the right of his wife, of a freehold of the value of $250.

Mr. Morton. Sir, these qualifications are, by the terms of the amendment, to apply to those who were not authorized to vote by the laws of the State before the rebellion—in other words, the colored men. He proposes to allow a colored man to vote if he has been in the Federal army one year, and he proposes to allow a rebel white man to vote, although he has served in the rebel army four years! He proposes that a colored man shall not vote unless he has sufficient education to read the Constitution of the United States and to subscribe his name to an oath to support the same, whereas he permits a rebel white man to vote who never heard of A and does not know how to make his mark even to a note given for whisky. [Laughter.]

Again, sir, he proposes that the colored man shall not vote unless he shall be possessed in his own right, or in the right of his wife, of a freehold of $250, a provision which, of course, would cut off nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand colored men in the South. The colored man cannot vote unless he has a freehold of $250, but the white rebel, who was never worth twenty-five cents, who never paid poll-tax in his life never paid an honest debt, is to be allowed to vote. Sir, what would be the inevitable effect of the adoption of this amendment? To cut off such

[CONCLUDED ON FOURTH PAGE.]