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THE WHOLE ART OF GOVERNMENT CONSISTS IN THE ART OF BEING HONEST.—Jefferson.

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Speech of Hon. Andrew Stewart,

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

In defence of the Protective Policy.

Delivered in the House of Representatives of the U. S., May 27, 1846.

(Concluded.)

[Mr. Holmes, of S. C., put a question to Mr. Stewart, whether all this was not done by taxing the South for the benefit of New England.]

The gentleman asked whether all this benefit did not grow out of a tax upon the South? Mr. S. would answer the gentleman; if these factories were built by Government, then this might, to some extent, be true. But they were built, not by Government, but by individual enterprise; and what sort of a tax was it upon the South to give them better goods for one-fourth the price they formerly paid? Mr. S. said he was very sorry that his excellent friend from S. Carolina should feel such deep regret at the prosperity of New England. If he thought that New England was getting rich upon manufactures, he would advise him to go home and do likewise; to follow the example, and grow rich also. The gentleman said that the planters of the South were working the whole year for a profit of four or five per cent., while the manufacturers of New England were getting forty or fifty. Was it not a free country? Who gave New England exclusive privileges? Why did not the South engage in the same forty or fifty per cent. business, instead of working on at four or five? Why did not they commence with coarse fabrics, made from their own cotton, just as New England had done before them? But New England was now passing from that stage, and going into higher and finer branches. The South, he was glad to learn, were now commencing. True, they were yet in the A B C of the business; they were in their infancy; they wanted the fostering care and protection of Government. The tariff on the coarse fabrics was now for their benefit. New England wanted it no longer on the coarse, but only on the higher and finer fabrics, in which they were now struggling with foreigners, and who were endeavoring to break them down by flooding our markets with these articles at an under value, hoping to indemnify themselves for temporary losses by future exorbitant prices, extorted from us when American competition is put down and destroyed.

How was it that Southern gentlemen could shut their eyes to the result of their own unwise policy? Let them look how they stood, and then look at the North. The North applied their shoulder to the wheel; they went to work to better their condition: they had banded their own resources; they employed and diversified their labor; they lived upon their own means; kept their money at home to reward their own industry, instead of foolishly sending it abroad to purchase what they could so well and profitably supply at home. But South Carolina and her Southern sisters would touch neither hammer nor shuttle. They sent away their money to New England, or old England. And what was the consequence of these two opposite systems? South Carolina was poor and dependant, while New England was independent and prosperous. South Carolina, when the Federal Constitution was adopted, had five representatives, North Carolina five, and Virginia ten representatives on this floor. They all cherished a deadly hostility to every thing connected with the manufactures, internal improvements, and progress of every kind. They denied to this Government the power of a self-protection and self-improvement; they went for the stand-still, lie-down, go-to-sleep, let-us-alone, do nothing policy; they had tried to live on whip syllabub, political metaphysics, until it had nearly starved them to death, while the Northern States had wisely pursued the opposite policy; and what had been the effect on their relative prosperity? New York began with six representatives in that hall; now she had thirty-four. Pennsylvania began with eight and now she had twenty-four. Virginia, with North and South Carolina, had commenced with twenty representatives, and New York with six; now they have, altogether, thirty, and New York alone has thirty-four. Such are

the fruits of the opposite systems of policy adopted by the North and South. Judge the tree by its fruits. Will men never learn wisdom from experience? He would rejoice to see the South as prosperous and as happy as the North. They had all the elements of wealth and prosperity in profusion around them—the raw materials and bread stuffs, minerals, and water-power in abundance, running to waste. If they would allow him to offer advice, it would be to abandon an exploded and ruinous policy; follow the example of the North, and share in their prosperity. Instead of coming here repining and complaining that the North was rich and prosperous, making forty or fifty per cent. profit on their capital, whilst the South realized but four or five, just turn around, quit your four or five per cent. profits, and go to work at forty or fifty. If the tariff was confined to the North, you might complain; but it was free to all alike—North and South, East and West. Go to the hammer and the loom, the furnace and the forge, and become prosperous in your turn. All these blessings are within reach, if you will but put forth your hands to grasp them; they are offered freely to your acceptance. You enjoy great advantages. You have not only all the advantages enjoyed by the North for manufacturing, but you have others superadded; you supply the raw material, and, above all, you have labor without wages, perfectly available for such purposes, the hands of the young and old, now useless for the field, might, in factories, become highly profitable and productive operatives. Take hold, then, on the same industry which had made New England great, and especially on those branches of it which New England now could and would spare. Then South Carolina would be, thus far, independent both of New England and of all the world. She could no longer hope to compete with Texas and the rich lands of the Southwest in the production of cotton. Her worn out fields must sink in a contest with the virgin soil of the new States. Then let her address herself to manufactures. The gentleman from South Carolina seemed to observe, with grief and envy, that New England was enjoying profits of from forty to fifty per cent. What if she did? If she gave that to South Carolina for six cents per yard which Carolina once could not get from abroad under thirty-six, the question for Carolina to look at was, not what profits New England made, but what prices she charged her. That gentleman wanted his State to go to old England for all she required. We were all to depend on Europe for our manufactured articles. Foreign countries were to enjoy exclusively the profitable business yielding forty and fifty per cent.; we were all to turn farmers, and join the gentleman in working, as he said, for a profit of four and five per cent., and again give old England twenty-five cents a yard for what New England now offered them for six. Was not this patriotic? Was it not a noble, an enlarged American policy? England was to be allowed to monopolize all the profitable business, the result of labor-saving machinery, while we were to content ourselves with the plough and the hoe, and profits at the rate of five per cent.—Was that the policy for America to pursue? They might be Americans who recommended it, but they were certainly playing into the hands of our transatlantic competitors. If manufacturing was such profitable business as these gentlemen represented it to be, why not let Americans have it rather than foreigners? Why not keep our money and our profits to ourselves, instead of giving both to the labor of Great Britain? The profits of manufacturing were chiefly owing to the use and constant improvement of labor-saving machinery. The saving of labor and the increase of human power produced in this manner was almost incalculable. By its aid one feeble woman was enabled to accomplish more in a day than would pay for the productions of forty able-bodied hard-handed men without it. Did gentlemen desire, and was it their policy, to let England enjoy all this benefit, and keep it to herself as a monopoly? It was this, and this alone, that kept the British Government from bankruptcy. This prolific source of wealth and power enabled the British people to stand up under a debt of four thousand millions of dollars, and to pay taxes to the Government amounting to more than two hundred and fifty millions every year. This was the result of her immense labor-saving machinery. Was it the policy of gentlemen to let England have this profitable business of manufacturing all to herself? That seemed to be the policy of the Secretary of the Treasury.—Indeed, he had avowed it in his report to be his settled policy to break down the manufacturers of our own country, and derive his revenue from British and other foreign goods.—His policy was to increase the revenue by increasing importations; and, as he would reduce the average of duties to one half, of course, to get the same amount of revenue, we must double our imports. This was manifest and undeniable. Our present imports amounted to one hundred millions; to carry out the Secretary's plan we must raise them to two hundred millions. Our exports were about one hundred millions, and of course one hundred millions in specie would be required annually to pay the

balance. The whole specie of the country had never been estimated at more than eighty millions. How, then, was his policy to work? How was he to make up this deficit? Not from the banks, for they would be broken up within the very first year of such a system; and then what was Mr. Secretary going to do for his revenue? The duty on foreign iron, he tells us, is now 75 per cent. He was for reducing it to 30 per cent.—less than one half. We must, of course, import more than double the amount of foreign iron to get the present amount of revenue, and to that extent break up American supply. Now, it was impossible to make our people double their consumption, and so the result must necessarily be to get them to take foreign goods where they now took domestic, thus reducing the demand, and of course destroying the domestic supply to that extent. Was not all this plain? Could any man in his senses deny it? And then, besides, where was the Secretary going to get the money to pay for all these foreign goods? There was the rub. The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Bayly) talked about exporting potatoes to Ireland. Export potatoes to Ireland! He would tell that gentleman that last year we imported 211,327 bushels, paying a duty of ten cents per bushel—15,045 from Ireland, while Ireland took of all our grain only 790 bushels of corn, not a barrel of flour, cornmeal, or a bushel of grain, or its productions in other form. The whole of our mighty export of breadstuffs to England, Scotland, and Ireland, amounted to less than \$224,000, less than one-fourth of a million—less than could be furnished by a single Western county.—Potatoes were cheaper in Ireland than in the United States, yet the people are starving, because they had no protection against England, no money, no employment. This was the effect of "free trade" with England, and it was precisely the condition into which "free trade" with England would soon bring this country, if it were adopted. "Free trade" with England reminded him of an anecdote of an Irishman, who, when complaining of starvation in Ireland, was asked whether potatoes were not very cheap? He answered, "Chape! the Lord love ye, they're but saxpence a bushel." "How is it, then, you are starving?" "Just because we have no work, and can't get the saxpence." (A laugh.) Such were the fruits of exchanging agricultural products for manufactured goods—the products of manual labor for the products of machinery—working the hoe against the loom. Such had been and always would be the result of this miserable system of policy, whenever and wherever adopted.

Next the gentleman complained of taxation. What tax did farmers and laborers now pay the United States? Nothing. Many of them used nothing but domestics. They bought no foreign goods except tea and coffee, and they were free. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of our people don't pay a dollar a year into our National Treasury, and thousands not a cent. How would it be under a system of direct taxation? The burdens of the Federal Government would fall on farmers and laborers more heavily than the heaviest State taxation. Under a system of direct tax the proportion of Pennsylvania would be three millions a year—more than double her present heavy State taxation. But all these burdens put together are nothing compared to the taxes imposed on by the British. To form an idea of its extent, let every gentleman ascertain the number of stores selling British goods in his district. These merchants are all tax-gatherers for England, taking millions and tens of millions of specie from our farmers for British agricultural produce; wool and every thing else converted into goods and sent here and sold to our farmers, who have those very materials on their hands rotting for want of a market; and this is the ruinous system recommended to our farmers by these "free trade" advocates. The farmers understand it, and they will let gentlemen know it at the polls.—They will let gentlemen know what they think of this "buy everything and sell nothing policy."—They know that the farmer who sells more than he buys gets rich, and he who buys more than he sells gets poor; and they know that the same theory is true with regard to nations; they know that, to sell more and buy less, is the way to wealth, and that the opposite course is the road to bankruptcy and ruin.

The true American policy was PROTECTION and INDEPENDENCE. It was to make America independent of all the world. That was sound American policy; and he trusted no man would suffer himself to be so carried away by mere party politics as to advocate "free trade" and starvation, twin-sisters, "one and inseparable." Protection was the policy which would spread comfort and happiness over the face of a smiling land. Its effect would penetrate our forests, and reach to the remotest hamlet in the West. This would keep our money at home, instead of sending it across the ocean to enrich British manufacturers at our expense.

What was the theory of our learned Secretary? We must reduce duties to increase our revenue. Now, Mr. S. said, and he defied contradiction, that as truly as the thermometer indicated the increase or diminution of heat in the atmosphere, just so truly did the increase or diminution of the tariff mark the increase and the diminution of revenue. He appealed to the record, and defied his opponents to the test.

The Secretary recommended a reduction of duties to an average rate of 20 per cent., and in support of this recommendation he had accompanied his report with a table, at page 956, showing the revenue under different tariffs for the last twenty-five years, viz., four years immediately before the tariff of 1824, four years under the tariff of 1824, four years under the tariff of 1828, ten years under the compromise bill, and three years under the tariff of 1842. And what was the result?

For the four years preceding the tariff of 1824 the average gross revenue was \$22,753,000. Under the tariff of 1824, which its opponents at the time predicted would ruin the revenue and compel a resort to direct taxation, the average for the four years of its duration was \$28,929,000. Next came the "bill of abominations," the "black tariff" of 1828, which it was said would bankrupt the treasury beyond all question, and what was the result? The average revenue during the four years of its operation increased to \$30,541,000. Then came the compromise bill of 1833, which brought the tariff down by biennial reductions to a horizontal duty of 20 per cent.; and what was its effect upon the revenue? The revenue declined *pari passu* with the tariff, yielding for ten years an average of \$21,496,000, and the last year of its operation under the 20 per cent. duty only \$16,686,000 gross revenue, netting \$12,758,000, while our expenditures were more than double that amount. Then came the present tariff, which yielded more than \$32,000,000 gross—\$27,500,000 net revenue. Now what does our profound Secretary of the Treasury propose to do to improve the revenue? Mark it! He proposes to reduce the tariff to an average of about 20 per cent., which "experience proves," he says, will give the highest revenue, and yet this very report shows the fact that a 20 per cent. tariff in 1842 yielded only \$12,758,000, while the present tariff last year yielded \$27,528,000. Thus, according to the Secretary, *twelve is more than twenty-seven!* A new discovery in arithmetic. The new "free trade" system of finance says "reduce the duties to increase the revenue," a doctrine not only urged upon Congress by the Secretary and "The Union," his organ, but by all the advocates of this new tariff on this floor. "Reduce the duties to increase the revenue!" Can any thing be more absurd—urged in the face of the fact, proved by every official report on the finances from the foundation of the Government, that the revenue has always gone up and gone down as the tariff has gone up or gone down? Yet we are told, "reduce the duties to increase the revenue." Are not duties the source of revenue; and would it not be just as sensible to say "reduce the revenue to increase the revenue?" Duties and revenue are convertible terms. You want twenty-five millions from the tariff—that sum must be raised, no matter how you impose the duties; and why not so arrange them as to protect and sustain your own national industry, thus making taxation itself prolific of benefits and blessings to the people?

On the subject of the revenue, he would venture to predict that if the system of measures recommended by the Secretary—the reduction of the tariff, the change from specific to ad valorem duties, the Subtreasury, and the warehousing system were adopted—the revenue next year would not be half the amount it will be this year. Mark the prediction, "not half!"

Who could deny the fact that with the raising of the tariff the revenue increased, and with its diminution the revenue fell off, till at last under 20 per cent., which the Secretary considered the very *beau ideal*—the very perfection of a revenue system—the net revenue sank down to less than thirteen millions? There was his theory—and there, alongside of it, stood his proof; and his proof utterly subverted his theory. Did it prove that reducing duties to 20 per cent. raised the revenue to its highest point? Just the reverse. It reduced it to the very lowest point of depression. While his theory said that 20 per cent. would give the "highest," his proof showed that it gave the "lowest."

And was not this a pretty time to select for the reduction of duties? Now, when we had just entered into a war, whose duration no man could predict or calculate? When we went to war in 1812 we doubled the duties; now it was proposed to cut them down one-half! What a consummate proof of political wisdom and financial ability was here exhibited!

There was another thing of which the tariff was an index, and that was the public prosperity. When the people were poor they could not afford to consume luxuries; imports fell off, and down went the revenue. But when duties were high and domestic competition was excited, agriculture having abundant markets, and labor full and profitable employment, the people became prosperous; they lived in comfort; they could afford to pay for fine goods and luxuries—and up went the revenue. Reduce the tariff, break up American industry, and you clothed the people in rags, and your treasury became bankrupt. The national revenue and the national prosperity went up and down together, and were always coincident with national protection.

Mr. S.'s system was this: Select the articles

you can manufacture to the full extent of our own wants, then, in the language of Thomas Jefferson, "impose on them duties lighter, at first, and afterwards heavier and heavier as the channels of supply were opened." This was Jefferson's plan; the reverse of modern democratic "free trade." Next Mr. S. went for levying the highest rates of duty on the luxuries of the rich, and not on the necessities of the poor. Encourage American manufactures, and while on the one hand the poor man found plenty of employment, on the other he got his goods cheap. He could clothe himself decently for a mere trifle. He wanted no foreign commodities but his tea and his coffee, and they were free, and should remain free. The poor man could now buy cloth for a full suit from head to foot for less than one dollar of substantial American manufacture. He had himself worn in this hall a garment of this same goods, at 10 cents per yard, and it was so much admitted that more than a dozen members had applied for similar garments, and they had been supplied to Senators and others; yet we are told the tariff taxes and oppresses the poor.—Put high revenue duties on wines, on brandies, on silks, on laces, on jewelry, on all that which the rich alone consumed and which the poor man did not want. Take off the duties from the poor man's necessities and give him high wages for his work. That was the way to diffuse happiness and prosperity among the great body of the people. That was good sound democratic policy. He was for lifting up the poor. He was for "levelling upward;" for increasing the domestic comfort of our own laboring population—the true democracy of the country. The rich could pay, and ought to be made to pay, and they should pay; the poor man could not, and should not, with his consent. Mr. S. went for the system which elevated the poor man in the scale of society; that promoted equality, that essential element in all free Governments, not by pulling down the higher, but by lifting up the lower classes to their level. The gentleman from Alabama and his friends advocated a policy which would have precisely the opposite effect. Their system would truly make the "rich richer and the poor poorer." The gentleman advocated a system whose direct and undeniable tendency was to destroy competition, and thereby give a monopoly to the heavy capitalists. He would benefit those very "millionaires" of whose presence here he complained so loudly.

Labor, productive labor, was the great source of national wealth. Its importance was incalculable. Compared with this all other interests dwindled into perfect insignificance. What is all other capital combined compared to the capital of labor—hard-handed, honest labor—the toiling millions? Supposing we have but two millions of working men in the United States, whose wages average \$180 per year—this is equal to the interest of \$3,000 at six per cent. Each laborer's capital, then, is equal to \$3,000 at interest. Multiply this by two millions, the number of laborers, and it gives you a capital amounting to the enormous sum of six thousand millions of dollars, producing, at six per cent., three hundred and sixty millions of dollars a year. This was the "labor capital" he wished to sustain and uphold. This was the great national industry he wished to protect and defend against the ruinous and degrading effects of a free and unrestricted competition with the pauper labor of foreign lands. He went to secure the American market for American labor. In the great struggle for the American market he took the American side. On the other hand, the gentleman from Alabama and his friends went for "free trade," for opening our ports to the manufacturers of all the world; for bringing in freely the pauper productions of Great Britain, to overwhelm the rising prosperity of our own poor but industrious citizens. They went for crushing American enterprise; grinding down American labor, and putting their countrymen on a footing with the very sweepings of the poor houses of Europe, and would, in the end, bring them down to their political, as well as their pecuniary and moral condition. Mr. S. was for cherishing American labor; for giving it high wages; for surrounding it with all the substantial comforts of life. Which was the true friend of the people? And yet these "free trade" advocates, from the Secretary down, professed to be the exclusive friends of the "poor man," and we are denounced as the friends of "millionaires and monopolists." We now imported fifty millions worth of British goods annually, and therein we imported twenty-five millions worth of British agricultural products; of English wool, English grain, English beef and mutton, English flax, English agricultural productions of every kind. And yet gentlemen would rise here and talk of a British market for our bread-stuffs. Why, how much of this did England take? Not a quarter of a million, in all its forms!

Here was a beautiful reciprocity. Here were the beauties of free trade. Here were our equality of benefits. We took fifty millions in British goods, one-half of it agricultural produce, while she took one-quarter of a million of our bread-stuffs. This was our boasted British market. What was this British mar-