

Democrat and Sentinel.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOVERNMENT, LIKE THE DEWS OF HEAVEN, SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED ALIKE, UPON THE HIGH AND THE LOW, THE RICH AND THE POOR.

NEW SERIES.

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GREAT SPEECH OF
Hon. D. W. VOORHEES,
OF INDIANA,
delivered in the House of Representatives,
May 21st 1862.

Our people were darkened by the horrors of civil war. Could it be expected that his wisdom could display any special brilliancy in our national sufferings, or that he could be expected to guard the public treasury from plunder? Instead of going to the rescue, he could have done for a few years more of the vessels transporting the great steamers, at a cost of \$1,000 to \$2,000, to carry himself and his family to Europe. This steamer was anchored in the harbor of New York, and when the Government was in its carriage and four to the front, yet another steamer was sent to the Government, as we were told, to carry them to Europe. A former member of the Senate, and a former member of the House, might thus live and thus be a pleasure yacht to his large family, and waste his money, when the people were being increased at the rate of \$200,000,000 daily, when the Government was spending money in grief and humiliation. There is but one thing more needed to complete this wretched picture of public plunder and crime, and that is, to publish the following extract from the report of the committee on the part of the House, which was reported to the House on the 21st of May, 1862, and which was adopted by the House on the 22nd of May, 1862, and which was printed in the House Report, No. 100, p. 100.

both, to enforce such measures, as, in his judgment, the people expected him to carry out. These words were spoken, as it were, in the very sick chamber of the Republic, and had the patient wretched struggling for life. They were uttered against the Government of the country, not those tranquil and strong and able to battle with all assailants, but of a country distracted and humbled and bleeding under the stab of traitors. They came from a man of high excitement springing from a triumph of arms, but were solemn and oft-repeated enunciations of a General just entering the field of his future operations, and surveying for the first time the strength of his gathering army; they were intended to impress them with obedience to his revolutionary programme. Gen. Fremont already held the sword, and it was most important for his purposes that C. L. Andrews, the head of the pay department, and Maj. Johnston, a paymaster under him, should not interfere with his free use of the national purse.

Sir, in what age do we live? In the age of Republican simplicity and integrity, or are we transported to the days of fraudulent usurpers to the unadorned robes of the Roman Cæsars? Are we in Republican America, or have we, by some magic process, been suddenly changed to the midst of oriental luxury and princely indolence? Has the Afloat of our Government sought for a model among the principles of Washington and Jefferson, or from the examples of "Biblet, Calista, and old Don Juan"? The great philosophical poet says that—

"Corruption wins not more than honesty."

But is that true in these latter days? I have sworn that by the detestable finding of a committee, raised under no authority of this House, and by the action of the House itself, the late Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, is to be declared guilty, in this awful crisis, of plundering, and with criminal knowledge permitting to be plundered, the resources of the people, the treasury of his country. With that brand upon him, he steps from one exalted station to another, and goes as our accredited minister to the court of the greatest and most friendly Power to us on the continent of Europe—the Russian Empire, which the Russian Emperor may draw in regard to the American sense of public morality will not, perhaps avise us much in his estimation. Let Mr. Cameron present the following resolution, adopted so recently by this House, as a part of its credentials, and our degradation in that quarter of the world will be complete.

Resolved, That Simon Cameron, late Secretary of War, by investing Alexander Cummings with the control of large sums of the public money, and authority to purchase military supplies without restriction, without requiring from him any guarantee for the faithful performance of his duty when the services of competent public officers are available, and by involving the Government in a vast number of contracts, with persons not legitimately engaged in the business pertaining to the subject matter of such contracts, especially in the purchase of arms for future delivery, has adopted a policy highly injurious to the public service, and deserves the censure of this House.

I have shown that, by the deliberate finding of a regular committee of the Senate, the present Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, in connection with his brother-in-law, George D. Morgan, has unlawfully extorted from the tax-payers of the Government \$70,000 of their money. With neither justification nor restriction on his part, he yet retains his seat at the board of the Cabinet council, wears his livery, and fares sumptuously every day, while the wives and children of soldiers have died in the great philanthropic cities of the North for the want of bread.

I have shown that a commission of most eminent gentlemen, appointed by the President himself, have proven, conclusively beyond all doubt, that the blighting touch of John C. Fremont, during his hundred days in Missouri, raised public credit, debauched the people of millions, filled the exhausted purses of his favorites by fraud, demoralized the public service in every branch, and sought to destroy the Constitution itself. The exhausted soldier is put to death for yielding to irresistible slumber at his post, the victim of pinching poverty is sent to the penitentiary for stealing provisions for his wife and children; but this exalted criminal finds approval for his conduct, is surrounded by flatterers, is restored to the field, and sits in the saddle of command and of power. Sir, Cameron brought the haughty Vesper to trial and condemnation for his fraudulent practices in the Sicilian language; and Burke indicted the English language by his denunciations of the extortionate measures imposed by Warren Hastings on the people of the East Indies; but in the midst of fraud and robbery in the very highest departments of this Government we have as yet seen no official delinquent brought to answer the law for the plunder of the public Treasury, but rather we have seen the perpetrators of these wrongs receiving still greater marks of confidence and of favor, and mounting to still loftier heights of honor.

But, Mr. Speaker, having established, by the highest proof, the charge which I make of fraud in the management of our pecuniary affairs by which our public debt has been so fearfully increased, I shall now proceed to the brief consideration of a few other points properly in this connection, and which I conceive to be of public interest.

enormous figures of our national indebtedness whenever they are brought to our attention, in the fact that we can defer its payment, and beneath it as an inheritance to coming generations. Admitting that this unworthy thing may to some extent be done, yet let us see, for a few moments, what amount of money this Government will be compelled annually to raise in order to prevent open and confessed bankruptcy before the world. I will content myself with a specific statement of the various items of current yearly expense which must be regularly met. Against the substantial correctness of this statement I challenge successful contradiction.

The interest on the public debt, at a very low estimate, \$100,000,000.

The ordinary expenses of the Government, including appropriations for the increased necessities of the army and navy after the war is over, will reach \$150,000,000, at another low estimate. I am especially warranted in fixing this amount in view of the declaration on this floor, by the chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, (Mr. Blair of Missouri) that hereafter our peace establishment will consist of a standing army of a hundred thousand men.

The pension list comes next. This Government must not fail to meet the requirements of civilization and of humanity. It must and will provide for the support of its maimed and wounded, and for the maintenance of the widows and orphans of those who have fallen on the field of battle or been stricken down by disease while in the public service. It is of course difficult to calculate the amount which will be required to meet this item of expense; but no well informed person will pretend that it will be less than the sum of \$100,000,000.

To the above must be added at least \$5,000,000 more as a margin for claims against the Government, contingent expenses, and unforeseen events during this convulsive and unsteady period of the world's history.

We have thus an inevitable annual expenditure, without making any provision whatever for the payment of the public debt itself, of the sum of \$300,000,000. This amount will make its demands on the resources of the people in each succeeding year, as regularly as the seasons come and go, and in a voice as imperative and inexorable as the cry of fate. You need not avert your frightened gaze from the mere contemplation of this terrible fact. It is the lion in the pathway of the future, but it must be met. Death itself is not more certain to all than is this monstrous annual burden on the shoulders of the American people. And now, sir, bearing this fearful fact in mind from which there is now no escape, the question necessarily arises with immense, overwhelming force, as to what system of finance shall be adopted to raise annually this monstrous sum of money. It is the vital question of the day, and paramount to all others save civil liberty and republican government.

I live, Mr. Speaker, in a land of corn, in a land where the fruits of the earth constitute the reward of labor. I live in a great valley, beside whose agricultural wealth the famed valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile and the richest fields of Europe sink into utter insignificance, and whose more than Egyptian granaries invite the markets of the civilized world. The plow, the harrow, the reaper and the threshing machine are our implements of industry, and compose the coat of arms of our nobility. The soil is our fruitful mother, and we are her children. We fill our cribs with grain and stock our pastures with cattle, and with these we seek to purchase those other necessary articles of life which are not made in our midst. These are our possessions which we offer in barter and exchange with the trading merchants of the world who give us the best returns. This we conceive to be our right, and that the Government in which we live should protect us in its enjoyment.

But turn to the contemplation of another region of this country. You there behold the land of manufacturing machinery, and hear the sound of the loom and the spindle. The people of the North and East make fabrics of cloth, and manufacture all those articles which man needs, and which do not grow. These constitute their wealth and their stock of merchandise for trade. The markets of the world are open to them, and of right ought to be. The West is an immense consumer of those articles which they have to sell. We are willing to buy of them of our own choice if we can buy there as cheap as we can elsewhere. But I here aver that the unequal and unjust system of finance now adopted by the party in power gives to the vast manufacturing interest of this country the arbitrary power to fix its own exorbitant prices, and the laboring agriculturist is compelled to pay them. To this no people can submit. Against this outrage the people of the West will cry out. You have fastened upon this country the most odious system of tariff on imported goods that ever paralyzed the energies of a nation or oppressed its agricultural citizens. You say by that tariff that the manufacturing institutions of this country shall not be brought in competition with those of other parts of the world. You say that our ports shall be closed to foreign traders for fear they will undersell the manufacturer of New England or the ironworker of Pennsylvania. You require of the European merchant a duty which he cannot pay, and thus you banish him from our commercial intercourse. You say to the western farmer, to agriculturalists everywhere, that there shall be but one market in which they may buy. You drive them to the counters and fenderies of men whom you protect in

a monopoly of the sales which they make. You do all this for the sake and avowed reason that goods from abroad can be sold cheaper than they can be made and sold by our own citizens, and that a protection must be given to high prices. Every school-boy in political science knows who pays this increase of price. Need I, at this period of American history, discuss the operations of a high protective tariff? Need I stop to show its folly and injustice? No, sir. It is one of the settled questions of governmental policy. Twenty years ago it was fairly tried, and the American people passed an intelligent verdict of condemnation against it. It was fully heard by greater advocates than it has to-day, and repudiated as an unfair and ruinous system. If any question was ever, in the history of this Government, distinctly tried before a tribunal of the people, and the American people were its judge, it was the question of a protective tariff. The country prospered by its repudiation, and the laborers bought where his money would buy most. But this issue has again risen, and in a shape more offensive and injurious to the true interest of the country than ever before. The present tariff is one which no party in the past would have sanctioned. It would have alarmed the old Whig party as much as any other by its stringent and prohibitory features. It goes far beyond what was deemed wise or prudent by the strongest protectionists of former high tariff periods. And, now, allow me to state some of its specific practical operations as a part of the financial policy of the present hour.

It forces the laboring man, the consumer, the farming classes generally to pay for manufactured articles, which embrace a large portion of the necessities of life, an increased price over their proper value, and over that for which they can elsewhere be bought of from fifty to one hundred per cent. Thus a tax of most fearful rate is levied on one branch of industry, not to support the Government, but to contribute as a gratuitous donation to privileged and favored business. That is the first extortionate price of taxation which meets us in the examination of this subject. It is one which at any time would fall with oppressive cruelty on a large majority of the loyal people of the country, but at a time like this, when the Government itself is claiming almost the entire substance of the land for its maintenance, no language can be found sufficiently strong with which to characterize the enormity of such a policy.

In the next place, the present tariff forces the Government of a much needed revenue by keeping imported goods from our shores. Under its operations during the past year, according to a statement made a few weeks since in the British Parliament by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, our importations from Great Britain alone have fallen off to the amount of \$85,000,000. The report on the finances of our own Government for the year ending June 30, 1861, shows a loss in our receipts arising from customs during the first three months after this tariff went into operation of over ten millions of dollars compared with the receipts during a similar period a year previous. Under the tariff of 1846, a revenue to support the Government was sought by liberal terms of trade with foreign nations, and richly obtained. The rule is now reversed, and for the unworthy purpose of protecting a class of business which ought to sustain itself or be abandoned, this great fountain of pecuniary support to the nation is dried up. It no longer flows into the Treasury, and the money which is thus diverted from the public to private and individual benefit, has to be replaced under this Administration by direct and specific taxes on the people. Thus taxation grows and augments its avaricious proportions in order that the interests of a favored few may be cherished and promoted.

But the manner in which this taxation is to be levied, and in which it is to effect the different interests of the country exceeds all the preceding features of venial outrage on those who live by producing from the soil, by the provisions of the tax bill which recently passed this House, a tax of three per cent. ad valorem is laid upon all articles of manufacture in the hands of the manufacturer. It is estimated that there will be thus raised \$50,000,000 of the annual income arising from taxation. This the manufacturing interest is to pay for the support of the Government, and the sins of patriotism which are assumed in consequence are eminently characteristic. But inasmuch as this manufacturing is guarded by a Morrill tariff from all competition in selling, and strictly protected in increasing its prices of sale to its forced customers, to an almost unlimited extent, will any one, in his simplicity, pretend that the three per cent. which with it is taxed, the \$50,000,000 which it has to pay will not be charged up to the buyer when its goods are sold. The tariff and taxation and kindred measures, born of a common origin, and like lashed hounds, hunt for their innocent prey coupled together. The tariff stands guard over the interests of the manufacturer, while taxation hunts for every other substance in the land on which to fasten its fangs. And if, for the sake of appearances, the manufacturing interest is mentioned in a tax bill, the tariff steps forward and enables its cherished friends to recover every dollar which they are assessed by raising the price of the wooden clothes, the linens, the calicoes, the plowshares, and the implements of husbandry, and the articles of daily necessity which the American Government forces its citizens to buy of its protected monopolists. This is the culmination, the climax or wrong—A Government which

plunders one citizen to enrich another needs the strong, stern hand of reform on its helm.

Though perfect equality should prevail in meeting the immense taxation which is coming like a mountain avalanche upon the people, yet it will be borne amid sorrow and weary pain, but when it shall all fall virtually on a given class of citizens it will become an intolerable, suffocating right mare and death. I challenge the attention of the country that such is the working of the present system, which it is pretended has been adopted for the support of the Government. Already we see its effects. The great manufacturing corporations of the East are crowding their pockets with rapid and gigantic gains. Their dividends of profits are a swollen thirty, sixtieth, and some an hundred fold. This is no random statement, but is sustained by the statistics before me. It is a fact, too, of which the whole country has taken cognizance.

Sir, no sectional boundaries to my love of country prompts these remarks. I call God to witness with what devotion I love every soil and rock and river, mountain, prairie and forest of my native land. For its happiness and glory it would be sweet and honorable to die. I reckon no section of it above another. It is all alike to me, all dear and hallowed by the principles of constitutional liberty. But I speak in the name of justice, which is everywhere present, in the name of fraternal and American equality. I ask you, I implore you, to look at the condition of the Western people. Their interests have been abandoned on this floor by more than half their Representatives, and they stand to-day heaving the hard burthen of the pitiless storm which has burst from the angry sky. They are shut out from all fair markets for their produce. Their natural channels of trade to the South are closed by the impious hand of war, and their avenue to the markets of the North are obstructed by the avarice of railroads. It costs sixty cents to freight a bushel of corn from the Wabash river to New York and leaves from seven to fourteen cents to the farmer who has caused it to grow and gathered it in, as the reward of his toil. For everything else he receives the same beggary return. And yet who has lifted up his voice here in behalf of that great, that honest, and oppressed people? Where is their representative in the committee of Ways and Means, that great despotic committee which matures measures of tariff, taxation, and of finance, and whose decrees on this floor are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians? On that committee, which speaks the voice of fate for the weal or woe of the tax payers of all the land, the great imperial domain of the West, from the foot of the Allegheny mountains to the Pacific coast, has had no member during this important session. How after blow has fallen on her naked head and how she stands exposed to the payment of four fifths of all the burdens which this Government has to bear, I speak advisedly. She has been trampled under foot. She has been plundered for the benefit of others. And from here I call upon her to vindicate herself, to assert her equality, to resist oppression, to scorn the tribute she is called upon to pay to a branch which God and nature never intended she should support, to demand from her Government the same protection which others obtain, and to reckon with her oppressors at the ballot box.

As for me I shall join in no such system of justice, inequality, and wanton extortion against the people whose interests are confided to my care in this House. I shall resist it in all constitutional methods, and do so once in every where; and in doing so I shall perform what I conceive to be one of the highest duties of honest, fearless patriotism.

I might here stop, Mr. Speaker, and rest this great subject with the American people. The vast debt, the unparalleled fraud by which it has been accumulated, and the iniquitous mode of assessing taxes on the wealth and labor of the country, are all before them. But the political party now in the executive and legislative departments of this Government have never considered any measure of policy on any subject complete or perfect unless it embraced a connection, however unpalatable with the African race, unfortunately in large numbers upon this continent. These are strange days that have come upon us. We have all lived to see the abolition of slavery become a pecuniary question, and the abolition party become a direct tax upon the pocket of the people. The Federal tax-payers will visit every home in the land in the next six months for money to carry out its schemes. In the midst of a war more expensive than the world ever witnessed before, with an Army and Navy costing us more than the armies of England, France, Austria, and Russia combined; with the hand of plunder deep in the sacred vaults of the national Treasury; with the hungry spirit of taxation, like the beggar and insatiate specter of famine, hunting for the smallest substance of a laboring people, out of which to wring an income; with markets closed, prices depressed, bankruptcy casting its appalling cloud on the horizon of the future, and dismay gathering in the face of the yeoman of the nation, this, sir, is the time chosen to startle us with a deliberate and most earnest proposal to purchase with money and set free the slave population of the South. The President of the United States, and both branches of the American Congress have solemnly pledged this Government, in the face of its own citizens and before the

attentive gaze of the nations of the earth, to buy and liberate, if the owners will sell, the entire four millions slaves which are held in the Southern States of the Union. This is the pledge, and it stands recorded by a vote of this House, by the approval of the Senate, and by a vote of the President, who amazed the country in its zealous recommendation. It is now a part of the financial policy of the present administration made so by a full party expression. Nor has it been barren of fruits even thus early.—The slaves of the District of Columbia have already been bought by a freed and unconditional sale, and over one million of dollars appropriated from the earnings of the people to pay for them. This act of favoritism fixes the meaning which the authors of this pledge attach to the phrase "pecuniary sale." It has received a severely practical illustration, and the doubting mind is set at rest. But if anything further is needed to convince the tax payers of the designs of abolitionism, I have it before me. I hold in my hand a pamphlet of twelve pages, written by Daniel R. Gooden, an office holder under the Administration, evidently a man of ability, but unfortunately led astray by a spurious philosophy, and a mistaken philanthropy on the subject of slavery. He warmly and ably espouses the policy of the President, and makes the following statement of the cost of that policy to the American people.

"I have shown that the compensation to the border States would be at two different rates of payment, per capita for the slaves, and it will be seen that I have favored the more liberal scale. I now proceed to show what would be the cost of redeeming the whole slave population of the Union at the same rates.

"By the census of last year there was 3,952,801 slaves in the United States and Territories. I have already shown that 451,411, which belonged to the border States would be worth, at \$250 each, \$112,852,500, at \$300 each, \$136,822,500. There remains to be disposed of, therefore, 3,498,390 slaves embraced in the country subject to the sale, but including 1,000,000 large numbers belonging to the friends of the Union, who have been constrained involuntarily by the rebel authorities against their wills. At the lowest estimated average value of \$250, these slaves of the rebels would be worth \$874,597,500, and adding the compensation of the border States on the same terms, the cost would be \$988,200,250. At the higher rates of \$300, the slaves in the rebel States would be worth \$1,049,595,000; and adding the compensation of the border States at the same rate the aggregate expense of emancipation the cost would be \$1,185,840,300. Or for the convenience of round numbers, the cost of emancipating would be, at \$250 a head, \$1,000,000,000 and at \$300 per head, the cost would be \$1,200,000,000."

These are the figures made by an ardent friend of the system, who is now employed by appointment of the President assessing the value of the slaves of this District. Sir, I turn from them in horror. I cannot linger over them. I hand them over to the white sons of toil throughout the land, and call upon them to consider well the lesson which they teach. The Pharaohs of old, provoked the maledictions of the Saviour by their intolerance and hypocritical zeal in the affairs of other people; and a portion of the citizens of the North, in the contemplation of the above figures, may find a curse upon an exactly similar offence, which will prevent its commission in the future.

Abolitionism has hovered in our heavens like an angel of death, and from its wings has shaken pestilence and war, and now, like a giddy terror, it comes to every household for every tenth of the fruits of the earth and the flocks of the field. Like the fierce locusts of Egypt, it comes to devour our green fields and blast our golden harvests. It comes announced by the President, and sanctioned by both Houses of Congress, and remains to be seen whether the sinews of strained and oppressed industry will submit to its ravens and illegal demands.

I now take leave of this subject. I have dwelt upon it to day, not to discourage or depress the energies of the people, but to awaken the people to a sense of their perilous situation, in order that they may guard up their jobs and meet it in a manner becoming the intelligent, free citizens of America. The present, it is true, is dark, and filled the elements of the tempest; but in the thick of the future the star of hope is still burning with its ancient lustre. I believe in its promises of returning prosperity, honor and unity to this Government. Ay, sir, Hope, Hope, the sweet comforter of the weary hours of anguish, the merciful and benignant angel, walking forward by the side of mourning sorrow, the soothing minister of spirit of every human woe, the stay and support of great nations in their trials, as well as the fuel of hope; hope, that never dies nor sleeps, but shares its immortality with the soul itself, will bear us through the Red Sea and the wilderness that are before us. I implore, Mr. Speaker, in this hope, and cherish it as my friend—a friend that always smiles and points upwards and onward to bright visions beyond the shrouded clouds which now envelop us as a shield, but the basis of this hope with me is the future action of the people themselves. In the wise, patriotic, and Christian conduct of the American people, I behold this nation lifted up again from its prostration purified of its bloody pollution, robed in the shining garments of peace; the furious demon of civil war, which has reeled and caused us to

the late commander of this department, orders a paper shadow from the circumstances under which these declarations were made. Mr. Fremont had a few weeks before taken and subscribed the following military oath: "I, John C. Fremont, do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States and that I will serve them faithfully and honestly against their enemies and aggressors whomsoever; and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the commanding officers, according to the rules and regulations of war." He thus in the sight of God and his country, had pledged faith and loyalty to the Government that he would bear true allegiance, and be "good plebe" to the most solemn of human sanctions to support that Constitution which "when the people are in the field," places at their disposal the President of the United States, and that any General holding a commission under him. With a couching fondness he was summoned from the obscurity of private life, and preferred above the veterans and the whole army of patriots, he was made Major-General. Scarcely had he been given the sword, to whose honor the best interests of the nation had been committed, when he says to his subordinates and followers that he draws it, not in the name of

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