

STRONG LIGHT ON TARIFF BUNCOMBE

Nothing in recent years has so stirred political circles as Secretary Taft's order to purchase abroad supplies for the Panama Canal in order to avoid the exorbitant prices which tariff protected trusts in the United States have placed upon their products.

Republican editors are greatly disturbed by the Taft order, although some of them, notably the New York Tribune, makes a brave attempt to have the dose prepared by Secretary Taft seem a wholesome one. The Tribune says that the objection made to the Taft order is "the kind of stand-patism which reduces itself to absurdity."

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat does not attempt to conceal its disgust, and declares that the Taft policy will "reduce American labor to the level of the pauper labor of Europe."

The New York Press is particularly bitter, and referring to the Taft order takes a fling even at Mr. Roosevelt in this way:

"We protest because it is an arbitrary canceling, by individuals, of the will of the people. We protest because it is a betrayal of the republican party, charged by the American people with the guidance and administration of their affairs. We protest because it is treasonable against the citizens of the United States and their sovereign will.

"And we submit that if any man, no matter who he be, persists in carrying out this un-American and unfaithful program until such time as congress, acting for the outraged people, shall suspend his power to do things which he has no right to do, then the national electorate shall bring against him a further indictment to be answered at the polls.

"And when the American people have fixed their punishment for him with the official cast of their ballots we don't think there will be enough of his political existence left for mortal eye to see it as anything but a shadowy memory of a misguided past, which closed not a day too soon."

The Chicago Inter Ocean, hotly indignant, declares: "That is so manifestly a reversal of American policy that it is only necessary to state it to secure its condemnation. As the case stands there is no excuse."

The Boston Herald suggests the thought that is uppermost in the public mind when it says "Whether President Roosevelt is to succeed in splitting his party in twain, as President Cleveland may be said to have divided the democracy, time alone can show."

The Boston Transcript says that the stand-pat policy and the Panama policy "appear to have met in a head-on collision."

The Philadelphia North American says: "The railroads and steel trust are of the opinion that 'Big Bill' Taft sits down harder even than his weight seems to justify."

The Philadelphia Record says that the public is shocked to learn that the beneficiaries of high protection are selling abroad at lower prices than at home, and adds: "If the foreigner can get low prices and if the government can, what justice is there in permitting these beneficiaries to exact high prices from American citizens?"

The Pittsburg Post predicts that the Taft order "will have a powerful effect in opening the eyes of the

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people generally to the necessity of tariff reform and the absurdity of the position of the stand-patters."

The Kansas City Times says that everything is "un-American" which prohibits the American trust from exacting two prices for commodities, and that in the view of the trust magnate "only a traitor without a spark of patriotism can complain about being compelled to pay tribute toward the support of the trust system."

The New York World says: "When the government of the United States refuses to be held up by its own tariff-fattened manufacturers it is setting a most pernicious example to its citizens. In fact, the stand-patters may justly charge the federal government with inciting a revolt against the Dingley schedules."

The Kansas City Times says: "Nothing else has happened to throw such a strong light upon the tariff buncombe as this Panama business."

The New York Times warns the stand-patters that they would better go slow in adopting a home purchase resolution, because such a course may prompt Mr. Roosevelt "to take the field for an active campaign in behalf of tariff reform."

The Wall Street Journal says that the Taft order was due to the "discovery" that American made goods can be bought abroad cheaper than at home.

The Indianapolis Sentinel says: "The decision to buy materials for the Panama Canal in the cheapest market does not leave the ultra-protectors a leg to stand on."

The New York Herald says: "If it is a good thing for the government to thus evade paying tariff tribute to the trusts and multi-millionaire tariff beneficiaries, why would it not be a good thing for the people?"

The Atlanta Constitution interprets the Taft order to mean that "tariff revision is not only dead, but that under the chaperonage of President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft it is bound to create all sorts of trouble in the high tariff campaign."

The New York Herald prints this dialogue:

"Father, if an 'open market' is good for us in Panama, why isn't it the thing for us here?"

"My son, necessity is the mother of invention, a rolling stone gathers no moss, and—say, here is a half dollar. Go down to Coney and enjoy yourself."

Here is another from the New York Press:

"If the American people, who are paying for this canal, pay the money for its construction to Americans they virtually pay it back to themselves. The hundred million dollars paid abroad would be taken from the people of the United States, who are paying for the canal. The government can obtain reasonable bids at home by refusing to accept them if they are excessive, as it did in the case of warships. It ought to spend the money at home. If necessary congress ought to compel this plan."

The New York Tribune finds it difficult to justify its approval of the Taft order with its high protective tariff

notions, but makes an interesting and heroic effort in this way:

"There appears to be really no considerable argument against such a system of purchase. The principle of the protective tariff—in fidelity to which we yield precedence to none—can not be effectively invoked against it, for the reason that protection is intended to preserve the home market for the home producer and the Panama canal is not a home market. We can not see, then, that it is properly to be regarded as under the rule of the protective system."

The St. Louis Republic says: "The situation as the protesting Mr. Grosvenor says, certainly furnishes a theme for some interesting tariff discussions. It gives tariff revision a boom such as it has not had in years. The action of the administration is a repudiation of all the logic that has ever been used in support of protection. The government, as represented by Messrs. Roosevelt and Taft, is nothing less than a free trader. It is a free trader when it comes to buy—but a stiff standpat protectionist when the ruling party is working up campaign funds. The government quite naturally rebels when it is confronted with the exactions under which the people have been made to suffer."

The New York Times says: "Has President Roosevelt resolved, late but firmly, to become the Richard Cobden of the Dingley act? Certainly Cobden, matchless popular orator that he was, and strong in the perfect sincerity of his purpose, never dealt the British corn laws a more terrible blow that Mr. Roosevelt has dealt the Dingley law. It is time for the beneficiaries of the high tariff to take heed about their protected interests, for this is a very leviathan of tariff reform that the president has unloosed. It is more than reform—it is rebellion, the most astonishing ever recorded in the chronicles of the world, the rebellion of a government against its own laws. It is a repudiation. It is virtual nullification. It is a destructive assault by the most powerful force upon the citadel of protection. Does anybody suppose that a tariff policy which is too extortionate and outrageous for the government business will long be put up with by those who carry on private business?"

The Kansas City Star says: "The Panama canal commission can not be too severely censured for its decision to buy supplies where it can secure them cheapest, whether in the United States or in Europe. Doesn't the commission understand that this is an un-American procedure? Isn't it familiar with President McKinley's assertion that a cheap coat makes a cheap man, and does it want to build a cheap canal with the consequent deterioration of the American people? However, there is no occasion to worry. The fifty men whom the Wall Street Journal calls the senate of American finance, are not likely to stand such an imprecation. It will be strange if their influence is not effectively exerted at the next session of congress to stop this preposterous attempt of the Panama commission to safe-guard the people's money and to build the canal as cheaply as possible."

Move as a Man With a Purpose--

Not as a Sheep Following a Bell

(Continued from Page 9)

shall do what I can to forward the good work you are doing. The people will be forced soon to take up the reforms and to then do their own thinking and reasoning.

T. J. McKean, Drew, Oregon.—I am glad of the opportunity to sign the primary pledge, which I find in The Commoner. I wish every democrat in the United States would sign the

pledge and work with all their might for the principles advocated by Mr. Bryan.

W. W. Faragher, Argentine, Colo.—I see by The Commoner's beautiful plan men of the highest all over the land are signing the pledge and are lending a hand; so it's time for us commoners to show where we stand, and sign Mr. Bryan's political plan; I am mining for silver; you know where

I stand, and I am always ready to do what I can, and it's a pleasure to me to sign my old hand.

Geo. R. Hall, Sr., E. F. Hall and Geo. R. Hall, Jr.—Bellfontaine, Ore.—I am much pleased with your plan to arouse the true democrats of our country to the matter of principles in politics. I hope you will direct us specifically in the future. We have proved our sincerity by repudiating a great leader who was a democrat only in name. I am glad to sign this pledge and with my boys, undertake to carry out in our weak way the principles of our greatest leader, Thos. Jefferson.

J. V. Killiom, real estate, Eminence, Kas.—Enclosed herewith find the primary pledge duly signed. It has been my practice for the last thirty-six years to attend all democratic primaries. The true and unfaltering democrats were discouraged, by the backward step taken by the national convention at St. Louis, as were the loyal democrats in many other states. The result was disastrous from a party standpoint, as well as from the standpoint of principle. Democrats everywhere should attend the party primaries and see that no one but democrats from principle are elected delegates to county, state or national conventions. If we can't win on democratic lines, we can't win at all. The plutocratic grounds are already occupied. Democrats can not hope to compete with the present occupants for the favors necessary to carry on that kind of a campaign. Let us fight it out on the peoples' side if it takes all summer.

Fred Parkinson, Chairman Democratic Executive Committee for the Indian Territory, Waggoner, I. T.—Find primary pledge herewith. Your plan is certainly commendable.

J. M. Clark, R. F. D. No. 2, Anderson, Mo.—Enclosed find my pledge to attend all primaries and do all I can in this county for the democratic party. Please send me 25 more primary pledges. Yours in politics.

John N. Burks, South Omaha, Neb.—I have secured twenty signatures to the primary pledge. They all heartily endorse your plan and are with William J. Bryan. I intend to get as many as I can.

Wm. E. Hill, Bentonville, Ark.—Enclosed please find primary pledge with my signature. I want to see the democrats come to the front in 1908.

Samuel H. Sanders, Brightwater, Ark.—I endorse your plan of organization. I am truly glad that it has commenced in time, and I shall do what I can for democracy.

W. F. Smith, West Union, W. Va.—Enclosed find primary pledge. I think the plan suggested by The Commoner a good one. Yours for success of democracy.

E. P. Jaques, Aitkin, Minn.—As there are not democrats enough here

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