

Western Opinion on Mr. Taft's Tribute to the Republican Tariff Law

Kansas City Times (rep.): There is no such thing as republican solidarity on the tariff today. There never again will be such a thing as republican solidarity on a high protection basis. The breach is too wide and too deep to be repaired on that basis. All the speeches of all the defenders of the Payne-Aldrich law will not convince the country that the party kept the faith, or that its representatives in congress who had control of the session even attempted to keep the faith. For the first time in the history of tariff legislation the chief opponents of a new law are on the republican side. The people won their first great victory within the republican party when they forced the nomination of a revision candidate and made the party embody a revision plank in its platform. They were deceived in Mr. Taft, and they were disappointed in many of their senators and representatives, but the insurgent members, at least, were loyal to them. Is it conceivable that the republican rank and file, especially in the states of the great central west, will realign themselves with Aldrich and Cannon and turn against their own loyal representative? Let no one think of it.

Waterloo (Ia.) Times-Tribune: What of the progressive republicans, now outcasts? President Taft says they have the privilege of continuing the fight within the party ranks. Kind, real kind of the president. But what will it avail them? They fought for nominee Taft, understanding they were fighting against the Aldrich-Cannon brand of republicanism. They find themselves fought against and the Aldrich-Cannon brand of republicanism accepted as the true ad pure brand, by the man they thought one of them. The Aldrich-Cannon brigade is astride the prancing steeds, with whips in hand they are beating back those who would "progress." It is, perhaps, now perfectly clear to progressive republicans that their party is controlled by the "hated gang." They thought when they elected Mr. Taft they had the "gang" licked. They prayed that the president would take a hand in the tariff fight at a time when he could have accomplished something. They excused his neglect to enter into the arena and fight for his beliefs, but hoped on and now they find he never much sympathized with their progressive methods. "Their noses were sharpened on their own grindstone."

St. Louis Post-Dispatch: In simple language what Mr. Taft did was to read out of the republican party those insurgents who responded to the dictates of conscience and placed principle above party solidarity. They were traitors. They considered it better that the tariff bill be defeated than that the solemn promises of the platform be violated. They would have saved Mr. Taft from making the humiliating explanation that the failure to reduce the wool rates was a sad error and the retention of the Dingley rates an "important defect in the Payne tariff bill." They would have spared him the abject apology that the wool schedule brings failure "in the performance of the platform to reduce rates to a difference in the cost of production with reasonable profit to the manufacturer." But Mr. Taft has not yet read out of the party or disciplined in the resonant language of forensic dignity the "wool growers in the far west" and "the woolen manufacturers in the east and other states," who "through their repre-

sentatives in congress," were "sufficiently strong to defeat and attempt to change the woolen tariff and, had it been attempted, it would have beaten the bill reported from either committee." These representatives of the wool interests were the real insurgents. They caused the perversion of the "difference in cost of production" theory and the repudiation of the solemn platform promise. They would have defeated, as Mr. Taft frankly and humbly admits, any tariff bill that ran counter to their interests, party solidarity or no party solidarity. The wool cabal yielded to no considerations of either party or conscience. "Without parties," argued Mr. Taft, "popular government would be absolutely impossible. In a party those who join it, if they would make it effective, must surrender their personal predilections on matters comparatively of less importance in order to accomplish the ground which united action on the most important principles at issue secures." He said that in justifying his condemnation of the conscientious insurgents. How perfectly it applies to the wool insurgents who did everything the other insurgents sought to do and did it for what? Shall we say that a redeemed promise and an unreputed platform are matters "comparatively of less importance" than a robber wool schedule? In short, to prevent an invasion of party solidarity Mr. Taft acquiesced in a violation of a platform pledge. If the pledge hadn't been violated the party would have been split. But he lets the men who forced this humiliating surrender for the accomplishment of a wrong to remain honored members of the party. He drives out of the party the men who declined to submit, who would not yield their "personal predilections," who considered a party platform a solemn engagement and election promises as earnest of an effort to redeem them.

Duluth (Minn.) Herald: If President Taft had gone to sleep ten years ago, in the days when patriotism was prostrate under the foot of partisanship, when everything gave way to the demands of the "party organization," no matter how infamous the make-up of that organization might be, and had just awakened, he would talk just as he talked at Winona. President Taft has signed, approved, defended and praised the infamous treachery of the Aldrich-Payne-Taft bill. President Taft has praised and applauded the people's servants who have been faithful to special privilege and its organization in control of the government, and has upbraided and held up to public scorn the people's servants who have been faithful to the people and have revolted from the galling rule of the vice-regents of organized greed. Could machine rule in politics, the rule of greed in government, ask or hope for more than this?

Kansas City Star (insurgent): President Taft's Winona speech will be a profound disappointment to the whole country, but especially to the west, which was first and strongest in the support of his candidacy for the office of chief magistrate and had the greatest confidence in his capacity as well as his sincerity. It is plainly revealed that the president does not comprehend the popular view of the tariff question. What is far more discouraging is that he views the action of congress with reference to the party pledges from the reactionary rather than the progressive standpoint. His reliance on a table

prepared by Chairman Payne of the house ways and means committee as the basis of his analysis of the new tariff law can be construed only as a definite alignment on the part of the president with the reactionary forces so far as the tariff question is concerned. Mr. Taft has particularly failed in sounding the temper and grasping the view of the west with reference to the Payne-Aldrich law. He assumes that by signing the bill the tariff issue has been disposed of for some years. So far as the west is concerned, this is an utterly fallacious assumption. The action of congress has made the issue greater and more insistent than ever, and it will not be allayed until the tariff system is relieved of at least its most flagrant iniquities.

St. Paul Pioneer Press (insurgent): Standpatters will hail President Taft's Winona speech as one of the greatest contributions to tariff literature. From the standpatters' standpoint it is a gem. Perhaps above all other men in the country President Taft is the master of clear statement. His review of the schedules would serve as a model brief of the attorney for the plaintiff. Yet the consumer finds no note of comfort in it.

New York Tribune: President Taft has made his eagerly looked for tariff speech and has declared himself in terms which will please the great majority of the American people, who are neither free traders nor extreme protectionists.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat: The things which Mr. Taft said in his speech in Winona about the tariff are just about what ought to have been expected, but he said them with a little more emphasis and decisiveness than had been looked for.

Chicago Tribune: Did anybody expect President Taft to affix his signature to that tariff bill and then go around the country knocking it?

Topeka Capital: You may not agree with President Taft in his opinion of the tariff law recently passed by a republican congress. But if you were president of the United States by grace of the votes of the republican party what would your opinion of the tariff law be?

Lincoln (Neb.) News (rep.): Mr. Taft was nominated because the republicans believed he was for revision of the tariff. If he had said a year ago that he would have been satisfied if congress put up to him a bill that reduced the tariff less than 1 per cent—which is all that Mr. Payne even claims it did—does anybody imagine that any tariff revisionist would have been yelling very loud for him? If he had said that as president he would sign any bill that the party organization decided was all right, he would not now be the man in the White House. We are very frank to say that we don't believe the president can convince many real tariff revisionists

that a 1 per cent reduction in duties is a substantial reduction such as he promised he would stand for, or that he meant what he said before the Ohio society last December when he said that it was better to veto a bill that was not in compliance with the party pledge.

Des Moines Register and Leader (rep.): We are already discovering what the so-called Allison amendment to the rate bill—in fact the Aldrich amendment—is doing to nullify the work of the commission. Practically every decision is being taken into the courts there to drag along and be decided in the end against the commission by judges of the Grosscup affiliation. Take the Des Moines case against the Rock Island, where it was shown that five different rates were charged on eastern merchandise, on the same goods, in the same boxes, and on the same train, according to the eastern point of shipment. The attorney for the Rock Island admitted at the hearing here in Des Moines that in his opin-

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