

Clark Replies to President Taft

Following is an Associated Press dispatch: Quincy, Ill., Aug. 29.—Champ Clark, speaker of the national house of representatives, before leaving here early today, replied emphatically to President Taft's speech of defiance to insurgent republicans and democrats, delivered at Hamilton, Mass., last Saturday. In a signed interview, the speaker accused the president of not stating facts. He said he did not reply for the insurgent republicans who, "no doubt will take up the cudgels in their own behalf."

He declared among other things that if the tariff board is to be used as a pretext for delaying tariff revision downward, the democrats will cut off its supplies.

"President Taft's speech at Hamilton, Mass., last Saturday," said the speaker, "can only be described as remarkable when the history of the recent past is considered."

"He essayed the rather large stunt of running amuck on both democrats and the insurgent republicans in congress, singling out Mr. Underwood and myself particularly as democratic targets."

"I accept his onslaught as a badge of honor. The president and I are personal friends. He has done me many kindnesses and I have tried to repay them as far as opportunity has served. He is, as a rule, a most amiable gentleman, but at the same time he seems to have been in a bad temper; because he sees defeat staring him in the face. I would say nothing unkind about him, but I can not and will not permit him personal strictures and his bad misstatement of historical facts to go unchallenged."

CALLS IT UNGRATEFUL

"The president's criticism of Mr. Underwood and myself, which is essentially a criticism of all democrats in the house and senate because all democrats stood together, is absolutely uncalled for and it is as ungrateful a performance as I can remember; for if it had not been for the action of the democrats in the house in both the Sixty-first and Sixty-second congresses in lining up almost unanimously in favor of reciprocity with Canada, he would have been the most thoroughly discredited and humiliated president since the days of Andrew Johnson."

"With all the influence and patronage of his great office, he could not muster a majority of house republicans for reciprocity in either the Sixty-first or the Sixty-second congresses. After we pulled him out of the hole in the Sixty-first congress, he wrote a letter of thanks to Mr. McCall, of Massachusetts and the republicans but said not a word of thanks to the democrats."

"When we repeated the performance of pulling out of the hole in the Sixty-second congress, he did divide the thanks between democrats and republicans, that was after I and other democrats had expressed our opinions with considerable force and bluntness about his letter of thanks to Mr. McCall."

REFERS TO POLITICS

"The president says we did not play politics about reciprocity but that we did play politics about the tariff. The only politics we played was to keep faith with the people and to religiously redeem the promises we made in order to win the election in 1910 which is the best and noblest sort of politics."

"If any politics was played on reciprocity, the president himself played it—personal at that."

"He seems to think that we ought to have adjourned so soon as reciprocity was disposed of—that is, he seems to think that congress is composed of a lot of school boys to be ordered about by him as head teacher; but he was forewarned by both Mr. Underwood and by myself that if he called the extraordinary session we would pass tariff bills and such other bills as the democrats deemed advisable. He will not deny that statement."

"We made the best record of constructive statesmanship made by any congress in the same length of time in a generation and that fact is precisely what caused the president to assail the democrats in congress."

THE WOOL BILL

"He has said the rates of Schedule K in the Payne tariff bill were too high and should be reduced. We reduced them. In the teeth of his Winona speech and his other declarations

to the effect that said rates were too high and ought to be reduced, he vetoed our wool bill, which largely reduced the rates and would have greatly relieved the people by giving them much cheaper clothing and blankets. He vetoed it, thereby going over boots and breeches to the standpatters."

"We cheerfully met him on that issue. We stand for the best interests of the masses. By his veto he enables a handful of protected tariff barons to continue to levy unjust and exorbitant tribute upon the consumers of the land. He appears to hope that the consumers will kiss his hand, which is the hand that smote them sorely."

"The president endeavors to convey the impression that Mr. Underwood and I advocated his tariff commission. We did no such thing. What Mr. Underwood and I did advocate and vote for was a board of tariff experts to be governed by and made responsible to the house in general and to the committee on ways and means in particular; because the house is charged by the constitution with the duty of originating revenue bills."

"We were never in favor of a tariff board or commission under the control of the president alone and responsive to him only."

THE TARIFF BOARD

"The president's tariff board is composed of able and well informed men in a general way. I know that my friend Hon. William Howard is. I have served in congress with him many years and rate his capacity high, but he is not a tariff expert. So far as I have been able to learn, the others are not experts."

"On the other hand, several members of the house, both republicans and democrats, including Mr. Underwood and myself, have spent a half a lifetime studying and debating the tariff."

"It will be noted that while the president's conscience would not permit him to sign a bill revising even one schedule, the wool schedule, the rate of which he declared to be too high and in need of reduction, without recommendation from his board of non-experts, he promptly signed the outrageous Payne-Aldrich tariff bill without the counsel, advice or tuition of any tariff board whatsoever."

"That bill was so bad that in a house with a republican majority we lacked only five votes of killing it by recommitting it."

"That day twenty-four patriotic republicans voted with us, among them Hon. J. R. Mann, the present republican minority leader."

NOT STAND FOR PRETEXT

"It might as well be understood now as later that if the tariff board is to be used as a pretext for delaying tariff revision downward, as the president is now using it, instead of expediting genuine and salutatory tariff revision, its days will be few for we will cut off its supplies. This board has already cost three or four hundred thousand dollars and has not given to congress any information to aid in revising the tariff."

"Mr. Underwood and I did say that we would gladly receive information on the tariff from any body possessing it; but we never did say and never will say that we, together with other members well informed on the subject, must wait until the president's board might get ready to make recommendations."

"The president himself is a man of large general information, as well as a man of great ability, but he is not enough of a tariff expert to justify him in vetoing tariff bills, which passed the house by majorities of more than two to one. It is not a flippant or unfriendly statement to say that he possessed only the 'surface information' on the tariff as Governor Dingley denominated it which is possessed by every citizen well informed in a general way."

NOT ILL CONSIDERED

"The president implies that he refused to sign the wool bill because it was introduced and rushed through without due consideration. Let's see. The caucus of democratic members-elect to the house and congress met January 19 and selected the democratic members of the committee on ways and means, making Mr. Underwood chairman. They, with their helpers, at once began to assemble information on the wool schedule. The bill was reported to the house about the middle of April, a period of three months, on the preparation of one schedule out of fourteen. Whereas the hearing on the Payne bill with fourteen schedules beginning November 11, and the bill was reported

to the house March 18, a period of a little over four months, devoted to fourteen schedules. Any beginner in arithmetic knows that if it takes three months to one schedule and the framers of the Payne bill devoted on the average only 2-7 of one month to each schedule, we devoted 10½ times as much time to a schedule as did Payne and his coadjutors on the ways and means committee."

"However and notwithstanding this the president signed the Payne-Aldrich-Smoot bill and vetoed ours. In this connection it should not be forgotten that when Mr. Underwood reported the wool bill, every line, paragraph and section was therein open to debate and that the debate continued until the members discussed it all they wanted to. Instead of being slapped together hastily without due consideration it was one of the most thoroughly and carefully considered tariff bills ever presented to any president for his signature."

ASTONISHED AT STATEMENT

"In view of the foregoing facts, it must be that the president forgot that all men are entitled to a square deal when he uttered this monstrous and preposterous sentence:

"The bills bear internal evidence of the fact that they rested on a basis of not tariff for revenue only, but tariff for politics only."

"Really I do not see how he could find it in his heart to utter the foregoing words for which there is no basis of fact in the universe."

"Never in the government's history, I venture to say, have important public interests been dealt with in such a light hearted way, with such absolute ignorance of the effect of legislation and with such willingness to sacrifice business interests to political exigencies."

"That is as reckless, as unfair a statement as has been put into print since Gutenberg invented movable type, and it is a personal reflection on the sense, honesty, integrity and patriotism of every man, democrat or republican, who voted for the bill. I resent them not for myself alone but for all who voted as I did."

"That was a queer and suggestive picture for democrats and tariff reform republicans to contemplate. The president making a standpat speech at Hamilton, Mass., on the farm of my good standpat friend Hon. August Peabody Gardner, flanked on one side by Brother Gardner himself and on the other by Gardner's father-in-law, Henry Cabot Lodge, chief of protective tariff highbinders. That was enough to make a sweep."

"The president rushed in to create an issue. We pick up the glove flung into our faces and the faces of the consumers of the land. We gladly accept his gage of battle. We confidently believe that the people will endorse our cause and give to us the victory, for we have right and truth and justice on our side."

TRUST PRICES VS. WAR PRICES

From the Index-Appeal, an authority on the war between the states, we learn that "trust prices are worse than war prices," that is to say, the prices of articles in daily use are higher now than they were fifty years ago, when the exodus of men from fallow fields to the front left few producers at home. A statistician has gathered figures showing the prices of various articles in war time and now in trust time. These figures show that in some cases trusts are more deleterious than cannon and charging legions:

War Time	Article.	Now.
\$4.10.	Flour.	\$7.75.
14c a pound.	Pork.	18c-20c a pound.
3¼c a pound.	Hams.	20c-28c a pound.
8c-12c a pound.	Lard.	12½c a pound.
15c-20c a lb.	Butter.	30c-35c a pound.
14c a pound.	Cheese.	35c a pound.
10c-18c a lb.	Sugar.	6c-7c a pound.
30c-35c a gal.	Molasses.	32c-38c a gallon.
6½c a pound.	Beef.	15c a pound.
5c a pound.	Shoulders.	20c a pound.
13c-16c a lb.	Coffee.	25c-40c a pound.

Flour, it will be seen, sold for \$3.65 the barrel less than that it sells for now. Yet there are millions of acres producing wheat now that were not cleared in the sixties. The increase in the total number of acres of cultivable land in the United States, due to the development of the west and to irrigation has been far greater than our increase in population. Improved transportation, as the Index-Appeal points out, should have helped to lower the cost of bread-stuffs.

There is a good deal of truth in the charge that production in this country is being limited purposely.—Richmond (Va.) Times-Dispatch.