

STARTLING REVELATIONS ON USE OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE

Senator Irving L. Lenroot of Wisconsin Exposes "Non-Partisanship" of Democratic Administration at Washington

SPEAKS TO THE REPUBLICAN LOYALTY CONVENTION

Senator Irving L. Lenroot of Wisconsin, discussing "The Patriotism of the Republican Party" before the Republican State Loyalty convention in Lincoln Tuesday afternoon, May 28, declared that in spite of the determined and consistent course of the president in the inner councils of the war and in spite of the fact that in all of the political campaigns held since war was declared, Democrats sought to fasten the badge of disloyalty upon Republican candidates, the party had given a thorough, whole-hearted and disinterested support to Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Lenroot said that this support had been given unwaveringly and in the face of the fact that Democrats themselves had deserted the president. The Republican party has repeatedly surrendered political advantage in order to sustain the president; it has refrained from criticism under great provocation; it has seen incompetency in some departments; it has seen partisanship in some cases taking the place of patriotism, but realizing the magnitude of the task and that more or less extravagance is to be expected in the beginning it has kept silent where it might have spoken. He said that no party in all history had so disinterestedly and wholeheartedly supported a government in wartime as the Republican party and contrasted it with the Democratic party's attitude during the Civil War.

Mr. Lenroot dwelt at some length upon the fight made up here in Wisconsin, told of the efforts of Vice President Marshall to brand him as a disloyal candidate and took considerable satisfaction in pointing out that it was the heavily German counties in Wisconsin that went for the Democratic nominee.

Mr. Lenroot declared that America is in the war until it wins the war, and that the Republican party would stand back of the president in all necessary war measures. He regretted that the administration is conducting the war as a partisan matter, but that the Republican party would vote to grant the president every power to enable him to win it. He warned his hearers, however, that they might expect the Democrats to raise in the coming campaign the same false issue of disloyalty against the Republicans, and that they should be prepared to meet it with the fact. Mr. Lenroot said:

A year ago America accepted the decision of war, but without great enthusiasm. While the nation responded loyally to every appeal and made plain that it would stand back of the government in the prosecution of the war, the minds of many of our people were wandering. For the first time in years Europe had been fighting, and during that entire time it was the hope and expectation that America would not become involved. The presidential campaign of 1916 was won by President Wilson upon the issue that "He kept us out of war." While the invasion of Belgium in the early days of the war, thus violating its neutrality, shocked us; while the admission by the German officials that the Belgian treaty was to be considered as nothing but a "scrap of paper," troubled us, we still looked upon it as a European quarrel that did not directly concern us. However as the days and months and years went by, it became more clear that this was not a European quarrel over the balance of power or for commercial rivalry, but that there was a deep-set purpose in the minds of the autocracy of Germany to conquer and rule the world.

The sinking of the Lusitania was one of the greatest crimes in history, but Germany's promise that the offense would not be repeated made us feel that if she did not have any concern for the laws of humanity, she did fear us and would respect our rights; but on January 31, 1917, when Germany announced that she would resume her ruthless and unrestricted submarine warfare, it became plain to us all who were familiar with the facts in the situation, that peace could not much longer continue between the United States and the German government. Germany carried out her threats—she did sink American vessels, did destroy American lives, did attempt to influence the American congress by the use of money, did by her authorized spies and agents destroy American property, and the result was the declaration of war on April 6, 1917. It was unfortunate that in the early days of this war the aims and purposes of America were so vaguely stated by those in authority. We realize more fully now than we did then that this is not a war primarily to make the world "safe for democracy," altho it will do that when it is won—it is not primarily to restore Belgium or safeguard the rights and liberties of small nations, altho it will do that when it is won—it is not, except incidentally, to protect our rights upon the seas, altho those rights are included in what we fight for—this is really a war to save America, to preserve American ideals and the principles upon which this great republic was established.

We are in it, and we must go on until we win it. We cannot safely allow ourselves to stop short of complete defeat of the German autocracy. We cannot negotiate with a man who regards treaties as "mere scraps of paper"—who makes promises only to break them, who has no respect for any law, human or divine. We must fight on, until we can negotiate with a government responsible to the German people themselves. Then, and not until then, can we begin to think of peace.

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Not a Political Issue

In the conduct of this war there should be no politics, no partisanship. Patriotism never should be a political issue between loyal Americans. Whatever differences may exist between political parties, there should be no difference in the support of our government in time of war. In all matters in relation to the conduct of the war, party lines should be forgotten, and every one forget they are Republicans or Democrats, but remember only that we are all Americans.

Nevertheless, political parties should be instrumentalities for the creation of a correct public sentiment in the support of the war, and the subject of my talk today is "The Patriotism of the Republican Party." It was a deep and burning patriotism that created the Republican party and that patriotism is as active today in this crisis as it was in its earlier days.

Peace with Victory

Peace we all desire—peace we all long for. The day will come when Grant will repeat the words of Lincoln, "Let us have peace," but as he did not speak these words until the victory was won and the union saved, so America will not speak until this war is won and our liberties are preserved. Until victory comes we will rather remember Grant's words, "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." But it is not my purpose today to speak of the past. I wish to speak of the patriotism and unselfish devotion to country of the Republican party in this great struggle for the very existence of our republic.

In all history no party out of power has more disinterestedly and wholeheartedly supported the government than has the Republican party in this war. Its only desire has been to help President Wilson in the prosecution of the war to victory. It has in congress repeatedly surrendered political advantage in order to sustain the president; it has refrained from criticism under great provocation; it has seen incompetency in some departments; it has seen partisanship in some cases taking the place of patriotism, but realizing the magnitude of the undertaking, realizing that mistakes will occur, that more or less extravagance is to be expected in the beginning—realizing this, it has kept silent when it might have spoken.

As a Partisan Matter

We regret this administration is conducting the war as a partisan matter. No other nation has done this. In every other nation every political party has been consulted and given a participation in the administration of the government. In every other nation associated with us in this war there are coalition cabinets representing the whole people. In the United States alone the administration side of the government has been conducted in a partisan way, and yet, Republicans have ungrudgingly given the administration their support and will continue to do so.

President Wilson called upon the Republicans for help only when his own party leaders deserted him and it is a matter of pride that Republicans have never failed to come to his rescue upon any measure necessary to properly prosecute the war. Republican party lines have never been drawn upon any war measure. We claim no special credit for this, for it is our duty to our country, irrespective of who may be its president.

In both senate and house the Republicans have voted for and actively supported all measures necessary to carry on the war. As I have said, we

do not claim any special credit for this, for we performed only our duty. We have not asked for the thanks of the Democratic party in what we have done, but we had a right to expect that in the face of this record Democrats would not, at the very least, deny the patriotism of the Republican party.

But what are the facts? Last year there was an election to fill a vacancy in New Hampshire caused by the death of Mr. Sulloway, a Republican. In the campaign following Democratic orators sent into that district by the Democratic national committee, in their speeches stated that a vote for the Republican candidate was a vote for the Kaiser. Nevertheless, the Republican candidate was elected and he has been a loyal supporter of all war measures since he has been a member of the house. He was known to be loyal through the campaign, but for the sake of political advantage alone Democrats tried to place the stamp of disloyalty upon the Republican candidate and the Republican party in New Hampshire.

Citing the Record

Last June there was a special election in Indiana to fill a vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Comstock, a Republican. The Republicans nominated a loyal supporter of the war—the Democrats nominated a man who had been a member of congress until March 4, 1917; a man who was a professed pacifist; a man who had opposed preparedness measures in congress—preparedness measures advocated by President Wilson. Nevertheless, President Wilson, in a letter, endorsed the pacifist candidate, but as in New Hampshire, the Republican candidate was elected and he has been a loyal supporter of all war measures in the house.

The first partisan speech made on the floor of either house of congress since the war began was made on January 21st of this year in the senate by a Democrat. His text was, "Republican leaders in and out of congress are undoubtedly seeking to make politics out of this war." This speech was followed on February 4th by the inscription in the record by Mr. Ferris, a Democrat in the house, of an editorial in the Republican party. A few weeks afterward Mr. Ferris was elected chairman of the Democratic congressional committee.

A little later the Wisconsin senatorial campaign came on. I shall touch upon that only because it reveals the methods and unfairness of the Democratic party, and we must be prepared to meet like methods in the campaign next fall.

Issue in Wisconsin

The finger of suspicion had unjustly been pointed at the loyalty of Wisconsin. Loyalty was the issue. I was nominated as the Republican candidate upon that issue. Altho as a member of the house I had voted for the declaration of war and every war measure since—altho President Wilson had frequently called me to the White House to confer upon war measures and I had by speeches and in every possible way supported him, an attack was begun upon the loyalty of the Republican nominee. I regret to say that such attack was participated in by President Wilson in an indirect way. It was followed by the Democratic national committee, by the Democratic newspapers and a score of Democratic senators and representatives sent to Wisconsin.

The voters of Wisconsin were told they could not be loyal unless they supported the Democratic candidate. Billboards from one end of the state to the other were covered with the statement that "Wilson Wants Davies." His defeat will bring joy to Potsdam and Bloomington, Wis. Finally, Vice President Marshall came into the state. In a speech at Madison, the capital, he said: "I came to Wisconsin to find if 100,000 Republicans will not count the loss of partisanship cheaply if thereby Wisconsin may be saved to the union." He said some other things which I shall refer to in a few moments.

Pressure on Soldiers

The Wisconsin soldiers still in the United States, under the statutes of the state, have the right to vote if they were stationed at Camp Grant at Rockford, Ill. A few days before the election the following advertisement was published, two columns in width, in a Rockford paper: "To the Wisconsin soldiers at Camp Grant, Tuesday, April 2: You are entitled to vote for United States senator from Wisconsin, to succeed Senator Paul O. Hastings. President Wilson, your commander in chief, desires all loyal Americans to vote for Joseph E. Davies for United States senator. Davies' election means joy at Washington and gloom at Berlin. Davies' defeat means gloom at Washington and joy at Berlin." To say to soldiers in the service that their commander in chief desires them to vote a certain way is indefensible from any standpoint. I, of course, freely acquit President Wilson of any knowledge of this outrage. It may be interesting to note what the vote of this camp following this appeal to obey their commander in chief was. The Republican nominee received 576 votes at this camp and the Democratic candidate 403 votes.

I shall not speak of misrepresentation made by the Democratic organizations. I am giving you simply some illustrations of the methods employed. Notwithstanding these methods, the Republican candidate was elected, but following his election the Democratic national committee issued a statement on April 4, quoting from the speech of Vice-President Marshall which I have referred to, in part as follows:

"It makes no difference how pure and patriotic the purposes of the Republican candidate may be, to be elected he is now bidding for the vote of the German sympathizer, for the vote of the traitor, for the vote of the seditionist, for the vote of the pacifist, for the vote of the man so hidebound in politics that he rejoices at every mistake made by the president or his advisers, for the vote of the man who is willing to make an

inglorious peace, for the vote of the disappointed profiteer and the vote of the man who wanted our citizens and our ships to stay off the high seas, and who wanted an embargo placed upon the sale of munitions of war in the markets of the world. By these votes and these alone can the Republican candidate hope to be elected, for Mr. Davies does not seek them and would, I believe, scorn to receive them."

The national committee adds: "This statement of the vice-president accurately described the campaign which resulted in Mr. Lenroot's election by a small majority."

Made False Statements

As I was the candidate referred to, I can say that the English language is not sufficiently strong to adequately characterize the falseness of this charge. That the people of Wisconsin knew that it was false is demonstrated by the fact that such a storm of protest went up after the vice-president's speech that it was certain the Republican candidate would win. The people of Wisconsin knew that neither the Republican candidate, nor any Republican speaker, or the Republican party organization, was bidding for disloyal voters. They knew that every speech made by Davies was a loyalty speech, denouncing disloyalty and pleading for support of the war to victory.

But we have other evidence disproving the charge of the Democratic committee. The pro-German vote of Wisconsin, as elsewhere, is naturally confined very largely to those of German blood. It is cruel to assume that all citizens of German blood are disloyal, for such is not the case. We have citizens of German blood or ancestry who are just as patriotic as any other citizens of our country, but it is true that those who are for Germany first and America second, a large majority of them are of German blood.

The majority of the Germans in Wisconsin are confined to fourteen counties, out of the seventy-one in the state. This group of German counties was carried by the Democratic candidate by a plurality of public candidate votes over the Republican candidate. The counties in which it was admitted that practically all of the voters were loyal, were carried by the Republican candidate by a plurality of more than 30,000 votes over the Democratic candidate, so the fact is, as shown from the returns, if the election had been dependent upon the German counties of Wisconsin, the Democratic candidate would have been elected.

Resent Methods Used

I have taken the time to recite these facts only because they indicate the policy that the Democratic party will pursue in the fall elections. Republicans will resent these methods wherever employed, but they will not retaliate by using similar methods. Republicans will not attack the loyalty of President Wilson or of the Democratic party. On the contrary, they will continue to support the Democratic administration in all necessary war measures in the future as they have in the past. The Republican party in this war is not following the example of the Democratic party in the Civil War. Comparisons are odious, but in view of what has transpired we have a right to compare the patriotism of the Republican party in this war with that of the Democratic party in the Civil War. I quote from the platform of the Democratic party adopted on August 29, 1864, at Chicago:

"Resolved, That this convention does explicitly declare, as the sense of the American people, that after four years of failure to restore the union by the experiment of war, during which, under the pretense of a military necessity of war power higher than the constitution, the constitution and public liberty and private right alike trodden down, and tutition itself has been disregarded in the material prosperity of the country essentially impaired—justice, humanity, liberty and the public welfare demand that immediate efforts be made for a cessation of hostilities, with a view to the ultimate convention of the states, or other peaceable means, to the end that at the earliest practicable moment, peace may be restored on the basis of the federal union of the states.

That the aim and object of the Democratic party is to preserve the federal union and the rights of the states, unimpaired, and they hereby declare that they consider that the administrative usurpation of extraordinary and dangerous powers not granted by the constitution—the subversion of the civil by military law in states not in insurrection; the arbitrary military arrest, imprisonment, trial and sentence of American citizens in states where civil law exists in full force, the suppression of freedom of speech and of the press; the denial of the right of asylum; the open and avowed disregard of state rights, the employment of unusual test-oaths; and the interference with and denial of the right of the people to bear arms in their defense—is calculated to prevent a restoration of the union and the perpetuation of a government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed."

We have a right to be proud of the splendid record the Republican party is making in this war. We are glad for the sake of our country that there are no such party differences now as there were in the Civil War. The fact is that the rank and file of the parties are equally patriotic. Only a few men, seeking political advantage, would make it appear otherwise. The effort by some to make this a war of, and by the Democratic party will fail. This is not a Democratic war, it is not a Republican war, it is an American war and in carrying it thru to victory there will be "glory enough for all."

To win this war organization is necessary and every energetic organization should be utilized. Both Republican and Democratic organizations can be most helpful; every speech that is made in the campaign should be a loyalty speech. With every speaker "America first, partisanship second" should be the controlling sentiment. No opportunity

should be lost by either party to impress upon the people the righteousness and justice of the war and that we must go on with it until we win it. President Wilson may not call Republicans into consultation; he may not appoint Republicans in his cabinet; nevertheless, Republicans will support him in all proper war measures, because he is the president of the United States, because he is commander in chief of the army and navy. If Democrats desert him in the future as in the past on vital war measures, the Republicans will furnish votes enough to put them thru, but in so doing we support a government of which we are a part, and neither senators nor congressmen should be rubber stamps.

Stand by Wilson

President Wilson has his responsibilities as commander in chief of the army and navy in the prosecution of the war, and congress has its responsibilities in regard to legislation necessary to carry on the war. As the president should not, if he could, delegate his responsibilities to congress, so congress should not delegate its responsibilities to him. It is his duty to recommend to congress such legislation as he thinks necessary. If he asks for more money we will provide for them. If he needs more money we will appropriate it. In everything necessary in connection with the army and navy we will follow him, but we should not permit any man, without protest, to determine what are war measures and what are not. That congress should determine for itself.

Every power necessary to enable President Wilson to carry on the war to victory should be granted him, but all other powers vested in congress should be as carefully guarded in time of war as in time of peace. The record of the past twelve months in the way of war preparation is not altogether inspiring. The incompetency in carrying on our aircraft program is disheartening. The record of the first six months in our shipping program is one which we do not like to think about. The delay in securing heavy artillery we deplore. The record of the past twelve months must not be repeated—the American people will not tolerate it; it will not be repeated, because at last we are beginning to recognize that publicity is of greater value in war preparations than concealment of plans and preparations from the enemy. When we appropriated \$640,000,000 for aeroplanes we were told that the public must not have any information concerning the details of the aircraft program, for such information would be of value to the enemy. The result is that until a short time ago we had sent but one combat aeroplane to France. I have not observed that our boast a year ago that we would have 20,000 aeroplanes in France by the first of July deterred Germany in any way in her fighting. It would have been better to have had greater publicity, and as a result, a thousand combat aeroplanes in France today, than concealment and silence and only one "over there" manufactured in America. We must have less boasting about what we are going to do and more doing of what we have set out to accomplish.

Power of Congress

Congress is powerless to prevent incompetence and waste of money. All congress can do is to provide the means with which to prosecute the war and thru its committee investigate the expenditures which it authorizes. The result then must rest with the executive department of the government, and with the American people. I say with the American people, because when incompetency and waste exist, the force of public opinion is the only remedy.

And public opinion is already making itself felt, and conditions are rapidly being remedied. In the aircraft division, we have at last a man at the head who will produce aeroplanes—who will do less talking but get more action. So in our shipping program, we now have a man in charge who will bring to the service of the government the same great capacity and executive ability that he has shown in private life. Theorists must give way to practical men. In the future, conducting experiments without progress, we must utilize what we have and get results.

Publicity in our preparation for war is one of the best aids that President Wilson can have. We have assumed to place upon him duties and responsibilities that no living man could by himself perform. He must act thru others, and the American people demand that the men selected by him be the best the country has. Incompetent selections, the facts should be made known to the country so that he may replace them with others fit for the job.

Only One Kind of Criticism

That President Wilson should welcome this goes without saying. To win the war is his great desire, as it is that of every loyal American, and constructive criticism will help him in his great task. I would say in this connection that anything but constructive criticism should not and will not be tolerated by the American people. Any man who will criticize for political advantage, or for the purpose of destroying the confidence of the American people in President Wilson, should be condemned in exactly the same way as he should be condemned who would shield incompetency for fear that its exposure might hurt some one politically.

But we must not lose sight of the fact that notwithstanding we have not in the last twelve months made the progress that we had hoped to make, nevertheless, we have accomplished great things. We have more than a million and a half of men under arms, the best army physically, mentally and morally ever raised in the history of the world; men eager to get into the fight, eager to meet the German foe, and eager to fight for America and civilization. We have a navy of which every American is proud—a navy that in the past twelve months has made a record of wonderful accomplishment.

And we must remember, too, that in this gigantic undertaking it is inevitable that there will be a degree

of incompetency and extravagance. It is inevitable that there will be some mistakes made. We have no right to complain that such things have occurred, for they have accompanied every war. The only demand that we have the right to make is that incompetency and extravagance when discovered shall not be continued, and that the agencies elected to carry out our undertakings shall be chosen with regard to their qualifications to perform the duties imposed upon them.

Loyalty Not an Issue

The Republican party is fortunate in that it is not compelled to raise any false issues in the coming campaign. We do not need to attack the loyalty of the Democrats in order to make an issue. We hope every Democratic nominee next fall will be loyal in support of the war and that the only issue between the two parties will be, which can best be trusted to wisely legislate in matters directly connected with the war and meet and solve the great economic questions which will confront us following the war. Upon this issue the Republican party is supremely confident of the verdict of the American people.

The Republican party today is united as it has not been for a decade. Its rank and file are united because they realize that the country needs the Republican party.

It was Republican dissension that placed the Democratic party in power—it is Republican unity that will put it out of power. The beginning will be made next November and the job will be finished in 1920. The Republican party realizes its responsibility. No political party can succeed in the future that does not serve the highest ideals of the nation, and when this war is over, when America is saved, these ideals will be even higher than ever before.

In this war the American people have learned anew the sacrifices required for their country. Thousands of our boys will never come back. There will be mourning in many homes before this war is done; and when the war is won, our people will determine that because of these sacrifices America shall be a better place for all of its people than it ever has been.

Unselfish service, coupled with ability to wisely serve, will be demanded. The great economic problems that will confront us must be met and solved, not from the standpoint of any class or section, but from the standpoint of the nation. Giving a privilege here to a class and there to a section is not statesmanship, and will not be tolerated.

Earned Confidence

The Republican party has earned the confidence of the American people and it will be commissioned by them to undertake and carry thru the great problem of reconstruction made necessary by the war. And our motive has been "America first" in the war, so the Republican party will continue to be for "America first" when the war is over. This will not be difficult, for it has always been for America first when others have not in their economic affairs. The protective principle is a Republican principle and will continue so, and it will have a much wider application in the future.

The protection of American laboring men, primarily thru the levying of duties at the custom house, but in the future we must apply the principle of protection to a much wider field than heretofore. We must protect the individual incentive and ambition of men to a wider degree than in the past. Every man must be given a chance to achieve the best things in life so that success or failure will depend upon him alone. The rights of labor must be protected so that it will not be exploited or oppressed by capital—the rights of capital must be protected so that it shall not be oppressed by labor. In the future in America, labor and capital must not look upon each other as enemies, they must co-operate as friends. Agriculture must be dealt fairly with. The very large margin between what the farmer receives and what the consumer pays must be cut down. If we could divide the unnecessary expense in distribution between the producer and the consumer the farmer would receive more and the consumer would pay less than he does today. All industries must be brought into closer co-operation. The political demagog who would array class against class, who profits by hate, and who on discord, should not be tolerated in any party.

After War is Over

The problems which will arise following the war must be solved upon the basis of justice and equity. They must be solved in such a way as will give to all of our people an ever-widening field of liberty; not a political power, but the good of the whole people must be the aim. We must make of America, to an ever-increasing degree, a land where the highest ideals of man shall find their full fruition. We must by wise legislation and administration protect every man in every sphere—protect him in his rights and in his property, furnish incentive to every laudable ambition, prevent him from being exploited and oppressed by others, and thus give full rein to all the better instincts and higher ideals of men.

The Republican party was born because its founders had a newer conception of liberty and the rights of men. The nation went thru fire because of the principles the Republican party proclaimed, but the nation came out of that fire united and purified, and the principles which gave the Republican party birth were established.

This nation is again going thru fire—again, in the onward march of civilization, still higher ideals are to be established. Again the great opportunity for service comes to the Republican party. It will not fail to accept the opportunity and thru its instrumentality new foundations of liberty and justice will be laid so deep and broad that they will never be overthrown.

This will be the mission of the Republican party and as it has had a glorious past, so will it have a glorious future in the service of man-