



## THE TRUSTS AND THE FREE LIST

STRONG REPUBLICAN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF THE KANSAS CITY PLATFORM.

The proposition made in the Kansas City platform that "Tariff laws should be amended by putting the products of trusts upon the free list to prevent monopoly under the plea of protection," would not provide a complete remedy for all trust evils. This proposition suggests one of the several remedies. That it is an important and a valuable remedy is indicated by the fact that the trust magnates vigorously object to its application. So far as this suggestion applies to tariff-protected trusts it is, indeed, a plausible remedy and it must appeal to the intelligence of the people.

It is by no means a new remedy.

Ten years ago Mr. Bryan, then a member of congress, introduced in the house a bill providing for the removal of the tariff on the products of trusts. Mr. Bryan's bill was introduced May 26, 1892, and yet this proposition was by no means original with Mr. Bryan.

On October 15, 1888, John Sherman, then a member of the United States senate, said: "Whenever this free competition is evaded or avoided by combination of individuals or corporations, the duty should be reduced and foreign competition promptly invited."

On October 26, 1891, Senator Plumb, republican of Kansas, delivered a speech against the McKinley tariff. In this speech Senator Plumb said: "There are dozens of lines of manufactures covered by the terms of this bill which are controlled by trusts. I do not know of any better way to start in trying to reduce the exactions of trusts than to cut down the shelter behind which trusts are created."

A great many republican politicians objected because the Iowa republicans demanded: "Any modification of the tariff schedules that may be required to prevent their affording shelter to monopoly." The tariff trust plank adopted by the Idaho republican state convention was very similar to the one adopted by the Iowa convention; and even in that staid old state of Connecticut, the republican state convention adopted a platform in which it declared: "If in any schedule import duties are found that have been notoriously perverted from their true purpose to the inordinate enrichment of corporations, monopolistic in fact or in tendency, we look to a republican congress to apply in its wisdom the needed corrective without impairing the principle of protection."

Although a great many republican leaders sneered at these planks, Speaker Henderson, one of the most skillful of politicians, discovered that these sentiments were very dear to the rank and file of his party. It is strange that republican leaders did not long ago learn that they could not, in safety, advocate a trust-breeding tariff. While it is true that Mr. Roosevelt and all the other national leaders of the party insist that the tariff shall not be revised, even when it is discovered that the tariff provides a shelter for monopoly, it is true that republican statesmen have gone on record in favor of the proposition that the tariff be removed from trust-made articles whenever it is apparent that monopolies find shelter in the tariff.

The republican record on this point is a most interesting one. Here it is:

The late Governor Mount (republican) of Indiana, speaking to the Association of Indiana Hotel Keepers in December, 1899, said: "I emphatically favor removing all tariff protection from every industry that belongs to combinations formed in restraint of trade."

Ex-Senator Washburn, that distinguished republican of Minnesota, in an interview printed in the New York Tribune of September 11, 1899, said: "The republican party, whether justly or unjustly, is associated with trusts in the minds of the masses. As a party we have reached a crisis where we have got to call a halt. The republican party has got to disconnect itself from trusts. It has got to do something more than to adopt platform planks against trusts."

"It seems to me, after giving the matter a great deal of thought, that the republicans in congress will have to examine the subject thoroughly; and, whenever they find a trust is depending for its exorbitant profits largely on protective duties, it will be the duty of republican congressmen and senators to remove the duties at once. We cannot stop short of that. The duties must be repealed

when it is shown that the trusts are benefiting by them. This should be done with the duty on steel rails and on tin plate."

It will be remembered that several years ago, when the white paper trust was bearing heavily upon the consumers, republican papers joined the democratic papers in demanding that the plan recommended by the Kansas City platform be applied as protection to the paper consumers.

The Chicago Times-Herald, a republican paper, in an issue in March, 1899, said:

"Most certainly it should be the duty of congress, in both branches of which the republicans have a majority, to abolish or suspend the protective duty on the products of any industry which has been organized into a trust, and which has arbitrarily raised the prices of such products."

The Minneapolis Journal, a republican paper, commenting upon Senator Washburn's speech, in its issue of October 2, 1899, said:

"The senator is so eminently correct in his position that tariff duties which enable trusts or any other kind of monopolies to raise prices above the point at which they could otherwise be maintained should be lowered in the public interest, that we must range ourselves beside him on that proposition."

The New York Commercial Advertiser, a republican paper, in an issue printed in the fall of 1899, said:

"The time will soon come when public opinion will no more tolerate protective duties on trust products; for protection should logically promote home competition, while trust organization destroys it."

The Portland Oregonian, a republican paper, in an issue printed in March, 1900, said:

"Because the paper trust has put up the price of printing paper to unconscionable figures, Representative Devries of California has introduced a bill to repeal the duty on printing paper and the material of which it is made. It is very well; but there are about forty more big trusts that have been helped through protective tariff, and should be dealt with the same way."

The Hartford Courant, a republican paper, commenting upon the republican president's message, in an issue printed in December, 1899, declared that the president should have closed his trust discussion in his message "with a straight-from-the-shoulder recommendation for the immediate repeal of any and every protective customs duty behind which a price-raising monopoly is squatted."

The Dubuque (Ia.) Times, a republican paper, in its issue of January 20, 1900, said:

"The paper trust is making hay while the sun shines. The simple remedy lies in the repeal of the tariff used to suppress competition and to rob the publishers, and through them the public. Congress should lose no time in wiping it off the leading statute books, and should not stop until every other duty which operates to suppress competition or enhance the value of the bounties of nature in private hands is repealed."

The Philadelphia Ledger, a republican paper, in an issue printed in February, 1899, said:

"What is imperatively required is a revision of the tariff such as will modify the rates, or, better still, place upon the free list all foreign goods, whether raw material or finished product, that are the subject of domestic monopoly."

The St. Paul Pioneer Press, a republican paper, in an issue printed in April, 1900, said:

"The whole list of protected monopolies ought to be brought within the purview of a tariff reform which would enable foreign competition to put a limit on their ability to raise prices."

The Rockford (Ill.) Republican, a republican paper, in its issue of January 29, 1900, said:

"At a meeting a few days ago at Denver the Colorado Editorial association adopted resolutions demanding the repeal of the tariff on wood pulp and all other materials entering into the manufacture of print paper. There are many other trusts entrenched securely behind tariff duties, which shut out foreign competition and enable American

monopolies to rob consumers. There should be a sweeping repeal of protection, which is made the opportunity of such merciless exactions as the print paper trust has laid on the newspapers of the United States."

The Republican club of Harvard university on Wednesday, May 16, 1900, adopted a platform approving various measures, among them the following:

"Publicity of the affairs of trusts and removal of all duty on commodities controlled by trusts."

The Keokuk (Ia.) Gate City, a republican paper, in its issue of January 30, 1900, said:

"Because of present injustice, the protective system in America will perish unless it is divorced wholly and completely as an instrument of power of these combination robbers and made an agency that shall serve all the American people."

The Indianapolis News, a republican paper, in an issue printed in May, 1899, said:

"With the formation of trusts controlling almost everything in use, there arises the fair question why, after all these years of practical monopoly of the home market, and now after the practical ending of domestic competition, should there be a law to keep out foreign manufactures?"

Henry O. Havemeyer, president of the sugar trust, in a deposition made June 14, 1899, said:

"The mother of all trusts is the customs tariff bill. It is the government through its tariff laws which plunders the people, and the trusts are merely the machinery for doing it."

In a speech delivered in Wisconsin during the summer of 1901, Congressman Babcock, chairman of the republican congressional committee, said:

"I maintain that it is part of the policy of protection to protect the consumer. We can today produce and undersell the world. Shall we continue a tariff on articles that are, in fact, articles of export? If congress maintains a tariff on such articles, the whole theory of protection falls to the ground, and it simply inures to the benefit of those who may secure the control of any such commodity, since by its aid they can fix exorbitant prices in the domestic market. How can such a policy be defended?"

In an interview printed in the Washington Post of September 21, 1901, Congressman Babcock said:

"One of the points which impressed me of the desirability of revising the steel schedule was information I obtained in Scotland of the placing of an order for 20,000 tons of American steel. When you stop to think that 20,000 tons of steel means more than 1,000 carloads it will not do to say that such an order placed abroad by our manufacturers is only their surplus product."

In an interview printed in the Washington Post of February 4, 1902, Congressman Babcock said:

"From now on I am going to push the tariff plan at every possible opportunity. I am going to take advantage of every possible opening. The bill is going to be pressed every time the smallest chance offers, and I am not going to let anything go by. If the bill ever gets before the house it will pass by three to one, and it will get before the house. I don't care whether he (Payne) takes the duty off lumber or not. That is a threat that has no terrors for me. That won't hurt in Wisconsin. The people who are going to make trouble if the duty is taken off lumber live in Pennsylvania and Maine, especially the hemlock people in Pennsylvania. If Mr. Payne makes that threat good he will be hurting the east and not the west. Nobody out our way is going to be worried by the taking off of that duty. It would have been taken out of the Dingley tariff when that bill was passed if it had been passed by schedules."

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