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JACOB M. DICKINSON'S SPEECH

At the banquet given in his honor by the Iroquois club at Chicago, Jacob M. Dickinson, Mr. Taft's secretary of war, spoke as follows:

of a farewell dinner from my friends of your friendship. of the Iroquois club, I understood that it had no political significance, was in no sense an indorsement of my going into the cabinet of President Taft, and that it was merely an expression of personal good will. If I had anticipated that it would offend any member of the club I would have taken leave of my well-wishers in an informal way. When it was brought to my notice that objection had been made, I at once requested that the

occasion be pretermitted, but that did not meet with the approval of those who had undertaken it. I shall not now let the objection of absentees, however distinguished, mar my en-When I accepted the compliment joyment of this generous testimonial

As publicity has been given to a protest made on political grounds, I feel that it will not be indelicate for me to refer to my own status. For nearly forty years, and much of that time with great activity, I have been in the ranks of the democratic party. I have never sought of it the reward of office, nor any other benefits, direct or indirect. Like many southern men, I have at times disapproved its policies; but on account of local conditions, did not actively oppose it. It is an abnormal condition when almost all those who represent the property and best citizenship often contiguous states act together politically. It is certain that all of them do not think alike on all such questions, and that differences of opinion would lead to opposite party amiliation in the southern states, as in the other states, but for a constant and powerful compacting force. It is a misfortune to the south, a misfortune to the whole country, that inexorable conditions were such, that differences on all other questions have been subordinated to one question. When such action of those best qualified to represent their people extended throughout so long a period and so constantly, it would be like indicting a nation to affirm that it was either unwise or unpatriotic. Whether or not these conditions will operate in the future, as they have in the past, I do not claim the wisdom to predict. All lovers of our country should unite in the hope that this may not be true-not so much on account of the political result, as on account of the conditions themselves, which are a constant menace to the south, and, in reflex action, operate with unhappy effects upon the entire country.

On account of the causes to which I have referred, all of the southern electoral votes against President Taft, as they have hitherto done with respect to other republican presidential candidates. Therefore, politically, there was no bond between him and the southern states. He is now, after the battle has been fought, entering upon the duties of his office, as president of the entire country. He has been much in the south, and for years has counted very many southern men within the closest circle of friendship. His jurisdiction judge extended over the states of Kentucky and Tennessee. Through a long period he was in close association with the people there, visited their homes intimately, was always an earnest student of everything affecting the general welfare of the country, and came to know more about the southern people and the causes controlling their social and political action than any man of the north who has been called to high national office. Moved by no obligations to the south, but by strong friendship and sympathy for the southern people, and still more by a patriotic love for the entire country, whose welfare is necessarily bound up with that of the south, he determined to invite into his cabinet a southern man, thereby giving assurance to the southern people, that although their solid electoral vote was against him, he wanted them to feel that they were in close relation with his administration and would be in no sense alien to it.

If he had selected for this purpose a southern republican, however well qualified to discharge the duties of the office, it would not have fulfilled the purpose he had in mind. If he had selected a democrat who had voted for him, there would have been

room for carping criticism to say, however unjustly, that the appointment had been tendered and accepted as a reward for such support; and besides, such an appointment might have lacked that ligament with the southern people which would exist between them and one who had not left the party. I am confident that the great purpose of the president was to establish the relationship I have indicated. It would belittle the broad patriotism which inspired him, to assume that his purpose was to achieve political results. Having known me for a long time and intimately, and having conferred with southern men whose opinions he valued, he came to the conclusion that my qualifications, and my relations to the southern people, were such as to justify putting me in his cabinet.

Having accepted the position, I shall bring to the discharge of the duties of the office my best efforts, and shall, of course, carry out his policies. I can not conceive that any duty can arise in connection with that office that will be incompatible with any views I have hitherto entertained. Certainly if such an occasion should arise, I would not embarrass the president by holding a position, the duties of which I could

not heartily discharge.

That the purpose operating in his mind was broad, magnanimous and patriotic, no one can question. The wisdom both of the purpose and of his selection is to be tried by time. I have every assurance, from letters and expressions in the public press, that his action in appointing me and my action in accepting are approved by the south, and having the approval of the southern democratic states, whose judgment was especially appealed to in this matter by the president, I can bear with equanimity any criticism that may come from individual democrats elsewhere.



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