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Who Are the Culprits?

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in a recent issue, speaking as if inspired from Washington, declared that "there will be no veto." It says: "But if the bill retains any of its objectionable features when it reaches him, he will undoubtedly sign it, and let the culprit shoulder the responsibility."

This is the concluding sentence of an editorial, nearly a column long, in which there is a labored effort to justify the president in refusing to interpose a veto to protect the consumers of the country from increased tariff taxation.

The Globe-Democrat quotes the president as having advocated a "thorough revision" and an "honest revision;" as saying that "the rates generally, or most of them, are too high;" and as asserting that "the revision, therefore, will probably be downward." And yet with the prospect, if not the certainty, of an increase in the average rate, the Globe-Democrat informs us,—and does so as if speaking with authority—that the president will "undoubtedly" sign the bill, even if the objectionable features are retained. He is going to do it and then let the "culprit shoulder the responsibility." But, who are the culprits?

According to the constitution the law-making power is vested in the house, senate and president; neither can act without the other and the president's part in law-making is so important that he can, by his veto, prevent the passage of any bill unless two-thirds of both houses favor the measure. Can the president escape his share of the responsibility, after assuring the people that the revision would probably be downward? Can he justify the signing of a bill which raises the tariff rates?

The republican party promised "unequivocally" to revise the tariff "immediately." Why promise "unequivocally" if an increase was intended? Was an increase so urgently desired as to justify an unequivocal promise to make the raise; and was the increase so imperatively necessary that it should be made "immediately?" Were the people so anxious to have their taxes increased that they could not wait until the regular session of congress?

Mr. Aldrich and some of his high tariff associates insist that the republican party did not promise a reduction, but no one can read the platform without recognizing that those who wrote it INTENDED to make the republicans BELIEVE that a DOWNWARD revision was contemplated.

Mr. Taft not only ran upon the platform, but so construed it as to convince the western re-

publicans that he regarded it as a promise of REDUCTION. Is he keeping faith with the western republicans when he signs a bill INCREASING the tariff?

The Globe-Democrat says that "Mr. Cleveland disliked the Gorman changes in the Wilson tariff bill as much as Mr. Taft does those which Mr. Aldrich has made in the Payne measure," but that Mr. Cleveland did not veto the bill. The Globe-Democrat neglects to state, however, that the Wilson bill made a reduction, while the new tariff bill is going to make an increase in the tariff. If the Payne-Aldrich bill made a material reduction, the president might be justified in signing it, even though it did not make as much of a reduction as he desired, but no manipulation of language can furnish the president an excuse for INCREASING tariff taxes when he cultivated among western republicans a belief that they were to have a REDUCTION in tariff.

And what reason does the Globe-Democrat give in support of the president's decision to sign the bill?

It says: "Yet Mr. Taft will not take the responsibility of vetoing a bill which will not meet his views in every respect, and thus hamper his party in the coming session, render all the work of the extra session vain, and put the party on the defensive in the congressional campaign next year. A veto would do all this, and it would also check the trade rally, and seriously disappoint the country. A veto of the Payne-Aldrich bill would, of course, leave the Dingley law intact, and the country which lived under it for twelve years could stand it for a few years longer. But a veto would instantly renew the tariff revision agitation, and bring the question up in a more acute form than it had before. Congress would be obliged to make an attempt to revise it either by prolonging the extra session into the fall and winter, or else to take the matter up in the regular session which begins in December. In either of these alternatives the suspense would be prolonged many months, the prosperity which every one expected to see soon would be postponed."

It will be noticed that the Globe-Democrat justifies the signing of the bill—even though the bill be bad—on several grounds. First and foremost, is the partisan reason that it would "put the party on the defensive in the congressional campaign next year." That is, he is to put the interests of the party above the welfare of the country. The tariff barons have taken the party by the throat and compelled it to raise the tariff instead of lowering it and yet, the Globe-Democrat tells us that Mr. Taft will not interfere with the outrage for fear it would put its party on the defensive in the congressional campaign next year. Will not the signing of the bill put the party on the defensive? How is the country to secure reform if a republican president is afraid to use his veto to prevent an increase in the taxes? And then are the republican voters compelled to elect another republican congress to "support the president?" If the president signs the bill the republican leaders will contend that the bill fulfills the party's promise and then the voters will be asked to ratify the action of congress. If they do so, the new republican congress will consider itself bound by the vote and will not attempt a reduction, especially in the presence of another campaign, and then the same game can be played again in 1912—provided, of course, the people are willing to be fooled again. Is this the only hope of revision that the republican party can offer?

The Globe-Democrat gives as a second reason, namely, that a veto would "check the trade rally and seriously disappoint the country." Here is that old fraudulent argument again. Last fall we were to have a trade revival as a result of a republican victory. The revival has been a little slow about reviving, and we are now told that the president must sign a bill increasing the tariff or the trade "rally" will be checked. The Globe-Democrat believes that the country can stand the Dingley law a few

years longer, and so do the beneficiaries of protection, but what of the consumers?

The third reason given by the Globe-Democrat for the signing of the bill is that "a veto would instantly renew the tariff revision agitation, and bring the question up in a more acute form than it had before." "Congress would be obliged to make an attempt to revise it by prolonging the extra session into the fall and winter or else take the matter up in the regular session which begins in December." The logic of this is very plain. The people were deceived last fall, but they must not make any outcry or seek to punish those who deceived them. The tariff agitation which led the republicans to make the promise of revision, must be regarded as ended and the energies of the republican party must now be devoted to the suppression of any new, or further agitation. Will this program please the tariff reform republicans? If not, what are they going to do about it?

And again, who are the culprits? Will the tariff reform republicans support this bill when they find that it will increase the tariff?

And the papers; can papers like the Globe-Democrat escape condemnation? Did they not help along the deception which was practiced in the last campaign? Did they not construe the platform to mean downward revision? Did they not assure the voters that the republican party could be relied upon to reduce the tariff? And have they not applied epithets to Aldrich and to Payne? Was it all a part of the play? Was the noise that they have made merely stage thunder? Can they make a scape-goat of the high tariff senators and members and throw all the blame upon them?

This course may satisfy a partisan newspaper, but it will hardly satisfy the honest republican who believes that a party ought to keep faith with the people, and who regard the obligation of a party to its members, as even more sacred than the obligation of the members of the party to the party organization. The republican voters are likely to have their own opinion on the subject of culprits, and they will not be apt to forgive the president who can, by his veto, prevent an increase in the taxes; or the republican papers which promised tariff revision when they had every reason to know that the republican leaders had no intention of keeping the promise.

Who are the culprits?

LORIMER DEMOCRATS

Democracy as defined by the democrats in the Illinois legislature is about as loathsome an article as one can imagine. A republican boss has been sent to the United States senate by the aid of democratic votes. If the democratic members of the legislature had voted for Hopkins—objectionable as he was—they might have pleaded as an excuse that he had received a plurality in the primary of the dominant party; if they had found the selection of some clean and upright republican they might have justified their act, but to join in the selection of Speaker Cannon's right hand man is indefensible whether considered from the standpoint of party or from the standpoint of patriotism.

Why did they do it? Well, you can not judge from the reasons given publicly. Watch the democrats who voted for him and you may be able to discover from their movements what led them to so grossly abuse the authority vested in them.

FOLLOW THE ASTRONOMERS

When astronomers find an eccentricity in a planet's orbit, they look in that direction until they find the heavenly body that draws the planet out of its orbit. If the consumers of lumber will follow the example of the astronomers they may find that an earthly body named Weyerhaeuser, who abounds in stumpage, has caused the eccentricity in the political orbit of those senators and members of the house who voted against free lumber.

CONTENTS

WHO ARE THE CULPRITS?
LORIMER DEMOCRATS
GOVERNOR JOHNSON'S TONNAGE TAX VETO
THE TARIFF IN THE SENATE
EDUCATIONAL SERIES—GOVERNMENTAL REFORMS IN UNITED STATES FOR 1909 TO MRS. CLEVELAND, DEBTOR FROM THE TARIFF DEBATE
CARNEGIE PENSION COME HOME TO ROOST
PRACTICAL TARIFF TALKS
THE TARIFF AND THE JEWELERS
CURRENT TOPICS
MR. BRYAN NOT A CANDIDATE
LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE
SENATOR SIMMONS OF NORTH CAROLINA
HOME DEPARTMENT
WHETHER COMMON OR NOT
NEWS OF THE WEEK