

# "The Old Ship is Leaking Now"

## An Upheaval at Washington

The republican insurgents have received notice from the Taft administration that if they are to obtain any office for their constituents they must abandon their principles. The story is told in Associated Press dispatches as follows:

Washington, D. C., January 4.—War without quarter will be waged between the Taft administration and such republican insurgents in congress as are now opposing and who oppose in the future the Taft legislative program. The battle is not with those tariff insurgents who quietly sheathed their blades after defeat, but with those who have nursed disappointment and are whetting their knives publicly in anticipation of continued conflict.

The battle broke suddenly today. At first it was a single shot; then a scattered firing; swiftly the thing spread until tonight it has taken on the aspect of a general engagement, the consequences of which can not be foretold. The substance of it is that the senators and congressmen who have taken a stand against the present administration, and who continue to align themselves with the opposition to the president's policies, are to receive no consideration in matters of patronage.

Utterances such as that made by Senator Cummins at a recent dinner in Des Moines, by Senator Bristow in previous speeches, and anti-Taft articles in Senator LaFollette's magazine, and a recent interview by Senator Clapp on the price of foodstuffs, are said to have stirred the president to action. It had been reported further that some of the republican insurgents in the house have tried to secure appointment under the administration of men more or less openly out of harmony with the Taft regime. Mr. Taft's closest friends advised him that it would be impolitic for him to afford sinews of war to those who, they warned him, might even cooperate with the democrats in congress against the Taft legislative program, and in the country at large by creating anti-Taft sentiment in advance of the 1912 convention.

It is stated without reserve tonight that the president has listened to such advice and has decided to follow it.

In support of the position taken by certain leaders of the administration that the battle is not with the tariff insurgents, it was pointed out tonight that Senators Nelson, Brown, Burkett and Borah, all of whom voted against the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill, appear to be persona grata at the White House, postoffice department, land office and internal revenue bureau, where federal "pie" is served.

No politician who would discuss the situation at all tonight dared hazard the opinion as to the political outcome of the contest. Some insisted that it would arouse bitter opposition to President Taft, while others declared that the effect would be to make all republicans line up for or against the president and "smoke out" those who have carefully kept a neutral position.

Representative Miller, of the Eighth Minnesota district, was the man chiefly instrumental in "blowing the lid off" of the situation today. He did it by a statement to the effect that Postmaster General Hitchcock informed him yesterday that his (Miller's) recommendations for presidential postmasterships were being held up because of his insurgent activities in the house. He quoted the postmaster general as saying in substance:

"A great deal of pressure is being brought to bear upon me to withhold from the insurgent republican congressmen the patronage in their districts. I am very loath to do this, and the matter is still under consideration."

Mr. Miller said he told the postmaster general he intended to carry the thing to the open floor of the house but that Mr. Hitchcock urged him to defer any such action until the subject could be further considered. Whereupon Mr. Miller agreed to await full developments before precipitating an open fight.

As soon as the congressman's statement became known the postmaster general called him on the telephone and took him to task for not having regarded the conversation as confidential, to which Mr. Miller replied that he had not so understood it and felt that he had violated no confidence. Representative Miller said tonight that a month or more ago he complied with a request from the postoffice department to for-

ward his recommendations upon several presidential postmasterships in Minnesota. After a wait of several weeks he called at the department, he says, but could get no satisfactory information and was for a long time unable to see the postmaster general. He succeeded in gaining an audience yesterday afternoon, and it was during that conversation, according to Mr. Miller, that Mr. Hitchcock informed him of the existence of a situation which had made it impossible for him to act as yet upon his recommendations.

Mr. Miller insists that he had no idea that the interview was to be considered private, as there were three other callers in Mr. Hitchcock's office at the time who might have heard the conversation.

Representative Humphrey, of Washington, was one of the three present and one or both of the others were congressmen. Before making the matter public he had conferred with Senator Clapp, from his own state, also an insurgent. He did not desire, he said, to precipitate any final break, but he had merely repeated the remarks which he considered were official and authoritative.

Postmaster General Hitchcock was silent on the whole subject tonight, nor would any other officials representing the administration say a word about it.

Another feature of the attitude of the party leaders toward the insurgent members of the house was hinted at in disclosures today. It was currently reported that the "rebellious" republican members of congress were soon to feel the hand of the national party organization against them in their home districts. The plan, according to the statement of one of the insurgents, who also is to be marked as a victim, was for the organization at Washington to stimulate opposition to renomination of these congressmen by diverse local activities.

Local republican aspirants for their places were to be encouraged and if the opposition was unsuccessful at the primaries, the fight was to be carried even to the polls.

It was pointed out that in Congressman Cooper's district in Wisconsin already a rival republican candidate was in the field, although the primaries there do not occur until September. Large sums of money are available for the purpose, it is claimed by those who tell this story, and considerable has already been expended. In the district represented by Representative Norris of Nebraska, early republican opposition has developed. Representative Norris has said he well knew the fight was on against him at home.

On the other hand, inquiries among congressmen, generally classed as insurgents, failed to disclose any apparent active antagonism to them on the part of any one connected with the administration. Representatives Murdock and Madison of Kansas, have not suffered from "suspended animation" in their patronage recommendations.

When Mr. Madison was informed that the fight apparently had started, he said: "Good, I am glad of it. Nothing suits me better than to have a good square fight."

Congressman Hayes, of California, who presided over the only meeting the house insurgents held this year, declared that he was "in the fight to stay." "If no one will call a meeting of the insurgents to mark out the plan of battle, I will do it," he said; "and if there are others who are backwards in this battle I will go it alone. I am an insurgent until it is over."

Speaker Cannon tonight remarked that if he were to express his own views on the situation they would sound "chestnutty." He denied knowledge of any specific determination to crush the insurgents. But he turned to a copy of a speech which he delivered in Kansas City on December 7 and quoted from it the following paragraph as expressive of his opinion of the course that ought to be pursued against the insurgents. The paragraph read:

"When Lincoln found an army marching on the national capital from the south and a body of sympathizers in the north encouraging that army he said it was difficult to determine which was the most threatening to the welfare of the nation. History repeats itself, and when Senators Cummins, LaFollette, Bristow and their so-called 'progressive' following join hands with

Mr. Bryan in waging war upon the republican members of congress who passed the tariff bill and upon President Taft, who signed it, in that contest I know of but one way to treat them, and that is to fight them just as we fight Mr. Bryan and his followers."

### "ASTONISHED AND ANGERED"

Washington, D. C., January 5.—With amazement, in some cases bordering on anger, the insurgent republican members of the house today read the published reports that they were to be singled out by the administration for punishment for their "rebellious conduct," as members of the majority party of the house.

Several of them were unsparing in their denunciation of a policy which sought to punish a man for independence of thought and action, as they expressed it. Not a few were loath to believe the president would lend his aid to an effort to administer castigation to them for supporting the very principles and policies for which they claimed the party itself stood pledged.

Representative Madison (Kan.) expressed a view of the matter to which several of his associates subscribed. He said:

"We insurgents, as we are called, are not against Taft or his policies. We are unanimously, I believe, in favor of every leading reform to which the president and the republican party is committed. For instance, I am in favor of postal savings, conservation of national resources, regulation of injunction, reform of federal court procedure, government regulation and control of industrial and carrying corporations, the publication of campaign funds and other reforms. Most of the other insurgents are for these same things.

"It is slanderous to say that we can be swerved from the course of supporting these reforms by the withholding of any official patronage by anybody or be induced to support this or that proposition by the offering of official sop of any kind. We are committed to the principles which I have enumerated because we believe they are right and not because the president or anybody else is for or against them.

"It is not the insurgents of the house, but men like Aldrich and Cannon whom the president will have to induce to support his "policies." The insurgents are for them already and have been all the time.

Representative Norris of Nebraska, added his approval of this declaration as did Representative Hayes of California, who said his fight was solely against the rules of the house and its present organization. On the latter proposition, said Mr. Hayes, he was ready to fight to the finish.

The insurgents are discussing the desirability of holding an early meeting and ascertaining from President Taft where they stand. The calling of the meeting is in the hands of Representative Hayes of California.

There was no apparent sign of the insurgent difficulty on the senate side of the capital further than the numerous conferences which insurgent republicans from the house side were holding with the senators from their states regarding the policy which they were to pursue.

Senator Cummins said he had experienced no difficulty with the postoffice department or any other government department in regard to his patronage.

### NORRIS OF NEBRASKA

Representative Norris of Nebraska, republican, gave to the Associated Press the following interview:

"The insurgent republicans in the house are not intimidated by the action of the administration in withholding patronage from them and are not scared into silence by any apparent combination of President Taft and Speaker Cannon.

"President Taft is making a grave mistake by aiding Cannon in this way, and I want to say so unhesitatingly. I do not object, nor do any of the other insurgents object, as far as I know, to the withholding of patronage from us. But I denounce this singling out of the men who have opposed Cannon and the house organization for an infliction of punishment.

"How can the president say we are opposed to his policies and declare that we are to be punished for it when we have not opposed his policies in any way? We do not, in fact, yet know what President Taft's policies are to be. We have not even received his messages on several important subjects. Still we have been punished.

"Postmaster General Hitchcock has admitted that we are being discriminated against right

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