

Why Free Wool is Important at This Time

Representative Finly H. Gray of Indiana delivered a speech in the house of representatives June 20th in favor of free wool. Louis Ludlow, Washington correspondent for the Indianapolis Star, referring to Mr. Gray's speech, says:

Representative Finly H. Gray was the headliner while the bill was being considered in its final stage in the house. Of the twelve democratic members from Indiana, he was the only one who stood for free wool and it is betraying no secret to state that his efforts to get the bill amended so as to put wool on the free list caused his Indiana democratic colleagues some uncomfortable moments. He did not mince words, but told why he thinks a tariff on wool is an imposition on poor people who have to buy woolen clothes.

He indicated a belief that the excuse that the tariff is needed for revenue is a very specious argument and pointed out that if revenue is what congress is after, it would be better to put a tariff on rough diamonds and precious stones, raw silk and India rubber, all of which come in free.

Mr. Gray had no difficulty in deciding that as between a few sheep raisers and all of the people who have to buy woolen clothing it was his duty to stand by the latter, with both of his feet planted firmly on the numerous democratic platforms, state and national, that have declared for free wool.

Mr. Gray tried his level best to get the bill amended so as to put wool on the free list, but he had to cope with trained parliamentary sharps, who pulled a harsh and forbidding rule on him every move he made, and the result was that he could not get his proposed amendment before the house for a vote. He did succeed, however, in making a ringing speech defending the people who have to wear woolen clothing and pointing out that those who favor a wool tariff are performing a mighty valuable service for the woolen manufacturers.

Mr. Gray offered a double-barreled amendment. It provided that the 20 per cent tariff on wool in the bill should be stricken out and that in lieu of it should be inserted the following:

"All wool of the sheep, hair of the camel, goat, the skins of such animals, when imported into the United States shall be exempted from duty."

He also offered the following: "That the remaining paragraphs of Sec. 1 of said bill be recommitted to the ways and means committee with instructions to amend the same by reducing the duties on manufactures of wool to an average of 20 per cent ad valorem, with the highest rates laid upon the luxuries of dress and lowest upon the common essentials of comfort, and that to recoup for the loss of revenues resulting therefrom that committee be further instructed to report a concurrent bill imposing duties upon rough diamonds and precious stones, raw silk, and crude India rubber and substitutes, all now on the free list, at an average rate of 20 per cent ad valorem."

Representative Underwood raised a point of order against Gray's amendment, but withheld it while the Sixth Indiana district member made a speech that awakened the echoes and created a sensation. Mr. Gray tore the mask off of the pretension that a tariff on wool is absolutely necessary because the government has to have the revenue. He showed how a great deal more revenue could be raised in other ways without putting a burden on the wearers of woolen clothing.

He pointed out that the proposed duty of 20 per cent on wool would bring in \$13,398,200 of revenue annually as estimated by the treasury department. He suggested that in lieu of that revenue a duty of 20 per cent should be levied on rough diamonds and precious stones, which would bring in \$2,111,560, a duty of 20 per cent on raw silk, which would produce \$13,425,920 of annual revenue, and a duty of 20 per cent on imports of crude India rubber and substitutes, which would bring in \$21,372,295

more, crude rubber being the material from which automobile tires are made.

From all of these sources nearly three times the amount of revenue could be derived that would come from a 20 per cent tariff on wool and the burden would fall on the rich, who could well afford to carry it.

Warming up to his theme, Mr. Gray poured hot shot into the ranks of the wool manufacturers who use a tariff on wool to bunko the sheep raiser and milk the consumer.

Even those who did not agree with Mr. Gray could not fail to admire his courage in thus boldly expounding the dictum of free wool in the face of the fact that all of his Indiana democratic associates were on the other side of the proposition. He went down fighting, for Representative Underwood insisted upon his point of order and Representative Sulzer, in the chair, ruled in favor of Underwood.

On the final roll call Gray voted for the bill, considering it an improvement over the Aldrich-Payne law, but not nearly as good a bill as it would have been if it had made wool free.

FROM THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Hon. Finly H. Gray's Speech follows:

Tuesday, June 20, 1911.

The house being in committee of the whole house on the state of the union and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 11019) to reduce the duties on wool and manufactures of wool—

Mr. Gray said:

Mr. Chairman: I desire to offer an amendment.

The Chairman. The gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Gray) offers an amendment, which the clerk will report.

The clerk read as follows:

Resolved, That H. R. 11019, the same being a bill to reduce the duties on wool and manufactures of wool, be amended by striking out all in lines 10 to 13, inclusive, on page 1, and being paragraph 1 of section 1 therein, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"1. All wool of the sheep, hair of the camel, goat, alpaca, and all other like animals, and all wool and hair on the skins of such animals, when imported into the United States, shall be exempt from duty.

"And that the remaining paragraphs of section 1 of said bill be recommitted to the ways and means committee, with instructions to amend the same by reducing the duties on manufactures of wool to an average of 20 per cent ad valorem."

Mr. Underwood. Mr. Chairman, I reserve a point of order on the amendment of the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. Gray. Mr. Chairman, certain charges have been made here against the democratic caucus by the two honorable gentlemen from the state of Illinois (Mr. Mann and Mr. Cannon), and also on the floor of this house by certain other gentlemen. But I take no exceptions to the charges, nor the criticisms from insurgent republicans, because these men are consistent and practice what they preach, but I do take exceptions to the charges from these other men, because they are inconsistent and they do not practice what they preach. They say nothing against the procedure of their own caucus, and I take it that a man who has not the moral courage to denounce a bad thing in his own party has no standing to make charges against and criticize his opposing party. (Applause on the democratic side.) These gentlemen have never been in a democratic caucus, and they are evidently judging a democratic caucus from the proceedings of a republican caucus.

Mr. Madden. Mr. Chairman, I make the point of order that the gentleman is not talking to the point of order.

Mr. Gray. Mr. Chairman, I submit that this is responsive to the criticism from these men.

Mr. Mann. Mr. Chairman, I hope my colleague (Mr. Madden) will not insist upon his point of order. Let the gentleman from Indiana proceed.

Mr. Madden. The chair has not acted upon the point of order that is pending.

The Chairman. The point of order was reserved, and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. Gray) will continue.

Mr. Gray. What I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman, was that these men are judging our caucus by their own caucus, and from their charges certainly a republican caucus must be bristling with the gag rule, shrieking with the strains of the steam roller, and doleful with the wails of

the crushed. But I say to you, Mr. Chairman, such is not the proceedings of a democratic caucus. I am a member of the democratic caucus, and believe that I am in good standing, and yet under the rules of that caucus I am permitted to stand here on this floor and make a motion to amend the bill reported at the caucus and to move this house to place wool on the free list and reduce the duties upon manufactured wool to an average rate of 20 per cent ad valorem, and I am free to vote for any and all amendments which, in my judgment, I may see fit to support. So I say to these gentlemen that their criticisms are not well taken.

Mr. Chairman, along with the tariff on woolen clothing, behind which the woolen manufacturers have intrenched themselves for 50 years to exact millions in tribute annually from the people, there is a tariff on raw wool, placed there and kept there at the demands of the woolen manufacturers themselves. And while this tariff would have the effect, if allowed to operate, to increase the cost of the manufacturers' raw material, yet we are confronted with the spectacle of the woolen manufacturers, their agents, attorneys, and special representatives entreating and imploring congress to allow the tariff on wool to remain, and to permit them to continue the payment of a tax on their raw material. Why have the woolen manufacturers thus demanded, and why are they still demanding, a tariff upon wool and asking to be permitted to continue the payment of this tax? Let no man be deceived in their purpose. It is a stratagem to gain the wool growers' support for a tariff upon manufactured wool, to blind him with self-interest, to make him a party to the crime of extortion, and to close his mouth against the evils of private monopoly and the exploitation of the consumers of woolen clothing.

Monopoly and extortion never ask in their own name, but always for and in the name of others. The woolen manufacturers' demand for a tariff upon wool is a subterfuge to claim a tariff for themselves on manufactured wool under the name of the wool growers. It is to disguise the wool trust in the cloak of the shepherd to deceive the people and decoy them to support a tariff on woolen clothing.

And the woolen manufacturers can well afford to make this bargain with the wool growers, for the manufacturers do not live up to their promise to divide the tribute collected off of the people. But if the manufacturers did so divide with the wool growers they would only have to add any increase in price of wool they paid to the price of their cloth and collect it back off of the consumers, and would make the wool growers pay their own tribute.

During the last 13 years the tariff upon Indiana one-fourth blood wool, unwashed, has been 11 cents per pound, and yet the average Boston price for these years has been less than 4 cents per pound above the London market for the same class of wool, and in 1903 the price was only 3½ cents higher, in 1907 only 3¼ cents higher, in 1906 only 4 cents higher, in 1908 only 1½ cents higher and in 1910 only 1 cent higher per pound in the Boston market over the foreign price at London. The reason for this is plain. The farmers and wool growers have never been able to organize and co-operate to hold their produce, while the woolen manufacturers have long been combined as a trust, and thus acting as one buyer they offer the wool grower whatever price they determine to pay in directors' meeting, and the wool grower has to take it.

While the tariff of 11 cents per pound remained the same during all these years, the price of wool fluctuated with each year. If the tariff had been the controlling factor in fixing the price of wool and the measure of that price, as the woolen manufacturers promised the wool growers it would be, the price of domestic wool would have been maintained uniformly 11 cents higher than the foreign markets. The tariff was always to control the price of wool before the election, but the woolen manufacturers' trust has been the potent factor of control after the election.

But this is not all. While the wool growers have been induced to support a tariff upon woolens on the promise of being allowed to share in the tribute exacted from the consumers of woolen clothing, the woolen manufacturers have been collecting an average tariff tax of 90 per cent off of the American people, including the wool growers themselves, amounting, as variously estimated from official figures, from \$175,000,000 to \$200,000,000 annually.

The value of the manufactured wool produced in the United States for 1909, with imports

 © WHAT ARE THE WILD WAVES
 © SAYING?
 © ASK PAYNTER OF KENTUCKY—
 © HE KNOWS.
