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"THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT CUBA TO BE FREE."

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SPEECH

OF

HON. WM. SULZER,

OF NEW YORK,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JUNE 17, 1897.

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WASHINGTON.

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Mr. W. A. Smith

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On the joint resolution (S. R. 26) declaring that a condition of public war exists in Cuba, and that strict neutrality shall be maintained—

Mr. LACEY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from New York [Mr. SULZER] feels, I understand, a profound interest in Cuba and I yield him five minutes.

A MEMBER. Give him ten.

Mr. SULZER. Mr. Speaker, in the few moments given to me by the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LACEY] I desire to speak for Cuban liberty. On Monday last I had the honor to present to this House—

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. Will the gentleman allow me a question?

Mr. SULZER. I have only five minutes. The gentleman can have all the time he wants after I conclude.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York [Mr. SULZER] is entitled to the floor upon the pending bill.

Mr. SULZER. Mr. Speaker, to continue, on Monday last I had the honor to present to this House a monster petition signed by hundreds of thousands of citizens of the United States—

Mr. WILLIAM A. STONE. It is on just that point I wanted to ask the gentleman a question.

Mr. SULZER (continuing). Requesting this House to pass Senator MORGAN'S resolution granting belligerent rights to the Cuban patriots. That resolution came over to this House several weeks ago. It passed the Senate by an overwhelming vote. I am informed it has never

been referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, because the Committee on Foreign Affairs has never been appointed.

We are wasting time here day in and day out while hundreds and hundreds of American citizens are languishing in Cuban jails for no offense whatever. Our trade with Cuba ruined, our flag fired upon, our citizens robbed, insulted, and assassinated, or driven like wild beasts from their homes and farms in the interior of Cuba to the Spanish fortified towns on the coast to starve, to sicken, and to die! The history of the last two years' struggle in Cuba is the saddest in all the annals of the world. It is high time this great Government should protect its citizens and their property in Cuba. It is high time we should intervene in the name of humanity, civilization, and Christianity, and put a stop to this brutal, bloody, devastating carnage.

These citizens of the United States in Cuba look to this country for their rights and protection. Apparently they look in vain. The flag of their country, which should protect them, is spit upon by the brutal Spaniards. These cruel and bloodthirsty Spaniards trample our flag in the dust, ignore treaty rights, and bid defiance to this great Republic.

It is time for us to act. If we do not, we will stand disgraced in the opinion of our own liberty-loving citizens and before the Christian powers of the world. If we do not put a stop to the fiendish barbarities and refined cruelties of these Spanish brigands, our boasted republicanism will become a byword and our flag of freedom a reproach and a farce. How long shall we submit? How much longer shall we permit poor Cuba to be a human shamble?

I desired to-day to correct the Journal of the House in regard to the petition I presented. Parliamentary tactics precluded that. We do not know what has become of that great petition in favor of "Cuba Libre." The House Journal simply says: "To the Committee on For-

eign Affairs." That can not be a fact, for the reason that the Committee on Foreign Affairs has not been appointed. It should have been appointed long ago. The joint resolution of that venerable Senator and friend of humanity, Mr. MORGAN, granting belligerent rights to the Cubans, should be speedily submitted to a vote of this House. Some one is responsible for its suppression. Somebody is responsible for its delay. Who is the man?

The Cuban cause is the cause of liberty. By the grace of God it will and must triumph.

The American people to-day are in favor of granting to the Cuban patriots belligerent rights. If that question could be submitted to the people of this country, they would decide in favor of it by an overwhelming majority. The American people would like to know why the resolution of Senator MORGAN lies on the Speaker's desk. They would like to know why no action has been taken by this House on that joint resolution of belligerency. If there is "hell on earth," as John Sherman said when he was in the Senate, it is in Cuba. Does he believe that to-day? If so, then why does he not act? We send relief to India; we sympathize with the Greeks; but we allow our citizens to be butchered, murdered, and assassinated in Cuba without a protest.

The policy of that great assassin, Weyler, the greatest thief, the greatest coward, the greatest brute, the greatest liar, the greatest murderer, the greatest enemy to humanity the world has ever known is devastating the fairest island in the world within gunshot of our own shores, and exterminating as brave a people battling for freedom and for independence as ever fought for self-government on the face of the earth. If that resolution of belligerency could be submitted to this House, I have every reason to know that it would pass by an overwhelming vote. The American people want Cuba to be free. They will see to it sooner or later that Cuba is free. I do not know who retards the joint resolution.

I do not know who is responsible for the delay in procuring action upon it; but I do know that the day of reckoning is not far distant, and the American people, who sympathize with those brave and struggling Cuban patriots, will hold some one responsible. And woe to that man!

I saw in a newspaper yesterday that the President of the United States was in sympathy with the Cuban patriots; that he wanted them to succeed and achieve their independence, as our forefathers achieved their independence. I hope that is true. I am in favor of his policy to annex the Hawaiian Islands; but before the Hawaiian Islands are annexed I hope the President will take some action to make Cuba free and independent. He could not do a more popular thing. I read from an editorial in last evening's Washington Times this statement:

On Monday last a petition from 600,000 American citizens asking recognition of Cuban belligerency was presented.

Here the hammer fell. [Applause.]

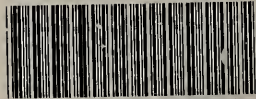
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