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1898

THE INSINCERITY AND DUPLICITY OF THE REPUBLICAN
PARTY EXPOSED.

AN APPEAL FOR CUBAN LIBERTY.

SPEECH

OF

Sebastian
HON. JOHN S. LITTLE,
OF ARKANSAS,

20/10/98
IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

JANUARY 10, 1898.

WASHINGTON.

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Mr. W. A. Smith

SPEECH
OF
HON. JOHN S. LITTLE.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 4751) making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the Government for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899, and for other purposes—

Mr. LITTLE said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Standing with the Democratic party and its platform, I desire to say that I am opposed to the civil service in principle, in theory, and in practice. Its principles as now practiced I regard as undemocratic, contrary to the genius of our Republic, and positively obnoxious to the great mass of the people of our country. In its theories it is a humbug; it promises and never performs. In practice it is a colossal fraud. If administered according to the intention of its authors and advocates, it leads to a life tenure in office and a civil pension roll which ought to be and is intolerable to every patriotic American citizen.

I have never been able to discover, Mr. Chairman, why a man who has enjoyed his share of the good things of life when he was young, occupying a good position, drawing a good salary, and doing light work, when he grows old should be entitled to any more of the benefactions of the Government than the man who has been compelled to toil in the sunshine and storm to make a living for himself and his family. The only exception made under our Constitution in favor of life tenure in office was yielded to the Federal judiciary, and that after a long and continued contest; and I believe, Mr. Chairman, if the present has not established the fact, that the future will demonstrate that this was one of the great mistakes made by the wise and good men who framed our Constitution. [Applause on the Democratic side.]

If, sir, the men who occupy seats in the Supreme Court of this Government had to respond to the voice of the people, we would have no fear that there ever would be a rule permanently established in this country whereby the property and incomes of the rich would be exempt from taxation and the burdens of the Government placed upon the poor but industrious people. [Loud applause on the Democratic side.]

But, Mr. Chairman, I did not intend to enter into a general discussion of the civil service. Our friends on the other side, I think, are engaged in a very profitable discussion, one that will demonstrate to the country the insincerity of their platform and their inability to administer the principles upon which they were elected. I was a long time in the brush before I knew who was chargeable with this civil-service law. The Republican convention relieves me of further doubt. The platform reads:

The civil-service law was placed upon the statute book by the Republican party—

And this is the first time in the history of this House that a party has turned to destroy its own progeny—

which has always sustained it—

And they say—

and we renew our repeated declarations that it shall be thoroughly and honestly enforced and extended wherever practicable.



No modification is suggested, no repeal suggested. But we find when we come to this Congress that men who were elected upon that platform seek now to destroy it, and I am reminded of the couplet of Sir Walter Scott:

Oh, what a tangled web we weave
When first we practice to deceive.

[Laughter.]

Gentlemen, you find yourselves divided, and you will find yourselves incapable of dealing with this evil unless you receive the support of the Democratic side; and you will not receive that on any amendment you may offer whereby you may expect to relegate Democrats out and Republicans in. If you want to repeal it, if you want to strike down the evil, I believe you will have the support of almost all gentlemen on this side of the House; but no amendment which does not carry out, in good faith, the demands of the Democratic platform can receive our support.

Now, Mr. Chairman, on January 5 my friend from Indiana [Mr. LANDIS] made use of this truthful language, this real prophecy, this inspired truth, as the future will demonstrate:

We propose that they shall be corrected—

Speaking of the evils of the civil service—

and if this Congress does not correct them, the people, shod with indignation and clothed with wrath, will send a Congress here that will correct them.

Right, my friend! A Congress will be here after the next election, and a Congress bold enough and true enough to the American people to deal with this question and all other public questions as they should be—in the interests of the people. The gentleman seems to have lost hope.

Also the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. PEARSON], on January 5, made use of this prophetic language:

And I tell the gentleman from Pennsylvania—

Speaking to Mr. BROSUS—

And I tell the gentleman from Pennsylvania, and with this I close, that ever since this law was passed—the Democrats ought not to hear this, but they know it [laughter]—ever since this law was passed, at every election following the election of a President the House of Representatives goes against the party in power, and at the next quadrennial election it goes against the party in power for the control of the Presidency, and it will be so just as long as the Republican party will permit itself and its policy to be guided by the pious and holy gentlemen in William street and their disciples.

These gentlemen seem to have lost all hope for the future of the grand old party. I commend to them the following lines, which are, I believe, from Milton:

So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear;
Farewell remorse; all good to me is lost.
Evil, be thou my good.

But, Mr. Speaker, the distinguished and original gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. LINNEY], on December 10, 1897, more vividly portrayed the evil way of the Republican party and its dismal future in this splendid, inimitable declaration:

The gentleman can rely much on party organization.

Referring to the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. ALLEN], I believe.

The gentleman can rely much on party organization. I must rely upon the purifying process of reasoning addressed to the intellect and conscience. And let me tell you that if this system of civil service continues I will not get 19,000 votes next year. Neither will the Republican party in my State present force enough to grease a gimlet to bore a hole to bury ourselves.

The truth is that prophecy will be true not only in North Carolina, but nowhere in this great country will there be enough of the old machine left to serve the purpose indicated by the gentle-



man from North Carolina. To him I breathe these pleasant lines:

Come, disappointment, come,
But not in thy terrors clad,
Come in thy meekest, saddest guise
To the reckless and the bad.

Mr. Chairman, not only has the Republican party gone back on this part of its platform, but we all know that during the last campaign you were all bimetalists of the international kind. To-day you are but the chained slaves of gold monometallism, unable to free yourselves from its embrace. The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Gage, the financial high priest and mouthpiece of the Administration, declares that the purposes of the bill prepared by him which has been presented to the Committee on Banking and Currency is designed to more thoroughly and permanently commit the country to the gold standard; and it proposes to go beyond that and destroy the greenback, to destroy the silver certificates, and to surrender the sovereignty of this Government to the national banks, and thereby make the burdens of the people more intolerable.

Mr. Chairman, if this was all the wrath of the people might be stayed for a time; but there is a sadder question. There is a question involving human liberty, the life of a struggling people—a question whether the good offices of this Government shall be used in behalf of the struggling patriots of Cuba. Let me read, Mr. Chairman, a declaration of Gen. Maximo Gomez, a message sent by him to the American people on Christmas morning. He says:

All that I have to say regarding this great and heroic war in Cuba is a complete ratification of our manifesto issued at Monte Christo. You may make it known to the American people that it is the firm resolution of the army and people of Cuba, who have shed so much blood in order to gain their independence, not to falter in their just cause until death or triumph crowns their efforts.

M. GOMEZ.

Language as eloquent as ever dropped from the burning lips of Patrick Henry. It comes from a man whose patriotism and courage rank high among the patriots and soldiers of any age.

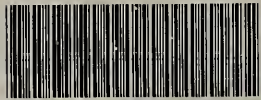
These people struck the blow for liberty, and for three years they have maintained it with a courage and sacrifice and devotion that has won the love and respect of liberty-loving people all over the world. One-third of their population has been destroyed, and every breeze that blows from the sunlit shores of that ill-fated island bears upon its bosom the tears and prayers of a struggling people. They learned their songs of liberty from our people, they gathered the hope of freedom from our flag, and yet the majority on the other side of this House sit unmoved and unconcerned.

Mr. Chairman, the same tyranny that rides down these people has insulted our flag. It has destroyed twenty millions of property of our people and has imprisoned and outraged our citizens. How long shall this great country submit to these great outrages at the hands of this puny and decaying tyranny? Mr. Chairman, how long must liberty, bleeding, wait for affirmative action upon the part of our Government? Let us act promptly, let us act now, let our love for liberty and humanity inspire us to uphold the banner of liberty in the hands of these struggling people.

Oh, give, great God, to freedom's waves to ride
Sublime o'er Conquest, Avarice, and Pride—
To sweep where Pleasure decks her guilty bowers,
And dark Oppression builds her thick-ribb'd towers.

Touch but the shores of Cuba with our flag, and the shouts of her freedom will roll round the world. [Applause.]

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