

A PATERNALISTIC DOCTRINE

The doctrine that by law, by special privilege, by governmental favor, this Government ought to give to any class of capitalists or laborers a special bounty that must be paid out of the pockets of all the people is paternalistic to its very marrow and socialistic to the very last degree. The wage-earner who works in a factory is no more entitled to it than the wage-earner who works on the farm. The manufacturer or his employee is no more entitled to a bounty than the cotton planter or the wheat grower or the cattle raiser. It is not a correct principle of government to build up a few industries at the expense of many, or a few classes of laborers at the expense of all. If a combination can be made, of special interests that are so favored, strong enough to carry the elections, it may for a time succeed, but its success can never be enduring, because it is based on principles that are un-Democratic, un-Republican, and un-American; principles against which our fathers fought in 1776; principles that are completely antagonistic to the very genius of this Government, which was founded to bestow upon all men equality in opportunity and rights. But our Republican friends contend that the figures and statistics show that high tariffs in general, and the Dingley tariff in particular, have resulted in an increase in the wage of the American laboring man, particularly in manufacturing industries, and in support of this proposition, upon which they have now come to mainly rely, they grow vehemently eloquent and learnedly statistical. * * *

The tariff has been a positive disadvantage to the American wage-earner, for it has increased the cost of living to him at much more rapid rate than his wages have risen. The rise of prices shows an increase of 55 per cent. since 1897. During that same period wages have risen but 19.2 per cent., even according to the high estimate given by the Bureau of Labor (March 1907). What folly for the workingman to believe that the Republican party, or any other party that undertakes to create industries and fix values by law, will not take more from him with the left hand in the shape of increased prices for what he must buy than it will or can give to him with the right hand in the shape of tariff protection and increased wages for his labor!

—Hon. Thomas W. Hardwick, H.R. Feb. 1908.

SELFISHNESS OF PROTECTION

It is the inherent vice of the Protectionist philosophy that it always prefers selfish, special interests to large general interests; it is always prefer-

ring the interest of this or that class of producers to the large general interests of the community or the consumer. Selfish interests are all antagonistic to one another. Let us look at the interests as the Protectionist sees them. Every man has an interest in what he sells to sell as dear as he can and in buying as cheap as he can. The shoemaker wants to make a good profit on his shoes, but likes to get his coat cheap; and the tailor is all for a dear coat but thinks that shoes ought not to be priced too high. The farmer would like to see cotton down and corn up, and *vice versa*. Those are the selfish interests of humanity which we all have, and if we prefer them to the general interests, which we can also see staring us in the face, the only result of that preference must be an immense disharmony working its way through the whole fabric of society. Where does labor stand among all these interests? I have always thought it a great mistake to speak of labor as if it were an ordinary commodity which you could buy in the market as a chair, or a piece of paper, or a top hat. It is not such a commodity. It is much more. It is a great service rendered by man to man, and I have always denied, and will always deny, it is a service which ought to be regulated purely on a cash basis.

To my mind obligations are contracted between persons working for each other of a much higher character than can ever be discharged by cash payment. But for the sake of the argument, to develop my point, I would speak of labor as if it ranked with shoes and boots and meat and corn. And I say that judging from this selfish view, the view of the Protectionist, the amount of protection that will help the shoemaker will not help the tailor and the farmer who want the other things cheap; and in the same way the amount of protection that will suit all the special interests which Protection seeks to safeguard will not be of the slightest use to the selfishly special interests of labor. You will find that the man who has only his labor to sell wants to sell it dear, and wants all other things cheap. And if all these other interests are to be arrayed against him, how are they going to get the extra profit for which they look and work? All the great producing capitalist interests are to be bound together under a tariff, and each man is to get a higher price for the commodity he sells. They cannot make it out of each other merely by marking their goods at a higher figure. They cannot get richer that way. All the other interests can supply a profit which the Protectionist conspiracy seeks to extract from the commercial fortunes of our country.

—Winston Churchill, M.P., at Manchester, Eng., Jan. 1908.

WALT WHITMAN ON PROTECTION PLUNDEE

The Protectionists are fond of flashing to the public eye the glittering delusion of great money results from manufactures, mines, artificial exports—so many millions from this source, and so many from that—such a seductive unanswerable show—an immense revenue of annual cash from iron, cotton, woollen, leather goods, and a hundred other things, all bolstered up by “protection.” But the really important point of all is, into whose pockets does this plunder really go? It would be some excuse and satisfaction if even a fair proportion of it went to the masses of laboring men—resulting in homesteads to such men, women, children—myriads of actual homes in fee simple, in every State (not the false glamor of the stunning wealth reported in the census, in the statistics, or tables in the newspapers), but a fair division and generous average to those workmen and workwomen—that would be something. But the fact itself is nothing of the kind. The profits of “protection” go altogether to a few score select persons, who, by favors of Congress, State legislatures, the banks, and other special advantages, are forming a vulgar aristocracy, full as bad as anything in the British or European castes of blood, or the dynasties there of the past. As Sismondi pointed out, the true prosperity of a nation is not in the great wealth of a special class, but is only to be really attained in having the bulk of the people provided with homes or land in fee simple. This may not be the best show, but it is the best reality.

We know we must be civilized because
of all the ways
Of killing off the children we've in-
vented in these days.
We kill 'em off with factories to fill the
owners' maws—
Protecting “infant” industries with
brutal tariff laws.
We kill 'em off with patent foods be-
fore they're in their teens.
We kill 'em off in school rooms, and in
the Philippines.
We kill 'em off with autos, we kill 'em
off with vice.
We kill 'em off with coddling when
beating don't suffice.
We kill 'em off with cigarettes. We
make them deaf and dumb.
We vaccinate, inoculate and kill 'em off
with rum.
Can savage nations do as much?
Well, we should be surprised!
We rather guess they'll have to wait
until they're civilized. —Life.