

THE FORCE BILL—WHAT IS IT?

It is a scheme to take elections out of the hands of the people and place them in charge of federal officials. Briefly stated, a chief supervisor of elections is appointed in each United States judicial district. This chief supervisor, when he is petitioned to do so, calls upon the circuit court to convene and appoint supervisors of elections—three for each polling precinct, two from one political party and one from the other. These appointments are made by the judge from the list of names furnished by the chief supervisor. The supervisors are empowered to appoint as many deputy marshals as are deemed necessary to carry out their plans of securing such results as they desire. This supervision is over state elections when members of congress or presidential electors are to be elected. The board of supervisors for a precinct have power under direction of the chief to revise and supervise the registration of votes, to examine state ballot boxes before election begins, to keep a poll list and the number of voters, to receive and count ballots rejected by the regular and duly appointed judges of election. In cities of 20,000 inhabitants and upwards the chief may require any of the supervisors or deputy marshals to make a house-to-house canvass which may begin five weeks before and end on the day before the election. This is to inquire into the eligibility of voters and whether they have been legally naturalized, which means that these federal flunkies called deputy marshals and supervisors shall simply make domiciliary visits doing the work of trappers, intimidators, ticket peddlers, and executors generally of the blocks—of—five scheme to carry elections. They are authorized to call for and examine naturalization papers of foreign born citizens. They are authorized to inform voters in which box to deposit their ballots and if they see a democrat go with any voter into a room or booth it is made the duty of one of them to enter and superintend the voting. When instructed by their chief these supervisors are to make a full list of all foreign born citizens who have been naturalized, with the date thereof, their place of nativity and present residence and the name and residence of witnesses used to obtain naturalization papers, and they are to examine and note the original affidavits and applications presented to the court. The United States judge is directed by the chief supervisor to appoint a board of three canvassers, who shall receive \$15 per day and they shall appoint a clerk who shall receive \$12 per day. They shall canvass the statements and certificates of ballots cast at any election general or special, to certify the results as shown by the returns made by the supervisors to the chief supervisor. They thus certify who is elected to congress. This infamous bill then provides that it shall be the duty of the clerk of the lower house of congress to make up his roll of members elect from the returns thus made by these supervisors. A more devilish scheme to thwart the will of the people was never concocted. The certificate of the governor or duly created canvassing board of a state would be entirely ignored. The bill provides that chief supervisors shall be appointed for life and his expenses and salary provided for by a permanent appropriation.

We have thus presented the chief provisions of the bill. Let the reader observe the whole chain as made up link by link. The president appoints circuit judges, the circuit judges appoint chief supervisors, and they in turn appoint boards of supervisors, who appoint deputy marshals. Under a packed judiciary, (and there is no obstacle in securing one,) and the step between a bold president, (backed by an unscrupulous set of leaders,) and a dictator.

1891.

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ship is but a short one. Even if it never were carried to such a length, the unscrupulous use of the power in a doubtful state or two could very easily be made to defeat the will of the people. Moreover, as Senator Daniel, of Virginia, forcibly points out, if congress has the right, under the constitution, to take charge of congressional elections, determining, through his supervisors, who have a right to register and vote, then the same power exists for congress to take charge at the election of a United States Senator, by a state legislature, and to decide who have the right to cast a vote in that election. The restrictions imposed on congress by the constitution are precisely the same in the one case as in the other with the single exception that the place where the election for senator is to be held cannot be determined by congress. The federal elections bill is a dangerous bill—dangerous not alone to the tranquility of the south, but dangerous to the liberties of America north, south, east and west.

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