

MESSAGE IS READ

Senate and House Receive Document in Usual Form.

RATE SUPERVISION THE THEME

Urges Economy in Public Expenditures—Monroe Doctrine—Reduce Philippine Tariff.

The most important points brought out in the president's message follow:

To the Senate and House of Representatives: The people of this country continue to enjoy great prosperity. Undoubtedly there will be ebb and flow in such prosperity, and this ebb and flow will be felt more or less by all members of the community, both by the desiring and the undesiring. Against the wrath of the Lord the wisdom of man cannot avail; in times of flood or drought human ingenuity can but partially repair the disaster. A general failure of crops would hurt all, and a general failure of money would hurt the general well-being, then those who are innocent of the folly will have to pay part of the penalty incurred by those who are guilty of the folly. A panic brought on by the speculative folly of part of the business community would hurt the whole business community. But such stoppage of welfare, though it might be severe, would not be lasting. In the long run the one vital factor in the permanent prosperity of the country is the high individual character of the average American worker, the average American citizen, no matter whether his work be mental or manual, whether he be farmer or wageworker, business man or professional man.

In our industrial and social system the interests of all men are so closely intertwined that in the business man's case a straight-dealing man who by his efficiency, by his ingenuity and industry, benefits himself must also benefit others. Normally the man of great productive capacity who becomes rich by guiding the labor of many other men does not by enriching himself do more than they could produce without his guidance; and both he and they share in the benefit, which comes also to the public at large. The superficial fact that the sharing may be unequal must never blind us to the underlying fact that there is a degree to which the benefit comes in some degree to each man concerned. Normally the wageworker, the man of small means, and the average consumer, as well as the average producer, are all alike helped by making conditions such that the man of exceptional business ability receives an adequate reward for his ability. Something can be done by legislation to help the general prosperity; but no such help of a permanently beneficial character can be given to the less able and less fortunate, save as the results of a policy which shall insure the advantage of all industries and efficient people who act decently; and this is only another way of saying that any benefit which comes to the less able and less fortunate must of necessity come even more to the more able and more fortunate. If, therefore, the less fortunate man is enabled by his more fortunate brother to strike at the conditions under which they have both, though equally prospered, the result will assuredly be that while damage may come to the one struck at, it will visit with an even heavier load the one who strikes. Taken as a whole, we must all go up or go down together.

The best possible regulation of rates would, of course, be that regulation secured by an honest agreement among the railroads themselves to carry out the law. Such a general agreement would, for instance, at once put a stop to the practice of discriminating against one railroad to discriminate against or secure advantages over some rival; and such agreements would make the railroads themselves agents for enforcing the law. The power vested in the Government to put a stop to agreements to the detriment of the public should be in my judgment, as it is now, retained by the Government, under specified conditions and careful supervision, agreements clearly in the interest of the public. But, in my judgment, the necessity for giving this further power is by no means as great as the necessity for giving the Commission or administrative body the other powers I have enumerated. These powers may well be inadvisable to attempt to vest this particular power in the Commission or other administrative body until it already possesses and is exercising what I regard as by far the most important power of all the powers I recommend—as, indeed, the vitally important power that is given by maximum rate, which rate, after the lapse of a reasonable time, goes into full effect, subject to review by the courts.

Let me most earnestly say that these recommendations are not made in any spirit of hostility to the railroads. On ethical grounds, on grounds of right, such hostility would be intolerable; and on grounds of mere national self-interest we must remember that such hostility would tell against the welfare not merely of some few rich men, but of a multitude of small investors, a multitude of railway employees, wageworkers, and many adversely against the interest of the public as a whole. I believe that on the whole our railroads have done well and not ill; but the railroad men who wish to do well should not be exposed to competition with those who have no such desire, and the only way to secure this end is to give to some Government tribunal the power to see that justice is done by the unwilling exactly as it is gladly done by the willing. Moreover, if some Government body is given increased power the effect will be to furnish authority to cover the interest of the railroad whenever irrational clamor against it is raised, or whenever charges made against it are disproved. I ask this legislation not only in the interest of the public, but in the interest of the honest railroad man and the honest shipper who are always providing a chief support for the practices of their dishonest competitors. This legislation should be enacted in a spirit as remote as possible from hysteria and rancor. If we of the American body politic are true to the traditions we have inherited from our fathers, we should endeavor to make us hate any man because he is rich, just as much as we should scorn any man, effort to make us look down upon or treat contemptuously any man because he is poor.

Insurance. The great insurance companies afford striking examples of corporations whose business has extended so far beyond the jurisdiction of the states which created them as to preclude strict enforcement of supervision and regulation by the parent states. In my last annual message I recommended "that the Congress carefully consider whether the power of the bureau of corporations cannot constitutionally be extended to cover interstate transactions in insurance." Recent events have acted in insurance, for in the absence of emphasized the importance of an early and exhaustive consideration of this question, to see whether it is not possible to furnish better safeguards than the several states have been able to furnish against corruption of the kind which has been exposed. It has been only too clearly shown that certain of the men at the head of these large corporations take by no means the most scrupulous distinction between honesty and dishonesty; they draw the line only this side of what may be called law honesty, the kind of honesty necessary in order to avoid falling into the clutches of the law. Of course the only complete remedy for this state of affairs is to be found in an aroused public conscience, a higher sense of ethical conduct in the community at large, and especially among business men and in the great profession of the law, and in the growth of a spirit which condemns all dishonesty, whether in rich man or poor man, whether European or American. The only way to obtain that to which they are justly entitled while it in return gives to Santo Domingo the only opportunity of defense against claims which it ought not to pay; for now if it meets the views of the Senate we shall have to examine all these claims, whether American, foreign, and see that none that are improper are paid.

acter. My predecessors have repeatedly recognized that the foreign business of these companies is an important part of our foreign commercial relations. During the administrations of Presidents Cleveland, Harrison and McKinley the State Department exercised its influence, through diplomatic channels, to prevent unjust discrimination by foreign countries against American business. These negotiations illustrated the propriety of the Congress recognizing the National character of the State Department could only give expression to the wishes of the authorities of the several states, whose policy was ineffective through want of uniformity.

Economy in Expenditures.

I earnestly recommend to the Congress the need of economy and to this end a right scrutiny of appropriations. As examples merely, I call your attention to one or two specific matters. All unnecessary offices should be abolished. The Commissioner of the General Land Office recommends the abolition of the office of receiver of public moneys for United States lands. This will effect a saving of about a quarter of a million dollars a year. As the business of the Nation grows it is inevitable that there should be from time to time a legitimate increase in the number of officials; and this fact renders it all the more important that when offices become unnecessary they should be abolished. In the public printing also a large saving of public money can be made. There is a constantly growing tendency to publish masses of unimportant information. It is probably not unfair to say that many tens of thousands of volumes are published which no human being looks at, and for which there is no real demand whatever.

Federal Elections.

In my last annual message I said: "The Government to protect the integrity of the elections of its own officials is inherent and has been recognized and affirmed by repeated declarations of the Supreme Court. There is no enemy of free government more dangerous and none so insidious as the corruption of the electoral process. No one defends or excuses corruption, and it would seem to follow that none would oppose vigorous measures to eradicate it. I recommend the enactment of a law directed against bribery and corruption in Federal elections. The details of such a law may be safely left to the wise discretion of the Congress, but it should be so framed as to conform to the Constitution if it is possible to go, and should include severe penalties against him who gives or receives a bribe intended to influence his act or opinion as an elector; and provisions for the publication not only of the expenditures for nominations and elections of all candidates, but also of all contributions received and expenditures made by political committees."

I desire to repeat this recommendation. In political campaigns in a country as large and populous as ours it is inevitable that there should be much expense of an entirely legitimate kind. This, of course, means that contributions, and some of them of large size, must be made, and as a matter of fact, in any big political contest such contributions are always made to both sides. It is entirely proper both to give and receive them, unless there is an improper motive connected with either gift or reception. If they are given for a kind of promise or promise, express or implied, direct or indirect, in the way of favor or immunity, then the giving or receiving becomes not only improper but criminal. It will undoubtedly be difficult as a matter of practical detail to shape an act which shall guard with reasonable certainty against such misconduct; but if it is possible to secure by law the full and verified publication in detail of all the sums contributed to and expended by the candidates or committees of any political parties the result cannot but be wholesome. All contributions by corporations to any political committee or for any political purpose should be prohibited by law; directors should not be permitted to use stockholders' money for such purposes; and, moreover, a prohibition of this kind would be, as far as it went, an effective method of stopping the evils aimed at in corrupt practices acts. No only should both the National and the several State Legislatures forbid any officer of a corporation from using the money of the corporation in or about any election, but they should also forbid such use of money in connection with any legislation save by the employment of counsel in public manner for distinctly legal services.

Santo Domingo.

Santo Domingo, in her turn, has now made an appeal to us to help her, and not only every principle of wisdom and common sense within us bids us respond to the appeal. It is not of the slightest consequence whether we grant the aid needed by Santo Domingo as an incident to the wise development of the Monroe Doctrine, or because we regard the case of Santo Domingo as standing wholly by itself, and to be treated as such, and not on general principles or with any reference to the Monroe Doctrine. The important point is to give the needed aid, and the case is certainly sufficiently peculiar to deserve to be judged purely on its own merits. The conditions in Santo Domingo have for a number of years grown from bad to worse, until the Government is on the verge of dissolution. Fortunately, just at this time a ruler sprang up in Santo Domingo, who, with his colleagues, saw the dangers threatening their country and appealed to the friendship of the only great and powerful neighbor who possessed the power, and as they hoped, the will to help them. There was imminent danger of foreign intervention. The previous rulers of Santo Domingo had recklessly incurred debts, and owing to her internal disorders she had ceased to be able to provide means of paying the debts. The patience of her foreign creditors had become exhausted, and at length they were forced to the point of intervention, and were only prevented from intervening by the unofficial assurance of this Government that it would itself strive to help Santo Domingo in her hour of need. In the case of one of these nations, only the actual opening of negotiations to give increased power the effect will be to furnish authority to cover the interest of the railroad whenever irrational clamor against it is raised, or whenever charges made against it are disproved. I ask this legislation not only in the interest of the public, but in the interest of the honest railroad man and the honest shipper who are always providing a chief support for the practices of their dishonest competitors. This legislation should be enacted in a spirit as remote as possible from hysteria and rancor. If we of the American body politic are true to the traditions we have inherited from our fathers, we should endeavor to make us hate any man because he is rich, just as much as we should scorn any man, effort to make us look down upon or treat contemptuously any man because he is poor.

Accordingly the Executive Department of our Government negotiated a treaty under which we are to try to help the Dominican people to straighten out their finances. This treaty is pending before the Senate. In the meantime a temporary arrangement has been made which will give the Dominican Government has appointed Americans to all the important positions in the customs service, and they are seeing to the honest collection of the revenues, turning over 45 per cent to the Government to pay its expenses and putting the other 55 per cent into a safe depository for equitable division in case the treaty shall be ratified, among the various creditors, whether European or American.

The custom-houses offer well-nigh the only source of revenue in Santo Domingo, and the different revolutions long ago made their real aim the obtaining possession of these custom-houses. The mere fact that the collectors of customs are Americans, that they are performing their duties with efficiency and honesty, and that the treaty is pending in the Senate, gives a certain moral power to the Government of Santo Domingo which it has not had before. This has completely discouraged all revolutionary movement, while it has already produced such an increase in the revenues that the Government is actually getting more from 45 per cent than the American collectors turned over to the Government formerly when it took the entire revenue. It is enabling the poor harassed people of Santo Domingo once more to turn their attention to industry and to be free from the curse of interminable revolutionary disturbance. It offers to all bona fide creditors, American and European, the only way to get their money, and obtain that to which they are justly entitled while it in return gives to Santo Domingo the only opportunity of defense against claims which it ought not to pay; for now if it meets the views of the Senate we shall have to examine all these claims, whether American, foreign, and see that none that are improper are paid.

There is, of course, opposition to the treaty from dishonest creditors, foreign and American, and from the professional revolutionists of the island itself. We have already reason to believe that some of the revolutionists do not care that some of the creditors, honest and dishonest, are endeavoring to stir up opposition in the island and opposition to the treaty. In the meantime I have exercised the authority vested in me by the joint resolution of the Congress to prevent the introduction of arms into the island for revolutionary purposes.

Army and Navy.

We cannot consider the question of our foreign policy without at the same time treating of the Army and the Navy. We now have a very small Army—indeed, one well-nigh infinitesimal when compared with the army of any other large nation. Of course, the Army does not have to be perfect in its kind and for its size, as is possible. I do not believe that any army in the world has a better average of enlisted man or a better type of junior officer; but the Army should be organized effectively in a mass. Provision should be made for the immediate application for maneuvers of a practical kind so that the troops may learn how to take care of themselves under actual service conditions; very much, for instance, being made with the soldier loaded exactly as he would be in an active campaign. The General and Colonel would thereby have opportunity of handling regiments, brigades and divisions and the commissary and medical departments would be tested in the field. Provision should be made for the exercise at least of a brigade and by preference of a division in marching and embarking at some point on our coast and disembarking at some other point and continuing its march. The number of posts in which the Army is kept in time of peace should be materially diminished, and the posts that are kept in time of peace should be larger. No local interests should be allowed to stand in the way of assembling the greater part of the troops which would need form our field armies in stations of such size as will permit of the best training to be given to the personnel of all arms, including the high officers and staff officers. To accomplish this end we must have not company or regimental garrisons, but brigade and division garrisons.

Our Navy must, relatively to the navies of other nations, always be of greater size than the Army. We have most wisely continued for a number of years to build up our Navy, and it has now reached a fairly high standard of efficiency. This standard of efficiency must not only be maintained, but increased. It does not seem to me necessary, however, that the Navy should be increased beyond the present number of units. What is now clearly necessary is to substitute efficient for inefficient units as the latter become worn out or as it becomes apparent that they are useless. Probably the most efficient way to do this is to build a single battleship to our Navy each year, the superseded or outworn vessels being laid up or broken up as they are thus replaced. The four single-turret monitors built immediately after the close of the Spanish war, for instance, are vessels which would do but little use in the present war. The money spent upon them could have been more usefully spent in other ways. Thus it would have been far better never to have built a single one of these monitors and to have put the money to make a single supply of vessels. Most of the same supply of vessels, though they serve a useful purpose so far as they are needed for international police work, would not add to the strength of our Navy in a conflict with a serious foe. There is, however, a need of providing a large increase in the number of ships, and especially in the number of enlisted men.

Naturalization Laws.

During the past year evidence has accumulated to confirm the expressions contained in my last two annual messages as to the importance of revising by appropriate legislation our system of naturalizing aliens. I appointed last March a commission to make a careful examination of our naturalization laws, and to suggest appropriate measures to avoid the notorious abuses resulting from the improvident or unlawful granting of citizenship. This commission, composed of an officer of the Department of State, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Commerce and Labor, has done its duty bravely and upon it, and has submitted a report, which will be transmitted to the Congress for its consideration, and, I hope, for its favorable action.

Breaches of Trust in Public Service.

There seems to be no statute of the United States which provides for the punishment of a United States Attorney or other officer of the Government who corruptly agrees to wrongfully and fully to perform any act when doing any act when the consideration for such corrupt agreement is other than one possessing money value. This ought to be remedied by appropriate legislation. Legislation should also be enacted to cover, explicitly, unequivocally and beyond question, the case of an officer of the Government who, by reason of his official position, is employed by the United States, and to provide a suitable penalty therefor. Such officer or employee owes the duty to the United States to guard carefully and not to divulge or in any manner use prematurely information which is accessible to the officer or employee by reason of his official position. Most breaches of public trust are already covered by the law, and this one should be added.

Public-Land Laws.

Once again I call your attention to the condition of the public-land laws. Recent developments have given new urgency to the need for such changes as will fit these laws to actual present conditions. The honest disposal and right use of the remaining public lands is of fundamental importance. The iniquitous manner in which the monopolizing of the public lands is being brought about under the present laws are becoming more generally known, but the existing laws do not furnish effective remedies. The recommendations of the Public Lands Commission upon this subject are wise and should be given effect as soon as possible. The forest policy of the Administration appears to enjoy the unbroken support of the people. The great users of timber are themselves forwarding the movement for forest preservation. All organized opposition to the forest reserves in the West has disappeared. Since the organization of the Government of the National Forest Service there has been a rapid and notable gain in the usefulness of the forest reserves to the people and in public appreciation of their value. The National parks within or adjacent to forest reserves should be transferred to the charge of the Forest Service also.

Merchant Marine.

To the spread of our trade in peace and the defense of our flag in war a great and prosperous merchant marine is indispensable. We should have ships of our own and seamen of our own to convey our goods to neutral markets, and in case of need to reinforce our battle ships by a merchant marine. It is gratifying to me that the lines of communication with our sister republics of South America should be chiefly under foreign control. It is not a good thing that American merchants and manufacturers should have to send their goods and letters to South America via Europe if they wish security and dispatch. Even on the Pacific, where our ships have held their own better than on the Atlantic, our merchant flag is now threatened through the liberal aid bestowed by other governments on their own steam lines. I ask your earnest consideration of the report with which the Merchant Marine Commission has followed its long and careful inquiry.

Pensions.

It is a matter of unmixed satisfaction once more to call attention to the excellent work of the Pension Bureau; for the veterans of the Civil War have a greater claim upon us than any other class of our citizens. To them, first of all among our people, honor is due. Several years ago my predecessor, President McKinley, stated that the time had come for the Nation to care for the graves of the Confederate dead. I recommend that the Congress take action toward this end. The first need is to take charge of the graves of the Confederate dead who died in Northern prisons.

Immigration.

The question of immigration is of vital interest to the country. In the year ending June 30, 1905, there came to the United States 1,028,000 alien immigrants. In other words, in the single year that has just elapsed there came to this country a greater number of people than in any year during the 169 years of the colonial period. It is gratifying to me that the first landing at Jamestown and the Declaration of Independence. It is clearly shown in the report of the Commissioner-General of Immigration that while much of this enormous immigration is undoubtedly healthy and natural, a considerable proportion is undesirable from one reason or another; moreover, a considerable proportion, including most of the undesirable class, does not come here of its own initiative, but because of the activity of the agents of the great transportation companies. These agents are distributed throughout Europe, and by the offer of all kinds of inducements they wheedle and cajole many immigrants, often against their best interest, to come here. The most serious obstacle we have to encounter in the effort to secure a proper regulation of the immigration to these shores arises from the determined opposition of the foreign steamship lines who have no interest whatever in the matter save to increase the number of their passengers by carrying masses of immigrants, either in the steerage quarters of their ships.

The questions arising in connection with Chinese immigration stand by themselves. The conditions in China are such that the entire Chinese population, that is, the class of Chinese laborers, skilled and unskilled, is legitimately come under the head of undesirable immigrants to this country, because of their numbers, the low wages for which they work and their low standard of living. Not only is it to the interest of this country to keep them out, but the Chinese authorities do not desire that they should be admitted. At present their entrance is prohibited by laws amply adequate to accomplish this purpose. These laws have been, are being and will be thoroughly enforced. The violations of them are so numerous that to be admitted to the country and can be entirely disregarded. There is no serious proposal to alter the immigration laws as regards the Chinese laborer, skilled or unskilled, and there is no excuse for any person or persons to feel the slightest alarm on the subject.

But in the effort to carry out the policy of excluding Chinese laborers, Chinese coolies, grave injustice and wrong have been done by this Nation to the people of China, and therefore ultimately to this Nation itself. Chinese students, business and professional men of all kinds—not only merchants, but bankers, doctors, manufacturers, professors, travelers and the like—should be encouraged, to come here and treated on precisely the same footing that is given to students, business men, travelers and the like of other nations. Our laws and treaties should be framed not so as to shut out those people in the excluded classes, but to state that we will admit all Chinese, except Chinese of the coolie class, Chinese skilled or unskilled laborers. There would not be the least danger of any such provision would result in an increase of the law about laborers. These will, under all conditions, be kept out absolutely. But it will be more easy to see that both justice and courtesy are shown to the Chinese, and they ought to be shown, to other Chinese, as the law or treaty is framed as above suggested. Examination should be completed at the port of departure from China. For this purpose there should be provided a more adequate consular service in China than we now have. The appropriations, both for the offices of the Consuls and for the office forces in the Consulates, should be increased.

The Government has the friendliest feelings for China and desires China's well-being. We cordially sympathize with the announced purpose of Japan to stand for the integrity of China, and an attitude tends to the peace of the world.

The Civil Service.

The civil service law has been on the statute books for 22 years. Every President and a vast majority of heads of departments who have been in office during that period have favored a gradual extension of the merit system to the more thoroughly its principles have been understood. The greater has been the favor with which the law has been regarded by administrative officers. Any attempt to carry on the great executive departments of the Government without this law would inevitably result in chaos. The Civil Service Commission are doing excellent work, and their compensation is inadequate considering the service they perform.

Adulteration of Foods.

I recommend that a law be enacted to regulate interstate commerce in misbranded and adulterated foods, drinks and drugs. Such law would protect legitimate manufacturers and consumers, and would tend to secure the health and welfare of the consuming public. Traffic in foodstuffs which have been debased or adulterated so as to injure health or to deceive purchasers should be forbidden.

National Parks.

I call your attention to the generous act of the State of California in conferring upon the United States Government the ownership of the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. There should be no delay in making the gift, and appropriations should be made for the including thereof in the Yosemite National Park, and for the care and policing of the park. California has acted most wisely as well as with great magnanimity in the matter. There are certain mighty natural features of our land which should be preserved in perpetuity for our children and our children's children. In my judgment the Grand Canyon of the Colorado should be made into a National park. It is greatly to be wished that the State of New York should copy as regards Niagara what the State of California has done as regards the Yosemite. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the preservation of Niagara Falls in all their beauty and majesty. If the state cannot see to this then it is earnestly to be wished that she should be willing to turn it over to the National Government, which should in such case assume in conjunction with the Canadian government the burden and responsibility of preserving unharmed Niagara Falls; just as it should gladly assume a similar burden and responsibility for the Yosemite National Park, and as it has already assumed them for the Yellowstone National Park. Adequate provision should be made by the Congress for the proper care and supervision of all these National parks.

During the year just past, the phase of the Indian question which has been most sharply brought to public attention is the larger legal significance of the Indian's introduction into citizenship. This has made itself manifest not only in a great case of litigation in the Supreme Court, but in a more widespread disposition to levy local taxation upon his person, but in a decision of the United States Supreme Court which has hitherto rested the Government's benevolent effort to protect him against the evils of intemperance, and which has the effect that when an Indian becomes, by virtue of an allotment of land to him, a citizen of the state in which his land is situated, he passes from under Federal control in such matters as this, and the acts of the Congress prohibiting the sale or gift to him of intoxicants become substantially inoperative. It is gratifying to me that the states and municipalities of the West which have most at stake in the welfare of the Indians are taking up this subject and are trying to supply, in a measure at least, the abdication of its trusteeship forced upon the Federal Government. Nevertheless, it would be well to press upon the attention of the Congress the question whether some amendment of the internal revenue laws might not be of aid in prosecuting those malefactors, known in the Indian country as "bootleggers," who are engaged at once in defrauding the United States Treasury, and in bringing the Indians into a state of intemperance. It is gratifying to me that the states and municipalities of the West which have most at stake in the welfare of the Indians are taking up this subject and are trying to supply, in a measure at least, the abdication of its trusteeship forced upon the Federal Government. 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