

# UNCLE JOE CANNON'S GREAT SPEECH

## ADDRESSES REPUBLICAN CONVENTION

### Of the Eighteenth Illinois Congressional District Today--Is Coming to the Front as a Presidential Possibility

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention: I thank you for this expression of confidence, and I congratulate on the prosperous condition of the country under Republican administration. The Republican party has followed the teachings in the parable of the wise servant who returned to his master the talent entrusted to his care multiplied ten fold. Clothed with responsibility for the administration of the government of 80,000,000 people, we have sought to make a return that will benefit those who entrusted the talent to our care. We have succeeded in making two blades of grass grow luxuriantly under Republican administration where one grew feebly before under Democratic administration.

Since the election of William McKinley as president the business of the country has doubled and the material interests of the people have become better than ever before in our history; aye, better than the condition of any people on earth in any time since history began. This is under the policies of the Republican party as enacted into law by congress and executed by the president. Attribute this condition to what cause you may, speculate about it as you will, call it confidence in men or measures, the fact remains that it exists, and that there never has been recorded anywhere such industrial development and such a wave of prosperity as has swept over the United States in the last decade.

Under the administration of the Dingley tariff law there has been a greater development in all forms of industry than has ever been reached under any other revenue law since the government was organized. The schedules of that law are not secret, but the principle there embodied is fundamental. Since the enactment of the first revenue law under Washington down to the present time the periods of prosperity have been under protection, and the periods of adversity have been under the policy of free trade or tariff for revenue only.

**Prosperity for All.**  
This remarkable prosperity under the Dingley law has not been for one class, but for all the people. It has touched the artisan, the farmer, the manufacturer, and the common laborer of the country. All have felt its beneficent influence, and I measure my words when I say that the production from all kinds of busi-

ness enterprises has doubled since that memorable year of 1896, when the country in its distress turned to William McKinley, the champion of protection, as the advance agent of prosperity. The capital employed in our industries has doubled; the total wages paid for labor have more than doubled in ten years; the farmers have lifted their mortgages and are enjoying the embarrassment of a surplus in the savings banks, and laborers have ceased to hunt for jobs and have become the hunted by the jobs; in spite of large immigration from other lands, there is more work than workers in this country today. Capital is cheaper than ever before, and money can be had at less interest than anywhere else in the world. That sun of prosperity is shining on every part of our immense stretch of territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf and the Rio Grande. We are at peace with all the world, and our influence for peace, whether it be between two great powers in the Orient or among the small republics on the American continent, is felt throughout the world.

The record of the servant is his best and only certificate for continued employment, and the Republican party, as a servant of the people, stands today in this campaign squarely on its record.

We have no census figures as to business conditions in 1896, but we have them for 1890, 1900 and 1905, and to supplement these we have the official message of President Cleveland, complaining that unparalleled business distress and lack of confidence marked the greater part of his administration. We also have the official statement of Samuel Gompers, as president of the American Federation of Labor, that more than 3,000,000 workmen were without work in 1894 and 1895, and that work did not return to them until 1897.

**Capital and Wages.**  
According to the census of 1890, there were \$6,525,000,759 capital invested in manufacturing industries in the United States, whereas, according to the official figures, there were in 1905, \$13,122,607,090 so invested. The average number of wage-earners in 1890, as given by the census, was 4,251,535 (and Mr. Gompers said 3,000,000 were without work in 1894 and 1895). In 1905 the number was

5,492,178, not including those in the hand trades.

The total wages paid in 1890 amounted to \$1,891,208,696, and in 1905 to \$2,661,409,858.

The value of the output of our manufacturers in 1890 was \$9,371,378,843, and in 1905 \$14,873,818,425, not including that from the hand trades.

Taking the testimony of President Cleveland and Samuel Gompers as to the deplorable condition in 1894, 1895, and 1896, it will be readily seen that the industrial development of the country, both affecting labor and capital, has been at the rate of 100 per cent in ten years.

There has been much discussion and no little confusion over the effort to compare the relative increase in wages and cost of living in the last few years. The labor bureau of the United States in its last bulletin, on this question made a very careful analysis for fourteen years from 1890 to 1904. In that comparison and analysis it was shown that the weekly earnings of all employees had increased 53.4 per cent from 1894 to 1904, and that the retail prices of food products had increased in the same time only 12 per cent. This, I believe, is the only careful and scientific investigation that has been made of the subject.

#### Plant the Factory by the Farm.

The Republican party has always followed the maxim "Plant the factory by the farm," that there may be the closest possible exchange between the two great bodies of producers. One of the old complaints here in the West was that the manufacturing was principally in the East; but the continuation of a settled policy of protection has gradually extended the industrial development to the West and the South, bringing agriculture and manufacture closer together. The new statistics of manufactures compiled by the United States census office last year show more clearly than any previous census the general benefit of the protective policy. The prosperity that has come to the country under the Dingley law has not been spasmodic nor sectional, except that it has produced greater extension of manufacturing into Central, Western and Southern states. This new census shows, first, that there has been a larger per cent of increase in the capital put into manufacturing plants in the last five years than there has been in the product of these industries. The actual increase in capital was \$3,700,000,000, or 41 per cent greater than the capital invested in 1900. The actual increase in output was \$3,364,000,000, or about 30 per cent over that of 1900. Capital has grown confident of its investment and has turned back into the plant a larger share of its earnings to increase the demand for labor and ultimately increase the output.

This census also shows that in five years from 1900 to 1905 the increase in the number of wage-earners employed was 16 per cent over the number in 1900, and the total wages paid 50 per cent greater; in other words, the increase in the total wages paid was almost twice the ratio of the increase in employment. To my mind there could be no more complete answer to the complaint that wages have not advanced since 1900.

#### Manufactures in West and South.

But the most significant figures in this new census are those which show where the greater increase in industrial plants, capital, employment, wages, and output took place. It was in the Central, Western and Southern states, which a few years ago were designated simply as agricultural sections of the country. Of the \$3,500,000,000 of new capital put into industrial plants in these five years more than one-half of it was in Central, Western, and Southern states. New England increased her industrial capital only \$264,000,000; the Middle Atlantic states, \$1,384,000,000; the Southern states, \$575,000,000; the Central states, \$1,114,000,000, and the far Western states, \$271,000,000. The percentages of increase were: New England, 24 per cent; Middle Atlantic, 37.5 per cent; Southern, 72 per cent; Central, 42 per cent, and Western, 73 per cent. While the increase in the old manufacturing centers of the East was normal and healthy, the increase in the Central, Western and Southern states was in the nature of a great boom in the industrial development. The comparative increases in labor and wages also were much greater.

in the West and South than in the old manufacturing centers of the East. The increase in wage earners in New England in the five years was little more than 10 per cent, and the total wages paid 19.4 per cent; in the Middle Atlantic states the increases were, wage earners, 16 per cent; total wages, 25.8 per cent; Southern states, wage earners, 22 per cent; total wages, 49.4 per cent; Central states, wage earners, 15.7 per cent; wages, 32 per cent; Western states, wage earners, 29 per cent; wages, 59 per cent.

More than this, the wonderful development of manufacturing industry in the South and West has already moved the industrial center of the country nearer to its geographical center, and it is safe to say that today fully one-half of the capital, wage earners, wages paid, and output from manufactures is in the Central, Southern and Western states. The industrial census of 1905 shows this, and demonstrates that under the economic policy of the Republican party, with its steady and prosperous development, our manufacturing has steadily advanced into the great agricultural sections, placing the factory beside the farm, to make the exchange between the two great bodies of producers the more direct and equitable and make other.

#### Prosperity on the Farm.

Not alone in manufacturing has there been this doubling-up process in prosperity under Republican administration. The farmers have doubled their crops and the money they have received in exchange. The farm value of those three great staple crops in the West, corn, wheat and oats, in 1896, amounted to \$934,000,000 and last year it aggregated \$1,912,000,000 or more than double the value in the last year of Democratic administration. The value of farm animals also doubled in the same period, increasing from \$1,728,000,000 in 1896 to \$3,675,000,000 in 1906.

This prosperity to the farmer was not confined to the corn and wheat belt of the country. Like the rain which falls on the just and unjust alike, it descended upon our friends in the South, who still refuse to believe that prosperity can exist under Republican policies. The value of the cotton crop went from \$319,000,000 in 1896 to more than \$600,000,000 in 1904, the last year for which we have statistics. The miners doubled their output of coal and iron, and in every line of industrial development the last ten years have been in harmony with this scriptural injunction to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before.

Our foreign trade has been along the same double-track lines, our imports increasing from \$780,000,000 in 1896 to \$1,227,000,000 in 1906, and our exports from \$883,000,000 in 1896 to \$1,744,000,000 in 1906. The total volume of our foreign trade in 1896 amounted to \$1,662,000,000, and in 1906 to \$2,970,000,000. Add to that our trade with Porto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines, which amounted to \$75,000,000, and we have in the last year a grand total of \$3,045,000,000 as the amount of business done between the people of the United States and the rest of the world. This is greater than the foreign commerce of any other nation, Great Britain alone excepted, and that because that nation imports her food products, her imports being almost double her exports, while our exports exceed our imports by half a million.

Under the policy of protection the United States produces one-third of the manufactured and agricultural products of the civilized world. Our labor receives double the compensation that labor receives in Great Britain and three times the compensation paid to labor on the continent of Europe. Ninety-three per cent of this product is consumed by our own people, and the comparatively small surplus that goes abroad makes us the greatest exporting nation on the earth.

In the rapid development of the country we not only live better than any other people, but from the savings of production we have become the wealthiest nation on earth.

#### Steel Trust Does Not Dominate.

While this unprecedented prosperity has come in less than a decade of Republican administration and the Dingley tariff law has demonstrated that it is a revenue producer both for the people and the government, we occasionally hear the old wall that the tariff is the mother of trusts and the shelter of monopoly. The tariff revisionists are, however, answering their own complaints. I

find in the New York Times, one of the ablest and most uncompromising organs of tariff revision, an editorial, showing that the giant steel trust is no longer looked upon by free-traders as a monopoly, and that it has steadily declined in its proportion of steel produced since its organization. The Times says:

**Steel Trade.**  
"The widest interest in the steel corporation report attaches to what is least discussed—that is, the conditions in the trade as reflected by the first-hand facts now available. It is true that the steel corporation is not a steel trade. Big as it is, it is neither the majority interest nor even the controlling interest. In fact, its proportion of the trade is relatively declining, while concurrently it is breaking its own records of production and earnings. Its production of pig has fluctuated since its organization within a narrow range and without decided trend, standing now at 44 per cent of the country's total. Its production of open-hearth and Bessemer castings has fallen by about 3 per cent to 47 per cent. Its dominance is greatest in the wire nail product, which, although declining, remains at 66 per cent. In short, the trust is not by any means a monopoly, and yet it is impossible that the trust should prosper and the trade languish."

All legislation, and especially revenue legislation, is the result of compromise. It must inevitably be so in order to command, as, of course, is necessary, a majority vote in both house and senate. It is therefore impossible to secure perfection in each schedule of a tariff bill; but I have no hesitation in saying that the present revenue law, known as the Dingley law, all things considered, is the most perfect and just customs-revenue laws ever enacted. The general distress and industrial conditions prevailing throughout the country at the time of its enactment helped to make it so, because it brought all the people together. In times of prosperity, when it attempted to enact tariff legislation, the selfishness of the people is appealed to, but when there is industrial depression different interests are more inclined to get together for the general good.

The Dingley bill was substantially the first legislation under the administration of William McKinley. It was enacted at a time when the revenues of the government were short, when all our people, on farm, in mine, and in factory, were unable to realize reasonable profits upon their respective products, and when consumption was at a minimum for the want of steady employment by our people at fair wages. In its operations that law has spread more evenly and justly over all production in the United States than any tariff law previously enacted. Under its workings there came hope, confidence, employment, profitable production, and universal prosperity, which has grown and increased from year to year up to the present time. Under it the people worked out their own salvation.

It did not, and does not, please the Democratic party. That party denounces the policy of protection as robbery and declares for a tariff for revenue only. This has been the position of the Democratic party for many years it is its position today and the position of all its leaders, including William J. Bryan and John Sharp Williams, the leader of the minority in the house of representatives, who time and again during the late session of congress proclaimed the policy of his party to be, if cloth-

ed with power, not to destroy protection absolutely at one fell swoop—over night, as he expressed it—but to journey toward a tariff for revenue only. He would not kill the patient outright at one stroke, but would gradually starve it to death.

Such policy means less wages for labor, both skilled and unskilled, in every avenue of production; and, with decrease of wages and slack employment, the great mass of the people would become less valuable customers to all other producers. Such a policy would act and react upon all our people who are customers for each other, and we have the "nightmare" of 1893 to 1897 repeated.

#### When to Revise the Tariff.

Tariff revision in time of prosperity always has halted, and always will halt, business activity, production, and commerce. The manufacturer will lessen his output, for he fears to pile up his product unless there is a reasonable certainty of realizing its cost and a fair profit. The farmer halts in making improvements and consumes less, because there is a shortened demand for his products. The decrease in the wages of labor alone pending revision would amount to many hundred million dollars. Where there is confidence and prosperity without precedent, there would be doubt and destruction of confidence.

I heartily endorse the platform lately adopted by the Republicans of Indiana, which, in substance, says that the Republican party will revise the tariff when it will do more good than harm to the great mass of the people.

It is vital that the Republican party should remain in power for the coming two years in order that the legislative and executive departments of the government should continue in harmony. If our friends, the enemy, should be successful in electing a house of representatives in November next, that body in the sixtieth congress would not be in harmony with the senate or with the president. There would be a "tie-up," so to speak, in legislation. Furthermore, their success would be claimed by our Democratic friends to be an evidence of dissatisfaction upon the part of the people with the legislation enacted by the Republican congress, as well as an evidence of dissatisfaction with the president, and an assurance of complete power to be given to them in 1908 to enable them to carry out their policies. Their success, conservatively speaking, would halt production and consumption, and, necessarily, business and commerce, at least one-tenth. Instead of forging ahead, as we are doing, in every producing and business avenue, we would halt; aye, more, we would retrograde.

#### Labor.

Education, invention, capital, and labor have struck hands. The forces of nature are utilized in production for the benefit of both producer and consumer. This condition necessarily required the combined activities of employer and employee. Naturally, differences arise between the two as to what is a proper wage, or, in other words, as to a fair division of the profits of the business. Laborers found it necessary to co-operate with each other and act together in determining from time to time what was due them in the division of the profits.

According to the last census, 30,000,000 of our people are employed in gainful occupations, and 3-

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