

DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN?

Speech of Hon. William A. O'Brien of Arkansas in the House of Representatives.

Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you are all here to-day, going out to see the two great political parties and to see the two great political systems of the United States.

Two Theories of Government.

When I had been a member of the House for some time, I had seen the two theories of government in this country today, and the line of demarcation between them is just as clear and distinct today as it was in the days of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. The Republican Party is the disciple of the Hamiltonian idea, and the Democratic Party is the disciple of the Jeffersonian idea, and in their last analysis, the great contests of today between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party are produced upon causes not dissimilar in the least to those that divided Hamilton and Jefferson.

The Hamiltonian Theory.

Hamilton and his followers were insistent upon a strong central government with order by virtue of strength and force. The late Senator Lodge in writing of him says:

Hamilton's scheme went further seeking to create a strong and in so far as possible and judicious, a permanent class all over the country, without regard to existing political affiliations, but bound to the Government as a Government by the strongest of all ties, immediate and personal pecuniary interests.

And, further, Mr. Lodge observed: That the full intent of the policy was to array property on the side of the Government.

Again, it seemed to be a part of his plan to impose a property qualification upon the right of suffrage, at least for President and Vice President; but this seems to have been defeated by Washington, Jefferson, Madison and others; but substantially the same idea with respect to State matters was made to obtain in the State of New York, the home State of Hamilton, for a period of years, but it was eliminated long ago.

Mr. Hamilton had come to the colonies shortly before the Revolution. With respect to his mental make-up, his idea of wealth, his idea of class, his idea of a government of, by, and for class and wealth, his idea of a strong central government with autocratic power and grandeur of then European governments. A biographer of one of his contemporaries records of him:

In American politics it was impossible that he ever should have been at home, because he never could believe the truths nor share the hopes upon which the American system is based.

The Jeffersonian Theory.

Thomas Jefferson's theory was in direct contrast with that of Hamilton. It primarily opposed a strong central government, but advocated a general government of delegated power only, and only for common good; and, in form, a representative democracy. The advocates and chief exponents of this theory were of American birth; their lives in the colonies, their experiences, and the observations had revealed to them the necessity, the humanitarian right, if you please, of a government so aptly described many years later as a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." A general government of delegated power for the common good; State governments strong and supreme in their own right in all things consistent with the authority delegated to the General Government.

It would seem that the greatest practical difference between the two theories was with respect to the great body of the citizenship and its rights and privileges; and I have no doubt that the Hamilton theory served a very useful purpose in operating as a powerful influence upon Jefferson and his associates, not only to bring about the establishment of a representative democracy, but to define and preserve personal rights and personal liberties; and it must have produced profound thought and consideration on the part of Jefferson and Madison, because we observe them, not only defining inalienable rights, and so forth, but weaving them into the fundamental law of the land and to the end of forever preserving them to American citizenship. When you hear of "inalienable rights," "equal rights and privileges before the law," "freedom of religion," "of speech," "of the press," "of assembly," "of petition," "from arrest and search without proper warrant," "due process of law," and so on, the name of one great American fits across your mind; and that is the name of Thomas Jefferson; and the principles of government and of human rights delineated and defined by him are the specific ones to the preservation of which the great Democratic Party stands forever committed. The men and women of America who believe in a sound liberalism and who subscribe to the doctrine of equal rights to all and special privileges to none should begin now to organize Jefferson clubs throughout the country. Jefferson's birthday should be celebrated on the 13th of April and his doctrines instilled in the minds of the people.

There were the two theories of government in the day of Hamilton and Jefferson; and these are the two theories of government in this country today; and the line of demarcation between them is just as clear and distinct today as it was in the days of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. The Republican Party is the disciple of the Hamiltonian idea, and the Democratic Party is the disciple of the Jeffersonian idea, and in their last analysis, the great contests of today between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party are produced upon causes not dissimilar in the least to those that divided Hamilton and Jefferson.

It was the spirit of democracy—an aroused democracy—that exerted from King John, of England, the Magna Charta; that led Benjamin Franklin to present in a written constitution at Albany the principles of which have been carried into every State constitution as well as the Federal Constitution; that brought about the famous Virginia Bill of Rights and privileges of each and every citizen; that was the characterizing spirit of the Declaration of Independence; that the issue with England that precipitated American Revolution; that was guarded and protected by Jefferson and Madison and by them woven into our Constitution; that waged the fight against the alien and sedition laws and drove them out of our statutes; that defeated the obnoxious United States bank proposition under the leadership of Andrew Jackson; that characterized the very warp and woof of the many enactments brought about under the administration of that great scholar, statesman and patriot, Woodrow Wilson; enactments that were bitterly contested by those of today who would establish a government of class and wealth with autocratic power, and who in 1920 openly denounced and condemned virtually every act of that administration, and who, when clothed with the power to do it, were too cowardly to attempt the repeal or serious modification of a single one of these many enactments.

From the very hour that King John yielded the Magna Charta to this good hour the way of democracy has been a hard one. It was the realization of this truth no doubt, that caused that great Irish statesman, Curran, to exclaim, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," and that exclamation is just as timely today as it was on the day it was uttered in 1818; and the way of democracy holds no promise of a future easier than the past. It is one eternal fight, and an eternal fight; only, that will preserve to the great body of the American people the precious heritage that have been gained for them by Franklin, Washington, Jefferson and Madison; by Jackson and Lincoln—for Lincoln was extremely democratic—and by Cleveland and Wilson; heritages now entrusted to our keeping and of which we must make account to the future.

From 1903 to 1909—during the Fifty-ninth, Sixtieth and Sixty-first Congresses—it did seem that American government by class and wealth and autocratic power had reached its zenith and had expended its force; and the results of the general election of 1910 seemed to justify such an assumption. The general elections of 1910, 1912, 1914 and 1916 seemed to give verity to that assumption; but the elections of 1918 disclosed a desertion from the cause of democracy so great as to imbue the Republican Party with unusual inspiration to recapture the Government in 1920 for the precise forces from which it had completely freed itself only eight years before. As its hope grew, just in that proportion its sense of decency diminished; its determination knew no restraint; the more famous the defamations of democracy the more famous became the defamer; every slander that envy could invent and every hatred that malice could inspire were hurled against us. Utterly false charges of graft and corruption, of high crimes and misdemeanors were wafted throughout the land on every breeze, and the general elections of 1920 fully and completely restored to power the precise forces against which democracy has fought since the days of King John.

With the differences of the two theories of government clearly in mind, who could not take the roll calls and the title of the bills voted on in the Congresses for the past 60 years and without further information identify and classify the respective advocates of these theories—as Republicans or Democrats, if you please—and scarcely make an error? It is true that some votes are recorded on the great institutional reforms in purely domestic affairs in the early part of the Wilson administration that might confuse, but that results only from the fact that many Republicans realized that if they did not vote for the Democratic program in numerous particulars they would be granted an unrequited leave of absence from the next Congress by an outraged constituency. And while there is as much difference today between the policies of the Democrats and the Republicans as there was between the policies of Jefferson

and Hamilton, yet sometimes I feel that we should take ourselves to judge, and each determine for himself whether or not he is doing his utmost in the cause of democracy and to the end that present and future generations of American citizens may no more secure in the United States the very kind of justice that is done in the case of a man who is wronged, that one great principle of human rights and privileges to well-earned and demand by Jefferson and you, saved by constitutional amendment, shall pass to the next and succeeding generations without impairment, and we, as Democrats, should be filled with and actuated by the spirit of the democracy that characterized the devotion of Jefferson and Madison to the great cause of humanity.

Harding-Coolidge Administration.

What happened when the Government fell into the hands of the Republican Party on March 4, 1921? I venture the assertion that every American citizen entertained a sincere hope of the new administration's worthlessness; that it would fully measure up to the hopes and expectations that they so generally and generously entertained of it; that it would meet the then great questions of government with comprehension and strict fidelity; that it would take the great American people into its confidence, hear their pleas, and do them the even-handed justice of a chancellor; that it would set right all wrong and never wrong any right. And why should such a hope not have been entertained, when the country had observed the great preparation that was made for it, when the so-called "best minds" of America were conferring day after day, when the glowing newspaper accounts of the meetings of the "best minds" made the tremendous undertakings ahead of the new administration look small, insignificant, and inconsequential in comparison with the superb statesmanship and intellectual power that was about to seize upon them? Indeed, there was hope and there was faith, and there was charity in the hearts of the world for it; but hope soon fled, and faith soon failed, and charity lingered along on a false diet until after November 4, 1924. The overwhelming majority of the American people are hopeful, faithful, and thoroughly democratic in their customs; not only that but they are at heart Jeffersonian Democrats, and true to the faith that is in them; and I apprehend that time is not remote when they will awaken and again assert their right to freedom from a class-owned and wealth-maintained government of autocratic power that knows not how to resist the avarice of greed nor the lust of blood-sucking privilege and monopoly; nor punish the felons that prey upon the Government.

CLEAN-UP WEEK.

April 20 to 25th has been set aside as clean-up days in Waynesville. Householders are asked to place their refuse in proper containers on the sidewalks on these days. The city will have the drivers on the following streets on the dates mentioned: On Monday the 20th of April the drivers will be on the East Main street section. On the 21st on South Church street and West Main street. On the 22nd on Main street; on the 23rd, Walnut & Church, including Love Lane; on the 24th between North Main and Walnut streets. Be prepared in these dates. Please do not ask drivers to pick up scattered refuse, but have all in containers. Tin cans at the back door beset slovenly citizenship. You aren't a good citizen unless you are interested in keeping your own and other yards clean. Clean comely and beautiful surroundings bring beauty into lives of all and make cleanliness and good appearance a public habit. They attract residents and raise real estate values. We ask the co-operation of every citizen of Waynesville in this campaign, and especially the owners of vacant lots. If you have a neighbor with an unsightly back yard please suggest that he take advantage of this opportunity and clean up. If you are a business man with a clean back yard please make an effort to help your neighbor clean up.

Waynesville Civic League.

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY CALLED.

A primary election for Democratic voters in the town of Waynesville, N. C., to select candidates for Mayor and three Aldermen is hereby called for Saturday, May 2nd, 1925, at the court house at 2 p. m. to continue until sun set. R. G. A. Love and Sam K. Miller are appointed judges for the primary.

Saturday, April 25th, at the same hours will be challenge day. The regular election day be on Tuesday, May 5th.

C. B. ATKINSON, Chairman, JAS. ATKINS, Jr., Secretary.

14-3t  
Salt Mackerel, canned Salmon, Tuna Fish, Oysters, Fish Roe and Fish Flakes. E. P. Martin. 1tc

The Harding-Coolidge administration, while the Harding-Coolidge administration, have not dared to repeat or seriously modify the important and progressive enactment of the Wilson administration which they condemn if so viciously in 1920, they have resorted to the unfair and unworthy process of rendering them impotent and ineffectual by the exercise of administrative power and administrative influence.

Why does this administration not be frank with the American people and say to them: "We do not want an honest and fair-dealing Interstate Commerce Commission; we do not want an honest and fearless Federal Trade Commission; we do not want an honest and conscientious Tariff Commission, and we do not propose to have them; we are going to have these commissions so manned and controlled that they will function in accordance with our dictation, and not otherwise." Why make the pretense of favoring the ends of their existence and at the same time seek to thwart the accomplishment of the purposes for which they were created? Why appropriate public money for their maintenance when it is determined that they shall not function in the public interest. And yet, my friends, is this not in strict keeping with the Hamiltonian theory and Republican principles and policies; and is it not the very antithesis of the Jeffersonian theory and of Democratic principles and policies?

Commenting upon the Hamiltonian theory, as it was defined by the late Senator Lodge, some writer observes that it is "a veritable school for graft. It should not be a matter of surprise if spoilsmen gather in high places in a party guided by a policy such as this. Such a policy is a cordial invitation to all the unprincipled. The direct appeal to the very lowest motive for serving one's country—for profits—not patriotism nor principles of justice and fair dealing with their countrymen." If this observation is well founded, may I not inquire if it does not apply with equal force to the happenings in our Federal affairs since March 4, 1921?

Mr. Speaker, it is not my purpose to criticize, rather the events of the Harding-Coolidge administrations do not provoke criticism so much as they do condemnation; but it is my purpose to point out the great fundamental difference between two theories of government—between the Democratic and Republican parties of today—that we may the better understand our own obligations to the cause of liberty and justice. The Democratic Party, with renewed courage and fixed determination, will rally again to the great cause to which it is committed.

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