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DEBATE IN THE SENATE.

Tuesday, February 25, 1834.

[Concluded.]

Mr. BROWN, of North Carolina, rose and said, that he had hoped, after the discussion which this subject had already undergone in the Senate, and from the period of time which had elapsed since that discussion, that it would not have again been revived. He expressed his regret that it should again have become necessary for him to claim any more of the time and attention of the Senate than had already been extended to him on this question; but some of the remarks which had fallen from his honorable colleague, (Mr. Mangum,) had imposed on him the necessity of making a few observations in reply.

Mr. B. said, he would take occasion, before he proceeded further in his remarks, to correct a mistake, no doubt unintentional, into which his colleague had fallen, in the course of the remarks which he had just made, in attributing to him an expression, when this subject was some time ago under discussion, which he had never used, and altogether disclaimed; an expression which respect, both for himself and the State which he in part represented, would have prevented his making.

He, Mr. B., did not say upon the occasion referred to, that the State of North Carolina "would *always* sustain the Administration," but he had taken occasion to say, that "he himself had no doubt that North Carolina would sustain the Administration;" which expression he had used in reference to the great question which was now agitating the country, and which had grown out of the removal of the public deposites. [Here Mr. Mangum asked leave to explain, and the floor having been yielded him, he read from the National Intelligencer that part of the speech of Mr. B., as reported in that paper, to which he had referred.] Mr. Brown resumed, and said, that the expression attributed to him, in the report of his remarks in the Intelligencer, which paper, he would say, had generally treated him with fairness and justice in reporting his remarks, was one which had not been used by him. He seldom troubled himself to revise the notes of any of the reporters, before their publication, as to any thing which he said here in debate. He had looked over his remarks very hastily, as given by the reporter of the Intelligencer, before they were published in that paper, but the error which he alluded to had escaped his observation. The report of his remarks, as published in the Globe of the 15th February, gave accurately the expression which he had used on the occasion alluded to. Mr. B. said, that he had ventured to express the opinion, that the State of North Carolina would sustain the Administration on this question, which, in its issue, he sincerely believed, involved great principles of constitutional liberty, and the preservation of our free institutions, in their purity, from the uniform and patriotic devotion to those principles which had distinguished her citizens in all the great political struggles which had, at different periods of our history, agitated the country. He did believe then, and he still believed, that there was a firm and determined spirit of patriotism in our country, which would not consent to witness the humiliation of the Government and the people, by the success and triumph of the dangerous and powerful moneyed institution which was now struggling for mastery and supremacy over the legitimate authorities of our country.

Mr. B. said, that his honorable colleague had remarked, that he believed a great majority of the people of the State of North Carolina were decidedly in opposition to the administration on this question, yet his honorable colleague had, in the course of the remarks which had fallen from him, expressed the opinion, that such was the great personal popularity of the President among the great mass of the people, that the individual risked his popularity who stood before them in opposition to any important measure of his administration! If the measure, in question, of the administration was so unpopular in North Carolina, as had been represented, he was at a loss to perceive how any public man could hazard his popularity by opposing it. It had been said by his colleague that the only party in North Carolina which supported the administration, was, what had been termed by him, the "regency party," and which he had described as active, persecuting, and well-drilled. He (Mr. B.) was not aware of the existence, in that State, of any such political party. If any such did exist, he believed a full set off would be found in the activity, zeal, and perfect party organization which marked the political combination which was now arrayed in fixed and determined opposition to the administration. He believed his honorable colleague, at the last presidential election, had given in his adhesion to that ticket which had on it the name of an individual who is said, by his political opponents, to belong to the party which they denominate the "regency party," and this, too, *after* the passage of the act to reduce the tariff in 1832, for their course in relation to which, his colleague had just spoken in such strong language of censure. It had been said, that the present contest was one for political power.

He (Mr. B.) believed that the opponents of the administration had seized upon the occasion presented by the state of things at this crisis, to endeavor to break down, in public estimation, those in power, and to pave the way for their own elevation. What, he would ask, was the scene daily exhibited before us?—Every day gentlemen gave the most exaggerated picture, as he believed, of the public sufferings. Every day the accounts of distress had resounded here. He said, he believed that different kinds of distress, at this time, prevailed in our country; and he thought not among the least distressed class of the country, was to be found in that class of politicians who had been disappointed in their hopes, for the success of their party. They were, no doubt, distressed, because their opponents were in power, and they themselves were out of power. This had been the case in all times, and under every form of government.

Mr. B. proceeded to remark, that, for one who was unacquainted with the condition of things in this country, to listen to the language almost daily employed in the debates in this Chamber, by gentlemen in opposition, it would be supposed that the Executive branch of the Government had established a ruthless and unrelenting despotism, on the ruins of our free system of Government. We had heard many eloquent discourses on the right of trial by jury; many eloquent denunciations of the Executive, for the danger which threatened the great bulwark of our liberty from that quarter. These were mere fancy sketches, pictured from over excited imaginations. In what instance, he would ask, had the right of trial by jury been violated by the Executive? When, he would ask, had all the great constitutional rights secured to individuals, both as to their persons and their property, been more amply and universally enjoyed, in every part of the U. States, than at this time? When had the blessings of liberty, abundance, and prosperity, been more generally diffused throughout our land? It was true that some indications of distress appeared in some of our commercial cities, but, he believed, the great body of the people, and particularly the agricultural class, were never more contented, never more prosperous and happy. Gentlemen might insist upon it, that the people were suffering great distress; but neither that, nor the operations of the Bank of the United States, could prevent the industry and energies of a free people from going forward, in that rapid advance to national character, prosperity, and greatness, which this country was destined to attain.

Mr. B. said he must be permitted to express the opinion, that his honorable colleague had done the President much injustice, in supposing that he did not wish the tariff question adjusted at the last session, that he might, by its failure, have made use of his power to gratify his alleged vengeance against the People of a particular State. Could it be supposed (said Mr. B.) that the Chief Executive Magistrate of this country, who had been twice elevated to the highest station within the gift of a free People, would so far forget what was due to his own fame, and to that high station, as to use the power which had been committed to him, for the mere gratification of revenge? He thought not; and although he had disapproved the course proposed by the Administration to carry into effect the laws of the United States in the State of South Carolina, he had never doubted that it originated in honest and patriotic motives. He believed a recurrence to the official acts of the President would show, that, to him, far more than to any other individual, was due the downfall of that system which had produced so much excitement throughout our country.

In each of his annual messages to Congress, before the final adjustment of that question, he had strongly recommended its reduction. At the session of 1831 and 2, the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. M'Lane, having been called on by a resolution of the House of Representatives for a plan to reduce the tariff, proposed one which, if it had been carried into effect, would have been far more favorable to the South, than the compromise bill of last session. It was, said Mr. B. no doubt fresh in the recollection of all, that gentlemen in Congress, who at that time supported the manufacturing interests, denounced the plan proposed by Mr. M'Lane as ruinous to those interests. Before the re-election of the President, in the Fall of 1832, the issue of a reduction of the tariff, which he was avowedly favorable to, had been distinctly made up; and the overwhelming success at the election polls, both of himself and the party supporting him, declared, in terms not to be misunderstood, the public will on that subject. At the commencement of the session of 1832 and 3, and before it was known at the Seat of Government, that the Convention of South Carolina had passed their ordinance, the President again strongly recommended to Congress such a reduction of the tariff as would bring down the revenue to a proper standard, and would do justice to all the great interests of the United States. These facts, he thought afforded conclusive proofs, if any were wanting, of the earnest and anxious wishes of those who had conducted the affairs of the administration, for a satisfactory adjustment of the tariff.

Mr. B. said he thought it must be obvious to all, who were at all observant of passing events, that a great effort was now making, by those who were out of power, to break down in public opinion the party in power, in order to secure their own ultimate success. And what, he would ask, was the composition of the extraordinary combination of parties which was now moving to effect that purpose, with a zeal, a perseverance, & an activity, which he would say was worthy of a better cause? It embraced parties every of political hue & complexion. Nullification & Nationalism were found united, directing their joint efforts to the accomplishment of that purpose. Could it fail to be perceived that a union of parties, thus constituted, seconded by the great power and influence of the Bank of the United States, if successful in their efforts to obtain power, would wield a power and control more formidable than any heretofore known under our Government. In such an event, Mr. B. said, it was but reasonable to suppose, judging from the past conduct of those who managed the affairs of the Bank, that its whole power, if the deposites were restored and a recharter obtained, would be exerted to sustain those in power who had upheld that institution. It appeared to him that the country might well startle with alarm at the consequences of the success of so formidable a party, sustained and supported, as it most probably would be, by a power which would go far to place it beyond the reach and control of public opinion.

It had been repeatedly said, that the Administration had resorted to the State Banks as places of deposite to strengthen themselves & perpetuate power in the hands of its friends. The effect of this measure, as one of patronage, he thought was rather to bring more of weakness than of strength to the party in power.—The Government could select, comparatively, but a small number of Banks in proportion to the large number which existed in the different States, and those Banks whose claims were overlooked, constituting, by far, the most numerous portion, would be more likely to indulge feelings of resentment that of friendship for the Administration.

In relation to the removal of the deposites, he (Mr. B.) would take occasion to say, that, in his opinion, the Secretary of the Treasury was fully justified in taking that step, by the flagrant violation of its charter, by those who managed the concerns of the Bank in having placed at the disposal of the President the funds of that institution, to an unlimited extent, to promote its recharter, by its unhallowed interference in the political concerns of the country, and by its attempt to exercise an improper control over the public press.—Who could doubt the quo animo with which these transactions had been conducted on the part of those who managed the concerns of the Bank, after an examination of the circumstances under which large sums had been loaned to Editors of influential newspapers?

He believed, if the question of the intention with which some of those transactions had taken place, was submitted to an honest and unprejudiced jury of twelve men, that their decision would be, beyond all doubt, that the intention was to control and corrupt the Press. It might be attempted to varnish these transactions over, by various ingenious and delicate phrases, much in use in these days of modern refinement, but, among plain and intelligent men, there could be but one opinion about them. When the question of rechartering the old Bank of the United States was under discussion, the mere suspicion that it had attempted to interfere in the party politics of the times, was so repugnant to the moral sense of the country, that it was no inconsiderable objection to its longer continuance.

Mr. B. said, that more timid men than those who conducted the affairs of the administration, might have paused, to calculate the effects of the measure on their popularity; but it was due to the offended laws and constitution of the country—it was due to the principle of popular supremacy under our form of government, that both should be vindicated, and an example made by the public functionaries, that an institution which endeavors to set itself above the control of both Government and People, should be taught the salutary lesson, that it can attempt neither the one nor the other with impunity.

Mr. B. said in conclusion, that he did not stand there as the apologist of the President of the United States, or any other person connected with his Administration. He had nothing to ask for himself, neither from those in power, or those who might succeed them. His highest political ambition was gratified, by the honor of a seat in that body, and, when he ceased to act in a representative capacity, he should cease to act in any public station under the Federal Government.

Mr. MANGUM, in reply to Mr. Brown, said he would not voluntarily do injustice to any man, and he therefore felt it proper to correct the misconception of his remarks, touching the views and the conduct of the President, in reference to the tariff. However strong his impressions, changing his entire estimate of the wisdom and efficiency of that individual, he felt it due to himself to abstain from any suggestion, that he did not believe fully and clearly sustainable. He had not said that the President endeavored to defeat the adjustment of the tariff. As far as he had heard, the President uniformly expressed his desire that some bill should be passed; and he knew of nothing in conflict with those declarations, save the expression imputed to him, that "he never would consent to the abolition of the discriminating duties," which was understood to be contemplated by the compromise.

What he meant to say, and what he had said, was, that the political party which held the Executive in the palms of its hands, directed its councils, and controlled its volition, had endeavored to effect that object, that it was their interest, as a mere party measure, he did not doubt; and, that they were as true to their interest, and nothing but their interest, as the needle to the pole, he supposed was apparent to all men.—That their object was to keep the question open, mantain their strong hold in the North, and decoy the South into the support of their views, by creating a false expectation, and holding out delusive promises. He would likewise discriminate between these false friends and the real friends of the President; of the latter, many, and especially those from Tennessee, made every effort in their power to adjust that subject.

But of that other party, that ambitious, and, he feared, bad party, which controls the operations of the actual Government, he felt no disposition to conceal his opinion.—He did not well know whether to regard its designs as more terrible or contemptible.

As regarded the Bank, that was not now the question. He did not mean that his eye should be turned from the lawless abuses of Executive power, until that subject should be finally disposed of. When the Bank should come up, he should be ready to go with gentlemen into an investigation of its alleged abuses. He was not the advocate of the Bank; he had once voted against its recharter, when he supposed its premature application had some connexion with the interests of a certain political party. He should keep his mind open to as fair an examination of the whole subject as he could. That it had been of immense utility and convenience to the country, in its moneyed operations, he believed all men conceded. As to the constitutional question, and the dangers to liberty, he should well examine them before final action on the subject.

He had a word to say in regard to his vote in the last Presidential election. The vote for the first on the ticket was freely and heartily given. Subsequent events had disclosed to him the wisdom of exercising great caution in designating any public man as worthy of unlimited confidence. As regarded the second on the ticket, (the Vice President,) he acted under the influence of a strong and urgent necessity—all men acquainted with his sentiments, knew with what deep reluctance he yielded to that necessity. He should not be likely to repeat the act, and, if he did not mistake the signs of the times, other gentlemen might not despise a wise caution in bestowing their confidence in advance too freely in that quarter. He, Mr. M. had acted under a sort of duresse, and though subsequent developments had confirmed all his anticipations, yet he ought not to regret the vote, for he could not have done otherwise.

What may be the sense of the country as to the United States Bank, he could not tell. But, one thing is clear, that the Bank was never heard of or felt, except in the facilities and conveniences it extended to the community, until this Government opened the fire upon it from the whole battery of Administration presses. The very spirit of empiricism seemed to have seized upon the subject, and the country is given to understand that the extension of the charter is the destruction of liberty. How has liberty survived the forty years of the existence of the Bank? Who does not see that the whole contest is one between the Executive and the Bank? and who believes that the war would have raged at all, if the Bank had been a little more political and a little more politic? To have no politics in these times, is almost as bad as to have bad politics. The Albany is the only true school. His honorable colleague seemed at a loss to perceive how any public man could hazard his popularity by opposing any measure of a popular Administration.

Mr. M. said no one sets a higher value on the good opinion of his constituents, than did he. That the only value of a seat in this chamber, was derived from the just, and, he trusted, honorable pride he felt in that confidence. That the seat, and the paltry honors of it, would be valueless in his eyes the instant it should be divorced from the public confidence; that he bowed with profound reverence to the expressed will of his mother State, yet he must be the keeper of his own honor; and if it shall ever happen, as in his opinion it never can happen, that a course of conduct should be required of him, which he deemed incompatible with his honor, his duty would be to surrender a trust that he could not execute.

But, while he recognised a profound respect to the opinions and wishes of his constituents, he should feel himself wholly unworthy of the trust, if he could shrink from rebuking bold and lawless usurpations of power, because they proceeded from a popular Administration, and because the blow that he aimed might, per adventure, recoil upon himself. Some allusion had been made to the combination of two parties to assail this measure. Has it come to this, that any thing may be done by men in power, and if, perchance, men of different parties shall object, that straightway it is a combination?

Combinations, in his judgment, are odious only when they seek objects of mere personal ambition. They are always entitled to respect when they seek to defend and maintain the Constitution and the laws. With whom did the Executive form a combination last winter, when the "Bill of Blood" was required? Where were the genuine, sturdy, and uncompromising advocates of the principles of '98 found on that occasion? Certainly not by the side of the executive. And he remembered, with great pleasure, that his honorable colleague was then found, as he doubted not he would always be found, sustaining his principles, in disregard of the will or wishes or vengeance of the Executive.

But the Bank corrupts the press! That is not now the question. But, how is it with the Executive? Suppose the gentleman's jury was impannelled, and the "quo animo" were the issue, how would the Executive hope to escape a verdict of guilty, as to the widest, deepest and most flagrant tampering with, and corruption of the press? One would think that this Administration would put forth a charge of that kind with great delicacy and caution. It must be conceded, however, that none can better know the extent and facility with which the press can be corrupted. Perhaps, therefore, the opinion of the Executive ought to have somewhat of the weight of authority.

It is however, said, that the country feels now, or but little, distress; that every thing, and every one, is quiet, easy, and happy, under the temperate rule and moderate counsels of this wise and just Administration! It may be so. In truth, in the opinions of those who defend the blunders and usurpations of power, it is scarcely ever otherwise.

But is it not strange, that for the last six weeks, more memorials, sounding every accent of distress, have been laid upon our tables than was ever before known? Are the people mad? What delusion or infatuation has seized them? Do they not know their own condition? Do the political doctors alone understand this thing? Because they harden their hearts to the cries of distress and urge the "experiment," am I to believe there is no suffering? I will not say all that I feel on this subject.

But the praises of this administration are again sounded for its adjustment of the Tariff. I will not again go into that subject. I deeply regret that my honorable colleague did not witness all the events of last winter.—Sir, who settled the Tariff? Does not every gentleman know that the great leading measure of the administration the last winter, was that "bill of blood?" That the Heavens and the Earth would have been moved to place in their hands the flaming sword of vengeance? That the eye of power was turned upon the fair fields of the South—and that already men panted for the stormy conflict? In this moment of alarm, deep and startling alarm—in this moment, when the destinies of this happy republic might be made to depend upon one rash move, did the friends of the administration move to the adjustment of the great questions of difference? Did they not, I mean the favorite party, did they not stand aloof, cold and indifferent spectators? Were they not willing to see the fields of the South drenched in blood, our dwellings in flames, and our whole country uprooted by the hand of desolation? Our men slain, our women and children exposed to all the horrors and sufferings of civil war?

Did not the very men, who yet may hope to decoy us into their toils of ambition, stand aloof, willing to witness these scenes of desolation and horror, rather than appease the quarrel by giving to the South what their own Administration said the South was entitled to? Did not thousands revolt at the horrors in prospect, and almost despair of the Republic, until the honorable Senator from Kentucky, (Mr. Clay,) and his friends, announced that they came to heal the wounds of the country? Sir, I have a thousand times called up the recollection of that fearful period, and that glorious consummation. I had rather have occupied the position of the honorable Senator (Mr. Clay,) than to have grasped the sceptre and waved it over the heads of millions, whether of slaves or of freemen. Official station, and all the ensigns and trappings of office, sink into utter insignificance, when compared with that commanding position from which the eye may range over the future, and look into the most distant periods of posterity, secure of its approbation and applause.

Mr. BROWN said, he again rose merely to make one or two observations