

FREE COINAGE AND THE SHERMAN ACT.

**THE NEW YORK DEMOCRACY STANDING BY THE
PRESIDENT ON THE CHICAGO PLATFORM.**

SPEECH

OF

HON. AMOS J. CUMMINGS,
OF NEW YORK,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

AUGUST 23, 1893.



WASHINGTON.

1893.

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The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 1) to repeal a part of an act, approved July 14, 1890, entitled "An act directing the purchase of silver bullion and the issue of Treasury notes thereon, and for other purposes"—

Mr. CUMMINGS said:

Mr. SPEAKER: First I desire to thank my colleagues [Messrs. FITCH and COVERT] for their kindness in reserving ten minutes of their time for me.

Sir, I recognize the fact that the people of this country demand action and not talk. I had not intended to trespass upon the indulgence of the House until I heard the arraignment of the New York Democracy by the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. STOCKDALE], night before last. Silence is no longer golden. The New York Democracy need no vindication. Their fealty to the party is proverbial. But the Southern Democracy need vindication before the people when they arraign the New York Democracy for their support of Grover Cleveland in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a district in which there are very few banks—fewer, perhaps, than in any other Congressional district in the United States. I represent one of the centers of the teeming and toiling millions of New York. It has in some of its precincts what you find nowhere else on the face of the earth, a population at a ratio of a million to the square mile. No farmer in the land, however poor, lives in the squalor and the misery of some of these men. Over six thousand working men and women are crowded into one block. Some of them have raised the black flag—not the red flag—with the yellow flag in the offing at quarantine. It has been inscribed with the words, "Work or bread."

In standing here and speaking to this House I represent that cry for bread, for work. The only work these people can get is from the manufacturers and merchants of New York City, and they tell them they can not give them work until this purchasing clause of the Sherman law is repealed. President Cleveland, in consonance with the plain letter of the national Democratic platform, has asked for its repeal, and the New York Democracy unanimously sustains him in his request. This is the sole head and front of their offending. [Applause.]

But, sir, I return to the arraignment of the distinguished gentleman from Mississippi, born and reared in the Republican State of Pennsylvania, but representing a Mississippi district. Sir, the country is suffering in more senses than one. It seems to be suffering from a fearful surplus of statesmen and from a dearth of politicians. [Applause.] The gentleman from Mississippi went back to the Chicago convention in his assault upon the New York Democracy. I am loth to follow in his footsteps, but justice to the New York Democracy, in my opinion, demands it. He said that two-thirds of the votes from the South were given for the nomination of Grover Cleveland at Chicago. He might have made it four-fifths, and still have been within the limits of truth.

These votes were cast in the face of letters from Grover Cleveland defining unqualifiedly his attitude upon the propositions before the House. [Applause.] I will not quote them. You all recognize them. They were against free coinage.

You men of the South have ears to hear, and eyes to see. You have at least common-school educations. You understand Grover Cleveland's attitude. No man, friend or foe, has ever accused him of being untrue to his convictions. He is as firm here as the rock of Gibraltar. He abates not a jot or a tittle of them. Yet, sir, in the face of a repeated protest of the New York Democracy, over two-thirds of the Southern delegates to the Chicago convention forced Mr. Cleveland's nomination for the Presidency. Missouri voted solidly for him; Arkansas voted solidly for him, and other Southern States in due proportion.

A committee sent from the New York delegation tried in vain

to obtain a hearing from the Arkansas delegation, and on that committee, sir, were two delegates who had voted for free silver in the Fifty-first Congress to preserve the South from the horrors of a force bill. [Applause.] Yet they failed to get the poor courtesy of a hearing.

Now, sir, the time for these gentlemen from the South to enter their protest was then, not to-day. [Great applause.] The time for you men from Missouri to say that you would desert the standard of the Democracy unless free coinage was accepted was then, not to-day. [Renewed applause.]

The New York Democracy, sir, bowed humbly to the will of that convention. They loyally accepted its candidate and its platform. They did more. I say to you men of the South here to-day, that it was their vote that gave you the plank for tariff for revenue only. [Applause.] They have never deserted the South in her hours of trial. They stood by her years ago even to the brink of rebellion, and they were among the first to extend the right hand of fellowship after the war. They stood by you in crucial moments in the Fifty-first Congress; but they will not stand by any man in a treasonable attitude toward the Democratic party. Common honor, let alone chivalry, requires that the South shall not desert them after placing them in the situation which they occupy to-day. [Applause.] We are supporting your candidate and your President honestly, loyally, and proudly. We merit praise, not denunciation. [Renewed applause.]

I will except one Southern State from the list, Mr. Speaker—the plucky little Commonwealth of South Carolina. Her delegates at Chicago, apparently awake to the realities of the situation, cast every vote but one against the nomination of Mr. Cleveland. They ought to bow to the will of the convention, as New York has done; but they, unlike the most of the Southern States, have at least the shadow of an excuse for their attitude to-day, if they desire to avail themselves of it. [Applause.] South Carolina in this House to-day occupies the same attitude. All but one of her representatives in this Congress refuse to accept the recommendation of the President's message.

But, sir, the New York Democracy obeyed the mandate of the Chicago convention. They went to the front in line of battle. They led a charge like that of MacDonald at Wagram. They pierced the enemy's center, and the Democrats of the West and South closed in upon the flanks and routed them. Sir, the New York Democracy to-day stands by the pledges that she made at Chicago. She accepted not only the nominee, but the platform, and—

The SPEAKER *pro tempore* (Mr. BROOKSHIRE in the chair). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. BOATNER. I move that the time of the gentleman be extended.

Mr. CUMMINGS. They do not—

Mr. KYLE. I object to the extension of time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, mark that a distinguished gentleman from Mississippi made this unprovoked attack on the New York Democracy, and a gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. KYLE] objects to any reply.

Mr. TURNER. How much time does the gentleman from New York desire?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Three minutes.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, if I may be recognized I will yield to the gentleman the three minutes he desires. [Cries of "Good!" and applause.]

Mr. CUMMINGS. I heartily thank the gentleman from Georgia. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that New York, in accepting the nominee, accepted the platform. She stands by its letter and its law. She finds no "glittering catchwords" in its construction. She stands by the nominee and platform loyally. What is the platform? Did it declare in favor of the repeal of the Sherman act, with free coinage at 16 to 1 or 17 to 1, or any other ratio? No, sir; a free coinage amendment was lost there by a decisive vote. Then, why is it that gentlemen here who advocate this qualification of the President's recommendation, under a threat of betrayal of the party, are to-day accusing New York Democrats of repudiating the platform?

Mr. BOATNER. Because you would not agree to give us free coinage at any ratio.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The National Democratic Convention refused you, and we humbly bow to the will of the convention. The convention almost unanimously refused to give you free coinage. You yourselves are the repudiators of the work of the convention, and not the New York Democracy. You yourselves are confessedly responsible for the selection of the President of the United States, and you yourselves, in view of his letters before the nomination, ought to have the manliness and the common honesty to stand by the Democracy of New York in carrying out his recommendations. We accepted your choice, and you ought to stand by it. [Loud applause.]

Mr. BOATNER. After you have got off the platform.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Are you on the platform, my friend?

Mr. BOATNER. I think I am.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Can you show where the platform declares for the free coinage of silver at any ratio at all?

Mr. BOATNER. No; because you are all against free coinage, and will not give us free coinage at any ratio.

Mr. CUMMINGS. We stand by the platform, but you are not willing to trust the President you selected in the face of the protest of the New York Democracy. We trust him. You do not. Is this honorable? Sir, I thank the Southern Democracy, who after reading the New York Democracy a lesson, are teaching themselves the lesson they are learning here to-day.

Mr. BOATNER. We will try to give you a better one next time. [Laughter.]

Mr. CUMMINGS. He is a poor doctor who refuses his own medicine. Take it like men. Stand by your party. Never desert your colors. The gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HATCH] had something to say about sand. Save your sand. You need more of it. Follow the example of the engineer, and pray for it. Don't get up here, as we have seen Southern Democrats do, day after day and night after night, coached by guerrillas from Colorado and Populist Jayhawkers from Kansas, arraigning and condemning the Democratic President of the United States for standing by the people on the platform of the national Democracy in convention assembled. [Loud applause.] Stand by the New York

Democracy as the New York Democracy stands by your President and its President and our President, and the black financial cloud will soon roll away and the nation resume the road to prosperity.

[Here Mr. CUMMINGS's time expired.]

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