

States Senate is not in any respect qualified to speak for the people of the United States, nor can it be said in any respect to represent them.

Why, sir, the very essence of the constitution of the United States Senate is to give the tiniest State, with scarcely 100,000 population, a voice in the decisions of the Senate equal to that of the great State of New York, with a population of well-nigh 10,000,000, and so all through the list. If the United States Senate can be said to represent anything, I am afraid it represents what, for want of a better term, we must describe as the plutocracy which has so suddenly sprung into being in the United States within the past few years, which has accumulated in the hands of a few individuals the hugest fortunes the world has ever seen, at least since the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, thousands of years ago.

Sir, I am by education and temperament as far removed from socialism as a man well can be, but I recognize for all that that such great fortunes are a menace to the United States, nay, more than that, the accumulation of such tremendous fortunes in the hands of individuals is a menace to civilization at large. Sir, these men have come to exercise far greater power over the lives and fortunes of great masses of their fellow-countrymen than ever were exercised by the English aristocracy in its proudest days, when it controlled two-thirds of the votes of the House of Commons. They elect the judiciary. They purchase whole legislatures. They fix the rate of taxation. They are the true despots of the age.

For my part, I believe that it is as true to-day as it was in the days of Tacitus and St. Jerome, that these great fortunes are a great peril to the State. "*Lati fundia perdidere rem publicam*," or as I think Lord Bacon put it, "Great wealth and the Commonwealth did never yet agree."

Sir, these men in a great measure are the spawn of a monstrous tariff, most properly described by Mr. Joseph Chamberlain as a "tariff of abominations," which formed the worst legacy left behind by the Civil War, which nullified to a great extent the sacrifices made by the people in that tremendous struggle, and caused the United States to exchange black slavery for white. If you think my words are strong, let me recall to your recollection certain passages from certain speeches by my friend Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Dealing with this very question he said:

"I denounce to you the policy of protection as bondage. Yes, bondage, and I refer to bondage in the same manner in which the American slavery was bondage; not in the same degree, perhaps, but in the same manner.

"I do not tell you that we must have no taxation, but I do say that the Government has no right to take a cent from you or me except for the necessities of the revenue, and if the Government takes from you any portion of your earnings, whether the portion be large or small, to give to anybody else, that Government is as much a robber as the highwayman who puts a pistol to your forehead and says 'Your money or your life!'"