

deserts, swamps, unbridged streams, bad-roads or bands of robbers between producers and consumers, or whether, for the benefit of some private interests, that have done nothing to merit it, we impose a toll on the commodities transported, and call it a tariff. In both cases there is a greater effort and an increased cost required to produce a given result, and a diminution of the abundance of the things which minister to everybody's necessities, comfort and happiness. A twenty per cent duty is like a bad road; a fifty per cent., like a broad, deep and rapid river, without any proper facilities for crossing, a seventy-five per cent., like a swamp flanking such a river on both sides; while a hundred per cent. duty, such as is levied upon kerosene oil, is as a band of robbers, who strip the merchant of nearly all he possesses, and make him not a little grateful that he escapes with his life.

Q. How does a tariff, enacted for so-called "protection," involve the principle of slavery?

A. Any system of law which denies to an individual the right freely to exchange the products of his labor, by declaring that A, a citizen, may trade on equal terms with B, another citizen, but shall not under equally favorable circumstances trade with C, who lives in another country, reaffirms in effect the principle of slavery. For both slavery and the artificial restriction of exchanges deny to the individual the right to use the products of his labor according to his own pleasure, or what may seem to him the best advantage. In other words, the practical working of both the system of human slavery and the system of protection is to deprive the individual of a portion of the fruits of his labor, without making in return any direct compensation.

Q. What is the argument generally put forth by protectionists to justify the restriction of freedom of exchanges?

A. That any PRESENT loss or injury resulting from such restriction to the individual will be more than compensated to him INDIRECTLY, as a citizen of the State.

Q. Was not this essentially the argument used to justify slavery?

A. Yes. The plea for slavery asserted that the system was really for the good of the slaves, and that any deprivation endured by them for the good of society—meaning the masters—would be fully compensated to them, through moral discipline, if not in this world, certainly in the world to come. It made the slave owners, who enacted the laws, the sole judges of the question.

Q. Have not the same arguments employed for the restriction of exchanges—i. e. indirect or future individual or social benefit as a justification for present personal restriction or injury—been always used to justify every encroachment by despotic governments on the freedom of the individual?

A. Yes; and especially in warrant of State persecution for heresy or unbelief; of enforced conformity with State religions; of abridging the liberty of speech and of the press and of restricting the right of suffrage. In short, the restriction of freedom of exchange for the purpose of subserving private interests, is one of those acts on the part of the State which are utterly antagonistic to the principles of free government; and which, if fully carried out, would be absolutely destructive of it.