

MORILL TARIFF - Passed in March of 1862, two days before Lincoln was sworn in as President, and the New York Times reported that the Commerce Centers of the World would begin their Trade with the New Confederacy. The Problem, 95% of the 1860 U.S. Treasury Revenue was from Tariff's, and Lincoln became Absolutely Paranoid over the South destroying the Revenue of the Industrial North - WAR against the South became his Strategy. Within days after the Passage of the March, 1861 Morill Tariff Bill, Lincoln's meetings with Unionists from Virginia and Maryland - Declared that "How Will He Govern the Country, If He did not Take Back Charleston and Keep the Confederacy in the Country."

The New York Times

The Tariff and Secession.

March 26, 1861

We stated, a day or two since, that the enactment of the new Tariff was not only not an Administration measure, but that it was not in accordance with the opinions and wishes of the President himself. The Journal of Commerce makes the following comment on this remark:

"This is assurance of the most unblushing character. It was Mr. LINCOLN's political friends and supporters who passed this new tariff act, in spite of all opposition. If Mr. LINCOLN was opposed to it he carefully kept the secret to himself, when by a word he could have prevented its passage."

We take it for granted that the Journal has entirely forgotten Mr. LINCOLN's speech at Pittsburgh, on his way to Washington, in which, -- while he did not express any personal wish on the subject, -- he recommended every member of the next Congress "to take an enlarged view, and inform himself thoroughly, so as to contribute his part to such an adjustment of the Tariff as shall produce a sufficient revenue, and in its other bearings, so far as possible, be just and equal to all sections of the country and all classes of the people." This shows that he did not anticipate such hasty action on the Tariff as it subsequently received. Nor could any one who appreciated the condition of the country, deem it either wise or prudent to pass such an act, just as new parties and new men were to enter upon the administration of the Government.

We have the satisfaction of reflecting that the TIMES zealously opposed the enactment of this Tariff, not so much with reference to its intrinsic defects as from regard to the political condition of the country. We anticipated and forewarned the country of the very difficulties which have since arisen. They were foreseen by every man who reflected on the crisis that was upon us, and the necessity that would arise of making laws to meet it. But it was fashionable just then to treat Secession as a matter of very small importance, and to ridicule the idea that it should influence in the slightest degree the action of Congress or the Government; and as Pennsylvania, with her usual promptitude and energy demanded the measure, she was allowed for the moment to dictate the policy of the Government, and the bill was passed.

It is pretty evident now that it will prove a most serious obstacle to the adjustment of our sectional differences. We have imposed high duties on commerce, at the very moment when the seceding States are inviting commerce to their ports by low duties. They are appealing to foreign nations to recognize their independence, and are soliciting their friendly regards by the most powerful of all appeals, -- that addressed to their commercial interests. We cannot expect nations whose prosperity depends so largely upon commerce as does that of England and France, to be insensible to such appeals: -- and the extracts we have copied from their public journals show that the bill in question has done more to create a disposition to look favorably upon secession, -- to find an apology for recognizing the independence of the States which thus invite their commerce, -- than the arguments and appeals of their Commissioners could have effected in a year.

It is evident now to everybody that Secession is a serious matter, -- that it must engross the attention and enlist the active efforts of the Government for some time to come. It is the most pressing of all the subjects that engage or invite its attention. Slavery, Protection, Foreign Relations, must all be postponed. The first thing to be done, -- that without

which all attempts to do anything else are futile and foolish, -- is to prevent the seceded States from achieving their independence. The Administration cannot permit disunion to become an accomplished fact, -- except after its wisest, most strenuous and most persevering endeavors to prevent it, -- without incurring the condemnation of the American people and of the civilized world for all time to come. The seceded States must be coerced back into the Union, -- not by arms, -- not by force, but by the pressure of their interests, by the weight of their taxation, by the stagnation of their business, -- by making it apparent to their people that in the Union alone can they find the prosperity of which secession deprives them. We must not allow them to develop an independent commerce, through our blundering or careless legislation. And, in our opinion, the temporary admission into our ports of the great mass of most foreign goods, free of all duties except what might be needed to pay the expenses of the Customs Department of the Government, would be a far wiser measure than the bestowment of bounties upon Southern commerce at the expense of our own, which is actually effected by the new Tariff. Such a measure would at once defeat every attempt of the Southern States to attract commerce to their ports, and obviate all the difficulties which are now so formidable in the collection of Southern revenue. And while very many reasons will occur to every one against the enactment of so sweeping a measure, we believe that the action of the Government ought to be in that direction. There would be no difficulty in raising all the money we need by loans, to which the prospect of a speedy restoration of peace and prosperity would give infinitely greater security than is furnished by the new Tariff.

This subject must certainly command the prompt attention and energetic action of the Government. New difficulties are arising every day which will grow more and more formidable with every week; and the whole current of commerce may be so far diverted from its natural channels by a few months' operation of this new tariff, that it will be impossible to remedy what may now be prevented. In spite of the objections to it, we do not see how the country is to escape the necessity of a special session of Congress.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1861/03/26/news/the-tariff-and-secession.html>