

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF FREE
TRADERS AND REVENUE REFORMERS,
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
AMERICAN FREE TRADE LEAGUE.
CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 11 AND 12, 1885**

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CHAS. D. HAMIL, *Treasurer.*

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ROBERT W. PATTON.

S. S. GREGORY.

ERRATUM.

FOURTH SESSION. After the report of the Committee on Resolutions and the minority report the chair was taken by W. P. Wells, Esq., of Detroit, at the request of President Morton.

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PLATFORM.

We submit to the people of the United States that the continuance of the war tariff, with duties averaging 42 per cent on over 1400 articles of domestic consumption, and a much higher specific duty on many crude materials, has prolonged the evils of war in times of profound peace, and has been the principal cause of the commercial and industrial depression of recent years. By forcing labor and capital from naturally profitable into unprofitable lines of business, and by adding to the cost of production, it has decreased the common productive capacity of labor and capital, and thereby reduced both the wages of labor and the profits of capital.

It has provoked an antagonism between labor and capital, against which our great natural resources and our free institutions should have protected us.

It has impaired our power to compete with other manufacturing nations in the markets of the world, and so obstructed natural progress and development.

It has destroyed many branches of business, and has kept our people from engaging in other branches of business which would have given increased employment to labor, by preventing our buying from nations willing to buy from us, and by provoking retaliation in like spirit, instead of promoting friendly reciprocity.

It has obstructed the consumption of our agricultural and manufactured products by other countries, and has driven our commerce from the sea.

By impairing our domestic power to buy it has prevented the full development of our interstate commerce, and reduced the legitimate profits of traffic, and has driven into bankruptcy a large number of our transportation companies and made domestic traffic more costly.

Through the influence of its lobby it has enthroned jobbery and corruption in our legislative halls, and has impeded the reform of the civil service.

In short, taking by force the earnings of one class of men to enrich another class, it is opposed to the spirit of American liberty and to the Constitution. It has imposed a new industrial slavery. It has prevented the natural progress of wealth among the farming class. It has decreased wages and their producing power, and lengthened the enforced idleness of working-men. It has restricted our manufactures from their natural market, and demoralized the general business of the country.

While holding accordingly that taxes in aid of private interests or for any purpose other than the requirements of government are un-American, unjust, and unwise, and that every protective feature must at the earliest possible date be eradicated from our revenue system, we invite all who oppose the abuses of the present tariff to join us in promoting immediate steps of practical revenue reform, which we believe will increase wages, diminish the frequency of strikes, develop business, and restore our flag to the seas. We, therefore, urge upon Congress, for action at the ensuing session:

1. That under no pretence shall any countenance whatever be given to attempts to increase protective duties.

PLATFORM.

2. That articles which are at the foundation of great industries should, in the interest of labor and commerce, be freed from duty, whether they be crude materials, as lumber, salt, coal, ore, wool, etc., or partly manufactured, as chemicals, dye-stuffs, pig-iron, tin-plate, wood-pulp, etc.

3. That on products from such articles duties should be at least correspondingly reduced, so that protection, real or nominal, to manufacturers shall not be increased, and that the consumer shall have the immediate benefit of the reduction.

We urge that any steps in tariff reform should simplify the present complicated classification, and should do away with mixed duties, replacing them by *ad valorem* rates instead of by specific duties, which are most burdensome on low-priced goods, consumed by the great body of the people.

We demand free ships and the abolition of our restrictive navigation laws, which, together with the tariff, have driven our flag from the sea; and we oppose bounties and subsidies on shipping.

We urge revenue reformers to vote only for such Congressional candidates as oppose a tariff for protection, and to take steps to nominate independent candidates where both party candidates oppose revenue reform, preparing for that step by diffusing sound economic literature and promoting organization, especially in close Congressional districts.

The following resolutions were also passed by the Conference:

We urge every revenue-reformer to become a subscriber to the *Million*, of Des Moines, Iowa, the national representative of our cause, and to induce his neighbor to do the same; and we also commend to hearty support the *Freeman*, of Indianapolis and other journals which have ably represented this cause."

Resolved, That it is the sense of this Convention that no further reduction be countenanced in the internal revenue tax on spirits and tobacco, until the existing tariff has been brought to a strictly revenue basis.

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

AND

DELEGATES PRESENT AT CHICAGO CONFERENCE.

AMERICAN FREE TRADE LEAGUE—Headquarters, 89 Nassau St.,
New York.

Pres., David A. Wells, Norwich, Conn.

Hon. Sec'y, R. R. Bowker, New York.

Western Sec'y, H. J. Philpott, Des Moines, Iowa.

Treas., Geo. F. Peabody, 16 Broad St., New York.

Chairman Ex. Com., Thos. G. Shearman, New York.

MANUFACTURERS' TARIFF REFORM LEAGUE.

Pres., J. B. Sargent, New Haven.

Sec'y, A. A. Healy, New York.

(Not connected with the National Organization and not represented at the
Conference.)

MASSACHUSETTS.

MASSACHUSETTS TARIFF REFORM LEAGUE.

Pres., Chas. Francis Adams, Jr.

Sec'y, Josiah Quincy, 66 State St., Boston.

Delegates, Josiah Quincy, Boston.

W. B. Mendum, "

Delegate at Large, L. Prince, Worcester.

CONCORD FREE TRADE CLUB.

Pres., Woodward Hudson.

Sec'y, Frank A. Nichols.

(Not represented at Conference.)

NORTHAMPTON REVENUE REFORM CLUB.

Chairman, Wm. Gaylord.

Sec'y, Arthur Watson.

(Not represented at Conference.)