

**SELF-GOVERNMENT IN
LOUISIANA.
SPEECH, JANUARY
13 AND 14, 1875**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649194186

Self-government in Louisiana. Speech, January 13 and 14, 1875 by John A. Logan

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

JOHN A. LOGAN

**SELF-GOVERNMENT IN
LOUISIANA.
SPEECH, JANUARY
13 AND 14, 1875**

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN LOUISIANA.

SPEECH

OF

HON. JOHN A. LOGAN,
OF ILLINOIS,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

JANUARY 13 AND 14, 1875.

WASHINGTON:
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.
1875.

S P E E C H
OF
H O N . J O H N A . L O G A N .

The Senate having under consideration the resolution submitted by Mr. Schurz on the 8th of January, directing the Committee on the Judiciary to inquire what legislation is necessary to secure to the people of the State of Louisiana their rights of Self-government under the Constitution—

Mr. LOGAN said :

Mr. PRESIDENT: I believe it is considered the duty of a good sailor to stand by his ship in the midst of a great storm. We have been told in this Chamber that a great storm of indignation is sweeping over this land, which will rend asunder and sink the old republican craft. We have listened to denunciations of the President, of the republicans in this Chamber, of the republican party as an organization, their acts heretofore and their purposes in reference to acts hereafter, of such a character as has seldom been listened to in this or any other legislative hall. Every fact on the side of the republican party has been perverted, every falsehood on the part of the opposition has been exaggerated, arguments have been made here calculated to inflame and arouse a certain class of the people of this country against the authorities of the Government, based not upon truth but upon manufactured statements which were utterly false. The republican party has been characterized as despotic, as tyrannical, as oppressive. The course of the Administration and the party toward the southern people has been denounced as of the most tyrannical character by men who have received clemency at the hands of this same party.

Now, sir, what is the cause of all this vain declamation? What is the cause of all this studied denunciation? What is the reason for all these accusations made against a party or an administration? I may be mistaken, but, if I am not, this is the commencement of the campaign of 1876. It has been thought necessary on the part of the opposition Senators here to commence, if I may use a homely phrase, a raid upon the republican party and upon this Administration, and to base that upon false statements in reference to the conduct of affairs in the State of Louisiana.

I propose in this debate, and I hope I shall not be too tedious, though I may be somewhat so, to discuss the question that should be presented to the American people. I propose to discuss that question fairly, candidly, and truthfully. I propose to discuss it from a just, honest, and legal stand-point. Sir, what is that question? There was a resolution offered in this Chamber calling on the President to furnish certain information. A second resolution was introduced, (whether for the purpose of hanging on it an elaborate speech or not I am not aware,) asking the Committee on the Judiciary to report at once some legislation in reference to Louisiana. Without any facts presented officially arguments have been made, the country has been aroused,

and some people have announced themselves in a manner calculated to produce a very sore feeling against the course and conduct of the party in power. I say this is done without the facts; without any basis whatever; without any knowledge officially communicated to them in reference to the conduct of any of the parties in the State of Louisiana. In discussing this question we ought to have a stand-point; we ought to have a beginning; some point from which we may all reason and see whether or not any great outrage has been perpetrated against the rights of the American people or any portion of them.

I then propose to start at this point, that there is a government in the State of Louisiana. Whether that government is a government of right or not is not the question. Is there a government in that State against which treason, insurrection, or rebellion may be committed? Is there such a government in the State of Louisiana as should require the maintenance of peace and order among the citizens of that State? Is there such a government in the State of Louisiana as requires the exercise of Executive authority for the purpose of preserving peace and order within its borders? I ask any Senator on this floor to-day if he can stand up here as a lawyer, as a Senator, as an honest man, and deny the fact that a government does exist? Whether he calls it a government *de jure* or a government *de facto*, it is immaterial. It is such an organization as involves the liberties and the protection of the rights of the people of that State. It will not do for Senators to talk about the election of 1872. The election of 1872 has no more to do with this "military usurpation" that you speak of to-day than an election of a hundred years ago. It is not a question as to whether this man or that was elected. The question is, is there such a government there as can be overturned, and has there been an attempt to overturn it? If so, then what is required to preserve its status or preserve the peace and order of the people?

But the other day when I asked the question of a Senator on the other side, who was discussing this question, whether or not he indorsed the Penn rebellion, he answered me in a playful manner that excited the mirth of people who did not understand the question, by saying that I had decided that there was no election, and that therefore there was no government to overturn. Now I ask Senators, I ask men of common understanding if that is the way to treat a question of this kind; when asked whether insurrection against a government recognized is not an insurrection and whether he indorses it, he says there is no government to overturn. If there is no government to overturn, why do you make this noise and confusion about a Legislature there? If there is no State government, there is no State Legislature. But I will not answer in that manner. I will not avoid the issue; I will not evade the question. I answer there is a Legislature, as there is a State government, recognized by the President, recognized by the Legislature, recognized by the courts, recognized by one branch of Congress, and recognized by the majority of the citizens by their recognition of the laws of the State; and it will not do to undertake to avoid questions in this manner.

Let us see, then, starting from that stand-point, what the position of Louisiana is now, and what it has been. On the 14th day of September last a man by the name of Penn, as to whom we have official information this morning, with some seven or ten thousand white-leaguers made war against that government, overturned it, dispersed it, drove the governor from the executive chamber, and he had to take refuge under the jurisdiction of the Government of the United

States, on the soil occupied by the United States custom-house, where the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States Government extends, for the purpose of protecting his own life.

This then was a revolution; this then was a rebellion; this then was treason against the State, for which these men should have been arrested, tried, and punished. Let gentlemen dodge the question as they may; it may be well for some men there who engaged in this treasonable act against the Government that they had Mr. Kellogg for governor. It might not have been so well for them, perhaps, had there been some other man in his place. I tell the Senator from Maryland if any crowd of armed men should undertake to disperse the government of the State of Illinois, drive its governor from the executive chamber, enter into his private drawers, take his private letters, and publish them, and act as those men did, some of them would pay the penalty either in the penitentiary or by dancing at the end of a rope.

But when this rebellion was going on against that State, these gentlemen say it was a State affair; the Government of the United States has nothing to do with it! That is the old-fashioned secession doctrine again. The Government of the United States has nothing to do with it! This National Government is made up of States, and each State is a part of the Government, each is a part of its life, of its body. It takes them all to make up the whole; and treason against any part of it is treason against the whole of it, and it became the duty of the President to put it down, as he did do; and, in putting down that treason against the Kellogg government, the whole country almost responded favorably to his action.

But our friend from Maryland, not in his seat now, [Mr. HAMILTON] said that that was part of the cause of the elections going as they did. In other words, my friend from Maryland undertook in a round-about way to endorse the Penn rebellion, and claim that people of the country did the same thing against the government of the State of Louisiana, and on this floor since this discussion has been going on, not one Senator on that side of the chamber has lipped one word against the rebellion against the government of the State of Louisiana, and all who have spoken of it have passed it by in silence so as to indicate clearly that they endorse it, and I believe they do.

Then, going further, the President issued his proclamation requiring those insurgents to lay down their arms and to resume their peaceful pursuits. This morning we have heard read at the clerk's desk that these men have not yet complied fully with that proclamation. Their rebellious organization continued up to the time of the election and at the election. When the election took place, we are told by some of these Senators that the election was a peaceable, and a fair election, that a majority of democrats were elected. That is the question we propose to discuss as well as we are able to do it. They tell us that there was no intimidation resorted to by any one in the State of Louisiana. I dislike very much to follow out these statements that are not true and attempt to controvert them because it does seem to me that we ought to act fairly and candidly in this Chamber and discuss questions without trying to pervert the issue or the facts in connection with it.


Now, I state it as a fact, and I appeal to the Senator from Louisiana to say whether or not I state truly, that on the night before the election in Louisiana notices were posted all over that country on the doors of the colored republicans and the white republicans, too, of a character giving them to understand that if they voted

their lives would be in danger; and here is one of the notices posted all over that country:



2 x 6

This "2 x 6" was to show the length and width of the grave they would have. Not only that, but the negroes that they could impose upon and get to vote the democratic ticket received, after they had voted, a card of safety; and here is that card issued to the colored people whom they had induced to vote the democratic ticket, so that they might present it if any white-leaguers should undertake to plunder or murder them:

	NEW ORLEANS, Nov. 22, 1874.
<i>This is to certify that Charles Durassa, a barber by occupation, is a Member of the 1st Ward Colored Democratic Club, and that at the late election he voted for and worked in the interests of the Democratic Candidates.</i>	
<i>NICK HOPE, Secretary.</i>	<i>WILLIAM ALEXANDER, President 1st Ward Col'd Democratic Club.</i>
ROOMS DEMOCRATIC PARISH COMMITTEE, New Orleans, Nov. 22, 1874.	
<i>The undersigned, Special Committee, appointed on behalf of the Parish Committee, approve of the above Certificate.</i>	
<i>ED. FLOOD, Chairman. PAUL WATERMAN. H. J. RIVET.</i>	
ATTEST:	
<i>J. H. HARDY, Ass't Secretary Parish Committee.</i>	

These were the certificates given to negroes who voted the democratic ticket, that they might present them to save their lives when attacked by the men commonly known as Ku-Klux or white-leaguers in that country; and we are told that there is no intimidation in the State of Louisiana!

Our friend from Georgia [Mr. GORDON] has been very profuse in his declamation as to the civility and good order and good bearing of the people of Louisiana and the other Southern States. But, sir, this intimidation continued up to the election. After the election, it was necessary for the governor of that State to proceed in some manner best calculated to preserve the peace and order of the country. Certain men were known to be elected to the Legislature, and one person elected to a State office. I ask now, in furtherance of what I am say-

ing in reference to intimidation, that the Secretary read from one of the journals of Louisiana's statement, made after the election, to show that the intimidation still continued.

The Chief Clerk read as follows:

SHREVEPORT, November 16, 1874.

The following extracts from an editorial in the Times yesterday but faintly reflect sentiments expressed in a hundred speeches made in Northern Louisiana by prominent White League leaders before and since the election:

"We want no representative on the returning board, no favors or concessions from Kellogg and Packard. * * * We know the results of the election in every parish. * * * Therefore we should simply give the members of that board to distinctly understand that unless they return the elections as they were returned at the polls, they and those they seek to count in will pay the forfeit with their lives. We have no appeals to make to our fellow-citizens of New Orleans. We know that the men of the 14th of September will do their whole duty as freemen and Louisianians jealous of their liberties; but throughout the country parishes there should be concert of action, and that action should be prompt and emphatic. In every parish where the officers elected by the people may be counted out by the returning board, the people should use hemp or ball on the defeated candidates counted in.

"To localize the proposition: If George L. Smith is counted in over W. M. Levy, or if Twitchell is counted in over Elam, let Smith and Twitchell be killed. If Johnson and Tyler, in De Soto, are counted in over Soales and Schuler, as the New Orleans Republican thinks; or if Keating, Levesee, and Johnson, in Caddo, are counted in over Vaughn, Horan, and Land, then let Johnson, Tyler, Keating, Levesee, and Johnson be killed. And so let every officer, from Congressman down to constable, in every district and parish of the State, be served, whom the people have defeated and whom the returning board may count in. We cannot afford to be defeated by a ring of political scoundrels after we have triumphed. * * * Human life may be precious; but the lives of all these carpet-baggers and radical politicians in Louisiana are valueless, compared with the worth of a single principle of justice and liberty."

Mr. LOGAN. Now, Mr. President, in the face of what has been said on this floor, a kind of sport-making of the statements of intimidation of the voters of the South, am I not justified in bringing forward this statement? What is it? That if certain men, republicans, are announced as elected to the Legislature of the State of Louisiana, they shall be murdered. Murdered; why? Murdered because they are republicans, elected to the legislature of a sovereign State, naming the men; that, if the returning board announce their election, they shall be murdered! Yet our democratic friends on the other side sneer at the idea of republicans being intimidated or murdered on account of their peculiar notions in the Southern States. This was in the State of Louisiana, and Louisiana is the State with which we are dealing now, and not the State of Georgia. I here will say for the benefit of my friend from Georgia—for I am his friend personally—that he is in the habit of bringing Georgia in all the time when we talk about intimidation, alleging that Georgia is peaceful. I will speak to that before I am through; I am now confining my attention to Louisiana.

If we take into consideration this declaration in one of the leading newspapers; if we take into consideration the notices given to the people all over the country on the day before the election; if we take into consideration the Penn rebellion of the 14th of September; and if we then go back for a period and take into view the bloody riot in New Orleans in 1866, when a convention was being assembled in that State, what are we to conclude? In 1866 these same men went into that convention and killed and wounded over two hundred, as I have the authentic report, made by the medical officers who examined the killed and wounded on that occasion, to show. Some thirty-odd were killed, and the rest, amounting to over two hundred, were wounded on that occasion. Why? Because they went in convention to de-

clare their views in reference to certain propositions. If we take all this into consideration and then follow it down until we come to the massacre at Colfax, what was that? I have here a pamphlet published, containing extracts from one of the papers in the State of Louisiana, the New Orleans Times, and I will read from it in regard to that transaction:

Sunday night, shortly after dark, the boat landed at a wood-pile about a mile above Colfax, Grant Parish, and a young fellow, armed to the teeth and very much excited, came aboard and requested the captain to land at Colfax and take some wounded white men to Alexandria, about twenty-five miles farther down the river.

On arriving at Colfax we found about a hundred armed men on the bank, and most of the passengers, myself among the number, went ashore to view the "battle-ground," for our young friend who came aboard at the wood-pile informed us "that if we wanted to see dead niggers, here was a chance, for there were a hundred or so scattered over the village and the adjacent fields," and he kindly offered to guide us to the scene of action.

Almost as soon as we got to the top of the landing, sure enough we began to stumble on them, most of them lying on their faces, and, as I could see by the dim light of the lanterns, riddled with bullets.

One poor wretch, a stalwart-looking fellow, had been in the burning court-house, and as he ran out with his clothes on fire had been shot. His clothes to his waist were all burned off, and he was literally bruised.

We came upon bodies every few steps, but the sight of this fellow who was burned, added to the horrible smell of burning human flesh—the remains of those who were shot in the court-house, which was still on fire—sickened most of us and caused a general cry of "Let's go back."

I counted eighteen of the misguiding darkies, and was informed that they were not one-fourth of the number killed; that they were scattered here and there in the fields around the town, besides several in and around the burning court-house. This, however, was probably an exaggeration.

To show how terribly incensed the people were against the negroes, I relate the following incidents:

We came across one negro whose clothes were smoking, and who had probably been in the fire. Some of our party remarked that he was alive. Instantly one of our guides whipped out a six-shooter, saying "I'll finish the black dog." Of course we remonstrated and he put away his weapon. Some one stooped down and turned the negro over. He was stiff and cold.

A few minutes afterward we came on a big black fellow who was reclining on his elbow, and to all appearances alive. The man with the six-shooter hit him a fierce kick with his boot, and then stooped down and examined him, saying: "O, he's dead as hell." It was so; the darky died that way—in a reclining position.

When we came back near the landing the boat's crew were carrying aboard the two wounded white men, a Mr. Hadnot and another whose name I did not learn.

Sir, I ask you what Governor Kellogg was to do after the scene of 1866, after that horrible scene at Colfax; after the taking possession of five persons at Coushatta, northern men who had gone there with their capital and invested it and built up a thriving little village, but who were taken out and murdered in cold blood; and not only that, but they had murdered one of the judges and the district-attorney, and compelled the judge and district attorney of that jurisdiction to resign, and then murdered the acting district attorney. My friend from Georgia said in his way and manner of saying things, "Why do you not try these people for murdering those men at Coushatta?" You have the judge and you have the district attorney! Unfortunately for my friend's statement, we have neither. Your friends had murdered the attorney, and had murdered a judge before the new judge had been appointed, who had to resign to save his life. The acting district attorney was murdered by the same "banditti" that murdered the five northern men at Coushatta.

Mr. GORDON. Will the Senator allow me to ask him a question?

Mr. LOGAN. Certainly.

Mr. GORDON. Where was the United States court at that time? Where was the enforcement act? Where was the Army of the United States? Could not the United States court under the enforce-