

not in m  
61

# RECONSTRUCTION.

## SPEECH

OF

# HON. A. C. BALDWIN, OF MICH.,

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 29, 1864.

The House having under consideration the bill of Mr. DAVIS, of Maryland, providing for the reconstruction of the Union—

Mr. BALDWIN, of Michigan, said:

Mr. SPEAKER: The bill under consideration is one of serious importance, and involves principles that controvert and overthrow all our preconceived ideas of the admission of States into this Union, and ought not to be adopted without due deliberation. I believe it to be an utter subversion of the Constitution; that we have no warrant or justification whatever for it, in that instrument, even by giving the most latitudinarian construction. In my opinion it embraces a plan that can never be enforced except by the military arm; and it is only the precursor of the establishment of a despotism, instead of the republican form of government upon which we have so long been accustomed to pride ourselves.

The proposed plan and that of the President are fraught with so many objections that prudence would dictate their abandonment. I believe the great question is not the reconstruction of State constitutions when we have not a foothold in one of those that seceded that could be retained for a day upon the withdrawal of our armies; and, with the exception of Tennessee and probably Arkansas, the portions we occupy in every other are but a small fraction of the whole State.

But, sir, let me first recur to the past. It is but a few years since an American citizen could look upon the broad map of his country, and with a laudable pride truthfully exclaim, "It is the only free one upon the globe!" Our commerce penetrated every sea, and there was no nation so presumptive as to dare with impunity interfere with our flag. Agriculture, manufactures, in fact all the industrial callings, teemed with their painstaking devotees. There was a general distribution of employments, each avocation providing for its proportion of the workers of our country. The rich prairies and the once dense forests gave unmistakable evidence of the industry, patience, and perseverance of our people, and the churches and school-houses afforded proof of their virtue and intelligence. To the eye of the traveller all this betokened that ours was indeed a happy country, and only needed prudence in our rulers, and patriotism, conciliation, and a due attention to the requirements of our Constitution and the genius of our Government among all classes, to make those enjoyments perpetual. Then we had

comparatively no national debt, and the Government was wholly supported without resort to taxation or levying money upon the States. Then the rights of each individual, however humble, were respected, and no infringement thereof, except by due course of law, was tolerated. If illegally incarcerated, the *habeas corpus* was a remedy, and a denial of the writ would not have been for a moment permitted. The freedom of elections was another of the rights of which our people were justly proud; and any illegal interference therewith by the strong arm of an Administration would have aroused, without distinction of party, the entire population. All these matters were the birthright and pride of our citizens, and they had fondly cherished the opinion that no power could arise that would dare strike a blow at those privileges, dear-bought and inborn in the American heart, and which they supposed they cherished as their life-blood, and would protect at every sacrifice. Then, too, the national and the State governments had their respective powers properly defined, and each was considered sovereign in its sphere. Our Constitution was held sacred, and its support and maintenance the pride as well as the duty of every friend of freedom. It was "no North and no South," the Union and the whole Union. Happy but unfortunate delusion! How changed, however, the scene!

But three years have passed, and our citizens are incarcerated for months in loathsome dungeons, and then discharged, even without their offense or the cause of the arrest having been made known. The elective franchise has been interfered with; and free-born citizens have been compelled to abstain from the exercise of the rights of suffrage, or vote at the instigation of the bayonet for the person prescribed. The writ of *habeas corpus* has been denied, the freedom of speech interfered with, and our rights as freemen imperiled; the whole industrial pursuits of the country diverted, our commerce nearly banished from the ocean, a debt already counted by thousands of millions of dollars incurred, taxation to meet our expenses imposed and to be imposed in every imaginable form, and to an unlimited extent, and yet our resources not sufficient by hundreds of millions of dollars, to defray our annual current expenses. We have also a bloody, intestine war, and a divided country.

The historic annals of no nation present such a rapid change as ours. We have descended from the height of prosperity to the

depths of a profound abyss, where we find ourselves without a guide, and no apparent way of escaping. The prospect before us may indeed appal the stoutest heart; and to extricate our country requires far wiser counsels and more stability of purpose than has been manifested by those who now have charge of the administration of our affairs. It is now over three years since the accession of Mr. Lincoln to the presidential chair; and we can well pause and take a brief retrospect of the past, review his changing policy, and learn, if we can, the fortune the future has in store for our country. This ought to be done with all sincerity and fairness, but with such freedom as the subject requires. The times demand such a course; and Mr. Lincoln or any other individual is comparatively of no consequence, when the "life of the nation," to borrow a hackneyed expression, is at stake.

During this Administration its peculiar devotees have endeavored to make the terms "Administration" and "Government" synonymous, and to charge the person as either a traitor or a rebel sympathizer who had the temerity to canvass the wisdom of any of the acts adopted by the dominant party, or to doubt their expediency. Since the rising of the star of Fremont these terms have become less common; and by this slight diversion in their ranks reason has partially resumed her throne, and an intelligent and discerning people are dissipating the gossamer web with which the demagogue surrounded his specious reasoning, and they have learned that the "Administration" is composed of those servants, elected for the time being to execute the laws of their country, amenable, like the mass of that people, to those laws and responsible for any violation.

Our country would indeed be in a sad condition if in the three centuries' progress since the days of the Tudors we could not have the privilege of canvassing the acts of our rulers. It was then said by men like Lord Bacon "that the royal prerogative was not to be canvassed nor disputed nor examined; that absolute princes, such as the sovereigns of England, were a species of divinity; that it was in vain to attempt tying the queen's hands by laws and statutes," and "that God hath given that power to absolute princes which He attributes to Himself." And Mr. Secretary Cecil, with all the zeal of some of our modern administrative zealots, exclaimed, "Before I would speak and give consent to a case that should debase the prerogative or abridge it, I would wish that my tongue were cut out of my head."

This doctrine of the days of Elizabeth is specially commended to those blind devotees that deprecate any canvassing the acts of the present Administration; but to that class of our citizens who cherish the memory of our revolutionary fathers, and are intent upon the preservation of their constitutional rights, it is as odious as its correlative, which requires for the present Executive entire immunity from discussion. It should be our pride to receive lessons from the historic past, and

profit by them when applicable to our own case, and those base sycophants who would sap the foundations of our liberty, and pave the way for the introduction into this country of the arbitrary code of despotism of the sixteenth century, that our enlightened English brethren long since discarded, should receive the execrations of freemen.

That Administration that will not bear to have its acts discussed in the press and by the people is unworthy of a free people's support; and when discussion is interfered with, and a quiet acquiescence follows, the liberties of the people are rapidly waning, and it will soon require a herculean effort to rescue them from total destruction. In times like these, with the evidences of an implicit obedience by a portion of the military to the more than imperial behests of the Executive, it behoves us to be doubly active in the preservation of these rights.

We hear it daily brawled, both in this House and in the Administration press, that we have much denunciation of them, and none for the rebellion. The Democracy of this country have no sympathy or favor for the rebellion. In all their acts and speeches they have evinced as sincere devotion to the Union as have the peculiar friends in the majority. They have rightly deprecated the cause that has precipitated the war upon us, and tried to fix the divided responsibility where it belongs; yet they have given the Administration every constitutional aid in bringing it to an honorable issue, with our Union and our Constitution preserved intact. We have voted men and money for that purpose; we have encouraged the enlistment of our friends in our gallant Army, and have bid them God-speed and a glorious success in their efforts to restore the whole Union. Have the Republicans done more than this? Is it necessary now to continue mere shouting? Will denunciation insure success? Will words frighten the rebel army? Experience teaches the reverse. I have ever believed that patriotic action was superior to denunciation; and if the party in power had omitted the latter, and in good faith devoted themselves and the country wholly to a restoration and preservation of the Union, that happy consummation would long since have been realized.

But, sir, we have one thing to console us. No conservative speaker, no conservative paper has advocated the doctrine of secession. We have not, like President Lincoln, told the people of the South that they, "being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing Government and form one that suits them better." And we have not, like distinguished Senators and others holding high offices and high places in the confidence of the Administration, advocated dissolution of the Union; but have ever stood by the Government and endeavored to preserve it and our Constitution as our fathers made them. We have ever wished, and I trust we will continue so to do, to preserve that country and that sacred

instrument, both from enemies and traitors within and without. Our record in this respect is one of which any party might be proud; and when pseudo-patriots arise in our midst and arrogate to themselves all the Unionism and all the loyalism of the country, with such a history as their leaders present, we may well pause and inquire the causes of their strange conversion.

I could occupy more than my hour in brief selections from the public speeches of these gentlemen, showing that the Union they favor is not the Union of Washington and Madison, but a new one of their own devising; and it can be shown that if their wish cannot be obtained, they will not only prevent that consummation, the restoring our old Union, but will aid in forming another. They take to their bosoms and cherish men whose boast it is they have devoted their lives to a destruction of the old Union—men who have proclaimed that our "Constitution was a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." The Helpers and the Giddings and their pestilent co-workers in dissension and disunion occupy high positions, while the consistent patriot, who will not give his assent to every act of the Administration and approve its usurpations of despotic power, is denounced as a traitor!

I will not on this occasion attempt to enumerate the various encroachments upon the liberties of the people and the palpable violations of the Constitution, of which the dominant party have been guilty. I know it is claimed because that portion of our once prosperous Union now in rebellion has discarded that instrument that we are also justifiable in departing from its conditions. I believe, sir, that our Constitution contained sufficient in itself to enable any Administration to protect this Government from the attack of every enemy, without adding to or departing from any of its provisions. To make our Government respected requires stability in its administration. The citizen should derive his knowledge of his own and his rulers' duties from the written and the established laws of the country; nor under any circumstances should a departure therefrom be permitted. If Mr. Lincoln, as he and his friends claim they have a right to do, for any cause, transcends the limitations provided for the performance of his constitutional duties in one respect, he may in another. It matters little how praiseworthy his motives or how honest his intentions, the act is none the less a violation of the Constitution he has sworn to "preserve, protect, and defend." The argument because the South have done the same is of no avail; and the consequence is, if the doctrine prevail, we have no guarantee whatever for our protection. The violation of to-day is a precedent for to-morrow.

Criminations and recriminations now will not atone for the past; but I believe no exigency has arisen in our history to render an inraction of any kind necessary or that afforded even a palliation. The vacillating course of the Administration has served to

disgust even the warmest of its radical friends; and can it be supposed that those who are in favor of consistency and a constitutional Administration, can approvingly follow in all the meanderings of the Executive? Besides, does an acquiescence in or an approval of the prosecution energetically of the war for a restoration of the Union, or the giving every constitutional aid compatible for that object, render it incumbent upon us to adhere under all circumstances to an Administration like ours? Such has not been the practice heretofore, and I trust it will never be so long as a vestige of the rights of free discussion and freedom of opinion remains. A blind adhesion to such doctrines would be but the forerunner of a blotting out of those great principles we have been taught to venerate.

At the commencement of hostilities it was distinctly avowed that the war was not upon the local institutions of any portion of the country, but to retain the unity of the whole, and when that was accomplished strife would cease.

Mr. Lincoln gave repeated assurances of his intention in his various public papers. In his inaugural he said:

"Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican Administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed, and has been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the public speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that 'I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.' Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them. And more than this: they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

"Resolved, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights of the States, and especially the right of each State to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to the balance of power, on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend; and we denounce the lawless invasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes."

This was a voluntary pledge of the present Executive upon his induction to office. "On the 4th of July following, in his message to Congress, he announced to the country that

"Lest there be some uneasiness in the minds of candid men as to what is to be the course of the Government toward the Southern States after the rebellion shall have been suppressed, the Executive deems it proper to say it will be his purpose then as ever to be guided by the Constitution and the laws; and that he probably will have no different understanding of the powers and duties of the Federal Government relatively to the rights of the States and the people, under the Constitution, than that expressed in his inaugural address."

And again, in December, 1861, in his annual message he reiterated those sentiments as follows :

"The inaugural address at the beginning of this Administration, and the message to Congress at the late special session, were both mainly devoted to the domestic controversy, out of which the insurrection and consequent war have sprung. Nothing now occurs to, add or subtract to or from the principles or general purposes stated and expressed in those documents."

In July, 1861, an almost unanimous Congress passed the Crittenden resolutions, which were approved by the President, again reiterating the like objects for the prosecution of the war; and I fearlessly assert that if no change in the programme had been made, the rebellion would ere this have ceased. What these changes have been is too fearfully evident. Fanatical radicalism has gained the ascendancy, and the war for the last eighteen months has been prosecuted, not for the restoration of the Union, but for the destruction of the South; and in the blow aimed at them it is believed to be the intention that all the reserved rights of the States of the Union be obliterated, and a vast centralized Government formed.

If this war had simply been prosecuted only for a restoration of the Union a hundred thousand lives would have been saved, and \$1,000,000,000 would be deducted from our national debt. I am not one of those who would stop to count the cost of preserving our Union in any war. Every man owes a debt to his country, and we should stand by that country under every circumstance, correcting what is amiss, but with a firm determination to preserve the nation at all hazards. And let the consequences be what they may, the property and lives of every individual should be freely granted to give success to the effort for that purpose.

Sir, I have been in favor of adopting such energetic measures in the prosecution of this war as would soonest terminate the unnatural conflict, restore harmony throughout the land, and save the nation from the incubus of an intolerable debt, and the awful destruction of its sons.

The question now arises whether wisdom and patriotism do not require an entire change of policy, and a return to the original avowed object; to abandon all plans of reconstruction which only tend to intensify hate and put further off the day of peace. I am aware to the enthusiastic there is sweet music in the catch-words hourly used on this floor, of the "life of the nation" and "the removing all causes of the war," but, sir, they are not employed with any intention of settling our difficulties, but to prevent all settlement prior to utter extermination. That it was intended that the amnesty proclamation of last December would hasten the end of this strife, I do not believe. We are told that nearly every Southern paper published it, and it only nerved them to the performance of more earnest deeds.

I do not propose to examine in detail either

the amnesty proclamation and the reconstruction plan therein set forth, nor the bill this House has under consideration. Both, I believe, are more intended to obtain votes from those reconstructed States to perpetuate the present party than for any purpose of restoring the States to the Union. I assume, too, if that policy is persisted in, this war has but commenced, and our people should resign themselves to the continued conflict until utter financial and physical exhaustion result.

We have the authority of the President as late as July, 1861, for saying that "it might be questioned whether there is to-day a majority of the legally qualified voters of any State, except perhaps South Carolina, in favor of disunion," and in the same message he recommended Congress, that the war might be a short and decisive one, to place at his control for the work at least four hundred thousand men and four hundred million dollars. That number of men and this sum of money have been increased, the former over five-fold and the latter nearly tenfold, and to-day, by the vacillation, the waywardness, the insane interference, the blunderings, and the corruption of the Administration, final success and peace are not apparent.

I insist, sir, that the Administration has never appreciated the power of the enemy, but has had a too overweening confidence in itself, and that it has adopted ultra paper fulminations when it ought to have relied upon the stern realities of war, with the sword in one hand to subdue the armed forces of the South, and the olive-branch in the other, to welcome any reculant and repentant State that was ready to return to its allegiance and submit to the requirements of the constitution. By the census of 1860 there were in those States now in rebellion about three million white males, and in the free States about nine million. There were also nearly two million male slaves in the South, which for most practical purposes were as available and efficient as the whites. Then the proportion of numbers was, as near as may be, two to one: The people of the South were upon their own soil, acclimated, and they had been educated to believe their rights were invaded and that this war was as against them, one of invasion and extermination. It requires but a little imagination to judge where the odds would be when these millions of people were engaged in a war on their own soil, nerved to the belief that their property, their lives, and their children, their household gods, and their altars depended upon their success. True, they were laboring under a hallucination, but Mr. Lincoln and his advisers are responsible for changing the original object of the war, and aiding the rebel leaders in educating a now almost unanimous South in this delusion.

I have fondly cherished the hope that our armies might speedily be successful. To attain success I would have put forth every effort and submitted to any sacrifice; but, sir, with the policy adopted by the President and Congress to be persisted in, that day is in the far distant future. We have little means of

knowing the casualties of war in the South, but they are probably no greater proportionally than ours; and by the natural increase of population and the greater facility for moving their forces, they can continue them in the future numerically as available as in the past. We know the expense of our own transportation and the necessity of having large armies inert to guard the various posts and fortifications. We have learned the power of endurance of the Southern people, and these various facts ought to afford sufficient inducement for us to adopt wise and humane measures to recall them to their allegiance.

It is estimated that over a quarter of a million Northern lives have been lost by reason of this war. Their blood has fertilized many a hard-fought battle-field, and their bones lie bleaching in every rebel State. Not a northern household but that mourns some near and dear friend who has thus been sacrificed upon the altar of his country. The habiliments of mourning meet us at every step, and we are momentarily admonished of the grief of the mothers, wives, and friends, weeping and wailing for those who will return no more. One-fifth of the male population has gone forth, thus making any future calls fall with redoubled effect upon those remaining. Last year hundreds of fields were uncultivated for the want of laborers, and this year thousands of acres of our rich lands will go unplowed and no crops be produced, because the calls to arms have taken away the young.

But, sir, the extravagant action of the Administration has entailed upon us a fearful national debt. It has been our pride that this bane of the Old World has found no lodgement in America. How we have exulted in the proud satisfaction that while England has a debt of \$4,000,000,000, we were free from the incubus! This was three years ago. How stands the record now? By reference to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury it will be seen that on March 4, 1861, our total outstanding indebtedness was \$68,482,686 19. On the 30th of September, 1863, \$1,222,113,559 86. The estimate of the Secretary (page 8) fixes the public debt July 1, 1864, at \$1,656,956,641 44. This is only for forty months since the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln, and shows an increase of debt over and above all the enormous taxes levied in every conceivable way of over forty-one million dollars per month.

But this does not cover all the indebtedness. Already has Congress had two deficiency bills of about one hundred and ten million dollars to act upon, neither of which are considered in the report. This was for only a few items connected with the War Department, but it was so much increase of our debt. Time will not permit me to enter into any minute specification. The unsettled items, if all provided for, would make the debt on the 30th of June next over three billion dollars. If we could stop here, we might still have hope. But there are claims springing up in every direction for damage done by our forces to the property of loyal men, and in numerous

instances for the absolute destruction of such property to prevent its falling into the hands of the rebels.

From nearly every quarter where our armies have been, these claims must arise. One recently came before the Court of Claims from the far off Territory of Arizona, and Judge Wilmot delivered the able opinion of the court, fixing the claimant's damage, in that single case, at \$41,530. He said:

"We hold in this case that the property was destroyed by the rightful order of the commanding officer, and upon an urgent and pressing necessity, and to prevent it from falling into the hands of the public enemy, and those hostile to the United States; that it was a taking for public use, and the Government is bound under the Constitution to make just compensation to the owner."

But, sir, the official document shows that for the first forty months of this Administration the expenditures exceeded all its receipts, except from loans, at the rate of over forty-one million dollars per month. I believe the real facts are that they exceeded over seventy millions per month.

I know, sir, that this is a dull subject, but it is an exciting one when the pay day comes; and, as this enormous sum of money must be paid, it is a duty incumbent upon us to examine it in all its aspects. We are making a fearful legacy for posterity; but we ought not to shrink from a full gaze at our terrible folly or criminal extravagances. I will not now inquire where this money has gone, or how it has been spent. The reports of your numerous investigating committees in the last Congress showed that corruption was rampant in every direction. It is useless to particularize. We have not learned from experience; and the result of our three years' experiment of Republicanism will be a mortgage upon our national domain, upon the firesides, the earnings, ay, the heart's blood of our sturdy yeomanry, when all outstanding claims are liquidated, of over three thousand million dollars. We cannot escape it; but, sir, by proper economy, a proper management of our military forces, an honest desire to end this war, with our Constitution and the rights of the States and the people intact, over one-half of that vast outlay might have been saved, our Union restored, and peace once more prevail throughout our distracted country.

Radicalism must have it sway. "*Delenda est Carthago*" has been the war-cry from that side of the House, and their leaders have feared that the war would end before they had satiated their vengeance upon the South. To create delusive hopes throughout the States in rebellion, they have proclaimed that the conservatives in the North sympathized with the South, thus, by a refined species of political dissembling, endeavoring to incite a disturbance here, while encouraging the enemy with these false statements to persist in their contest, and enabling the rebel leaders to force the people to become a unit in deadly opposition to our Government.

But, sir, we have the enormous national

debt upon our hands, and it must be paid. We have been accustomed to boast of our prosperity and to refer to the tables produced from our decennial census returns as an evidence of this fact. I wish to educe a few lessons from the same source. In my calculations I shall assume our national debt to be on June 30, 1864, only \$2,000,000,000, which I believe, with all due deference, is not two-thirds the actual sum. In the preliminary report of the eighth census, page 195, the total true value of all the real and personal estate of the entire country is put at \$16,159,616,068. In this sum is included the value of nearly four million slaves, as estimated prior to the war. Putting these at the very low estimate of \$400 each, \$1,600,000,000 is to be deducted. If this approximates correctness, and it was as near as could be attained, our national debt at this low estimate would equal one-seventh of all the real and personal property in the States and Territories in our Union in 1860.

The Secretary estimates the increase of the debt for the current year at over \$588,000,000, nearly \$50,000,000 per month; and for the ensuing year at the sum of \$544,978,548 93, giving, according to his estimate in the official report, a liquidated debt in July, 1865, of \$2,232,000,000. Taking these figures, if we should then be so fortunate as to have a restored Union, and this debt, no portion of which rests upon an estimated or problematic basis, but upon stern facts, and is now \$1,000,000,000 less than the actual sum, be fairly apportioned *pro rata* according to the representation of all the States in this House, it would be over \$9,250,000 for each congressional district in the Union "as it was." The very idea is appalling. Is it possible by any imposition of taxes to make the hardy yeomanry of the West, who have felled the dense forests or reclaimed the rich prairies, take from their hard earnings sufficient to pay even the interest upon this enormous sum? Why, sir, at six per cent. the interest will be \$550,000 annually for each congressional district, provided we can include the now rebellious States and all the Territories.

I have stated that by a proper and economical management in the conduct of this war one-half of its cost might have been saved, and that we have been accustomed with patriotic pride for years to point tauntingly to the magnitude of the national debt of England, and contrast her condition with our own immunity from debt and taxation. But that debt, which in our eyes has been a pall cast over England, making the rich richer and the poor poorer, engendering enormous taxes, is now but a fraction greater than our own; and yet it has been one hundred and fifty years in accumulating. Ours is only three years old.

We have also during the last fifty years, and while the Democracy were in power, heard the continual and persistent charge of extravagance as to the management of our national affairs. During that time we have had a war with Great Britain, the Florida war, many other Indian wars, and that with Mexico.

Corruption and extravagance were charged as being the characteristic in the management of these various matters, and a person ignorant of the facts might have deemed the country ruined. I shall contrast those expenses with our present condition.

During the five years 1812 to 1816, inclusive, our total expenses for the prosecution of the war with Great Britain and the support of the Administration of Mr. Madison were only \$215,866,074 98, as appears by reference to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury to the present Congress, pages 242 and 243. From the same page I learn that the total expenses of the alleged extravagant Administration of Mr. Van Buren, including the Florida war, with an additional year added, 1837 to 1841 inclusive, were only \$158,000,000—not enough to supply us at the present time for three months. For the three years of the Mexican war and all other governmental expenses, 1846 to 1848 inclusive, our total expenses were \$177,582,424 57. Let us now examine our present condition. My figures are all derived from the same official source, and contain only those items there recognized. Our total expenses were, as given:

In 1862. . . . .	\$570,841,700 25
In 1863. . . . .	714,709,995 59
In 1864. . . . .	1,099,731,960 42

Total for the three years. . . . \$2,385,283,656 26

By reference to the Treasury report, page 243, it will be seen that the total of our expenses from 1789 to 1861, a period of seventy-two years, of every kind, for peace and war, was the sum of \$1,453,790,786. In the expenses for the present Administration are included only those items given in the report. Our experience is that over one-half can easily be added to it without considering either an unliquidated debt for damages or other matters of that nature. But taking Mr. Chase's report, deducting this total expense of all prior Administrations, we have an excess of cost of Mr. Lincoln's first three years of nearly one thousand million dollars:

Expenses for 1861-62-63, as per report, - - - - -	\$2,385,583,656
Expenses for 1789 to 1861, as per report, - - - - -	1,453,790,786
Excess - - - - -	\$931,792,870

From the foregoing, and the facts cannot be disputed, the proportion now for each congressional district in the entire Union is \$9,250,000. But there are only one hundred and eighty-three Representatives in the present Congress. The *pro rata* debt will then be \$12,000,000 to each district—\$72,000,000 for the State of Michigan. By the census returns for 1860 the true value of all the real and personal property of Michigan was \$257,163,983. It will be seen two-sevenths of all the property in this State will be required to pay its proportion of the debt for the first three years of this war, taking the Treasurer's estimate as the basis. But our real national debt is over \$3,000,000,000 or \$16,000,000 for each

congressional district, and nearly \$100,000,000 for the State of Michigan.

I would call attention also to the immense local debts that have been contracted in every portion of the country. Hardly a State, county, town, or city but that has added its thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars to swell the vast sum. I have no data to give the actual amount, but I can safely assume that the portion of Michigan, in connection with local bounties, support of families of soldiers, and other humane, patriotic, and praiseworthy acts, has added to our State, county, and local taxes at least one million dollars per annum. The annual interest on her proportion of the public debt as it now is, deduced from official returns, and divided among the loyal States, will be over six million dollars, and is in addition to all local matters; an amount, I will not hesitate to say, far greater by one-half than the total available profits of the people. This is about one million dollars annual interest to each Congressional district in the Union. It may be denied that our national debt amounts to the sum stated. I am aware of the difficulty of obtaining the full sum. The Secretary, in his report, taking the actual and estimated, fixes it—

June 30, 1864, at	-	-	-	\$1,686,956,641
April 1, 1864, it was	-	-	-	1,632,485,508
Difference only				\$54,471,133

and three months of the time remaining. The following is the rate of increase. The first item is from the Secretary's report:

September 30, 1863,	-	-	-	\$1,222,113,559 86
February 2, 1864,	-	-	-	1,469,192,649 66
March 3, 1864,	-	-	-	1,513,291,042 35
March 15, 1864,	-	-	-	1,580,201,774 24
April 1, 1864,	-	-	-	1,632,485,508 00

During the month of March the increase was \$119,200,000, and there was an increase of over \$400,000,000 in this preceding six months.

I will, in corroboration of my own statement, present an extract from the Albany Evening Journal, the leading Republican paper of New York:

"For thirty years our State debt, which never exceeded \$24,000,000, was the occasion of popular solicitude. Our elections hung and turned upon the canal debt. Now our appropriations for the war, coupled with our county, city, and town bonded war debt, far exceeds the canal debt. The present debt of this State reaches half or nearly half of the whole Federal Government debt at the close of the war of 1814. Superadd to this a sixth part of the war debt of the General Government, (\$4,000,000,000, for close the war to-day and this sum would be below the real figure,) and we should find our State nearly \$1,000,000,000 in debt."

It will thus be perceived that I am within bounds in my estimates, and that our national debt on the 1st of next July, when the outstanding demands and accruing expenses are paid, will far exceed the Treasury estimates for July, 1865. With all this immense debt rising, like Pelion upon Ossa, before us, the tale does not stop. The war must necessarily

go on, and as long as the present Administration is in power, with the same astounding extravagance; over \$500,000,000 per year must be added to this debt, and that sum doubled, for the ensuing year, cannot be avoided.

If the war should now terminate we will have over \$3,000,000,000 to pay, casting aside the millions upon millions of unliquidated demands upon the Government, and which I believe, with the above paper, will require another \$1,000,000,000.

I know it will be said we shall have to pay only the interest on our debt for years to come, and that that will be provided for by the national Administration. That theory will not relieve the people from paying both principal and interest by vastly increased taxes on every article imported or produced. Besides paying this sum our annual expenses will be increased fourfold. These cannot be less than \$200,000,000, exclusive of the interest on the debt, and that will amount to as great a sum, requiring \$400,000,000 in the future, per year, to administer the Government, without diminishing in the least our national debt. The total products of the industry of the loyal States, in 1860, were about \$2,000,000,000. Out of this is to be deducted the cost of producing, leaving not more than a tenth as the actual profits, scarcely one-half the requisite sum to support our Government upon a peace basis. To pay our annual interest and expenses will require twenty per cent. of all the earnings of the people of the country, and twice their actual profits, leaving the principal still undiminished.

I have adverted to these facts to show the present monetary aspect, the result of the war, and the necessity of our having confined ourselves to such a plan as would have retained a love for the old Union in the people of the South; and made the task easier to reclaim them. The bombastic proclamations of the President, his forgetting his pledges, and his departure from the original object of the war have been the cause of plunging us into this labyrinth of debt. Never in the annals of the world was money squandered as it has been by us. Never have such frauds been perpetrated.

Yet, sir, with our armies occupying only the outskirts of the rebellious States, a million men standing in hostile array, our very authority scouted within cannon shot of this Capitol, and no indication that a single rebellious State wishes to return, we are endeavoring to reconstruct and form anew, governments for those States. Let us pass this bill, and we shall nerve our enemies to desperation, and God only knows how the conflict will end. We have no means to squander in Utopian schemes. We have been endeavoring by our action this winter to make our country a vast negro poor-house and a negro primary school, and now with the result of the President's political campaign in Florida, and the disgraceful butchery at Olustee before us, we ought to pause and cast

aside experiments and devote ourselves to the stern realities of the war and the salvation of our country. When the rebellion is subdued, it will then be time for political quacks to administer their nostrums.

In this connection, to prove that patriotism is not the inspiring motive of this proposed reconstruction, I have a few facts to relate of an incident in Michigan. On the 3d of November last an election was to be held for city officers in Detroit. At the time companies of the provost guard were stationed in Detroit. These were soldiers of the volunteer force in the service of the United States drawn from all parts of the country.

To aid in carrying the election and give a quasi legal character to the proceedings, and it may be to initiate a system and furnish a plan for like voting in the reconstructed States, the following was procured :

UNITED STATES DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE, }  
Detroit, Michigan, October 23, 1864. }

Gentlemen:—I have received your request for my opinion as to the question whether the soldiers now in the barracks in your ward are entitled to have their names registered and to vote there. The military post is the home of the soldier; the law compels him to abide there, no matter where his wife and children dwell, or where he exercises his calling in time of peace. A soldier, in contemplation of law, is without family or calling outside of camp. He cannot go where his family is, and would be disfranchised were it not that his residence is held to be where the military order fixes it. In my opinion the married as well as the single soldier is entitled to be registered and to vote.

\* \* \* \* \*

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,  
ALFRED RUSSELL,  
United States District Attorney.

OFFICE UNITED STATES MILITARY COMMANDER, }  
Detroit, November 2, 1863. }

Lieutenant John Van Stan, Detroit Barracks :  
Your friends in town expect activity from you to-morrow. Senator Howard spoke to me about you. Soldiers can be allowed to visit the nearest polls in small squads to cast their votes, and return immediately, in order that others may go.

Truly yours,  
J. R. SMITH, Lieut. Col.

—  
DETROIT BARRACKS, November 3, 1863.

Sir:—This being the day of the annual election in this State, in obedience to orders issued by Lieutenant Colonel J. R. Smith, military commander, you will detail good, efficient non-commissioned officers to take charge of detachments of such members of the provost guard as are voters, to escort them to the polls of the several wards of which they may be voters, that they may have the privilege of exercising the rights belonging to every American citizen, and when they shall have so cast their votes, return them to camp; and here allow me to suggest that, while your commander would not attempt to dictate the manner in which the members of the provost guard shall vote, I may, perhaps, say that it is very desirable, in fact our duty, to sustain the Administration both by word and deed.

E. D. ROBINSON,

Captain Com'g Michigan Provost Guard.

Lieutenant John T. Van Stan, Michigan Provost Guard.

The district attorney of Michigan is not a law officer of the State, nor is he the official adviser of the board of registration or election. There are officers designated by the State laws upon whom is devolved this duty to advise, yet we find a letter from him directed to a board in the tenth ward of Detroit advising a nullification of the laws of the State. Then we have the military commandant issuing his order requiring "activity," and announcing that Senator Howard "spoke to me about you." This was followed by an order from a subordinate requiring the soldiers to be "escorted," to the polls in "squads" under charge of three officers, and, "after voting, to be returned to camp!" And to clasp the climax of this attempt to trample upon the rights of the freemen of Detroit, the soldiers are very gravely informed, "it is their duty to sustain the Administration, both by word and deed!"

Let us apply this case to the bill under consideration. A registration of the votes is required, and if one-tenth of those registered take the oath the election can be held. Now, suppose some facile district attorney should decide that the soldiers "not in the regular Army" who have been in a State for a given length of time were citizens, and could be registered, take the oath, and vote. There are thousands of our volunteer forces in many of the seceded States who have resided there over two years. Their "home" is the military post, and if any question arises as to the legality of their voting, this opportune decision from Michigan is in point, and the fact is accomplished.

I will dwell no longer upon this subject. The principles involved in the bill are of too serious a nature to permit it to pass with less than I have said. I am no friend of the rebellion or of the rebel States. I fervently desire to see our armies successful, the Union restored, and peace and harmony once more prevail. I do not belong to that class of individuals who believe that we can have peace without a decisive, overwhelming victory; nor do I suppose it can be obtained if the present policy of the Administration be persisted in. I am in favor of rendering every constitutional aid to sustain, encourage, and reinforce our gallant army now marshaled under our flag, and I have voted for every measure having in view that object. I shall continue so to do. However much of vacillation or incompetency may curse and impede our progress toward victory, we should not abandon our brave soldiery nor despair of the Republic nor forsake it in this, its hour of direst need. The day of peace may be distant, but the nation's honor is with us; and whatever may be the character of our present rulers, our solemn duty is to stand by the Government and protect and preserve it, that its administration may pass into the keeping of wiser, more patriotic and energetic counsels, with the Constitution in a condition to be restored to its original purity.