

## Dolliver's Justification

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"But," said Bowers, "there was something better than all this which was new—a passionate earnestness, the zeal of a crusader, the fierce temper of the Scotch covenanters, the militant revolt of Cromwells Ironsides, and an undercurrent of righteous wrath."

#### DROVE ALDRICH FROM THE SENATE

There Dolliver stood in a hostile chamber, pouring forth such a withering fire of facts and figures as to indict the whole system. So devastating was the onset that one by one the members of the finance committee left the floor.

It was then that Aldrich sought sanctuary in the cloak room. Some senator observed aloud that not one member of the committee in charge of the bill was on the floor.

"I do not care 2½ cents to the square yard," said Dolliver, and hurried on with his 'blighting analysis'.

"When Dolliver finished," said Bowers, "there was not a senator or a correspondent in the gallery who did not know that he had heard one of the most memorable orations ever heard in the American senate, and the cotton schedule was a stench in the nostrils of the nation."

On July 8, the bill passed. It was a triumph for Senator Aldrich, but it paved the way for the revolt of 1912.

The physical strain on Dolliver had been terrific. Less than seventeen months after his famous speech, the great Dolliver was laid to rest in the soil of Iowa, and Beveridge was saying, "Senator Dolliver died for his country as literally as any soldier who ever expired on the battlefield."

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#### DOLLIVER'S JUSTIFICATION

By EMORY H. ENGLISH

Dolliver came into my life in a personal way one afternoon in the fall of 1901, when he visited me at my news-

paper office. I had met him casually at state conventions, and like everyone, was captivated by his brilliance in speech and logic, and charmed by the unaffected good nature that radiated from his presence. He always was the same with friends or strangers—if ever such there were—all were at ease with him, for he was one of the friendliest men that Iowa has given to our national official life. His smile and manner were as ingratiating and warming as a spring morning. He always met people with a warm handclasp and a genial word of friendly greeting.

A year previous, after eleven years service in congress, he had been appointed senator to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of Senator Gear, and was looking forward to an election for a full term by the Twenty-ninth General Assembly. I had been nominated as the Republican candidate for representative from Polk county and in those days that was regarded as equivalent to election. After a strenuous campaign Albert B. Cummins had been nominated for governor. Two years previous he had been a defeated candidate for U. S. senator against John H. Gear. Cummins' friends had urged his appointment to the senatorship by Governor Shaw when Gear died in 1900, but Shaw named his congressman, Dolliver. Dolliver knew that Cummins still entertained an ambition to ultimately reach the senate. And he was anxious to learn whether upon election as governor, Cummins again would seek the senatorship and oppose his own re-election. This was the reason for his visit.

Dolliver thought it quite probable that the Republican nominee for representative from Cummins' own county might know something of any such plans or program. After characteristic greetings he quickly reached the subject. I frankly informed him that Mr. Cummins had not advised me of any such intentions, and that I had not heard of such from any other source. Then I told Dolliver, as he perhaps knew, that in my paper I often

had occasion to commend his course in congress; that I had admiration for his forthright way in meeting the consideration of public questions, as well as satisfaction that he had gained and held such universal confidence. Also, that while I expected to vote for his re-election as senator, I would not make an unqualified pledge at that time, which he said that he did not ask.

During the course of this visit of about an hour Mr. Dolliver acquainted me with his inquiry into and study of the tariff question, and how he hoped to be of service to the state and nation in relation to it. In this conference I came to realize that the easy-going, engaging individual, in fact, was a sober-minded, keen and purposeful man. The memory of this fleeting glimpse of the inner man has always remained with me. Cummins did not become a candidate, and Dolliver unopposed was re-elected.

#### DOLLIVER'S EARLY COMMITMENT

In his speech of acceptance delivered to the joint session of the Twenty-ninth General Assembly at Des Moines, he then gave in clear statement evidence of having reached some of the conclusions so dramatically stated in the senate of the United States seven years later. Witness these words there uttered in discussing Iowa's support of the tariff laws and his own attitude as to correction of unreasonable schedules.<sup>1</sup> In part he said:

This state has been an influential witness for the economic system which we inherited from our fathers and which in these latter times before the eyes of all men has wrought the present day miracles of our industrial and commercial progress. Without the same direct interest in the schedules of the tariff law which other communities have had, we have confidently looked to the prosperity of the American market place and found in that a sufficient reason for our support of the principle of the protective tariff.

The design of protective laws is to prevent our home industries from being overborne by the competition of foreign producers,

<sup>1</sup>*Iowa State Register*, Jan. 23, 1902.

and it may be safely said that no American factory making an unequal or even precarious fight with its foreign rival will ever look in vain for help and defense to the people of Iowa.

But we are not blind to the fact that in many lines of industry tariff rates which in 1897 were reasonable, have already become unnecessary and, in many cases, even absurd. They remain on the statute books not as a shield for the safety of domestic labor, but as a weapon of offense against the American market place itself.

Without overlooking the dangers and evils of a general tariff agitation, I cannot believe that a correction of obvious defects in the present schedules, made by friends of the law in an open and businesslike way, could be disastrous to any legitimate interest of the people; unless, indeed, we admit the claim put forward by some—that Congress is impotent and helpless in the presence of these questions.

If William McKinley, speaking almost in the shadow of his martyrdom, uttered words of truth and soberness—and we all think he did—how is it possible to put off very long the readjustment of our laws to the needs of the new era which will always commemorate his name—the era of the development of our markets—the era of expansion of our commerce—the era of reciprocity, not only with our own neighbors, but with the nations of the world and the islands of the sea.

This was said seven years prior to the great fight upon the tariff schedules in which Dolliver and other mid-western senators engaged. They led the "insurgent's" onslaught against the Payne-Aldrich schedules at the time when by some he is credited with "a change" and an "awakening," but in reality it was the climax of action which resulted from years of preparation. And it might as well be said candidly that Dolliver's position was in harmony with the dominant Republican sentiment in Iowa from 1902 on, and prevalent nationally during the McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt administrations. If anyone was out of step it was those whom he opposed, rather than he and those with whom he agreed.

#### A MORAL ISSUE PRESENTED

Again in 1907, after the change in Republican leadership in Iowa through the ascendancy of what was termed

"the progressive movement," witnessing enactment under the Cummins administration of a wide range of reform legislation, Dolliver was accorded another unopposed re-election. Speaking to the Thirty-second General Assembly in appreciation, and acknowledging his obligations, Dolliver rightfully included himself as a part of what he characterized as "the new moral outlook," which here and in other states had come to govern the consideration of public questions.<sup>2</sup> He then said in part:

It must be obvious to all that within the last four years there has taken place in our state and throughout the nation an unusual movement by which the public conscience has been drawn into the affairs of the government in a way never before seen among us.

From this time forward every question is likely to present a moral issue. I may be wrong about it, but it has seemed to me that the nation has obtained a new moral outlook from which every problem with which the government has to deal is brought directly home, not alone to the judgment, but to the conscience of the whole people.

We stand in our public life upon a higher level than ever before; a level broad enough not only for the leaders of the people, but for the whole body of American citizenship.

And the chief concern of the next twenty years in the United States is to hold the position which the public mind has taken and to preserve the richness of good government which have been won from the old time indifference and neglect.

#### OPPOSED CUMMIN'S ASPIRATIONS

Then came the Allison-Cummins senatorial primary election in 1908, the details of which are well known. Suffice now to say that Senator Allison was ill after long service in the senate. Both his friends, and those of Governor Cummins knew that he could not live many months; and he passed away in August following his achieving victory over Cummins in June. Dolliver keenly resented the Cummins candidacy—it would have been the same had the candidate against Allison been any other man. He loved his mentor with all the devotion and homage of a son for a father, for Allison had been such

<sup>2</sup>*Des Moines Register and Leader*, Jan. 24, 1907.

to him in his public life. Dolliver went overboard in that campaign; he knew no restraint and pulled no punches. From one end of the state to another he went denouncing, ridiculing, disparaging, and discrediting the Cummins candidacy, questioning motives and even his having any right to oppose Allison. One of his largest meetings was held in Des Moines. Singlehanded, almost, he gave Allison the victory. But Allison was too ill to recover and died on August 4th.

The sequence of events included a calling by the governor of a special session of the legislature on August 31st, to consider the matter of filling the vacancy both in the primary nomination and in the senate. The legislature authorized a special primary election for the nomination of a senator to be held on the date of the November election. Cummins and John F. Lacey, of Oskaloosa, were Republican candidates and the former was nominated. By previous arrangement the legislature reconvened on November 24th, and elected Cummins as senator for the remainder of the term of Senator Allison, which expired the following March 3, 1909. Thereupon Cummins immediately resigned from the governorship and Warren Garst, the lieutenant governor, was sworn in at inaugural ceremonies, and served the remainder of the term.

Dolliver and Cummins, and Kenyon after them, seemed destined to go to the senate over dead men's bodies, just as soldiers in the battles of the war press forward over their fallen comrades. Upon his appearance in Washington for induction into office Cummins was conducted to the bar of the senate by Senator Dolliver, both as unruffled and cordial as though the contest of the previous summer had not taken place. Senator Borah was a trusted friend of each, and quickly through such association, the new senator was made to feel at home. Cummins was re-elected for the term beginning March 4, 1909, when President Taft was inaugurated.

When it became known generally that the latter would not seek fulfillment of party pledges on tariff revision, the "insurgent" group came into being, though the term had previously been used describing dissentient members of congress representing the progressive wing of the Republican party. Judson Welliver, a former Iowan, Mark Sullivan and William Allen White, newspaper writers of note, helped mightily to popularize the term, which was originally employed as an epithet by N. M. Hubbard in a letter written to Senator Allison in 1901, when Cummins was first a candidate for governor.

It is not necessary here to describe the desperate senate fight against the Aldrich leadership or the house battle against Joe Cannon, which were early manifestations at Washington of the cleavage in the party, nor even Senator Dolliver's part in it. Subsequently he joined with Cummins, Bristow and LaFollette in securing railroad legislation involving both regulation of rates and taxation. His own justification for the course he pursued is sufficient at this time, for it was convincing in character and eloquently stated, as all may well believe.

#### SUPPORTED PROGRESSIVE REPUBLICANS

In the 1910 state primary campaign Warren Garst was a candidate against Gov. B. F. Carroll, and other progressive republicans opposed the renomination of Congressmen Hull, Towner and Smith. Senators Dolliver and Cummins took personal interest in the primary campaign. They journeyed from Washington to speak at a state meeting for these progressive republican candidates in the Des Moines coliseum on May 10th opening the campaign. Their own records upon tariff and railroad legislation had been questioned by Iowa standpat newspapers and their fealty to Republican principles doubted in that quarter. Late that afternoon a committee of local Republicans, consisting of Robert J. Fleming, Judge Jesse A. Miller and the writer, met Senator Dolliver at the Rock Island train from Chicago, and escorted

him to the Chamberlain hotel, where reservations had been made for him. Though only a few months before his death Dolliver was in good spirits and apparently in the best of health. In the auto ride from the depot to the hotel he proved the same jovial companion as of other days, and indulged in considerable banter with Bob Fleming. At his room on the parlor floor of the hotel he asked the group to sit down and visit awhile. After removing both coat and vest, for it was an extremely hot day, Dolliver bluntly asked: "Now, what am I going to say at the big meeting tonight boys; you know I left some excess baggage down at the depot the last time I was in Des Moines?" referring to his campaign speech against Cummins' senatorial candidacy two years previous. But that was all he said on the subject, and it was mentioned only indirectly in the opening of his speech at the coliseum in the evening, when he said in part<sup>a</sup>:

It is a pleasure for me to appear at the same meeting and on the same platform with my colleague in the United States senate, because it has never happened before. It has, in the past, been my duty to fight for persons, but this time I am fighting for the principles and doctrines which lie at the basis of the Republican party. And I am not embarrassed, as one moss-covered Iowa editor has said I would be, to find myself on the platform together with my colleague. This is a matter concerning the people who have come forward to bear the standard of the progressive cause in Iowa. I fight for them, because they stand for the principles which I espouse.

I do not come to put into your mind an unkind thought, or into your mouth an inconsiderate word with regard to the president of the United States. He has great duties and responsibilities, but he is not alone in that particular. And it is no reflection upon him that, under solemn obligation to preserve the public welfare, I find it necessary to disagree with him and the leadership to which he is committed.

He says he is the titular leader of the Republican party. Now, what is a titular head? He is a good man, entirely surrounded by people who have the advantage of knowing exactly what they want. And if I have any complaint it is that those men have crowded to the front in the president's counsels, who have no interest in our party.

<sup>a</sup>*Des Moines Register and Leader*, May 11, 1910, p. 1-2.

The present congress has made no laws which the Republican party is under obligation to assimilate as the creed and doctrine of the party. Congress not only failed to make reductions that have commercial significance in the business of the people of the United States, but the leader of the party allowed the revision of the tariff to proceed without any reference to the doctrine stated in our platform and the pledge we had made to the people of the United States.

If a man who protests against injustice and wrong and fails, is to be derided as an insurgent, what is the moral status of those successful pirates who declare that they had become the nucleus around which the Republican party must rally to preserve its solidarity?

I was born in the Republican party. I know something about its history, and I know its future lies in the success of the movement, now nationwide, to depose and set aside a leadership which has betrayed the people. And I have been accused at the bar of Republicanism in the United States because I have refused to become a party to it.

I have had a good deal of experience and I believe I know the doctrines of the Republican party well. I had defended them before the American people for the last twenty-five years and I do not intend to retire from that goodly fellowship, although I have been invited to do so from one direction and somewhat violently urged from another.

#### IOWA'S SEAL OF APPROVAL

In the Republican State convention held August 4, 1910, Cummins and Dolliver stood side by side. The Republican state committee was to present the former for temporary chairman to voice the keynote for the approaching campaign, and favored the election of the latter by the convention for permanent chairman to preside during the balloting for candidates to be nominated and the adoption of a party platform.

The division between the party factions represented was clearly marked in the convention. Dolliver and Cummins were applauded by the progressives, and loud cries for "Taft, Taft, Taft," came from the standpatters. The vote on permanent chairman stood 834 for Dolliver and 539

for J. C. Mabry, of Albia. Chairman Dolliver's speech was not lengthy. While his theme was a justification of the faith that was in him, and his fidelity in performing his plain duty, again he displayed his wonderful forensic ability, as well as his unusual faculty of stating important things in language the ordinary citizen could not fail to understand, though on occasion he was superbly eloquent. Never during his long career did Dolliver tire his audiences—he charmed them. Bits of humor, homely illustration from the ordinary affairs of life as seen by the ordinary man, were used. On the platform he had few equals, driving his arguments hard and clinching his points effectively. On this occasion his manner was as one among home friends'. He said in part:

#### DOLLIVER'S REPORT TO IOWA

Some people think that we are going to harm the Republican party by publicly admitting our differences. The fact is, popular government depends on discussion. Without that it never could have come into existence. Without that, it cannot last very long. Truth is found in controversy. It usually lies between the extremes of opinion, and the most important truth which the world cherishes has come down to us through the greatest trial and tribulation.

The fleeting distinctions of politics do not attract me as once they did. I have but one ambition left, and that is to keep on the firing line in defense of public right against the sordid private interests which are seeking to usurp the government of the United States . . .

I, therefore, welcome discussion within the party. I have no favors to ask for any views of my own which are not to be sought through fair debate and a legitimate effort to persuade others to adopt my point of view, I have done nothing in congress with reference to the tariff question, for example, which I did not promise the people of Iowa to do in a public address to the legislature when I accepted the commission of the state as senator.

I cannot believe that any large number of people in Iowa desire to send me or any other man who represents them to far off states for permission to fulfill my promises to our own people. And so I have felt at liberty, without license from any quarter outside of Iowa, to aid those who in the two houses of congress were trying

*\*Council Bluffs Nonpariel, August 5, 1910.*

to make the protective tariff system a servant of the American market place rather than an over-capitalized asset in the organization of private business.

#### DOLLIVER AND CUMMINS ENDORSED

On the adoption of the resolution which the committee submitted, approving the statesmanship of Dolliver and Cummins, Delegate Peter Hepburn offered a substitute for that plank, seeking to endorse Iowa congressmen in so far as they had stood by President Taft. The roll call on the Hepburn substitute was 568 for and 815 against. The portion of the platform, adopted as originally written, referring to protection and the tariff, was in part as follows<sup>2</sup>:

The Republicans of Iowa, through their delegates, selected according to the law of the state, make the following declaration of their views upon public affairs . . .

They declare that to deserve the continued support of the people the party should oppose by every means in its power any political encroachment or legislative interference by those who seek to reap extortionate profits through the acquisition of unjust privileges.

They reaffirm their loyalty to the Republican national platform of 1908 and pledge themselves to do whatsoever they can to carry every part of it into full effect. They especially emphasize their long and well settled faith in the Republican doctrine of protection. Its soundness and wisdom are beyond controversy . . .

They do not recognize the revision of 1909 as a satisfactory fulfillment of the party promises . . .

They commend to the nation the type of statesmanship exhibited by Senators Dolliver and Cummins, and they heartily endorse their work upon the tariff bill, the railroad bill and the postal saving bill. The patriotic effort of our senators to protect the public rights from the greed of special interests in national legislation has excited the admiration of the country, their attempts to secure the largest measure of equitable revision in the tariff law was a Republican defense of the people's welfare, their insistence determined largely the beneficial feature of the railroad law and it is with pride that the Republicans of Iowa recognize the contribution of their chosen representatives to the welfare of the nation . . .

<sup>2</sup>*Council Bluffs Nonpartiel*, August 4, 1910.

The Republicans of Iowa are the best judges of the Republicanism of the senators and representatives whom they send to congress, and they resent any attempt to exclude any of them from the honors and privileges which properly attach to membership in the Republican party.

A treasured letter in the writer's files, written to him by Dolliver some weeks after his return to Washington following the Des Moines meeting, in appreciation of co-operation, speaks of himself "and the rest of the delegation from our state, who are trying to see that the promises and obligations of the party to the people are carried out." It came in the closing days of the campaign before the primary held on June 7th, and closes with this expression of confidence: "The movement for honesty and progressiveness in carrying out the party's pledges is growing all over the country, and I am confident that success will crown our efforts."

#### REGISTER RESENTED UNFAIRNESS

Some Iowa speakers and editors had criticized Dolliver, laying a foundation for later charges that he had "changed," or "deserted" old friends, and strayed from regularity in the ranks of Republicans. Both the editor and the publisher of the *Des Moines Register and Leader*, former residents of Dolliver's old congressional district, deeply resented the unfairness of these charges. The *Register* had frequently challenged the critics, and discussing Dolliver's course, in one instance said in part:<sup>6</sup>

Former Congressman Hager, in his speech at Nevada for Captain Hull, took occasion to upbraid Senator Dolliver for "his reversal of policy" on the tariff question. This is exceedingly unfair to Senator Dolliver, and in view of the record with which Mr. Hager is certainly familiar, inexcusable. For stoutly as Senator Dolliver has defended a protective tariff at all times, in the most official manner possible, he nearly ten years ago notified the Republicans of Iowa that he regarded many of the schedules of the Dingley tariff absurd. . .

This notice may be regarded as official, and one every Republican was bound to take notice of, . . . we quote again the remarks before

<sup>6</sup>*Des Moines Register and Leader*, May 30, 1910, p. 4

the joint assembly of the Iowa legislature, in which he accepted his first election to the United States senate (1902). . . Senator Dolliver's subsequent course is easily traced. At the first opportunity after entering the senate he made a speech on the tariff, which Senator Aldrich bitterly denounced. . . there has never been a time when he was not ready to take up the work he pledged himself to when he was named to succeed Senator Gear. . . From the day the Dingley bill reciprocity was defeated Senator Dolliver has been just where he is today.

#### AN ORACLE OF "THE GOLDEN AGE"

The life of Jonathan Dolliver was spent in what will be termed the "golden age" of the nation's history. His biographer of the future will uncover much in his years of service to commend, and little to criticise. The contemplative contentment and happy associations of the earlier years will be revealed as purposeful loyalty to "a great man in the shadow of whom" he "stood for a time," to quote his own words. Then came the vigorous asserting of a long realized duty, a recognition of responsibilities and obligations of leadership which he had been content to allow others to exercise, but now was eager to take up on his own account. Then Dolliver took command of his affairs and boldly directed his own course, like a Gulliver who had not known his own strength.

With the same sure artistry and superb descriptive sense that depicted to the Methodist conference the trials and limitations of his revered progenitors in early Virginia days, Dolliver in dramatic intensity pictured to the senate, in language that will live, the selfishness and grasping nature of the interests that he knew sought to exact in tariff schedules more than were their just due, and appealed to the American conscience and sense of right to support him. It was then that he most lucidly revealed himself, with a clearness of perception of justice and right, that claimed and inspired the supreme moments of the last turbulent years of his life, exhibiting his great inheritance of character and ability.

Writers have told of the deep and abiding personal attachments that adorned the life of this man—of his gentle and loving character, of his exceptional talent and brilliance—all traits and accomplishments of a notable public figure that Iowa has loved and honored. There was always a deep, strong and determined side of his life. It was one that so many failed to recognize, that emerged to the open in the tempest and strain of those last years, and in the grueling months of raging storm of battle in the senate, sustained him and marked his greatness.

His was a consistent course. His thoughts, his purposes and his plans were not pinned upon his coat sleeve to be read by all men. While the manner of their revelation upset the calculations of many in public life with whom he had associated, and they were wont to call him "the new Dolliver," it was the steadfast purpose of his training and his life that rose to challenge them in the culmination of his strength and power.

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#### AID FOR HUNGARIAN SETTLERS

Gov. Stephen Hempstead: The distinguished Hungarian patriot, Gov. L. Ujhazy, with a considerable number of his associates, driven from Hungary by the merciless persecution and aggression of the Austrian and Russian governments, in consequence of their gallant defense of the liberties of their country, have settled in the county of Decatur, in this state, with the determination of making that place their home, and as I am informed have petitioned congress to grant them the land upon which they have thus settled.

For the purpose of aiding those brave and worthy men in their application, and securing to them a home where they can enjoy that liberty for which they exposed their lives and sacrificed their fortunes, I respectfully recommend that the general assembly memorialize congress to grant them the land which they have asked.—Message to the Iowa General Assembly, December 14, 1850.

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