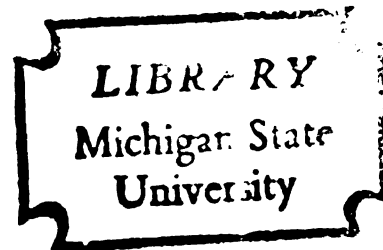


THE GENTLEMAN FROM VERMONT:
THE CAREER OF JUSTIN S. MORRILL
IN THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
RANDAL LEIGH HOYER
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The Gentleman from Vermont: The Career of
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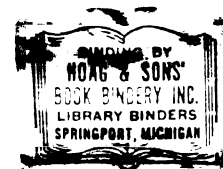
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ABSTRACT

THE GENTLEMAN FROM VERMONT: THE CAREER OF JUSTIN S. MORRILL IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

By

Randal Leigh Hoyer

The purpose of this study is to examine the nature, contribution and influence of the career of Justin Smith Morrill in the United States House of Representatives.

The comprehensive Justin Smith Morrill Papers in the Library of Congress provided the core of the research materials. These papers, reproduced on fifty-two reels of microfilm, mainly contain political, business, and personal correspondence; but they also include a diary, a journal, and personal notes. Smaller, scattered collections of Morrill Papers were also used. Papers of political contemporaries, newspapers, the Congressional Globe, and germane secondary sources furnished other research materials.

Justin Smith Morrill was born on April 14, 1810, in Strafford, Vermont. He was apprenticed at fifteen to learn merchandising and later became the partner of

Jedediah Harris. The partnership did so well that Morrill was able to retire from active business at 38 to become a gentleman farmer. His marriage to Ruth Swan lasted for half a century.

Morrill always took the active part in local politics that New England's town-meeting form of government encouraged. Although reticent by nature, his clear, analytical thinking and precise written expression brought him a respected position in local political circles. His main interest was working behind the scenes. Though aware of his reluctance to seek elected office, Morrill's friends insisted that he run for Congress in 1854. By a fifty-nine vote margin, he was elected.

Quickly learning the complexities of parliamentary procedure, Morrill became an effective representative of his constituents. With a staunch antislavery background, he entered the slavery controversy immediately. However, he let others take the lead on the slavery issue while he devoted himself to the eradication of polygamy. The law which Morrill guided to passage started the process of stamping out polygamy.

Keen consciousness of his lack of formal education inspired Morrill to champion education for workingmen's sons. He wanted to see colleges dedicated to the agricultural and mechanical arts which continued to teach the classics. The Morrill Land Grant College Act provided the

means to begin the nationwide system of land grant colleges which became a cornerstone of higher education.

Lengthy business experience in financial matters led to Morrill's work with tariff legislation. The Morrill Tariff of 1861 was a keystone of the Republican Party's financial policy. This law laid the base for the protective system which continued long after his death. Civil War expenditures forced Morrill to write several upward revisions of his initial tariff legislation.

During the Civil War the pressing need for revenue imposed on Morrill the heavy task of writing internal revenue laws. To a financial conservative like Morrill, it was essential that taxation meet as much of the war costs as possible. Despite his efforts (virtually nothing remained untaxed), the war was never adequately funded.

After the war Morrill was rewarded with the Chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee. He used this position to fulfill promises that internal taxes would be eliminated after the war. However, he failed in his attempt to lower the tariff. Before the completion of his term in the 39th Congress, Morrill waged a skillful campaign and became Senator-elect from Vermont.

Morrill had always professed indifference to continued public service, but he actively sought elevation to the Senate and was reelected five times. After the

frantic pace of the House in wartime, the more deliberative atmosphere of the Senate encouraged semi-retirement which more closely suited his sensibilities. Morrill's political goals had largely been achieved, but he kept busy, devoting considerable time to a favorite project, the beautification of Washington. After a fruitful life, Morrill died in office on December 28, 1898.

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Randal Leigh Hoyer

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CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND BUSINESS CAREER

For twelve years, 1855-1867, the congressman from the second district of Vermont was Justin Smith Morrill, a simple practical man, without guile, whose chief characteristic was common sense. He was not an intellectual and had little use for those who preferred to reside in ivory towers. To him, formal education, especially of the philosophical and theoretical variety, was fine as an avocation, but definitely secondary to practical experience. He asked advice of men experienced and educated by life. Morrill had great respect for the practical livelihoods of the common man. He practiced two of them, farming and store-keeping. Morrill was also an idealistic and religious man. He was by choice a Unitarian, a faith embraced by many prominent New Englanders because it stressed individualism, common sense, and humanitarian reforms such as abolition of slavery and temperance. In keeping with the last-named policy Morrill neither drank nor smoked.¹

¹Shelby M. Cullom, Fifty Years of Public Service (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1911), p. 209. George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York: Charles

Physically, Morrill must have been an impressive man. He stood six feet tall. He had deep set, penetrating blue eyes, a prominent nose and a cleft in his chin. At the age of 57 he still had thick, wavy, dark brown hair and full sideburns. His was a rugged masculine face.²

As a politician in an age when it was an honored profession, he practiced politics, the art of the possible, deftly. Wise in his dealings with men, Morrill was able to achieve most of his legislative goals without leaving vengeful opponents in his wake. His forte was holding his own in the committee room and the smoke-filled caucus room.³

A quiet unassuming man, Morrill was ill at ease in any large political gathering. In the House he read his speeches. When guiding a bill, he presented his facts forcefully and succinctly, believing that their worth and

Scribner's Sons, 1903), II, 55. Elizabeth M. Geffen, Philadelphia Unitarianism, p. 238. Arthur W. Brown, Always Young for Liberty: A Biography of William Ellery Channing (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1956), pp. 125-26, 228-29, 234-35. Stow Persons, Free Religion: An American Faith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 2, 22.

²Passport description, May 7, 1867, Justin Smith Morrill Papers, Library of Congress, Reel 3 (Microfilm copy), hereafter cited as Morrill Papers.

³T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Nature's Nobleman: Justin Morrill, A Victorian Politician," Vermont History, XXX (January, 1962), 6.

significance would be obvious to all. When he lost a bill, which was infrequently, it was often because something more than a cold factual presentation was needed. Floor debate was simply beyond his talents, and he knew it. Thus he seldom spoke; but when he did, members listened. An anonymous resident of another state, after a visit to Congress, wrote to the Burlington Free Press that Morrill had the attention of the House when he spoke. The commentator said that although Morrill was quiet, courteous, and modest, his influence was probably second only to that of Thaddeus Stevens and that even opponents respected his manner of supporting his position without being offensive.⁴

Outside the House, Morrill was an affable, even witty man. In small groups of family and friends he unbent, disclosing a warm, affectionate personality. His love and affection for his wife, Ruth, his son, James, and his sister-in-law, who lived with them, shows in the letters he wrote to them during long, lonely winters in Washington. He frequently told his family how much he missed them and how he wished he could be with them in Strafford. Both his loneliness and his wit are exhibited in letters to his wife, in which he either joked with her or chided her for neglecting him. In one light mood, Morrill announced an impending visit home through a mock formal letter in which

⁴Hoar, Autobiography, II, 55. Burlington Free Press reprinted in Vermont Watchman (Montpelier), April 20, 1866.

he posed as a suitor. After describing himself and his personality in very flattering terms, he asked his wife for a date.⁵ The personality that Morrill often showed to family and friends was quite different from the one so often seen by the public.

As a gentleman of means and influence, he had the opportunity to indulge his instincts for the better things in life. He began by building two homes, one in Strafford and the other in Washington. Both were fine examples of the best residential architecture of the day, and were designed for comfort and gracious entertaining. Many parties were held in the Washington home, Morrill's birthday parties became popular annual affairs. But, in spite of the many happy hours passed in Washington, the family was most at home in the fine Strafford house, which still stands. He had a passing interest in many of the arts and humanities. His large library contained the best books available on many topics. Morrill also enjoyed visiting the art museums in the larger cities and idling away the hours at home in discussions of poetry and philosophy.⁶

⁵Justin S. Morrill to Ruth Swan Morrill, March 22, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 3.

⁶Bassett, "Nobleman," 5. The Morrill Homestead is owned and maintained by the Justin S. Morrill Foundation, a group formed especially for that purpose in 1962. Morrill Papers, Reel 45. This reel contains a catalogue of nearly 1000 titles. Morrill to Mrs. Mary C. Ames, November 7, 1863, Mary Clemmer Ames Papers, Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio. Morrill to Ames, Aug. 12, 1866, Ames Papers.

Basically Morrill was a plain, frank, and practical product of Vermont, with a veneer of Eastern gentleman overlaid. Perhaps it was this combination of facets in his character which made him equally at home among workingmen or statesmen. Men in all walks of life liked him because he respected their views. Morrill was a quiet man who kept his voice low and his temper under control while others waged bitter, inflammatory verbal battles. Both colleagues and constituents valued his attempts to offer reasonable alternatives.

Vermont, Morrill's home state, was an agricultural state hindered by poor soil, unpredictable weather, and isolation because of its bad roads. Travel was nearly impossible in winter or when the roads were muddy. Only a strong people could live and prosper there. Hardworking, freedom-loving people struggled to make a living from the mountain soil. Vermont was no granary. It was better suited to the raising of livestock, feed grasses and potatoes. Dairy farming, fine horses and sheep were the major products.⁷

Sheep, especially, became the chief agricultural interest of Vermonsters. Spanish Merino sheep and a favorable tariff started a wild expansion of wool production

⁷T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Urban Penetration of Rural Vermont, 1840-1880" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1952), pp. 7, 12-14. Holman D. Jordan, Jr., "Ten Vermont Towns: Social and Economic Characteristics, 1850-1870" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alabama, 1966), pp. 37-38.

which lasted from the 1820's to the 1840's. Even when a lowered tariff and lessened demand brought on a drastic cut in the sheep population, the raising of sheep still remained a major concern of the people and their representatives.⁸

Vermont was a farm-oriented state. Nearly all the people lived on farms or in small towns which contained the necessary professionals and service people. Even doctors, lawyers, blacksmiths, and merchants were dependent on farming for their livelihood.⁹

Industry was relatively unimportant in the economy of Vermont. Mining produced small but profitable quantities of marble, granite and slate. The role of manufacturing was seen in the few small factories scattered around the state. The exception was the one great success story in Vermont manufacturing written by the Fairbanks brothers who invented and produced the platform scale used nationwide. Not even the construction of the railroads changed the predominantly agricultural character of Vermont.¹⁰

Stability was the chief characteristic of the Vermont farm towns. They neither grew nor disappeared.

⁸Jordan, "Ten Vermont Towns," pp. 35-36. Bassett, "Urban Penetration," p. 65.

⁹Bassett, "Urban Penetration," p. 62.

¹⁰Earle Newton, The Vermont Story (Montpelier: Vermont Historical Society, 1949), pp. 171-72.

There was economic opportunity for a small population but little possibility of an economic expansion to provide jobs for the farmers' often numerous progeny.¹¹

Strafford, the birthplace and lifelong home of Morrill, was a typical small Vermont town. In it were the shops and homes of the pliers of trades and professional men who provided services and supplies for the surrounding farms. The only nonagricultural industry was copperas mining, which was limited in scope, largely because of the lack of transportation. It was at least a dozen miles to the nearest railroad. Strafford remained by necessity a relatively self-sufficient, isolated, and static agricultural town.¹²

Morrill loved his sleepy hometown. In his old age he showed that love by erecting a building to house the library donated many years earlier by Judge Jedediah H. Harris. But he knew the thrifty people well and feared they might turn down the gift rather than assume the maintenance on a building they had not voted to erect. To convince them to accept it he explained that the second

¹¹Jordan, "Ten Vermont Towns," pp. 154, 268.

¹²Bassett, "Urban Penetration," pp. 105-6. Copperas is a copper sulfate used in making ink. Jordan, "Ten Vermont Towns," p. 116.

floor could be used as a rental hall. For whatever reason, the gift was accepted.¹³

The lack of economic growth forced many young Vermonters to migrate and discouraged new settlers from coming into the state. Vermonters went West and helped build their adopted states. A number of them, including Stephen A. Douglas, the Senator from Illinois, were later sent to Congress to represent their new neighbors. Most others, including members of Morrill's family, moved to other states and lived in relative obscurity. Morrill, on the other hand, remained and prospered in Vermont all his life.¹⁴

The absence of a booming economy also meant that the state could not draw immigrants to replace its lost people. Most Vermonters were native Americans and a majority were native to the state. As a result there existed a close-knit, economically and culturally homogeneous, middle class people with a strong stake in the local status quo.¹⁵

¹³Speech of Justin S. Morrill at Dedication of Strafford Library, Sept. 22, 1883, Morrill Papers, Reel 43.

¹⁴Jordan, "Ten Vermont Towns," p. 151. William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 7. Of the ten children of Nathaniel and Mary Morrill, half died in childhood and the other five lived to old age.

¹⁵Parker, Morrill, pp. 121-23, 265-66.

Vermonters, tempered by a harsh struggle with nature, also had to fight against greedy men in the pre-Revolution era. For many years after the settlers purchased the "New Hampshire Grants" from the governor of New Hampshire, New York landlords tried to enforce their vague old claims on that area. If the New Yorkers had been successful the Vermonters would have been forced into the status of tenant farmers. The lengthy battle, fought occasionally under arms but mostly in the courts, ended in the validation of Vermonters' title deeds. Shortly afterwards the Revolutionary War gave the people of Vermont the opportunity to establish an independent republic.¹⁶

In the constitution written for their new republic, the Constitution of 1777, Vermonters became the heralds of freedom. Having learned through bitter experience the meaning of freedom from oppression, Vermonters were the first to forbid slavery although there were no slaves and few Negroes there. This initial antislavery feeling hardened into dedication through the years before the Civil War. Vermonters were eager readers of the words of such men as William Lloyd Garrison who began his career in Bennington. Antislavery feeling in Vermont continued to increase until in the late 1840's the state legislature

¹⁶The area called the New Hampshire Grants later became known as Vermont. Dorothy C. Fisher, Vermont Tradition (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), p. 77.

and most of the churches had gone on record as being opposed to slavery and dedicated to its extinction. Despite the strong antislavery feeling of Vermonters, they were practical people, not of a fanatical bent. The radical Liberty Party made almost no headway in the state but the more moderate Republican Party did very well. In 1860 Abraham Lincoln carried Vermont by a 4 to 1 margin over Stephen A. Douglas, a native of Vermont but a member of the Democratic Party which had become tainted with appeasement of the Slave Power. As a result of Vermonters' history of opposition to slavery the South nurtured a special hatred of them. The real test came with the start of the Civil War. The people backed up their conviction by sending half of the state's able-bodied men into battle to help destroy slavery. They paid heavily in both men and money to see the goal realized.¹⁷

In the nineteenth century, following a frontier period of free living, Vermonters turned to religion, humanitarian causes and democracy. Vermont has always been divided ideologically at the Green Mountains which caused these movements to be felt with unequal intensity in the two sections. The eastern portion, where Morrill lived,

¹⁷Newton, The Vermont Story, pp. 125-26.

tended to be more conservative in politics and more orthodox in religion.¹⁸

The general turn to religion led to a temperance campaign. The campaign began shortly after 1820 and gained ground until a temporary prohibition was put into effect for the year 1847. That experiment was followed by passage of a "Maine Law," permanent prohibition, in 1852.¹⁹ Temperance was the biggest issue in local politics until the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

In addition to the campaign against slavery, Vermont had other humanitarian movements. One of these was an attempt to reform the penal code. The most noteworthy success of that reform was abolishment of the archaic penalty of imprisonment for debt in 1838. The people also took part in the campaign, which later spread nationwide, to provide care for the insane. A home for their care was built in 1836. This concern may have been fostered because Vermont led the nation in the number of insane per capita in this period.²⁰

All decisions, including those to participate in the several reform movements, came straight from the people

¹⁸David M. Ludlum, Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791-1850 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1939), p. 62.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 72.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 213-15, 219.

through their active participation in democracy. The governmental system rested on the town meeting as the basic governing unit dealing with local affairs. Such a system was not unique in the United States but Vermont did make some original contributions. The first of these was the "mountain rule" which provided that the eastern and western sections of the state share as equally as possible in important offices. One United States Senator came from each portion. The governor and lieutenant-governor were always from opposite sides of the mountains and they alternated every year. The citizens of Vermont also practiced rotation in offices on the state and lower levels. The towns and counties even took turns placing people in offices at the next higher level.²¹ Although it appears complicated, it seemed to satisfy most Vermonters.

Justin Smith Morrill was born April 14, 1810, the oldest child in a family well established in the community. Justin's father, Nathaniel Morrill, was a blacksmith who prospered because he had, in addition to the usual equipment, a water-powered triphammer to shape crude machinery. The water power was supplied from a creek dam jointly built with a neighbor on the latter's land. The shop, which stayed in family ownership and earned rental income for Justin during his congressional career, caused Morrill trouble years later when the man who was renting it from

²¹Bassett, "Urban Penetration," p. 169.

him complained that the water was being cut-off. Morrill wrote and demanded that the neighbor, who controlled the creek dam, honor his old agreement to share the water. Morrill also reminded the man that just a few years before he had sent over \$80 as a share of the repairs on the dam.²²

The blacksmith business was sound enough to provide a good living for the family of ten children but not enough for luxuries. Morrill had hoped to attend college but his father explained that he could afford the tuition of no more than one of his children. Since he felt it would be unfair to give this advantage to only one of them he decided not to send any. Thus, Morrill had to be content with elementary school and one term each at Thetford and Randolph Academies.²³

Because he was unable to continue his education Morrill began to prepare for his business career at fifteen. He worked in Royal Hatch's store for six months, followed by two years as a clerk for Judge Harris, an influential local storeowner. At the end of this apprenticeship, he was invited to work for an uncle in Portland, Maine, where he was able to learn much of the technique of merchandising in a busy shipping center.

²²Nathan S. Young, "Senator Morrill's Early Life," Burlington Free Press, Jan. 30, 1899. Parker, Morrill, p. 6.

²³Morrill to Royal A. Hatch quoted in Parker, Morrill, pp. 6-7. Morrill to James Barrett, Jan., 1886, Morrill Papers, Reel 20.

While working in Portland, Morrill had use of his uncle's extensive library. He happily took advantage of this opportunity to further his education. During the next two years young Morrill worked on his vocabulary, wrote essays, and read many books which included William Blackstone's Commentaries on the Law of England.²⁴

The key first step in Morrill's later business success occurred in 1831 while on a visit home after two years in Portland. Morrill took on the task of selling off the stock of a deceased merchant. He did so well that Judge Harris took him into a job where Morrill remained until his retirement in 1848.

Harris made his efficient, young, former clerk a full partner. Morrill had the usual selling and stocking duties of a clerk, but his most important additional duty was the semiannual buying trips to Boston. Harris had sufficient capital to enable the partnership of Harris and Morrill to get better buys through use of cash. They prospered and over the years acquired a chain of five stores, four nearby and one some distance away at Derby Line on the Canadian border.²⁵

²⁴Morrill to James Barrett, Jan., 1886, Morrill Papers, Reel 20. Portland Diary of Justin S. Morrill, 1831, Morrill Papers, Reel 43.

²⁵Washington Evening Star, April 27, 1895. Young, "Morrill's Early Life." James Barrett, "Early Life of Justin S. Morrill," The Vermonter (St. Albans), Nov., 1896. A copy is included in the Morrill Papers, Reel 45. The accuracy of this biography is attested to by Morrill. Morrill to Barrett, Aug. 24, 1891, Morrill Papers, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York.

A secure position in a well-run country store was the ideal training ground for Justin S. Morrill, the future politician. From Judge Harris he received an excellent training in business finance. This knowledge was repeatedly put to use during his public life. In addition, he learned politics at the grassroots level from Harris, a successful and influential local politician in his own right, and from daily contacts with the people of the town and surrounding farms.²⁶

Harris and Morrill was a successful business because it was an efficient operation. They exploited their initial advantage of paying cash for supplies and did everything else possible to remain ahead of the competition. They made sure that they had in stock the goods that their customers wanted, as any good store would, but they also made certain that payment was received. Their purpose, in terms of service, was to supply the needs of local farmers, which required them to extend credit to their clients. Although Harris and Morrill often sold on credit, they demanded that all accounts be settled by the first of each year. A bill unpaid after a reasonable time was put into 6 percent notes due on a day definite. The credit arrangement proved satisfactory to all concerned. The schedule of payment

²⁶Barrett, "Early Life of Morrill."

was flexible enough to give the farmer the chance to bring in a cash crop, pay off the notes, and make his profit.²⁷

The success of their stores led Harris and Morrill into financial sidelines. Soon they had also become a large moneylending concern, a natural extension of their credit business. It was not a minor operation loaning trifling amounts. Loans of \$5,000 were not uncommon and they charged top rates of interest. There was even one request from a group organizing a new bank for \$20,000. Fairbanks Scale Company, the largest industrial firm in the state, borrowed from Harris and Morrill. This loan business was joined as a profit stretching venture by investment in stocks. After the partnership acquired a portfolio of local bank and utility stocks and Boston mill stocks, they began to offer investment advice to customers. Finally, as citizens of stature and substantial stockholders, Harris and Morrill were asked to sit on various boards of directors. One board on which Morrill served was the Orange County Bank in Chelsea, a neighboring town.²⁸ Income from

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸B. F. Tenney to Morrill, July 1, 1853, Morrill Papers, Reel 1. Nathan S. Young to Morrill, Feb. 18, 1859, Morrill Papers, Reel 4. Willard Carpenter to Morrill, Aug. 7, 1853, Morrill Papers, Vermont Historical Society, Montpelier. Erastus Fairbanks to Morrill, Oct. 22, 1855, Morrill Papers, Vermont Historical Society. D. B. Cobb to Morrill, Jan. 22, 1852, Morrill Papers, Reel 31. Young, "Morrill's Early Life."

these sources helped greatly to make it possible for him to resign from the management of the stores at the age of 38.

These activities became the lasting portion of Morrill's business career. The loan and investment business, which had begun as a sideline, was continued throughout Morrill's lifetime. His correspondence while in public office contains a large number of purely business letters.

But the store was far more important to Morrill's career than as a mere means to financial security; it was a classroom for political education. Harris was the single most important teacher. A party worker rather than an office seeker, he took his turn at local and county posts, became a presidential elector, and finally a judge. But he never showed any ambition for higher office.²⁹ Nevertheless, he was in a position to introduce Morrill to many important party members.

The country store was, in a sense, the larger rural Vermont society in microcosm. People from all occupations came and went. In slack times, it was a gathering place, almost a social center, for the local farmers. They talked of crops and the weather, but they talked much about politics. The country storekeeper became a catalyst of thought in his area. He did not necessarily originate it, but he distilled all that flowed in and passed it on to the

²⁹Bassett, "Nobleman," p. 7.

next group. He was also the newsgathering service on his trips to the market cities for store supplies. The store-keeper learned much about the wants and interests of his customers, including the problems in which he had the closest personal interest--the problem of debt.³⁰ These and other problems were the political issues of the day. Morrill learned the wants, needs, and hopes of a farming people by working in a country store.

A life centering in such a store naturally led Justin Morrill into politics. For a long time he merely lingered on the fringes doing the little chores of a Whig party foot soldier. He was asked to do some stump speaking but found his place through use of his pen. The party quickly learned to depend on his facile pen to produce speeches, platforms, and position papers. Morrill also took his turn at committee work. In 1844 he was appointed to the Orange County Whig Committee and in 1848 he was promoted to the state committee. He was sent by the state committee to the National Convention of 1852 where he voted for the platform supporting the Compromise of 1850.³¹ This type of loyal service entitled a man to candidacy for an elective

³⁰Parker, Morrill, pp. 25-26. Bassett, "Nobleman," p. 7.

³¹J. P. Fairbanks to Morrill, Aug. 7, 1852, Morrill Papers, Reel 32. Carlos Carpenter to Morrill, Aug. 8, 1853, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. See also Justin Smith Morrill Mss Speeches 1844-55, Duke University Library, Durham, N.C. Parker, Morrill, pp. 50, 53. George W. Julian, The Life of Joshua R. Giddings (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Co., 1892), pp. 301-2.

office, but Morrill persistently declined with the exceptions that he served single terms in the low level posts of town auditor and justice of the peace. He was content to do the little jobs and had little inclination for the roughness of an election campaign.³² He particularly shied away from any possibility of an intraparty fight.

Morrill was happy in Strafford and reluctant to leave. In 1848 at the age of 38 he left active business for life as a gentleman farmer. After building a house on the farm, he married Ruth Swan, a niece of Judge Harris, and was looking forward to a long, peaceful life with her.³³

Morrill's reluctance to hold elected office only slightly slowed the efforts of his enthusiastic supporters. His friend E. P. Walton, publisher of the Vermont Watchman, was particularly indefatigable in his efforts to promote a political career for Morrill.³⁴ When in 1854 Andrew Tracey, the congressman from the second district, announced he would not seek reelection after a single term, Morrill's backers had the opportunity they had been

³²Justin S. Morrill, "Recollections of Congress," Morrill Papers, Reel 14. Morrill to E. P. Walton, May 11, 1853, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

³³Washington Evening Star, April 27, 1895.

³⁴E. P. Walton to Morrill, May 17, 1852, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

seeking. Tracey's decision was so unexpected that the Whigs had no alternate candidate. Immediately, Morrill was suggested as the only man for the job. Party members pleaded with him to become a candidate lest the Democrats get the seat by default, but Morrill was still reluctant. But the pressure was too heavy³⁵ and his party loyalty too strong, so Morrill agreed to run on the condition that there be no fight for the nomination.

³⁵S. H. Delano to Morrill, June 28, 1854, Morrill Papers, Reel 31 and J. Kimball to Morrill, July 24 and Aug. 18, 1854, Morrill Papers, Reel 36.

CHAPTER II

THE NEOPHYTE CONGRESSMAN AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POLYGAMY

Morrill's nomination for Congress changed his whole life. He had always thought of himself as a person who took only the part in politics that his duty as a citizen demanded.¹ Now he was about to enter Congress without even having served in the state legislature, the usual progression.² The campaign was not an easy one. Despite their assurances of a united party, Whig leaders could not hold the more radical antislavery members, who bolted to the Liberty party. Their defection and Morrill's aversion to public speaking made the election close,³ but Morrill won. He thus began a long career he never actively sought.

¹William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 59.

²T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Nature's Nobleman: Justin Smith Morrill, A Victorian Politician," Vermont History, XXX (Jan., 1962), 7-8.

³The majority totaled 59 votes. The tally was Morrill, Whig, 8380; J. W. D. Parker, Democrat, 5848; and O. L. Shafter, Free Soil, 2473. Parker, Morrill, p. 60.

Following the excitement of the hastily organized campaign and of the election, the wait to claim his seat was an anticlimax. According to law the Congress elected in November, 1854, would not meet until December of the next year, a delay of thirteen months. Morrill had plenty of time to learn what his friends and neighbors of the second district expected of him as their representative.

When Congress finally assembled, Morrill became involved in the contest for Speaker of the House which was particularly heated because of the slavery controversy. For the first time the Republicans had the largest single block of seats, but they lacked a clear majority. From the beginning their candidate, Nathaniel P. Banks of Massachusetts, led in the balloting, but he always fell a few votes short of victory. Along with his fellow Republicans Morrill supported his party's candidate on every ballot.⁴ The balloting dragged on and on. The Republicans needed to win some of the votes scattered among minor candidates in order to put their man in the Speaker's chair. While they worked on the problem, the business of the government stagnated.

The stalled condition of Congress was accepted by the Northern people as the lesser of evils. While government stagnation was deplorable, it was better than allowing

⁴Fred H. Harrington, Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948), p. 30.

the usual proslavery group to organize the House. Morrill's constituents exemplified those Northerners who strongly supported the firm stand of their representatives. They tended to reduce the question to basic elements of slave versus free control.⁵ Many weeks passed before anyone was tired enough to consider yielding.

After a month of no progress, moderates began in earnest to seek a compromise settlement. The editors of the New York Times deplored the defect in congressional procedure which allowed a willful minority to tie up the nation's business in the face of a poorly united majority. Yet, they warned that the rights of the minority must be preserved. The editors suggested that after a set number of votes, election be by plurality.⁶ Congressional moderates were not yet ready to go that far. Instead a resolution was proposed that the speakership candidates should all be questioned on their views of the issues. Morrill tried to amend the resolution to limit the questioning to the top four candidates in order to hasten action. This, his first motion, was voted down. The resolution passed but, unfortunately, it failed to resolve the deadlock.⁷

⁵Philip White to Morrill, December 29, 1855, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

⁶New York Times, Jan. 1, 1856.

⁷U.S., Congressional Globe, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, p. 219. [Hereinafter cited as Cong. Globe.]

By the end of January, the only alternative to continued stalemate was election by plurality. Even Morrill's adamantly antislavery constituents finally seemed ready to take a chance on it.⁸ The House agreed to take three more ballots and then proceed to election by plurality vote. On the first ballot by plurality Banks was elected.

Speaker Banks immediately selected the membership of the several committees. Naturally he gave Republicans the lion's share of important jobs. Morrill received appointment to the Committee on Territories which was chaired by Galusha Grow and included Joshua Giddings. The Washington Evening Star complained that Banks was packing this important committee with the Kansas-Nebraska controversy rising on the horizon.⁹ Of course, the complaints of the Star were justified. But there was nothing unusual in Banks's action. The Democrats in all likelihood would have done the same thing had they won.

The Star also evaluated the committee members, lauding the Democratic choices and either denouncing individual Republicans or giving them little praise. Giddings was described as a "terrible choice," while Grow had a bent toward abolitionism. The writer predicted that

⁸S. Short to Morrill, Jan. 23, 1856, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

⁹Washington Evening Star, March 5, 1856.

Morrill, the new member, would probably "take a high spot" as a businessman since he had done well in business in Vermont.¹⁰

Morrill's success as a businessman may have helped him get elected, but once he was in office the people were interested in only one thing, service. They expected him not only to provide a voice for expressing their views and needs but also to be a middleman for the distribution of the favors available from the federal government. Their requests assumed such a staggering volume and variety that much of the congressman's time had to be devoted to constituent service. Nevertheless, such service was not one-sided. Those who received favors tacitly agreed to supply votes in subsequent elections.

One of the most frequent requests was for public documents. Census reports, mapping surveys, reports of such explorers as Lewis and Clark, the yearly agricultural reports, and the Congressional Globe were all in demand.¹¹ In isolated Vermont, books were not plentiful and these seemingly dull publications must have helped to pass the long winter nights.

Morrill developed an efficient system to enable him to reap the biggest possible benefit from the publications

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Samuel Whitcomb to Morrill, Dec. 8, 1855, Morrill Papers, Reel 1 exemplifies this type of request well.

he distributed. His business habits were being carried over into his political career. He made a record book in which he wrote down the names, addresses, politics, and occupations of the recipients. By using a series of symbols placed after their names, he could tell at a glance which documents each had received. All of the names were cross referenced by county and town, and the whole book was indexed in the front. When a constituent died or moved, Morrill crossed him off with a short explanatory notation. In addition, he kept track of the newspapers and libraries which received documents.¹² Such careful preparation helped produce relatively effortless reelections.

While public documents comprised the bulk of the requests, many other favors were sought from him. Morrill devoted much of his working day to requests for court-houses, mail routes and the procurement of federal aid for such items as official weights and measures. In one case the supplicants promised that Morrill would see their gratitude at the next election.¹³ The thinly veiled threat

¹²Morrill Papers, Reels 51 and 52.

¹³Jason Steele to Morrill, Jan. 8, 1856, Morrill Papers, Reel 39. B. W. Bartholomew to Morrill, Feb. 18, 1857, Morrill Papers, Reel 28. Norman Williams et al. to Morrill, July to Oct., 1861, Walter Evans to Morrill, Nov. 18, 1861, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. Morrill to L. O. Brastow, Feb. 23, 1868, Morrill Papers, Reel 29. Lewis Emmons to Morrill, Feb. 1, 1864, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, p. 2186, 1767, 2076; 3rd Sess., 1857, p. 536.

exemplifies the seriousness of the voters about these outwardly trivial problems. In addition, he was virtually inundated with pleas for appointments to the service academies and for patronage jobs. Since there were always many more applicants than openings, Morrill showed a great deal of tact in not making more enemies than friends.

In view of the many activities that engaged Morrill's time in this area of constituent service, it is surprising that he had any time left for the questions of the day. Yet he was quite active in everything of importance that arose in the House. He seldom made a set speech, especially in his early years, but he was there to lend his vote almost without fail.¹⁴

The first major issue that Morrill became involved in was the bitter fight over Kansas, a struggle which had begun immediately in the 34th Congress under the guise of the speakership contest. Everyone realized that the new Speaker would appoint the members of the Committee on Territories. Congressmen also knew that Kansas was only the surface issue, that the real stakes were slavery and freedom. This knowledge added additional heat to the battle for the Speaker's chair. As expected, Nathaniel Banks, the new Speaker of the House, appointed a free-state

¹⁴A random examination of the Congressional Globe for these years will show Morrill's name recorded on roll call votes of all major and most minor bills.

majority, including Justin Morrill, to the Committee on Territories. Actually, concern over the composition of that committee proved premature because the real work on Kansas was done by a select committee appointed somewhat later.

The situation in Kansas had gotten out of control. The territory had been organized under the plan of popular sovereignty which allowed the people to decide the question of becoming either a slave state or a free state. Before the election of the territorial legislature, freestaters appeared to have a clear majority, but proslavery Missourians crossed the boundary line, voted illegally, intimidated the freestaters, and elected a proslavery majority to the legislature. Governor Andrew Reeder, convinced that he had no power to do otherwise, reluctantly and unwisely certified the legislature as duly elected. The proslavery members voted to adopt a slave code and other acts designed to make life as difficult as possible for freestaters. Through these tactics they hoped to drive freestaters out and obtain a majority of the permanent residents.

Chaos threatened when freestaters retaliated by holding an unauthorized constitutional convention. They stole a march on proslavery men by writing the Topeka Constitution and submitting it to Congress with a request for statehood. The document was carried to Washington by

ex-Governor Reeder who had recently been fired at the insistence of the proslavery faction.

Congress established a select committee to investigate and recommend a means to untangle the almost hopelessly confused situation. Basically the committee had to decide whether to recognize the proslavery territorial legislature or to admit Kansas as a free state. The Democrats favored the former, the Republicans the latter. Some Northerners were especially concerned over the complication raised by Governor Reeder's certification that the legislature had been duly elected. Since the Topeka Constitution had clearly been written under extralegal circumstances, the Democrats seemed to have the legal advantage.¹⁵

Well aware of the importance of the Kansas situation to the nation and to his constituents, Morrill chose it as the subject of his maiden speech in the House of Representatives on June 28, 1856. He opened with a disavowal of animosity toward any part of the nation.

Morrill strongly argued for the admission of Kansas as a free state under the Topeka Constitution. He called upon Congress to

waive all objections [to irregularities], as they have been often heretofore waived, in favor of junior States. . . .

By the act establishing the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, the people were left "perfectly free

¹⁵C. K. Field to Morrill, March 17, 1856, Morrill Papers, Reel 2.

to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way" . . . It can hardly be presumed, that any one here will object to the Kansas constitution on the grounds that it lacks anything of republicanism . . .

We have official information in relation to the election frauds quite sufficient to vitiate the whole of the territorial election; and no Legislature made at such an election could make any but illegal and tyrannical laws . . . there is not a man in this house who approves, or who would tolerate, such laws, even in a slave state. . . .¹⁶

Morrill had correctly pointed out that the pro-slavery faction had used fraud but failed to provide reasons to accept the Topeka Constitution. Simply because one faction employed fraud, Morrill asked Congress to accept the work of the other side without question. The freestaters may well have been unrepresentative too, but Morrill chose to ignore that possibility.

In the conclusion of his speech Morrill took both Congress and the South to task for timidity and short sightedness. He said:

Congress, having the constitutional power to make "all needful rules and regulations for the Territories" . . . suddenly abdicates . . . [Popular sovereignty's] forum is not the Senate or the Cabinet, but some territorial arena--some gladiatorial Kansas . . .

It will not be a very violent assumption to say that if in the preliminary contest among the squatter sovereigns of Kansas, slavery had come off the victor, there would be no opposition to her

¹⁶ Cong. Globe, 34th Cong. 1st Sess., 1856, pp. 679-83 appendix.

admission from the quarter whence it comes . . . the only way you can make it a popular favorite is to adhere to it when it makes against you as well as when for you. . . .¹⁷

Despite his opening disclaimer, Morrill had delivered a highly partisan speech. He chose his side in the Kansas dispute without waiting for the report of the select committee. Morrill simply ignored any questions not conducive to his argument.

The reaction to this speech, which outlined the free state position so well, was generally favorable in the North. Morrill wrote his wife that several colleagues considered it a good effort but that the effect was lessened because it had been delivered at a late hour when the House was tired.¹⁸

A few days after Morrill's speech the select committee on Kansas brought in its report. For the most part the report supported the freestaters' claims that outrages had been committed in the territory and that tyranny existed in Kansas. The findings of this official congressional investigation finally stopped allegations that the earlier reports from Kansas had been fabricated for the personal or party gain of the free state faction. However, neither Morrill's speech nor the committee's

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 682-83 appendix.

¹⁸Morrill to Ruth Morrill, June 29, 1856 and Clark Chapman to Morrill, July 16, 1856, Morrill Papers, Reel 2.

report was influential enough to prevent congressional rejection of the Topeka Constitution.

The New York Times blasted the situation in Kansas as a blot on the nation and predicted that the people would rise up against such outrage and drive the responsible party from power.¹⁹ The editors were poor prophets. In 1856 the people passed the burden of Kansas into the feeble hands of "Old Buck."

The new administration might have used the transfer of power as a chance to begin anew in Kansas. Unfortunately James Buchanan seemed more interested in electing Democrats than healing wounds. When the proslavery group submitted the Lecompton Constitution, the President ignored its doubtful legal status and supported it, since a slave state would surely elect Democrats. This was too much for Stephen Douglas. He broke with his party's leadership and joined the Republicans in a successful fight against the Lecompton Constitution.

The news for which antislavery men had dared not hope electrified the North. Editorial opinion correctly predicted the far-reaching results of this vote. The breakup of the Democratic party and the resulting triumph of the next Republican nominee were among the predictions. The thought brought joy to the North, at least to the

¹⁹New York Times, July 3, 1856.

Republicans.²⁰ But perhaps their joy would have been lessened had they not so lightly dismissed the threats of disunion.

In the few years remaining before the war began, slavery agitation was never far below the surface in Congress, but Morrill took little active part in it. He did not speak out even when his friend John Sherman was losing his bid for the speakership in 1859 over his unwise endorsement of The Impending Crisis of the South.²¹ Sherman had signed without having read the book, something Morrill, always the careful businessman, would never have done. He could bring himself to do no more than vote for his friend.

Although slavery agitation continued, a new act of the play had begun. The locus of power had shifted. The free soil men had the votes and were now content to let matters settle themselves. This contentment probably explains Morrill's inaction in these years. On the other hand Southerners began demanding active interference by

²⁰Green Mountain Freeman, April 8, 1858. Plyman Seamer to Morrill, May 2, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 39.

²¹Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, passim. Hinton R. Helper, The Impending Crisis of the South (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1960), passim. Helper, a southerner, condemned slavery as an economic disaster and called on nonslaveholding whites to boycott slaveholders. Southerners in the House felt any man who endorsed "insurrection" was unfit for speaker. New York Times, Dec. 9 and 12, 1859.

the federal government on behalf of slavery,²² which throws into doubt their claim that they fought for states rights.

Morrill's conservative business habits were evident in his whole political career but were particularly important in choosing issues. Just as Morrill, when a businessman, carefully decided where to invest his funds, so too, as a congressman, he carefully chose the issues before committing his political reputation. He almost always fought for politically popular issues. He did, occasionally, run contrary to popular opinion, as in his adherence to Unitarianism, but such acts attracted little public attention. The first of his chosen personal commitments was the suppression of polygamy.

Toward the end of this first session in Congress, Morrill reported from the Committee on Territories his own bill for the suppression of polygamy and spoke in its behalf. He supported passage of the bill with a concise speech which focused on the constitutional problem. He said that Congress clearly had the power to act in this case because it had purchased the territories and the ability to acquire includes the power to govern. Morrill next pointed out that Congress had that power in the Constitutional clause which gave the Congress the right "to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the

²²New York Times, Feb. 25, 1859.

territories." Morrill also insisted that the outlawing of polygamy would not violate the constitutionally guaranteed right of freedom of religion because what existed was a moral outrage hiding beneath the veil of religious practice. For those convicted of violating the law, he asked that a fine of five hundred dollars and a sentence of from two to five years be imposed. Despite his arguments the House voted to kill the bill by referring it to the Committee of the Whole where it died quietly.²³

The reasons why Morrill's colleagues listened politely to his arguments against polygamy but did nothing were complicated, but a few stand out. One main reason was that, since public interest was low, Congress felt little pressure. Morrill's bill was premature, coming before the press exposés and military expedition of the late 1850's. The New York press passed it by almost unnoticed.²⁴ There was not even constituent mail to prod Morrill or anyone else into pressing the bill. Then, too, he probably used the wrong technique. His argument was far too legalistic to catch the interest of many of his fellow congressmen. Several of them probably felt as he did on

²³Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, p. 1491.

²⁴Norman F. Furniss, The Mormon Conflict, 1850-1859 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), passim. New York Times, June 30, 1856. Even in the following January the New York Tribune was willing simply to ignore the Mormon question. New York Tribune, Jan. 10, 1857.

moral grounds but Utah and polygamy were just too far away to be of concern. Morrill's timing was faulty.²⁵ His keen personal sense of moral outrage was in advance of the national feeling and he brought the remote problem of polygamy before a House preoccupied with the omnipresent question of slavery.

When the House reconvened for the second session of the 34th Congress, Morrill tried to rectify his mistakes by working on a new tack. Instead of emphasizing only the moral aspects of the situation, he exposed the flaunting of the congressional will by authorities in Utah. The new approach included the use of a carefully worded resolution and a painstakingly researched speech.

The Utah resolution, successfully proposed on January 19, 1857, called on the president to submit to Congress all available information on the state of affairs in that territory. Specifically it sought to determine whether resistance had been offered to United States Territorial Officials, and whether the laws were equally administered to all residents.²⁶ These official data were supposed to be combined with the findings of Morrill's own investigation in order to lay the foundation for an attack against polygamy on wider and more solid grounds. But that

²⁵Thomas F. O'Dea, The Mormons (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 109.

²⁶Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, p. 376.

purpose was frustrated because the Executive never responded to this congressional request.²⁷

Morrill had a well researched and carefully written speech but destroyed its possible impact with poor tactics in the House. The best he could do was obtain permission to have it printed in the appendix to remarks.

In his strongly worded speech Morrill blasted the situation in Utah. He based his criticism on several reports which he considered reliable.

Probably the most serious problem was the "un-American" form of government. Morrill indicated that:

The Mormons . . . desire a kingly government in order to make their patriarchal institutions more homogeneous. . . . and lie in wait for an opportunity of defiance and revolt, when they can reach the "crowning glory" of their schemes. . . . Publicly and privately, they indulge in the coarsest and most brutal assaults upon the United States Government and its officers. . . . The lack of patriotism and the ingrained hostility of the Mormons to our Republic admit of no dispute [but] I would not punish them for these facts.²⁸

Morrill continued by pointing out that there were many extraordinary laws and practices in Utah for which responsible parties could be punished. After carefully studying territorial laws he discovered that:

ferries and bridges seem to be monopolized by the Governor and the leading elders, who are thereby enabled to extort considerable tribute from the

²⁷Ibid., p. 284 appendix.

²⁸Ibid., p. 285 appendix.

emigrant travel passing through to California. . . . As all the land requires to be irrigated to make it fruitful, the sole control of the city creek may be considered the cream of these special grants . . .

The act organizing the Territory of Utah "provided that the right of suffrage and of holding office shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States . . ." yet aliens are allowed to vote and hold office. Mormonism is the higher-law qualification. In point of fact, all the voters are mere machines to register the edicts of President Young. No one dares to throw a scattering vote; and hence the result is nearly always unanimous.

It was also provided in the organic act that "no law shall be passed [by Utah] interfering with the primary disposal of the soil." Yet it is notorious that all of the valuable portions of the land are squat upon . . . remain, worthless for all purposes of revenue to the Government of the United States.²⁹

While Morrill rightly pointed out several clear violations of the law which called for annulment by Congress he used faulty logic in his discussion of republicanism. First he claimed that the people of Utah had preferred theocracy. Later he failed to mention that the several practices described flowed naturally from the people's acceptance of an autocratic government. Indeed, this was not even a truly autocratic practice, repugnant as it was to traditional American practice. Having settled in a semi-arid area the Mormons found it necessary to discard the usual control of water by riparian rights in favor of the Spanish system of community control.³⁰ Morrill simply

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 285-86 appendix.

³⁰ Stanley P. Hirshson, The Lion of the Lord (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 97. O'Dea, Mormons, p. 88.

did not understand that to Mormons democracy and freedom of thought were meaningless words.³¹

After stating his case for congressional action against Utah's laws, Morrill got down to his real issue, the moral abuses of the Mormons. While polygamy was his main concern, Morrill also showed that both African and Indian slavery was common among Mormons. In condemning polygamy, he indicated first that the Book of Mormon of 1840 denounced the practice in the phrase "for there shall not be any man among you have, save it be one wife; and concubines you shall have none," and second that Mormon women had expressed their distaste by a short-lived revolt in 1856. Morrill felt that despite their claims of new revelation, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young were simply rationalizing their taking of multiple wives.³²

Morrill concluded his speech by stressing again that it was the duty of Congress to do anything necessary to restore a republican form of government wherever it was absent in the nation. He insisted that the supremacy of Mormon church leaders over the lives of the people of Utah constituted a rejection of such a governmental form. Morrill proposed that Congress disapprove all their laws.

³¹Hirshson, Lion, p. 94.

³²Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, pp. 287-89 appendix. Also see New York Times, April 6, 1860. There is evidence that Morrill is wrong on the attitudes of Mormon women. See Fawn M. Brodie, No Man Knows My History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), pp. 304-5.

He said that Congress "must not persecute the religion but yet must annul their extraordinary laws and outlaw their repugnant practices . . . or be guilty by association."³³

Morrill stated that Congress could not persecute a religion, but he was convinced that a practice could be outlawed. His concern over the absence of republican government was simply a sham to mask his latest blow at polygamy. After all it is difficult to define "republican form of government." Nebraska's unicameral legislature, for example, is atypical but hardly unrepublican. Surely Utahans had the right to discard riparian rights and other traditions. But if they were constantly harassed they might well discard polygamy to turn off the spotlight Morrill was trying to shine on them.

Unfortunately for his purpose, Morrill was unable to bring much pressure on the Mormons owing to his own shortcomings on the floor of the House. After failing to obtain time to deliver his speech, Morrill was forced into an ineffectual attempt to work through the appropriations process. He moved to withhold all funds from Utah until there was compliance with federal and territorial law and officials. That motion was ruled out of order in an appropriations bill. Next, Morrill moved to delete

³³Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, p. 290 appendix.

pay and mileage allowance for the territorial legislature, which was also ruled out of order because the section had already been passed.³⁴ At this point in his career Morrill was still a parliamentary novice, but he learned quickly and was seldom caught unprepared in future years.

After his easy reelection Morrill returned to Congress for another try at his seemingly hopeless campaign for the suppression of polygamy.³⁵ He introduced a bill early in the first session but it died in committee, which might have ended the fight.³⁶ However, the situation in Utah was deteriorating rapidly and Buchanan finally had to send an army to force compliance with federal authority. Thus, conditions would probably be more favorable for Morrill's third try.

The military expedition was only a limited success in rectifying the state of affairs in Utah. It placed a Gentile (non-Mormon) governor in office and kept the courts running at bayonet point. But, Mormons made up the juries and refused to convict a "saint" of any crime against a

³⁴Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, p. 836.

³⁵R. H. Rollins to Morrill, Aug. 5, 1856 and C. Chapman to Morrill, Aug. 13, 1856, Morrill Papers, Reel 2. On third nomination see G. C. Robbins to S. A. Marsh, July 28, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 3.

³⁶Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1858, pp. 184, 2114.

"Gentile."³⁷ One particularly galling case involved a Mormon accused of raping and murdering a young Gentile girl. The Secretary of the Interior had sufficient proof for a conviction but could not get it. He used the case as a vehicle to show the need for an indefinite period of martial law. Martial law had not been imposed when the army entered Utah and the result had been increased contempt for the federal government and the judge and jury system.³⁸ That was the low state to which affairs in Utah had sunk by the time the thirty-sixth Congress assembled.

Morrill, now in his third term and a member of the powerful Ways and Means Committee, quickly began a new campaign to outlaw polygamy and to bring Utah back under the control of the central government. On February 15, 1860, he introduced a bill to outlaw polygamy and to nullify certain acts of the territorial legislature.³⁹ The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee which reported it back favorably a month later.

Scattered opposition came from some legislators who argued that Congress could not legislate against crime in a territory since it was an internal matter. That idea was easily refuted by reference to the congressional right

³⁷ New York Times, May 13, 1859.

³⁸ Ibid., Dec. 30, 1859.

³⁹ Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, p. 793.

to legislate for the territories. Morrill had long ago taken that position and he stood with it.⁴⁰

Surprisingly, even with the bill progressing so well in the House that Morrill felt no compulsion to make a new major speech, the issue still had not generated widespread public notice. The common people, who seemed to write their congressman on the slightest whim, were strangely silent this time. Neither did the newspapers take much interest. Of course, the Salt Lake City papers hotly condemned the bill and its author for unconstitutional intervention in territorial internal affairs and in a matter of religion.⁴¹ But the major papers said little. The influential New York Times equivocated. While the bill was pending, the editors said that it seemed unlikely that anything less than a large Gentile immigration would solve the problem, but that Congress nonetheless had to outlaw polygamy. After the bill passed the House, the Times deplored the move because the lack of enforcement provisions would make the antipolygamy statute a dead letter. That would serve only to make the federal government yet more contemptible in Mormon eyes.⁴² The fact was

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 1150-51, 1410, 1492-93.

⁴¹The Mountaineer (Salt Lake City), March 31, 1860.

⁴²New York Times, March 30, 1860 and April 7, 1869.

that everyone agreed something had to be done but no one had a viable alternative to Morrill's solution.

With mainly indifferent support the bill progressed rapidly through the House. John McClernand of Illinois interjected an alternative by proposing the division of Utah as a means of breaking Mormon power. Neither the idea of division nor any other counter-proposal gained significant support. Numerous members made hour-long speeches on both sides as the measure moved toward passage.

William H. Hooper, the delegate from Utah, made the final attempt to defeat the antipolygamy bill. He warned that the bill would reawaken recently dead animosities created by military coercion. When pressed on polygamy, he tried to soften the issue by mentioning that half the men were monogamous and another quarter had only two wives. Hooper's efforts were in vain. Morrill got a large vote (149-60) and the bill passed.⁴³ But despite this large majority for its passage in the House, the antipolygamy bill died in the Senate.

A third defeat might have discouraged most men but Justin Smith Morrill was a persistent individual. Even while working on a major tariff revision and the land grant college act, he determined to try again.

⁴³Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1515-46, 1558-59.

Following the crush of business brought on by the secession of the South and the beginning of the Civil War, Morrill began work on his fourth bill to outlaw polygamy. Twenty days after its introduction the bill was reported out of committee with a recommendation that it be passed. Morrill forestalled debate by explaining that it was the same bill passed by a large majority in the previous Congress. He demanded the previous question and the Republican-dominated House passed the bill. This time success was complete. The bill reached President Lincoln's desk and he signed it into law on July 1, 1862.⁴⁴

Morrill could take pride in achieving a goal which he had pursued for eight long years, but it was a questionable success. As with the earlier versions this bill was unenforceable because it relied on uncooperative Mormon grand juries for indictments. There were only two likely possibilities. Either the law would die on the books or a second civil war would be needed to enforce it.⁴⁵ With the life of the Union at stake, Lincoln could not afford to send part of the army to Utah. That the law did become a dead letter was shown when, in 1874, Luke P. Poland, Morrill's successor in the House,

⁴⁴Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1581, 1847-48. U.S., Statutes at Large, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., p. 501.

⁴⁵O'Dea, Mormons, pp. 104-5. New York Times, June 19, 1862.

introduced a bill to give federal judges power to act in cases covered by the law of 1862.⁴⁶

Clearly the bill seemed to violate legislative common sense since it is seldom wise to pass an unenforceable law. The practitioners of the outlawed acts are allowed to see the limits of power which are better left vague. It would be far better to wait until the power necessary to back up the words was at hand.

Because he was no fool, Brigham Young realized that eventually the power of the United States would be brought to bear on his people. With this in mind he laid plans for a strategic retreat. Young told Speaker of the House Schuyler Colfax in July, 1865, that polygamy was not essential to Mormonism and could be abolished through a new revelation.⁴⁷ How curious that Brigham Young, the dreamer, should be so pragmatic while Justin Morrill, the practitioner of the art of the possible, should be so moralistic.

Why did Morrill work so long and so hard for the passage of a law which common sense told him could not be enforced? The answer would seem to be that he was on a moral crusade. From the first he spoke of the moral

⁴⁶ Nels Anderson, The Desert Saints (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 290. See also New York Times, Jan. 7, 1867.

⁴⁷ New York Times, July 18, 1865. On Mormon reasons for practicing polygamy see Anderson, Saints, p. 391 and Hirshson, Lion, p. 123.

outrage which arose from the second of the twin relics of barbarism. He must have known that the law's provisions could not be carried out, especially in the middle of a civil war. Yet, it seems to have been important to Morrill to take a moral stand against polygamy and to get the Congress of the United States to concur. His New England Puritanism, rather than regard for practical politics, guided his actions.

Morrill's moral fervor may have been generated by shame and state pride. He loved his home state and was ever alert to see that the honor of Vermont was defended. Because of this state pride, he could not help but be shamed by the knowledge that both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, the high priests of polygamy, were native Vermonsters.⁴⁸ Through his bill Morrill could condemn them and thus remove a smear from the good name of Vermont. A public damnation, through passage of a bill outlawing the Mormon's peculiar institution, would serve to satisfy honor even if it did little toward actually eliminating what he regarded as a moral outrage, polygamy.

⁴⁸Bernard Devoto, "Brigham Young," Dictionary of American Biography, 1935, vol. 20, p. 620.

CHAPTER III

LAND GRANT COLLEGE ACT

Many men dream of leaving a monument behind them. The best monuments, the ones which evoke a favorable memory of a man, are the hardest to build. Justin Morrill left his legacy in the more than threescore Land Grant Colleges around the United States. These colleges were founded as a result of the Land Grant College Act of 1862¹ which was written and sponsored by Morrill. Although he was responsible for several other major pieces of legislation, this one had the most far-reaching effects. The Land Grant Colleges continue to educate and train thousands of young citizens every year.

Several existing plans influenced Morrill during the years when he was developing the land grant college concept. Before Morrill introduced his first land grant bill in 1858, there were a number of institutions for

¹The bill was often called the Agricultural College Act, a title affixed by a clerk and disliked by Morrill. Alfred C. True, A History of Agricultural Education in the United States: 1785-1925 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1929), p. 108.

training workingmen, including the new Agricultural College of Michigan and the Peoples College in New York. There had also been several attempts to induce Congress to provide an alternative to the traditional classical education on a national scale. But, the movement for practical education was limited and under financed.²

Alden Partridge founded an academy at Norwich, Vermont, in 1819, which was incorporated as Norwich University in 1834. Partridge was an educator who felt that the existing form of education was defective and that the greatest defects were rigidity and a lack of practicality. He planned a curriculum, intended to open up the course of studies, that included physical education, military drill, and a wide variety of electives. The need for more practical education was met by stressing mathematics and the sciences related to engineering.³

Partridge carried his efforts for educational reform a step further in a January, 1841, petition to Congress. He asked Congress to establish a new national system of education on republican lines. The new system would supercede the classical system which he felt was

²John T. Fey, "Morrill's Concept of Education," Vermont History, XXXI (1963), 158. True, Agricultural Education, passim. N. A. McCune, "Justin Smith Morrill," Michigan Agricultural College Record, June 25, 1901, p. 5.

³True, Agricultural Education, p. 82.

antirepublican and monastic. He expected these new institutions to reflect republicanism because they were to be both nonpartisan and nonsectarian.

The curriculum, Partridge said, should include a broad spectrum of courses including the traditional liberal arts. However, the college would prepare men for lives in farming, engineering and commerce by teaching the practical fields of study. These fields would be the natural and economic sciences with their applications to agriculture, engineering, manufactures, and commerce; physical education; and military science and practice.⁴ In effect, Partridge was asking Congress to finance the establishment of new Norwich Universities all over the nation. Nothing came from this action directly, but it is an important and noteworthy predecessor of the Morrill bill.

The ideas of Partridge, in many ways the prototype of the land grant college plan, were well known to Morrill. Morrill was even offered, but declined, a trusteeship at the college.⁵ In addition, it is almost certain that Morrill knew Partridge himself very well. Norwich is only twelve miles from Strafford and Judge Harris,

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

⁵Morrill to J. Davis, Dec. 8, 1848, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

Morrill's business partner, was an incorporator of Norwich University and a trustee until his death in 1855.⁶

A second attempt to establish practical education was led by Jonathan Baldwin Turner, a member of the faculty of Illinois College at Jacksonville. Turner sensed the educational needs of the common man. He felt that there were two classes of men; the professional and the industrial. The small, privileged, professional class had the classical colleges to train their young men while the industrial class had none.

Turner first advocated founding an industrial university to care for the professional wants and needs of workingmen in Illinois, and later expanded his concept to include such a university in each of the states. All of these universities would cooperate with the Smithsonian Institution in improving the life of the industrial classes. The proposed curriculum emphasized the industrial arts and sciences which would prepare the students to perform their chosen job. A classical department might be added but was not necessary. Experimental farms would also be an integral part of each institution.⁷

Enough support had been mustered for the Turner Plan by 1853 to persuade the Illinois State Legislature

⁶True, Agricultural Education, p. 82.

⁷Ibid., pp. 85-86.

to pass a resolution requesting Congress to take favorable action. The resolution asked the Congress for a law donating at least one-half million dollars worth of public lands to each state. The proceeds of the land sales would be used to endow an industrial university which would provide the liberal, practical, and varied education appropriate to the needs of the industrial classes.⁸ However, Congress did not act on the resolution.

Morrill was also well acquainted with the Turner Plan. He was a delegate from Vermont to the United States Agricultural Society meeting in February, 1856,⁹ where the Turner or Illinois Plan for industrial universities was thoroughly discussed. In addition, Turner claimed that he sent Morrill all his information after the introduction of the Land Grant College Bill.¹⁰ However, there is in the Morrill Papers no evidence to support that contention.¹¹

While Morrill was very likely influenced by the thinking of many men, probably his greatest motivation was his own strong interest in education. He never ceased to

⁸Ibid., p. 91.

⁹Ibid., p. 94. He was asked to propagandize in favor of Vermont's famous Morgan horses.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹In reminiscences many years later, Morrill denied having received aid. Morrill to W. T. Hemett, Oct. 6, 1894, Morrill Papers, Reel 24.

feel deprivation at his lack of a college education. Because of this feeling he spent his lifetime educating himself well beyond the level he might have achieved in college.

Morrill was a man taken, almost obsessed, with learning. He and his friends ranged widely in their little debating society at Strafford. While reading books by and about famous people, Morrill took their thoughts down and carefully preserved them. Later in life he used those notes as the base for a book entitled Self-Consciousness of Noted Persons.¹²

Throughout his lifetime Morrill took a part in spreading education to the working class from which he had sprung. He took a close personal interest in the Strafford Library from the time Judge Harris willed it to the town until he himself had the building erected for it years later. During his first term in Congress, Morrill was given the honor of reporting a bill to increase all the territorial libraries out of the Committee on the Territories. He kept up his interest in education through work on the Agricultural College Act and into later life. In 1886, for example, he agreed to sponsor legislation

¹²Carl W. Borgmann, "The Education of Freemen," Vermont History, XXV (1957), 32. James Barrett, "Early Life of Justin S. Morrill," The Vermonter (St. Albans), Nov., 1896. Morrill Papers, Reel 43 contains many such items. Justin S. Morrill, Self-Consciousness of Noted Persons (Cambridge: John Wilson and Co., 1882).

allowing historical society publications distributed without charge to be mailed free or at a low rate.¹³ Thus, Morrill's interest in education was both genuine and of lifelong duration.

Morrill began the task of improving education while serving his first session in the House of Representatives. Just a few weeks after attending the United States Agricultural Society meeting in February, 1856, Morrill introduced a resolution asking the Committee on Agriculture to explore the possibility of establishing one or more national agricultural schools on the plan of West Point and Annapolis. The provision would be made to instruct one boy from each congressional district and two from each state at large in scientific and practical subjects at public expense. However, this attempt failed abruptly when, on the objection of Representative Lawrence Keitt of South Carolina, the House refused even to receive the resolution.¹⁴

Even though this resolution was introduced in the same month that he had heard the Illinois Plan discussed, the two measures bore almost no resemblance to one another.

¹³Nathan B. Cobb to Morrill, Dec. 7, 1857, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, p. 1440. The honor may have been simply coincidental but it is probable that the committee was aware of his interest in the field of learning. Morrill to Albert D. Hager, Dec. 11, 1886, Justin S. Morrill Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

¹⁴Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 1st Sess., 1856, p. 530.

Nor was Morrill's resolution like the bills he drew up in 1858 and 1862. The resolution was a half-formed idea prematurely proposed by the inexperienced member from Vermont.

Yet, there was enough in the resolution to show that Morrill put a considerable amount of thought into his Land Grant College Act. He must have been considering ways to provide higher education for the common man for quite some time before he entered Congress. Then, it took him two more years to perfect his educational plan and to find a way to finance it--through land grants.

A few days after Morrill began his second term in Congress, he introduced the first Land Grant College Act. The stated purpose of the bill was "to distribute a portion of the public domain to the states and territories in order to fund colleges of agriculture and the mechanic arts." Morrill tried to have the bill referred to the Committee on Agriculture. He served on that committee and felt it would favor the bill. John Letcher of Virginia demanded that the bill go instead to the Committee on Public Lands. The latter motion was passed.¹⁵

When the Agricultural College Bill was reported out of committee on April 15, 1858, Morrill demonstrated

¹⁵ Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1857, pp. 32-37. Beginning with the 36th Congress committee appointments have stood for the life of the Congress. Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1860, p. 3. See also Fey, "Morrill's Concept of Education," p. 157.

that he had learned parliamentary tactics. Williamson R. W. Cobb of Alabama, reporting for the majority of the Committee on Public Lands, recommended that the bill be rejected. Morrill quickly acted to counter that recommendation, usually a death sentence on a bill. It was essential that the bill be kept before the House. To help him accomplish this end Morrill had the aid of two allies, David Walbridge of Michigan and Israel Washburn of Maine. The three men made a series of motions designed to keep the bill on the floor and especially out of the hands of the unfriendly Committee on Public Lands. Morrill was granted permission to speak during the next morning hour.¹⁶ Walbridge, who had brought in the favorable minority report, moved that consideration of the bill be postponed and that in the meantime the bill and all reports be printed. Paradoxically, Washburn moved that the bill be returned to the Public Lands Committee. All these motions were left pending to guarantee that the Agricultural College Bill would not be brushed aside.¹⁷

At the next meeting in the morning hour, April 20, Morrill and his allies used another series of parliamentary moves to give him the opportunity to speak in favor of his

¹⁶The "Morning Hour" is defined as the time to act on bills reported from the committees.

¹⁷Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1857, pp. 1609-10. The pending motions prevented the automatic burial of the bill on the Speaker's table by freezing the committee reports at that point.

bill. After Morrill rose to claim the floor, Walbridge and Washburn quickly withdrew their pending motions to postpone and to recommit. These maneuvers allowed Morrill to offer an amendment which would become the pending floor business. The amendment was in the form of a substitute bill almost identical to the original bill rejected by the Public Lands Committee. Since he held the floor, Morrill now had the chance to deliver his speech on the Land Grant College Bill.

Morrill began by pointing out that many areas of the economy were aided by government grants, yet the vital area of agriculture received nothing. He insisted that:

The prosperity and happiness of a large and populous nation depends: 1. Upon the division of the land into small parcels. 2. Upon the education of the proprietors of the soil . . . the common mode of cultivating the soil in all parts of the country is so defective as to make the soil poorer year by year . . . Thus the accumulated store of ages passes away in a single generation. . . .

We do not ask for constant and persistent outlay and guidance; but a recognizance for once, and in the most convenient mode, of the propriety of encouraging useful knowledge among farmers and mechanics in order to enlarge our productive power . . .¹⁸

Having laid a foundation showing the need for improvements in agriculture, Morrill explained how agricultural colleges would fill the need. He said:

Such colleges may rightfully claim the authority of teachers to announce facts and fixed laws, and to scatter broadcast that knowledge which will prove

¹⁸Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1857, pp. 1692-93.

useful in building up a great nation . . . Farmers will not be cheated longer by unsustained speculations . . . our mines are much less remunerative than they would be under the control of Americans, with some fundamental instruction in their vocation . . . our mechanics need the means for that arm to acquire culture, skill, and efficiency . . .

Our present literary colleges need have no more jealousy of agricultural colleges than a porcelain manufactory would have of an iron foundary. They move in different spheres, without competition, and using no raw material that will diminish the supply of one or the other.¹⁹

In conclusion, Morrill made an appeal for votes from the populous Eastern states. For years there had been a natural resentment in the established areas of the nation over the distribution of public lands to the new states. As a rule states were granted federal lands within their borders. Since most of the public domain lay in the West, the older states received almost nothing. In Morrill's bill lay an opportunity for the East to share in the public domain through issuance of scrip redeemable in western lands. Finally, he said, all of the people would have a chance to benefit.²⁰

Following Morrill's speech Cobb forced a test vote on the bill by moving to table it. Morrill immediately tried to curtail further actions by moving to recommit and calling the previous question, but Cobb's motion to table took precedence. However, once that motion was voted down,

¹⁹Ibid., p. 1694.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 1695-96.

Morrill was fairly sure that a majority of the House would be favorable if he could arrange a vote on the passage of the bill.²¹

The defeat of the attempt to table gave Morrill the opportunity to press toward an immediate vote on the bill through use of the pending call of the previous question on his motion to recommit. The opponents of the Agricultural College Bill demanded a division of the House on seconding the previous question, but it was approved. This success cut off any further motions to amend or refer and prevented debate by everyone except Cobb who held the right to speak as the member who reported the bill to the House.²²

Despite the continued victories for Morrill, Cobb and his allies still had a few parliamentary weapons left. They again moved to table the bill and demanded a roll call vote. But, that move failed too. The opponents did manage to block Morrill's request to withdraw his motion to recommit. They were only playing a delaying game, but continued it, hoping to sway votes.

The last great obstacle preventing passage of the Land Grant Act was Williamson Cobb himself. He paid a compliment to Morrill by mentioning the extraordinary progress of a bill reported unfavorably. Nevertheless, on

²¹Ibid., p. 1697.

²²Ibid., p. 1739.

the verge of an unexpected direct vote on the bill, Cobb planned to say everything possible to show that the measure should not pass.

Congressman Cobb explained that the Public Lands Committee had two major objectives in mind when it recommended rejection of the pending bill. The committee was responding to criticism over land grants made in the previous session and also trying to return to the traditional policy of refusing all such requests due to possible unforeseen dangers.

With these goals in mind he asked for a negative vote, even though the committee felt the bill to be meritorious, for several reasons. The committee felt that:

The public domain belongs to all the people of the United States; their interest in it is common, and the Government is but the trustee for the common benefit, limited in its actions over it to those powers conferred by the Constitution. It is part of the public funds, and can be devoted to no purpose forbidden to the money of the Federal Government . . . [You] may be curious to know how I can reconcile my vote against this bill, meritorious as it is, with the votes which I have given in favor of railroad grants. It is a very easy matter. . . . I hold that the grants to States and Territories for railroad purposes increase the value of the public lands . . .²³

In the wake of Cobb's speech Morrill moved quickly toward victory despite one last delaying tactic by the opposition. He asked again for permission to withdraw his motion to recommit which had only been made to cut off debate. The opposition forced a vote but recommitment was

²³Ibid., pp. 1740-42.

denied. Morrill's amendment, the substitute bill, was then accepted. Finally, after a call of the previous question, the main question was proposed and the bill passed on a vote of 105-100.²⁴

Unfortunately for Morrill the rapid progress of the Land Grant College Bill was brought to an abrupt halt by indifference in the Senate. The bill was quickly reported from the Committee on Public Lands with no recommendation. Senator Charles E. Stuart of Michigan, the Agricultural College Bill's Senate manager, tried to get a vote without debate. Instead, the Senate sidetracked the bill by agreeing to hold it over until the next session.²⁵

Soon after the 35th Congress convened for its second session, it became apparent that Stuart was not the man to manage the Agricultural College Bill. At the first opportunity, he moved that the bill be made a special order for December 21. But, when the day arrived, the Senate refused to consider the bill because some members who wanted to speak were absent. Stuart argued vainly that, since the day had been set aside for this bill, debate should proceed. Stuart was unable to bring the bill up again.²⁶

²⁴Ibid., p. 1743.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 1989, 2230.

²⁶Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1857, pp. 108, 186-87.

Since it had become clear that Stuart could not persuade the Senate to act, Benjamin Wade of Ohio replaced him on February 1 to save his friend Morrill's bill. Wade argued that this worthy bill, which would aid farmers, was in danger of being lost without a fair hearing in the wake of the appropriation bills. He made a successful motion to postpone all other business until the Agricultural College Bill was acted upon.²⁷

Ironically, the major speech opposing the bill was made by Wade's Ohio colleague, Senator George E. Pugh, who characterized it as a fraud. Pugh claimed that no agricultural college would ever be built because speculators would get all the land at bargain rates as a result of the required short selling period of under five years. He condemned the distribution arrangement because he felt it gave little to the poor states and an abundance to the rich ones. Finally, said Pugh, the bill was an interference in the internal affairs of the states and beyond the constitutional power of Congress.²⁸

Jacob Collamer of Vermont retorted with a brief speech in which he refuted the main points of the opposition. Collamer countered the claim of unconstitutionality

²⁷Hans L. Trefousse, Benjamin Franklin Wade (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1963), p. 188. Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1859, p. 713.

²⁸Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1858, pp. 714-17.

by pointing out that Congress had the power to dispose of the public lands in any way it chose. He also denied that the western public land states would be ruined or owned by the older states because the total amount of scrip was not large and could be chosen only by individuals not by a state itself.²⁹

On the following day, the opposition stopped the Agricultural College Act, but its victory was temporary. By a single vote, a motion to recommit the bill to the Committee on Public Lands was carried. But, on February 3, Senator William M. Gwin of California inexplicably changed his mind and moved to reconsider. With Gwin's vote Wade was able to bring the bill before the Senate again.³⁰

Following the defection of Gwin, the Agricultural College Act moved quickly toward passage. The Committee of the Whole reported the bill to the Senate with only minor amendments. Even though the vote was postponed over the weekend and Clement C. Clay of Alabama made a final plea of unconstitutionality, the Agricultural College Act passed the Senate by a vote of 25-22 on February 7, 1859.³¹

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 722-23. Jacob Collamer was so respected by his constituents that his statue was included, along with Ethan Allen's, as Vermont's contribution to Statuary Hall in the National Capitol.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 734, 784.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 784-86, 851-57.

Morrill hoped to procure the needed presidential approval for his bill despite rumors of a veto. Precedent was on Morrill's side since the veto had rarely been used. He also received some support from the Democratic press, such as, the Burlington (Vermont) Sentinel. The editors stated that Morrill's bill was worthy of enactment and they hoped it would not get the rumored veto. In addition, Buchanan's record gave Morrill reason to hope for his approval. In 1827 Congressman Buchanan had voted in favor of a bill to supply an endowment for a deaf and dumb asylum in Kentucky.³²

Morrill's hopes were dashed when Buchanan vetoed the Agricultural College Act on the grounds that it was both inexpedient and unconstitutional in six ways. Buchanan insisted that the bill, passed at a time when the treasury was low, would deprive the government of revenue needed in the next year by flooding the land market. The bill would endanger relations with the states due to the unwarranted interference by the federal government. The scrip would cause a monumental injury to new states because speculators would grab the best lands and hold up legitimate settlement. Despite good intentions this grant could not help agriculture since the states probably would not fulfill the contract and could not be coerced. This grant

³²Burlington Weekly Sentinel, Feb. 11, 1859. True, Agricultural Education, p. 183.

could unjustly injure struggling literary colleges. Both agriculture and education would be better served by establishing agricultural professorships at existing colleges. Finally, the President said, it was unconstitutional both to appropriate money to aid education in a state, this grant being simply money in a different form, and to dispose of the public lands by outright gift.³³

Morrill immediately denounced Buchanan's veto as a blunder if not a crime. He said that the president had flaunted the will of Congress and of the people, many of whom petitioned for the bill. Morrill claimed that all of the past presidents, especially Washington, would have signed his bill.

Next, Morrill refuted each point the president had made. He said that revenue would not be lost during the coming year because two years would be needed to settle details. After that time the land sales would not have any more effect than the military bounties, which did not diminish revenues. The bill would not blur the federal-state division of powers since the states had been made trustees in the act. Nor would the bill harm the new states. Equal justice was done to all by the provision for a reevaluation after the 1860 census. Should the scrip devalue the land the new states would be better off because

³³Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1858, pp. 1412-13.

they could hold their lands while the old states sold the scrip. Lastly, Morrill insisted, the erroneous logic of the veto was most clearly exhibited in Buchanan's support of agricultural professorships for, if the colleges were unconstitutional, so must be the professorships.

The veto, Morrill concluded, was simply a partisan move. Had a Democrat proposed a land grant bill for almost any purpose, Buchanan would have signed. It was only unconstitutional for an opposition member to suggest giving away public lands no matter how worthwhile the cause.³⁴

Editorial comment on the veto was divided. The Republican New York Tribune strongly condemned Buchanan's reasoning. On the other hand the Washington Evening Star and the New York Times praised the president's wisdom and courage.

The Tribune, theorizing at length, claimed that the real reason for the veto was that Buchanan was a puppet of the slave power. Since he was their creature and instrument, he would destroy any measure they opposed, such as a bill for the education of labor. The slave power felt threatened by a suggestion to unite mind and muscle so they ordered Buchanan to veto the Agricultural College Act. Buchanan would gladly sign a bill granting lands for a project that the slave power approved.

³⁴Ibid., p. 1414.

Buchanan's stated reasons, said the Tribune, especially regarding financial loss, were foolish on several counts. First, holders of land warrants had under-sold the government for ten years with no loss to the Treasury. Second, many states would hold land until prices rose as others who had received land grants had done. Even if the states did not hold land the amount appropriated was not large enough to ruin the market. Finally, the editors claimed, Buchanan was talking in circles when he expressed fear of dumping land and of speculators in the same message. The speculators would not enter a flooded market. Buchanan's villains were simply strawmen.³⁵

The Evening Star came out bluntly in support of Buchanan. Its editors agreed 100 percent because Buchanan's message contained an able treatise with incontrovertible arguments against the bill.³⁶

The opposition of the New York Times was more unexpected because a few years earlier it had supported a free agricultural college in New York. At that time, using many of the same arguments that Morrill used to support his bill, the Times said that education should be provided for the workingmen. Yet, three years later, the Times disagreed only with the language of the veto message,

³⁵New York Tribune, March 5, 1859.

³⁶Washington Evening Star, Feb. 28, 1859.

while making the point that the President showed courage and rendered a service to the nation. The editors especially noted that the federal government could not provide schools for only one group, the farmers, even if it was the largest in the nation.³⁷ Apparently the Times favored agricultural colleges only when established by individual states.

Morrill was undaunted after one battle, but a presidential veto prevented any real chance to pass the Agricultural College Bill until a new president took office. Nevertheless, Morrill introduced his bill to the 36th Congress. The bill was referred to the Committee on Public Lands and never reappeared.³⁸

Toward the end of Abraham Lincoln's first year as president, Morrill introduced his revised Agricultural College Act. This bill was nearly identical to the one vetoed four years earlier. The major differences were an increase in the land granted to thirty thousand acres per member of Congress and a provision for the teaching of military tactics.

³⁷New York Times, Jan. 23, 1856 and March 1, 1859. After the colleges were established the editors became very favorable. They suggested that young men could prepare for more useful lives in them than in the Armed Services' Academies. New York Times, May 5, 1867.

³⁸Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, p. 793.

Despite the Republican majority in the Committee on Public Lands, the Land Grant College Bill became stalled because of Western opposition. It was not reported back for eighteen weeks, and, when it was returned on May 29, the committee suggested rejection. The long delay prompted Morrill to have Benjamin Wade introduce an identical bill in the Senate.³⁹

In contrast to the bill's lack of progress in the House, Senate action was remarkably swift, only forty days elapsing between the introduction of the bill on May 2 and its passage. Two weeks after his committee received the bill, Senator James Harlan of Iowa reported it with minor amendments but without recommendation. Wade then managed a rapid floor consideration.⁴⁰

On May 21, Senator James H. Lane of Kansas made the main speech in opposition which was directed at the land distribution clause, not against passage of the act. He feared that Kansas, the newest state, would see all its choice lands claimed by outsiders before it even exercised its admission option to reserve school lands. To prevent that catastrophe, Lane proposed that all agricultural college scrip be located in the territories.

³⁹Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 99, 2432.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 1935, 2160, 2187.

Wade replied that the federal government had been very generous with Kansas, and it was the state's responsibility to choose school lands quickly. He denied Lane's implication that a state had a right to the public domain within its borders. The land belonged to the United States to be disposed of at the pleasure of the government.⁴¹

Senator Harlan of Iowa, another public land state, made a speech three days later in rebuttal of Lane. Harlan pointed out that their states should not be selfish because they had received vast tracts of the public domain and ought not to begrudge the old states a share. He added that Senator Lane's fear was groundless because, even if all the scrip was located in Kansas, the state would have immense acreage remaining and also because choice land was available in other states and territories of the West.⁴²

The vote on the Land Grant College Act was taken June 10 after Senator Lane made a final effort to protect his state. Lane asked for an amendment limiting the amount of land to be claimed in any one state to one million acres. Wade accepted the amendment and the bill passed by a large majority, 32-7.⁴³

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 2238-39.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 2328-29.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 2625, 2634.

While his Agricultural College Bill was in the final stages before passage in the Senate, Morrill was finally able to speak in the House on the need for its immediate enactment. He explained that, even though he himself had often urged postponement of many worthy bills until after the war, this bill was twenty-five years overdue and deserved to pass on its own merits. It would, he said, provide an educational opportunity to the discharged soldiers and the rest of the agricultural and industrial classes.

The major change from the bill passed in 1858 was the provision for military training. Morrill said that:

Something of military instruction has been incorporated in the bill in consequence of the new conviction of its necessity forced upon the attention of the loyal states by the history of the past year. . . . The national school at West Point may suffice for the regular Army in ordinary years of peace, but it is wholly inadequate when a large army is to be suddenly put into service . . . each state must have the means within itself to organize and officer its own forces.⁴⁴

In his primary appeal for support Morrill stressed that the nation could easily afford the land but could not afford the consequences of continued agricultural neglect. He pointed out that:

There were, September 30, 1861, of surveyed public lands 134,218,330 acres, the unsurveyed being many times greater. Of these lands it is

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 256 Appendix. Morrill makes his position in favor of the military training very clear in Morrill to Charles Curtis, Apr. 30, 1877, Morrill Papers, Reel 31.

proposed to donate to the States for these colleges, if all should accept the conditions, about 9,000,000 acres. . . . We have now abandoned the public lands as capital, with the design of deriving a larger revenue from those who may settle upon them and make them fruitful. And here these land colleges come in aid of the plan of improving, not only the new lands, but also the old, and thereby extending the basis of taxation and revenue. . . .

I attempted to show, [in 1858] by the facts of the census of 1850, compared with those of 1840, including other State returns, that there was a constant and widely prevailing diminution of crops per acre under our go-ahead system of farming. . . . I regret to say, the retrograde march of agriculture, and . . . the positions heretofore assumed have only too much support in the census of 1860. . . .

These colleges, founded in every State, will elevate the character of farmers and mechanics, increase the prosperity of agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, and may to some extent guard against the sheer ignorance of all military art which shrouded the country, and especially the North, at the time when the tocsin of war sounded at Fort Sumter.⁴⁵

With the help provided by Senator Wade, Morrill was able to bypass the roadblock on his bill in the House and get it enacted into law. On June 17 Morrill called up the Senate version of the Land Grant College Act and explained that it was identical to the long delayed House Bill. The House agreed to consider the Senate bill. Brushing aside weak opposition, Morrill pushed a final vote, and the bill passed. President Lincoln signed the Land Grant College Act July 2, 1862.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 257-59 Appendix.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 2769-70, 3062.

Morrill was proud of his accomplishment, and during the crucial early years he maintained a close paternalistic watch to prevent action which would harm the developing colleges. The first attack occurred in 1864 when Representative William S. Holman of Indiana unsuccessfully tried to amend a bill which allowed additional time for states to accept the provisions of the Land Grant College Act. Holman proposed that a state be permitted to divert the fund to educate war orphans. Morrill angrily retorted that such a move would eviscerate the original bill without reason since war orphans were the most likely beneficiaries of the Agricultural Colleges.⁴⁷ A second challenge was raised in 1869 by George F. Hoar, a congressman from Massachusetts. He proposed establishing a national system of common schools if the laggard states did not act first. Morrill opposed this bill because the funds would have come from land sales. Such competition would lessen the possibility of such monies going to the Agricultural Colleges.⁴⁸ Obviously, the Land Grant College Act was a success that Morrill intended to follow up.

⁴⁷ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1284, 1497-99.

⁴⁸ George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), I, 265.

Managing the passage of the Land Grant College Act was very difficult, an exhibition of great parliamentary skill. Few bills have ever passed Congress without a single favorable committee report. Of course, Morrill had the support of a majority in each House, but more than that was needed. The Houses of Congress usually follow the advice in committee reports. These committees were composed of men who had become experts in their areas. Because many unwise bills would gain a majority vote if placed directly before either House, the committees were charged with sorting out the many bills which were defective in some way. Yet, despite the handicap of negative or neutral committee reports, Morrill got his bill passed.

The difficulties encountered by Morrill in getting the Agricultural College Act passed raised the question of motivation. Constituent pressure, potential advantage, idealism, pressing need, and many other motives could be sufficient to cause a man to dedicate himself to pressing an idea. Usually motivation will rise from a combination of several causes.

In a representative democracy constituent pressure has often brought legislative action. Such influence was felt in this case, but it came in the form of urges to continue after the bill had been introduced. There is no evidence that Morrill's constituents ever directly asked for agricultural colleges. One correspondent did stress

the need to improve agricultural methods and suggested the creation of a Department of Agriculture to disseminate information. But, from the time Morrill introduced the bill, the letters favoring it arrived in substantial number. Many said it was a grand idea to promote practical education, while others stressed the more mundane aspects such as getting a share of public lands for the East.⁴⁹

Morrill was helped in working for the bill by many important men, but none of them appears to have been a motivating factor. Henry Winter Davis, Schuyler Colfax, and Benjamin Wade all lent their support in Congress. Presidents J. P. Williams of the Agricultural College of Michigan and O. P. Hubbard of Dartmouth College and many other educators lent active support, but none of them approached Morrill before he introduced the bill. Actually, prominent people Morrill consulted tended to be discouraging.⁵⁰

⁴⁹F. Holbrook to Morrill, Oct. 26, 1857, Morrill Papers, Reel 35. Holbrook was the war governor of Vermont. C. H. Raymond to Morrill, Jan. 14, 1858 and F. G. Cary to Morrill, Feb. 4, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 3. William C. Kittreayr to Morrill, June 30, 1862, Morrill Papers, Reel 36. Pliny H. White to Morrill, Jan. 2, 1858 and J. Windsor to Morrill, March 4, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 3. S. Whitcomb to Morrill, Dec. 16, 1857 and John Kimball to Morrill, Dec. 28, 1857, Morrill Papers, Reel 2.

⁵⁰Bernard Steiner, Life of Henry Winter Davis (Baltimore: John Murphy Co., 1916), p. 161. William Howard Smith, Schuyler Colfax (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1952), pp. 99, 114. O. P. Hubbard to Morrill, Oct. 23, 1858 and Joseph R. Williams to Morrill, Nov. 15, 1858, Morrill Papers, Reel 4. William E. Sawyer, "The Evolution of the Morrill Act of 1862" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1948), p. 118.

Surely, a major encouragement to Morrill were the existing colleges for practical education. For the most part those in the United States, such as the Agricultural College of Michigan, were small and struggling. But, in Europe there were many flourishing agricultural colleges. In his speeches on both land grant bills, Morrill referred to these existing schools as examples of what could be done.

Some writers insist that there was only one important influence on Morrill, Jonathan Baldwin Turner. Morrill was most certainly influenced by Turner's plan but there is no evidence in either the Morrill Papers or the Turner Papers of a Turner-Morrill cooperation as Turner's adherents claim. If there were any scraps of evidence, Turner's advocates, Edmund J. James and Mary Turner Carriel, would have published them. Both presented as proof a single letter in which Morrill said "I presume I recognize Professor Turner, an old pioneer in the cause of agricultural education." That letter, dated December 30, 1861, hardly indicates the existence of an intimate working relationship of four years standing as the authors claim. It is on this feeble evidence that both authors rest their case.⁵¹ Actually, Morrill got

⁵¹Edmund J. James, The Origin of the Land Grant Act of 1862 and Some Account of Its Author, Jonathan B. Turner (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1910), pp. 28-36. Mary Turner Carriel, The Life of Jonathan Baldwin Turner (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), p. 144.

his idea not from Turner alone but from a multitude of sources.

Professor William D. Sawyer has said that Morrill claimed that the idea of Land Grant Colleges was exclusively his own. Sawyer read Morrill's statement that he did not know where the idea came from as a claim by Morrill of no outside influence.⁵² That same statement could be interpreted to say that there was a multitude of sources for the idea and no single one predominated.

Sawyer strongly denied that the Morrill Act was any more than a purely political measure. He said that Morrill's only goals were to gain spoils for the New England farmers and to benefit the Eastern Republican party. Sawyer also claimed that Morrill had no concern for education. He tried to prove these contentions by pointing out that few of the sentences in Morrill's speeches refer directly to education and by claiming that Morrill had no educational plan prior to 1862.⁵³

The claims of Sawyer are partly correct. Morrill referred in his speeches to aiding the farmer and gaining a share of the public lands for the old states. Both of those goals would very likely benefit the Eastern Republican party. That there was an effort to secure gain for the East was indicated by the opposition of the new

⁵²Sawyer, "The Morrill Act," p. 116.

⁵³Ibid., pp. 116, 273-76.

Western states, the very states which were to benefit the most in the future.⁵⁴

The desire to provide an education for the industrial classes was Morrill's greatest motivation and cannot be discounted as Sawyer attempted to do. Sawyer ignored Morrill's lifelong preoccupation with education. When he claimed that Morrill's floor speeches barely touched on education, he ignored the fact that very many sentences deal with education indirectly. Whenever Morrill described an agricultural problem and its possible solution, he was speaking of young men being educated to solve these problems. Nor was it true that Morrill had no educational plan before 1862. First of all, that was a careless error because obviously the plan had to have been completed by 1858 when the bill was first proposed. But, the contention was wholly false because Morrill had a plan as early as 1848. In a letter of that year Morrill told of his desire to modify the traditional forms of education. Morrill said he wished to lop off a portion of the centuries old curriculum and substitute new subjects of more practical value.⁵⁵ All he had yet to plan was the financing through a land grant.

⁵⁴Paul Gates, "Western Opposition to the Agricultural College Act," Indiana Magazine of History, XXXVII (1941), 109-12.

⁵⁵Morrill to J. Davis, Dec. 8, 1848, Morrill Papers, Reel 1.

Morrill clearly stated his goal to provide practical education for all who sought it in a speech at Cornell University in 1883. He said that the active, energetic, American people needed more than the inherited systems of Europe, something for daily practical use. He hoped he had aided large numbers in the professions, fields, and workshops to succeed in their vocations and to become better citizens. Sawyer lightly dismissed this and other speeches as an old man's rationalizations.⁵⁶ That fit his thesis, but collapsed in the face of Morrill's words in 1848.

Morrill worked hard to pass the Land Grant College Act because he dreamed of educating the industrial classes, of upgrading American agriculture, and of seeing the old states share the public domain. He had the idea for a new type of college at least by 1848. Some time later he realized that the new states were getting the entire benefit of the public lands. It was probably between his resolution of 1856 and the first bill of 1858 that Morrill thought of achieving both goals at once by financing Agricultural Colleges through a Land Grant. Portions of the plan probably came from many sources, but the dream and determination necessary to carry the idea to fruition were solely Morrill's.

⁵⁶Speech of Justin S. Morrill at Cornell University, June 20, 1883, Morrill Papers, Reel 18, Sawyer, "The Morrill Act," p. 116.

CHAPTER IV

THE TARIFF OF 1861

Throughout the history of the United States, the tariff has been one of the most persistent issues in American politics. The first Congress enacted a tariff which nearly all agreed was needed to supply the operating funds of the federal government. The first restrictive trade measures were applied against the British and French in 1808. Since that time, the level of the tariff has been an issue in the political arena.

The tariff controversy centered on the amount of protection to be granted to domestic industries. While there were always two extremist groups who advocated either prohibitive rates or none at all, most men based their stand on a personal interpretation of the theory of protection.

According to the theory of protection, if a young industry's growth was being restricted by such artificial means as an untrained labor force using complicated new machinery, a counter artificial barrier, a tariff wall, was justified. It was assumed that the natural

advantages of raw materials, cheap power, and a labor pool were readily available. If any one of these was lacking, or if the new industry was so similar to an old one that a transition could be made, protection was unwarranted. Of course, supporters of the theory made allowances for a wide range of opinions on its application.¹

Although protection in the United States had its birth in the restrictive measures of the Napoleonic Wars, there were no formal tariff laws enacted until after the War of 1812. The laws which originated in 1808, by forbidding Americans to trade with the nations at war, were in effect, but not in intention, the most severe form of protection: total prohibition. During the lifetime of these laws the stoppage of European manufactured imports encouraged the founding of many new industries. At the conclusion of the war, however, these industries were threatened with extinction by British competition. The same group of leaders who had led the prowar movement now felt that national pride and security demanded economic freedom from Britain, and the goal was

¹F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), pp. 2-4.

to be achieved through a tariff to protect industry. The Tariff of 1816 set most rates at 20 percent.²

From 1816 to 1824 support for protection increased slowly but steadily. In the next four years the advocates of a high protective tariff, then at the height of their influence, were primarily concerned with nurturing young industries.³

The Tariff of Abominations, as the South called the law of 1828, was in many ways a turning point in the tariff controversy. It marked the high point of protection for many years, and John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, who had supported the early protective movement, now strongly opposed the legislation. Employing reverse psychology, Calhoun helped write a bill whose rates, especially on raw materials needed in New England, were so high that he expected representatives from that section of the country to vote with the South to defeat the bill, and thus deal a mortal blow to the cause of protection. But Calhoun miscalculated. The woolen manufacturers had

²William W. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836 (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1966), pp. 92-95. Margaret L. Coit, John C. Calhoun (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1950), pp. 113-14. Charles M. Wiltse, The New Nation, 1800-1845 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), pp. 55-58. Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 18-19, 30.

³Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 23-24. Wiltse, The New Nation, pp. 103-4. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, pp. 106-7, 122-26.

united to lobby for high rates and their influence helped to get the bill passed.⁴ The defeat of the South on that vote brought on the Nullification Crisis and marked the sharp upward turn in sectionalism.

The power of the protectionists was broken for a decade by the Compromise Tariff of 1833, which provided for a steady reduction in rates until they reached 20 percent in 1842. Thereafter the rates were supposed to remain constant, but by 1842 the protectionists had regained strength and renewed the battle. By that date the Whigs were clearly identified with a protection policy, and the Democrats with free trade. The Tariff of 1842, a protective tariff, was passed under a Whig administration. The Whig protectionists hoped to consolidate their position in the election of 1844, but the Democrats won. Even though the Democrats insisted that the subsequent Walker tariff of 1846 was a free trade measure, its rates of 30 percent actually qualify it as a measure of moderate protection.⁵

⁴Wiltse, The New Nation, p. 103. Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 83, 88-89. Chauncey S. Boucher, The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1916), pp. 5-6. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, pp. 132-33, 137-38.

⁵Boucher, Nullification Controversy, pp. 208ff, 287-90. Coit, Calhoun, pp. 254-56. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War, pp. 292-97. Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 111-15. Henry C. Carey, The Harmony of Interests (New York: August M. Kelley Publishers, 1967), p. 6.

By 1840 the credo of protectionism had changed significantly. The argument that young industries needed protection was quietly discarded in favor of the argument that labor in the United States needed protection from the competition of the pauper labor of Europe, an idea proposed by Henry C. Carey, an influential Philadelphia economist. Carey, an ardent nationalist and strong advocate of Henry Clay's American System, believed that the United States would remain an economic colony of Great Britain until freed by protection.⁶ During the presidential campaign of 1844, Morrill, a strong nationalist, became involved in local political affairs, speaking in favor of both Carey's new protectionist ideas and Clay's candidacy.⁷

Economic conditions worked against the protectionists in the period following enactment of the tariff of 1846. The economy was so prosperous that, even though

⁶Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 20-21, 36-38. Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 65-67. Thomas M. Pitkin, "The Tariff and the Early Republican Party" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Western Reserve University, 1935), p. 22. For a fuller explanation of Carey's views see Carey, Harmony of Interests, pp. 227-29.

⁷Speech of Justin S. Morrill in Orange County, Vt., June 20, 1844, Morrill Mss., Duke University Library. Morrill to J. Laurence Laughlin, April, 1883, Morrill Papers, Reel 36. Morrill's view was strongly supported by the Vermont Watchman, Jan. 12, 1855.

they felt the rates were far too low, the tariff produced an embarrassing revenue surplus. The situation seemed to disprove the usual protectionist claim that low tariffs brought hard times. By 1857 nearly all factions, including manufacturers, agreed that a lowering of rates was necessary.⁸

On February 5, 1857, during the debate on the tariff, Morrill made a speech in which he agreed that the rates had to be reduced and the embarrassing Treasury surplus ended. He said that an overflowing Treasury was as bad as an empty one because it allowed wasteful dissipation.

The basic premise of tariff theory, according to Morrill, was to provide revenue for the government and moderate incidental protection favoring native industry and labor. In addition, the protection granted should be levied in specific duties since the ad valorem type encouraged cheating and required too many assessors.⁹

Having explained his personal view of protection, Morrill got to the heart of his speech, which was a

⁸ Pitkin, "Tariff and Early Republican Party," pp. 10, 29. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power, 1845-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), p. 64. Taussig denied the basic premise. He felt too many factors were involved to blame economic conditions on the tariff. Good and bad times alternated regardless of the type of tariff in effect. Taussig, Tariff History, pp. 118-21.

⁹ Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, p. 225 appendix.

strong statement favoring protection for the wool growers of Vermont:

My constituents . . . do not come here as suppliants. Do what is just and proper for the whole Union. . . . Those who urge that wool should be admitted free of duty . . . assert . . . that the home manufacturer cannot prosper because he cannot obtain wool as cheap as the foreign manufacturer. . . . [If wool is free the result] likely to occur, would be . . . American wool-growers abandoning the business. . . . Their [the manufacturers'] domestic sources for supplying the raw material would be cut off and they would speedily be at the mercy of foreign production and foreign legislation. . . .¹⁰

Morrill concluded his speech with a bid for Southern support by insisting that the duty on sugar be retained:

The question of repealing the duty on sugar I suppose is to be pressed upon us. . . . We have held out inducements to the sugar planters in the South to make heavy investments for the production of sugar. . . . For the last year or two unpropitious seasons have largely reduced the crop. . . . They [sugar growers] hope to recover . . . and yet, while they are crushed to the earth by an inhospitable season . . . it is proposed to mock them by an entire withdrawal of what was not begrudged them in the dawn of their prosperity.¹¹

Morrill said that Congress had to support a program of moderate protection to make the United States as self sufficient as possible. The proposed bill with the suggested amendments on wool and sugar would achieve

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 225-27 appendix.

¹¹Ibid., p. 228 appendix.

the goal. He promised to vote for the bill if so amended.¹²

While the tariff measure was moving through Congress, Morrill first won and then lost his bid to protect the wool growers. He successfully proposed that only wool worth less than ten cents per pound be imported duty free and that shoddy and pelts be excluded from the free list. In keeping with his promise, Morrill voted for the House version of the tariff. But the Senate quickly struck out the clause on shoddy and pelts and raised the upper limit on free wool to a value of twenty cents per pound. After the committee of conference agreed on the Senate version, Morrill voted against the Tariff of 1857.¹³

Unfortunately, the Tariff of 1857 proved to be very badly timed since the national economy soon plunged into a depression which rendered the new tariff woefully inadequate to meet the Treasury's revenue needs. The industrialized Northeast was particularly hard hit. In the South the crisis had much less effect for the cotton

¹²Ibid., Morrill found support for his position in Vermont. E. P. Walton to Morrill, Feb. 9, 1857, Morrill Papers, Reel 2.

¹³Cong. Globe, 34th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1857, pp. 749, 791, 971. Senators Jacob Collamer and Solomon Foot and the rest of Vermont's delegation also voted no. Pitkin, "Tariff and Early Republican Party," p. 51. James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill Company, 1884), I, 197.

market held firm. Attempts were made in the next Congress to alleviate the situation. In the second session of the 35th Congress, the Committee on Ways and Means reported two bills. One by John S. Phelps of Missouri simply proposed reverting to the higher 1846 rates in order to realize more revenue from the lower volume of trade until the economy righted itself. Morrill, who had just taken his permanent seat on the Ways and Means Committee, drew up the other bill, which both modified the tariff and authorized a loan as means to secure needed revenue. Both proposals were defeated, leaving the act of 1857 unchanged.¹⁴

During the next years many people began to see protectionism as the weapon needed to break the depression. Supposedly, it would fill the Treasury with revenue while sparking factory growth and an increase in employment. Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, and Henry C. Carey appointed themselves spokesmen for those demanding a protective tariff.¹⁵ Behind those leaders were many other citizens who supported an upward revision of the tariff. Morrill received many letters from

¹⁴Allen Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), I, 456-57. Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1859, p. 1409.

¹⁵Samuel Rezneck, "Depression and American Opinion, 1857-59," Journal of Economic History, II (May, 1942), 17.

constituents, some asking for revision, others suggesting their own plans. For a change Morrill was riding a wave of public feeling, not moving in front of it.¹⁶

By the middle of 1858, when it had become apparent that the economy was not going to right itself, the influential New York press began a continuous editorial campaign for tariff reform. Both the Independent Times and the Republican Tribune agreed that increases were necessary for economic recovery.

The New York Times came out in favor of basically the same type of tariff revision that Morrill later introduced. The editors strongly criticized President Buchanan for tinkering with the tariff and for trying to hide the deficits. They said that the nation did not need tinkering but real revision which would not create chaos in trade. Only carefully conceived, thorough, and permanent revisions would be satisfactory. The Times also strongly advocated a switch to specific duties to end fraud and to save time and money in administration.¹⁷

The New York Tribune supported a return to protection as the only means to restore confidence. The editors admitted protection might not be right in theory,

¹⁶D. Crawford to Morrill, Jan. 5, 1859 and John Kimball to Morrill, Jan. 12, 1859, Morrill Papers, Reel 4.

¹⁷New York Times, Nov. 5, 1858. New York Times, Feb. 1, 1859.

but the people had confidence that it would work; and it was that popular confidence which was needed if economic recovery were to be achieved. Following this type of reasoning, the editors condemned the Democrats in Congress for failing to take the necessary measures in the previous session, during which both the President and Secretary of the Treasury had requested increases.¹⁸

Since the Vermont Republican Party Organizing Convention of July 13, 1854, was the first state group to endorse protection as a Republican issue, it was fitting that Morrill should be assigned the task of writing the tariff bill. Protection was made second only to slavery in importance when the convention voted in favor of a revenue tariff with incidental protection. Morrill worked long hours to prepare such a measure which his party regarded as a revenue rather than protective tariff.¹⁹

The bill, quickly dubbed the Morrill Tariff, was reported for debate in mid-March, 1860. Morrill said that it had a triple purpose: to revise the tariff, to authorize a loan needed to pay outstanding debts, and to

¹⁸ New York Tribune, July 10, 1858. New York Tribune, March 5, 1859. Roy F. Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 237.

¹⁹ Francis Curtis, The Republican Party 1854-1904 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Son, 1904), pp. 331-33. Blaine, Twenty Years, I, 275.

pay the treasury notes which the administration had used to cover deficits. Without delay the House referred the bill to the Committee of the Whole and took the extraordinary action of having one thousand extra copies printed.²⁰

Even though everyone seemed to agree that the tariff was a vital question, few members could keep their speeches directly on the topic. They spanned the political issues of the day but dwelled particularly on slavery. Only Morrill kept to the subject as he justified the need for a new tariff and then carefully explained its provisions.²¹

Morrill began by discussing the loan authorized in the bill, pointing out that it was needed to pay off the treasury notes "first issued - December 23, 1857 - . . . for the relief of a temporary emergency."²² Yet, he said, this temporary deficit had become permanent, through Treasury Secretary Howell Cobb had stubbornly refused officially to increase the public debt by funding the notes. Since such short-term notes were not included in the national debt totals, Cobb could avoid political

²⁰ Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, p. 1231.

²¹ Ibid., p. 1830.

²² Ibid., pp. 1830-31.

embarrassment to his party by continually exchanging new notes for old ones.²³ Morrill condemned this practice because it was fiscal insanity to continue accepting the higher interest rates on short-term debts: " . . . it is time we began to husband our resources and change our form of indebtedness, so as to impose a lighter burden on the people."²⁴

The second major topic of Morrill's speech was the revision of the tariff structure itself. He reminded the members of the House that general opinion held the present law to be inadequate. He asserted that such leading members of the Democratic Party as President Buchanan and Secretary Cobb

are apparently willing, within the latitude of a revenue tariff, to make discriminations that will promote the interests of the country. . . . The Secretary of the Treasury [also] very earnestly and properly declares "the idea of increasing the public debt to meet the ordinary expenses of the Government should not be entertained for a moment." . . . [Yet] the public debt has been steadily increasing to meet ordinary expenses, every year during the present Administration. . . .

There are certain evils resulting from our present revenue laws. . . . To enable the Government to go on even in this from-hand-to-mouth manner, the people are crammed with foreign goods. . . . No prohibitory duties have been aimed at; but to place

²³ Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln, II, 41, 193.

²⁴ Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1830-31.

our people on a level of fair competition with the rest of the world is thought to be no more than reasonable.²⁵

In Morrill's view the shift from ad valorem to specific duties was the most important change in the new tariff, and he spoke of it as follows:

The revenue will obtain ample compensation for any loss in imports by the specific duties which will arrest some, at least, of the fugitives that have so long escaped through systematic undervaluations. After a most patient examination, I feel confident the importations under this bill would produce sixty million of revenue and not more.²⁶

In conclusion Morrill made bids for the support of several special interest groups. He explained that the proposed duty on sugar would protect the planters in good years and bad, that the proposed wool duty would bring mutual benefit to wool growers and manufacturers, and that numerous loopholes would be closed bringing aid to several industries. Finally he asked that the measure be passed because it would cure the economic problems of the nation.²⁷

Morrill's bill got welcome support from both sides of the House aisle. John Noell, a Democrat from

²⁵Ibid., pp. 1831-32.

²⁶Ibid., p. 1832. J. Wiley Edwards to Morrill, May 16, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 5.

²⁷Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1833-34. Robert Schenck to John Sherman, March 30, 1860, John Sherman Papers, Library of Congress. [Herein-after cited as Sherman Papers.]

Missouri, said that the bill went a long way toward the goal of protecting everything American from everything foreign. Garnett B. Adrain, an anti-Lecompton Democrat from New Jersey, and Henry Longnecker, a Pennsylvania Republican, both spoke in support of the tariff bill. John Sherman, the Ohio Republican who chaired the Ways and Means Committee, denounced the Tariff of 1857 because it was hastily written to reduce an overflowing revenue and resulted in a permanent deficit. He admitted further reforms were possible but insisted that the Morrill Tariff was needed immediately to avoid a projected seventy million dollar deficit.²⁸

Constituents and other citizens praised the bill as a whole, but pleaded that the duty on their particular product be altered in their favor. A most poignant comment was that the changes were basically fair, but that some of the wording was ambiguous and left loopholes for the unscrupulous.²⁹

²⁸ Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1844-48, 1928-31, 1946-50. John Sherman, Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet (Chicago: The Werner Co., 1895), pp. 183-85.

²⁹ Joseph Fay to Morrill, May 8, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 31. Henry Bowers to Morrill, March 19, 1860 and J. Washburne, Jr. to Morrill, April 26, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 4. Edward Dana to Morrill, May 3, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 31. Israel Lombard to Charles Sumner, Feb. 21, 1861 and Secretary, Jersey City Pottery Co. to Morrill, May 8, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 5.

The major opposition in the House came from two Democrats, Thomas Florence of Pennsylvania and George Houston of Alabama. Florence moved a substitute bill which would have revived the Tariff of 1846 and raised the rates without dumping the ad valorem system. Houston, who spoke for the South, disputed Morrill's claims and insisted that the Tariff of 1857 would produce the needed revenue if given time to work.³⁰

Morrill promptly refuted the Alabaman's claims that the proposed measure was unnecessary and weighted in favor of manufacturers. He hoped that it would produce sixty-five million dollars which the old tariff could not do. He also denied that the new bill was a manufacturers' tariff, pointing out that the free list contained only items not made in the country. In addition, Morrill noted that no factory owner would get a windfall if his raw materials were now on the free list. Since duties on his foreign competitors' manufactured goods were also lowered, potential advantages from selling-price reductions were neutralized.

Morrill then offered a substitute bill, including many of the changes suggested by friendly colleagues and correspondents, as an amendment to his original by moving to strike out everything after the enacting clause. The

³⁰ Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1859, 1973.

most important change was made on the wool duty. A three-level rate structure was proposed for wool: a) wool valued at less than eighteen cents per pound was to be untaxed, b) wool valued at more than twenty-five cents per pound was to be taxed at nine cents per pound, c) all wool valued between these figures was to carry a duty of three cents per pound.

Despite numerous amendments by the Committee of the Whole, Morrill used clever parliamentary tactics to get approval of the tariff bill substantially as he wanted it. When the final House vote was taken, the Morrill Tariff passed 105-64;³¹ but the jubilation was short-lived.

All hope for final passage of the bill before the election of 1860 evaporated when Senator Robert Hunter from Virginia reported the bill and made a successful motion to postpone it until the second session. While speaking in favor of this motion, Hunter explained that he opposed the bill, first, because in an election year the discussion would probably get bogged down in political considerations and, second, because a tariff revision was not needed. On the second point Hunter agreed with George

³¹Ibid., pp. 1874-83, 2014-22, 2052-56. John Sherman later rationalized that he had to intervene in order to save the bill after Morrill allegedly lost control of it due to unfamiliarity with rules of the House. Sherman, Recollections, p. 105ff.

Houston that the Tariff of 1857 would soon prove itself adequate.³²

Hunter's successful blocking of the Morrill Tariff was a Pyrrhic victory; with the bill stalled by Democratic votes the Republicans had a powerful campaign issue. A Democratic Party supporter, A. G. Holmes of Philadelphia, suggested to Hunter that the Republicans did not want the tariff passed. He predicted that the Republican Party would lose thousands of votes in the election if the bill was passed to eliminate the issue. Many adhered to that party only on the tariff issue and disagreed with its stand on slavery. Holmes asked if it would not be better for the Democratic Party to compromise on a lesser issue, protection, to lay the larger issue, slavery, to rest.³³ The advice was probably sound since the tariff was indeed a key issue in a close election.

When Congress reassembled in December, 1860, the tariff bill made rapid progress in the Senate, mainly because the resignations of senators from seceded states removed many obstacles. On January 23, 1861, Senator

³²Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 2910, 3010.

³³A. G. Holmes to Robert Hunter, April 3, 1860, Robert M. T. Hunter Papers, Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1916, Vol. II (Washington: A.H.A., 1916), pp. 312-13. [Hereafter cited as Hunter Papers.]

James F. Simmons, a Rhode Island Republican, who had assumed management of the tariff bill, initiated adroit parliamentary maneuvers, including referral to a select committee, designed to speed enactment.³⁴

On February 13, Senator Simmons, speaking for the bill, stressed the need to eliminate yearly federal deficits. Simmons explained that the government had been running an annual deficit of twenty million dollars for four years, with an additional four million outlay in annual interest on the swelling national debt. He felt that counting on the old tariff to cover the deficit when the economy revived was unrealistic; importations in the three previous years had been the highest in history and yet revenue had fallen far short of needs.

The only way to balance the budget, said Simmons, was through an equitable increase of tariff rates. He pointed out that the proposed tariff was fair to all; the average level of duties increased from fourteen and a half percent to twenty percent and not a single item suffered a huge increment. Opposition claims of great jumps in rates, Simmons insisted, either were based on false information or were simply misrepresentation.

³⁴Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, pp. 521, 686-87.

Senator Hunter counterattacked saying that the tariff was, in fact, unnecessary, and that in the past it had been justified only by fallacious arguments. In regard to the latter point, Hunter charged that Simmons used, as his basis, three years in which trade deficits were exceptionally large, thus giving no hint of potential revenue, and continually overstated the needs of the government. By means of economy in operations the government could use ten million less than the total amount which would be realized by the pending tariff. Should more be needed, Hunter added, incidental increases were preferable to a general revision. Finally, Senator Hunter predicted that more fraud than ever would be bred because the rates were too complicated and set exceedingly high.

Since no one else wished to speak on the measure, Simmons quickly opened the floor for amendments. All but two of the fifty amendments suggested by the Select Committee were accepted. One amendment, which changed the sugar duty and put a tax on coffee and tea, was particularly controversial. After the amendments were considered, the tariff bill easily passed, 25-14.³⁵

When the Morrill Tariff was returned to the House for concurrence on the Senate amendments, Sherman and Morrill combined to rush it through. Sherman moved that it be made a special order for immediate debate. Morrill

³⁵Ibid., pp. 885-905, 1064-65.

announced his willingness to accept all of the amendments except the one pertaining to sugar, coffee, and tea. The sugar duty was unnecessarily complicated, he said, and the duty on coffee and tea was unfair because those items were necessities. The House concurred with Morrill and asked for a conference committee on that amendment.

Agreement was easily reached in the Committee of Conference, and that opened the door to enactment of the bill. A compromise was devised in which the Senate version of the sugar duty was adopted and the coffee and tea duty dropped, and the bill passed both Houses. On March 2, 1861, President Buchanan, an old Pennsylvania protectionist who had finally freed himself from dominance by Southerners, signed the Morrill Tariff.³⁶

The Morrill Tariff was a landmark because of its lasting economic significance. James G. Blaine considered the Morrill Tariff a revolutionary change in the government's financial system.³⁷ It was surely a profound change in that it initiated specific duties and

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 1149-50, 1186-1201, 1248, 1416. New York Times, Nov. 10, 1858. Henry Pierce to Charles Francis Adams, April 27, 1860, Sherman Papers. Allan Nevins, The Ordeal of the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), II, 4.

³⁷ Walter Crockett, Vermont, The Green Mountain State (New York: The Century History Co., 1921), III, 478-81. Blaine, Twenty Years, I, 278.

laid the foundation for a policy of protectionism which lasted for decades. The bill was also important politically for the effect, possibly calculated, that it had on the election of Lincoln in 1860.

The Democrats left little doubt that they considered the tariff issue a Republican plot to win the presidency. Early in 1859 the Democratic Burlington (Vermont) Sentinel called on Democrats to unite and snatch the tariff issue from the opposition's hands. The editors predicted that the Republicans would attempt to keep the issue alive for the campaign.³⁸ Obviously, the best way to do that would be to launch tariff revision in the House only to have it founder on the rocks of Democratic recalcitrance in the Senate. Fearing that ploy, many Pennsylvania Democrats urged Senator Hunter to let the tariff pass so that their state's electoral vote would fall into its natural home, the Democratic Party. Instead, Hunter decided to hold firm, as Southern and Western Democrats demanded.³⁹ That was not surprising since he knew that Pennsylvania Democrats, including Buchanan, were staunch protectionists and thus exceptions to the Party's antitariff mainstream.

³⁸ Burlington Sentinel, Feb. 11, 1859.

³⁹ A. G. Holmes to Hunter, April 3, 1860, Hunter Papers. Nichols, Disruption of Democracy, p. 321. Sherman, Recollections, p. 1867.

Having seen their party narrowly defeated in the 1856 election, Republican party leaders were convinced that a switch in the electoral vote in several key states, including Pennsylvania, would carry the coming election for them. The Republican platform was carefully formulated to appeal to vast areas of the North. Planks were drafted to draw support from various regions with the tariff plank aimed mainly at Pennsylvania. The Democracy had long held the votes of Pennsylvania, but the depression left those votes open for bid. The situation in Pennsylvania was clearly indicated by the Democratic reverses in the statewide election of 1858 in which the new Peoples Party, which was formed around a single issue, protection, elected David Wilmot to the governorship and swept most of the state's Congressional delegation. Pennsylvanians believed that protection was the only salvation for their industry, and the party which provided it would get the state's crucial electoral votes. Conservative Republicans eagerly seized the popular tariff issue, ideologically more comfortable to them than antislavery.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Reinhard Luthin, "Abraham Lincoln and the Tariff," American Historical Review, XLIX (July, 1944), 609-27. Pitkin, "Tariff and Early Republican Party," pp. 93, 120-24. Foner, Free Soil, pp. 202-3. Ten of the fourteen incumbent Democratic congressmen were defeated. Nichols, Disruption of Democracy, pp. 236-37. David Wilmot was the author of the "Wilmot Proviso."

The Republican Party found the ideal candidate to exploit Democratic weakness on the tariff issue, Abraham Lincoln. Since he was an old Whig protectionist, his record could be used to swing Pennsylvania into the Republican column. His tariff record also gained favor in New Jersey, New England and scattered areas of the West.⁴¹ The final item needed to make the choice ideal was his residence in another important state, Illinois. Convinced of Lincoln's ability to win, the Pennsylvania delegation threw their support behind him at the Republican convention and helped him gain the presidential nomination.⁴²

Although protection had been downgraded as a major Republican economic issue, it was the paramount one in Pennsylvania and neighboring New Jersey. Protection was the topic of all the national party figures, including Morrill, who came to campaign for the national ticket. The New York Tribune told Pennsylvanians that only the Republicans would establish the protection they needed.

⁴¹Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), pp. 97, 105. Nichols, Stakes of Power, p. 81. George H. Knoles (ed.), The Crisis of the Union, 1860-61 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), p. 6. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 304. Luthin, A.H.R., XLIX, pp. 609-14.

⁴²Reinhard Luthin, The First Lincoln Campaign (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964), pp. 73-74. Hofstadter, American Political Tradition, pp. 101, 117. Nichols, Disruption of Democracy, pp. 337-38. Pitkin, "Tariff and Early Republican Party," pp. 190-201.

Pennsylvanians heeded the advice, voted their self interest, and helped to elect Lincoln president.⁴³

The Morrill Tariff passed after the election, but the controversy, instead of dying, began anew with the press taking turns predicting the effects of the new tariff. The New York Times, in a radical switch from its position of a year earlier, strongly condemned the bill. In March, 1860, the Times insisted that the Morrill bill was a needed revision which raised rates only slightly and made a welcome shift to specific duties. A year later in the midst of the secession crisis, the editors claimed that the bill was a highly protective measure, a reckless act at a time when the Confederacy could corner commerce under a free trade policy.

Other elements of the press, which seemed to have confidence in the future of the Union, confined themselves to a calm defense of the new tariff. The New York Tribune pointed out that the final law was almost exactly what the Democratic president had requested, a change to specific duties with only moderate rate increases. The Vermont Watchman was more blunt, pointing out that the tariff was moderate and obviously good for the United States

⁴³Foner, Free Soil, pp. 202-3. Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, pp. 195-209. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 298-305. Pitkin, "Tariff and Early Republican Party," pp. 210-34. New York Tribune, Sept. 29, 1860. John Bell of Tennessee, the Constitutional Union Party candidate, also favored protection. Ollinger Crenshaw, The Slave States in the Presidential Election of 1860 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), p. 30.

because only the free traders and foreigners were complaining.⁴⁴

The controversial nature of the Morrill Tariff raises the question of why Morrill emerged as author and manager. In most cases, bills closely tied to a political strategy are sponsored by the eloquent party leaders who seek national exposure. Morrill was not such a man.

Perhaps the main reason that the Tariff of 1861 carries Morrill's name is that it was a natural issue for a Clay-Whig. Morrill began his active political life at the high point of the Whig Party, the party of the American System, which advocated a protective tariff and internal improvements. Morrill's earliest speeches, delivered in Clay's presidential campaign of 1844, were liberally sprinkled with calls for a protective tariff. While he supported strong industry, Morrill indicated in his speeches that he did so out of compassion for the workingmen. He wanted both farmers and factory workers to reap the benefits of employment.⁴⁵ He used the same language in 1860.

It was strongly implied that Morrill was picked by the party because he was from a relatively uninvolved

⁴⁴New York Times, March 28, 1860; Feb. 14, 1861; March 22, 1861. New York Tribune, April 6, 1861. Vermont Watchman, April 12, 1861.

⁴⁵Speech of Justin S. Morrill in Orange County, Vt., June 20, 1844. Morrill Mss, Duke University Library.

state. John Sherman, stating the case a bit too strongly, said that because Morrill was from a small agricultural state he was unbiased by sectional feelings or his constituents' interests. Morrill called himself an impartial juror, rationalizing that he could hold that position since Vermonters were so industrious that the revenue system was a matter of indifference to them.⁴⁶

While Morrill could be generally impartial, his campaign for a wool duty proved a solid exception. Immediately after claiming impartiality, he stated his opinion that it would be best if all of the raw material produced in the United States was used in domestic industry. Vermont had a vocal minority of woolgrowers who were intent on the manufacturers taking all they could produce in the future. It became apparent that Morrill had always planned to protect both present and future wool production when he bragged in 1866 that he had gotten more protection for wool at each successive wartime tariff revision.⁴⁷

In writing his tariff bill Morrill was also being loyal to the principles of the Vermont Republican Party.

⁴⁶Sherman, Recollections, p. 183. Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 1974.

⁴⁷Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, p. 1974. Morrill to Edwin Hammond, Feb. 17, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7.

From the day of its founding, the state party had supported a revenue tariff with incidental protection. Morrill's bill filled the party's prescription.⁴⁸

The Morrill bill was an important issue in the 1860 campaign, but if there was a conscious Republican effort to delay its passage, as some party leaders suggested, Morrill probably had no part in it. Certainly Republican leaders knew that the tariff was not likely to pass the Senate, which would give them a good issue in certain sections of the country. They could have asked Morrill, one of their best parliamentarians, to push the bill to the point where delay would benefit the Republican Party the most; but that would have meant putting undue stress on an issue which might prove internally divisive to the party. Besides, Morrill indicated his determination to do all he could to get the tariff passed in the 1860 session. He wrote Henry C. Carey that he would be willing to continue the session through the summer (the supreme sacrifice, considering the heat of Washington), if the tariff could be pushed through.⁴⁹ Morrill felt that the

⁴⁸ Curtis, Republican Party, pp. 331-33. Blaine, Twenty Years, I, 275.

⁴⁹ Henry Winter Davis to Morrill, August 20, 1859, Morrill Papers quoted in Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, p. 7. Foner, Free Soil, p. 304. Morrill to Henry C. Carey, June 21, 1860, Edward Carey Gardiner Collection, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. (Hereafter cited as Gardiner Collection.)

economy desperately needed aid and that further delay might prove disastrous.

In addition to having a long standing interest in protection, Morrill wrote the tariff bill because he was well suited by experience and temperament to compose a complicated bill in a turbulent time. Colleagues from both parties attested to his skill at tariff calculations.⁵⁰ Morrill was also qualified because of his ability to get along with people; he could disagree with others without being personally abusive. Regardless of how far afield opponents ranged during debate, Morrill always returned to the issue. Because of his skill, a cornerstone of the Republican Party, financial policy was laid.

⁵⁰John Sherman attributed Morrill's skill to his business experience. Samuel S. Cox, an Ohio Democrat, testified that Morrill had a great ability at tariff calculations which helped carry the nation through the difficult war years. Samuel S. Cox, Three Decades of Federal Legislation: 1855-1885 (Providence, R.I.: Reid Publishers, 1888), p. 75. Sherman, Recollections, p. 183.

CHAPTER V

SLAVERY, FINANCE, AND THE REPEAL OF RECIPROCITY

Despite the gratifying biennial election results, returning to the capital was not entirely joyful for Morrill. Following the example of many members of Congress, he had chosen to leave his wife behind in the comfortable surroundings of their spacious Strafford home. And life in Washington was lonely for a man strongly tied to home and family. However, in spite of his lengthy absences and pressing duties Morrill always maintained a keen interest in affairs at home, frequently inquiring about the health of his family and about the condition of the flowers and fruit trees in the garden.¹

His decision to go to Washington alone may have been influenced by his wife's delicate health. Her condition was probably caused in part by the death of their infant first-born son, Justin, shortly after

¹William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), pp. 62, 76, 120, 131.

Morrill's first election. The loss deeply saddened both parents, and Morrill referred to the boy frequently in letters to his wife. A few years later, however, they were able to rejoice in the birth of a second son, James.²

Although Morrill's life in Washington was lonely he made a number of friends and had congenial surroundings. He was invited by Senator Solomon Foot of Vermont to join the "Mess" at Mrs. Curtis's boarding house on Capitol Hill. In the group were Senators William Pitt Fessenden of Maine and Jacob Collamer of Vermont. In later years, when the group moved to Mrs. Shipman's, the "Mess" also included Senator James Grimes of Iowa, Congressman Elihu Washburne of Illinois, and Horace White, Washington correspondent for the Chicago Tribune. The political discussions at meals helped establish lifelong friendships. White continued to write Morrill on current topics long after returning to Chicago as an editor of the Tribune. So close were Morrill and Fessenden that Morrill was pained years later to find that they were on opposite sides in President Johnson's trial. The presence of such companions eased Morrill's lonesomeness for his family.³

²Parker, Morrill, pp. 61, 151.

³Charles A. Jellison, Fessenden of Maine (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), p. 140. Parker, Morrill, pp. 62, 101-2, 114-15. Richard Current, Old Thad Stevens (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942), pp. 237-38. Morrill to William Pitt Fessenden, May 10, 1868, Fessenden Family Papers, Bowdoin College Library.

The peak of Morrill's career in terms of service to his country came during the Civil War. During those turbulent years Morrill made a personal contribution toward combating slavery, found time to guide the Land Grant College and Anti-Polygamy acts to final passage, and began work for repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty. In addition, Morrill was playing a vital role in establishing a financial base necessary to fight a modern war. Without Morrill's adept handling of his duties on the Ways and Means Committee during an unprecedented financial crisis, the war effort and the government could have collapsed.

Morrill's stand against slavery was entirely consistent with the historical position and contemporary opinion of his constituents. Vermonters had a long and active antislavery history, and their hostility towards slavery intensified in the years following Morrill's election. In 1858 the Vermont legislature officially abolished slavery in the state and provided a jury trial for alleged runaway slaves. The first law was superfluous, but it left no doubt as to the sentiments of Vermonters. The Vermont Watchman, speaking for the state's Whig majority, ran a series of editorials opposed to the extension of slavery and in favor of a united North to battle the slave power.⁴ The Watchman also echoed a

⁴ New York Times, Nov. 25, 1858. New York Tribune, Dec. 9, 1858. See also Wilbur H. Siebert, Vermont's Anti-Slavery and Underground Railroad Record (Columbus, Ohio: The Spahr and Glenn Co., 1937).

popular northern sentiment when it called John Brown a saint who sought great good. Vermont, on its record, came generally to be considered the most radical northern state.⁵

The seeds of radical Republicanism germinated mainly in New England and in rural areas of the West settled by migrating New Englanders. New England and especially Vermont, a state almost totally rural, sent radicals to Congress and returned large majorities for national Republican candidates. Upstate New York, Northern Pennsylvania, the Western Reserve of Ohio, and sections of Michigan and Wisconsin were all settled by New Englanders and were radical districts. Morrill pointed out that "almost every free state has its New England within its border." The name "little Vermont" given to St. Lawrence County, New York and the presence of the town of Vermontville in Michigan indicated Vermont's contribution to this radicalizing migration. Although urban areas such as New York City and Cincinnati were often conservative and Democratic, the New England

⁵Vermont Watchman, Feb. 3, March 10, and Oct. 6, 1854; Aug. 10, 1855; Dec. 2, 1859. Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men, The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 107. Reinhard H. Luthin, The First Lincoln Campaign (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964), pp. 191-92. Ollinger Crenshaw, "Urban and Rural Voting in the Election of 1860," in Eric Goldman (ed.), Historiography and Urbanization (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1941), pp. 54-55.

influence in rural areas and small towns helped create a firm radical Republican base in the North.⁶

Justin Morrill, the businessman-farmer from Vermont, stood firmly with the radicals on the slavery issue. He fit James Russell Lowell's description of the radical: one who put the moral issue first in the anti-slavery movement. Within the radical camp, unity on the slavery issue and disagreement on other matters, especially economic issues, was common. Morrill did indeed differ with radical colleagues on economic, social, and other issues. Morrill also held one tenet which was characteristic of party moderates. He strongly believed in party loyalty--not a radical forte. Thus Morrill would probably best be called a moderate radical.⁷

In the Spring of 1860 the moderates in national politics were rapidly losing ground to the extremists in the slavery controversy. Rhetoric became hotter on both sides. Southern Democrats tried to persuade the party's national convention to recognize slaves as simply property, an action that the moderate New York Times termed

⁶Foner, Free Soil, pp. 106-7.

⁷Foner, Free Soil, pp. 104-10, 147, 216. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, p. 633; 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 2470-75, 2908-9. Parker, Morrill, p. 57. Hans Trefousse, The Radical Republicans (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), pp. 20-26, 141.

regrettable.⁸ In the midst of the controversy over slavery Morrill outlined to the House of Representatives the radical antislavery position held by most Vermonters.

Morrill stated his strong aversion to slavery, his dedication to the Republican principle of non-expansion of slavery, and his opposition to any further territorial expansion of the United States, particularly regarding Cuba. He declared that he was dismayed by the course of slavery in the history of the country since the Founding Fathers had expected it to wither away, yet it grew ever stronger.⁹

Morrill clearly expressed the radical Republican's fundamental belief that the whole northern way of life depended on the prevention of slavery expansion. To explain why Republicans could not agree to the southerners' demand for a cessation of the antislavery campaign, he declared that "when a people reach that Utopian dream of the South, where all agitation is banished, and where all criticism is silenced, they will, indeed, have reached that perfect equality, that stolid acquiescence, where property in slaves will everywhere be recognized; for there all will be slaves." The North, he asserted,

⁸New York Times, April 27, 1860.

⁹Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 388-89 appendix.

in company with the entire civilized world, was united in opposition to that southern dream.¹⁰

Despite his personal hatred of slavery, Morrill took pains to convince the slaveholders that the only action contemplated was to be against slavery expansion, not slavery itself. He said that notwithstanding the strong antislavery feeling in the North, northerners would not interfere with slavery within the states. Indeed, should a foreign power invade the South to destroy slavery, the North would honor its constitutional obligation to defend that section and its slaves. But the extension of slavery could not be tolerated.

In discussing his opposition to territorial expansion, Morrill also displayed his intolerance of social equality. He was convinced that inclusion of new blocks of foreigners would endanger the American form of self-government. Southward expansion would be especially bad because the areas in view were inhabited by inferiors: "It is not necessary to point out the fatal defects in the characters of Cubans and Mexicans, to show their utter unfitness as associates upon a

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 388 appendix. Foner, Free Soil, pp. 309-13. Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 119. Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, p. 221.

footing of equality in the Union." Thus he advised that Congress abandon annexation schemes.¹¹

In closing Morrill indicated that the North held no hostile feeling as a result of the South's long domination of the national government. But he pointed out that the North's turn had come, and that threats of disunion would not prevent the legal transfer of power. Slavery's time of ascendancy was over; the world clamored for the end of slavery extension and territorial expansion.¹²

Neither Morrill's speech, nor any other, defused the crisis. After the Democratic Party broke into northern and southern factions, the road to the presidency lay open for the Republican nominee. Thus the slaveholders helped guarantee what they greatly feared, a victory for Abraham Lincoln, an event which they claimed would justify secession.

Senator Stephan A. Douglas of Illinois was the leading candidate for the Democratic Party's nomination but he had several serious obstacles in his path. His

¹¹Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 388-90.

¹²Ibid., p. 390 appendix. Morrill's words help to prove Roy Nichols's thesis that the lust for power was the potent force in these years. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power: 1845-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), pp. ix-x.

strongest support lay with Northwestern delegates who were convinced that only Douglas could carry their states. He also had many supporters from the East and some from the South. However, to most southerners, Douglas was anathema. They had no candidate of their own but they did have a proslavery platform to propose which Douglas supporters could never accept. Douglas was also opposed by the Buchanan Administration even though he had stepped aside for Buchanan in 1856. The two men had subsequently split over Kansas policy and had become bitter enemies. Finally, Senator Douglas's chances were reduced simply by the location of the convention; Charleston was hostile territory and the galleries cheered for his opponents.¹³

When the convention opened, neither side was seriously concerned about the consequences of a split. Douglas supporters felt that if a few southern delegations bolted, Douglas would gain sympathy and an easier nomination. Southerners expected both a compromise candidate and compromise platform to be offered as an enticement to return. Failing that, they hoped that the election would be thrown into Congress where they might win through political bargaining. When the split came neither faction

¹³Roy F. Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), pp. 156ff, 290-302. Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, pp. 120-32.

would compromise and the convention adjourned without making nominations.

The Democrats reconvened six weeks later in Baltimore to make another attempt to hold the party together. But the divisive forces were too strong. The southerners bolted again when Douglas's managers refused to withdraw his name. The remainder of the convention then nominated Douglas. The southern faction nominated Vice President John C. Breckinridge to carry their banner.¹⁴

In the period between the two Democratic meetings, the Republicans, manifesting a spirit of confidence and unity that was in marked contrast to that of their opponents, met in Chicago. The supporters of Senator William H. Seward of New York felt that he was too far in front to be stopped. But his strength was not broad enough. The convention turned to the more moderate, and therefore more acceptable, Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. Following Lincoln's nomination all party factions quickly pledged their support.

The campaign of 1860 became a four-party contest with the entry of the Constitutional Union Party. It soon became clear that Breckinridge would carry most of the

¹⁴Nichols, Disruption of Democracy, pp. 295-318.
Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, pp. 132-35.

South and that Lincoln led in the North with its large electoral vote totals. The election returns showed Lincoln with less than 40 percent of the popular vote but with a decisive victory in the electoral college.¹⁵

Elements of the northern press strongly criticized the southerners while still working for a peaceful solution. The New York Times said that despite the illegality of secession threats, the federal government must wait for an overt act. In that event, the government would have to use force. The Burlington (Vermont) Sentinel said that the Southern Democrats had refused to help nominate a national candidate and must now accept the consequences.¹⁶

Talk of compromise was widespread in the weeks following the election, but the unrealistic conditions insisted on by the slaveholders required an almost total abandonment of Republican principles. Constituents of such free-state congressmen as Sherman and Morrill wrote to them urging a firm stand. Morrill agreed with a Vermont Democrat that flexibility was in order, but he

¹⁵Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, pp. 136ff.

¹⁶New York Times, Sept. 19, 1860; Nov. 10, 1860. Burlington Sentinel, Nov. 9, 1860.

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refused to abandon principle.¹⁷ The New York Tribune urged a policy of no concession to people beaten in a fair election. Even the moderate New York Times agreed that it was ridiculous to demand that all concessions be made by the Republicans. Its editors added that if the southern position remained inflexible, no action should be taken.¹⁸

The period between Lincoln's election and his inauguration was marked by uncertainty and confusion. No one in Washington was quite sure what could or should be done to meet the challenge of secession. President Buchanan, who should have provided leadership, vacillated, being continually buffeted by conflicting cabinet advice and his own natural reluctance to act decisively. He finally did little more than send a message to Congress outlining his helplessness to act. The President's carefully drawn message explained to Congress that it was clearly unconstitutional both for a state to secede and for the federal government to stop secession by force. In effect Buchanan left the next move up to the Congress.

Congress made important attempts at compromise by creating a Committee of Thirteen in the Senate and a

¹⁷C. Coolidge to Morrill, March 5, 1861, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. W. T. Bascom to Sherman, Dec. 23, 1860, Sherman Papers. Morrill to Stephen Thomas, Dec. 23, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 5.

¹⁸New York Tribune, Jan. 26, 1861. New York Times, Dec. 3, 1860; Jan. 18, 1861.

Committee of Thirty-three, with one member from each state, in the House of Representatives. On the latter committee Morrill represented Vermont.

By this time, December, 1860, Morrill was so convinced of the futility of compromise and the inevitability of war that he tried to avoid serving on the Committee of Thirty-three. He was also concerned about potentially harmful political consequences, so he suggested that a retiring colleague take his place. He agreed with Lincoln and the majority of the party that the only compromise satisfactory to the South would require complete surrender of Republican principles. That was unthinkable--to Morrill, to Lincoln, and to the majority of the party. Morrill believed that the slaveholders were bent on reestablishing slavery in the North, and thus were prepared to reject scornfully any proposal that northerners might offer. Apparently, there was no basis for compromise. He told his wife that "we must accept the truth that there is an 'irrepressible conflict' between our systems of civilization." Morrill appreciated fully the painful reality of impending civil war, but despite his feelings he served on the committee, hoping that some good might come from it.¹⁹

¹⁹ Morrill to Ruth Morrill, Dec. 7, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1860, pp. 6, 22-23, 61-63. Morrill to Anonymous, Dec. 11, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 37. David M. Potter,

While the select committees of Congress deliberated, the states of the lower South were acting swiftly. By the end of January it was clear that compromise had failed in the Senate and was doing little better in the House. While there was still hope that a compromise plan might be reported, it was largely an empty hope. Almost completely ignoring the actions of Congress the South followed its own path. On February 1, Texas became the seventh state to pass an ordinance of secession.²⁰

Since Morrill was unable to agree fully with any member of the Committee, he decided to tell the House his views on the national situation before the committee reported. He warned southerners that if they rebelled the North would fight, but also insisted that there was no reason to quarrel because the South had no real grievances. Simple apprehensions and the loss of an election were not justifications for threats to secede. Morrill called their attention to the fact that although the South had long ruled the nation, and had held a

Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 177. Foner, Free Soil, pp. 219-24. William E. Baringer, A House Dividing (Springfield, Ill.: The Abraham Lincoln Association, 1945), p. 194. Kenneth M. Stampp, And the War Came (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), p. 155. Allan Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), II, 361.

²⁰ Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 390ff.

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disproportionate share of federal jobs, the North had never issued threats.²¹

The issue, as Morrill saw it, was to respect the rights of both sides while upholding the Constitution. Since to admit the right of secession was to brand the Constitution worthless, there seemed to be only one way to accomplish both goals peacefully:

If the seceding States desire to quit the Union, and to quit it forever, let them propose constitutional amendments for that purpose, and calmly submit them to the people. . . . For one, I cannot make what appears to me to be concessions, nor consent to any measure that shall lower the moral and political standard of the great majority in the North. The South shall have its rights; but I am commissioned to surrender none.²²

In keeping with what he felt to be a conciliatory spirit, Morrill announced that, although he had reservations, he would go along with several of the proposals the Committee was about to report. The constitutional amendment barring interference with slavery in the states was unnecessary, he declared, because no one had claimed the right to interfere with domestic institutions. To him even the implication that the Republican Party would attack slavery in the states where it legally existed was slanderous. Nevertheless, Morrill said that he would vote

²¹Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, pp. 1005-6. Potter, Lincoln and His Party, p. 97.

²²Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, p. 1006.

for the amendment in the interest of harmony. He also had minor misgivings about changes in the Fugitive Slave Law but felt that the modifications were generally good. Morrill approved all these suggestions of the Committee of Thirty-three because they violated no principle of his.

After frankly stating that he considered the Gulf states beyond reason, Morrill admitted that he was speaking mainly to the border states which he hoped might still be saved for the Union. Having already offered them the olive branch, he now tried to expose to them the duplicity of the deep South. The ideal of reconstructing the Constitution was a sham, Morrill argued. The Gulf states planned revolution; they intended to mangle the Constitution until it became unrecognizable. In closing Morrill asked that all parties try to live under the Union a little longer.²³

When the Committee of Thirty-three reported, Morrill supported only those recommendations which were consistent with his personal views. He voted for ten proposals that asked the states to put no physical or legal barriers in the way of slave catchers operating within the law. As promised, Morrill supported the proposed constitutional amendment. But, he drew the line at the suggestion to admit New Mexico to the Union under

²³Ibid., pp. 1006-8.

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popular sovereignty because it allowed the possibility of slavery extension. Morrill's votes were in the majority in each case.²⁴

Despite passage of several major recommendations, the compromise pleased almost no one because it was not a true compromise. Real compromise occurs when concessions are made by both sides, and the Southerners refused to yield a single point. In a special one-man minority report, Charles Francis Adams, the delegate from Massachusetts, said that in view of Southern intransigence Congress should do nothing at all. The New York Times agreed with Adams suggesting that the offering of a one-sided compromise was abject. Southerners thought so little of the possibility of agreement that many, including the member who suggested the Committee of Thirty-three, Alexander R. Boteler of Virginia, refused to serve on it.²⁵

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 1261-63, 1283-85 and Edward L. Pierce, Memoirs and Letters of Charles Sumner (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1893), IV, 12. Although Morrill was more radical on compromise than some party stalwarts, he was not an extremist. Charles Francis Adams and William H. Seward were willing to admit New Mexico to statehood with the possibility of slavery while Charles Sumner would brook no compromise at all. Martin B. Duberman, Charles Francis Adams, 1807-1886 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1961), pp. 241-41. George H. Knoles (ed.), The Crisis of the Union, 1860-1861 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965), pp. 93-94. Nevins, Emergence of Lincoln, II, 399-400. David Donald, Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960), pp. 368-72.

²⁵ New York Times, Jan. 18, 1861. Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, pp. 6, 22-23. Nichols, Disruption of Democracy, pp. 394-95.

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Apparently the slave state congressmen were just stalling while the South organized.

Morrill worked hard to reconcile the Southerners to the government because he was well aware of the horror of war. War was no glorious lark, Morrill felt, and only a defensive war, fought as the last resort, could be justified. He even wondered whether the South should have been left to founder on its own internal discord.

Nevertheless, when the fighting began, Morrill firmly supported the war effort. He loyally voted for all necessary troops and funds. He boosted army morale by making visits around Washington to Vermont troops in their camps and the wounded in the hospitals. Morrill felt the pain of grieving soldiers' relatives and aided them when he could. He continually hoped for an early end to the war, which he tried to hasten through a resolution calling upon all of the Northern people to unite against the common foe. This resolution, adopted in the hopeful wake of Antietam, was swiftly followed by the bloody, bitter disappointment of Fredericksburg.²⁶

Morrill was so involved with financial matters that he did not take an active part in antislavery work

²⁶Speech of Justin S. Morrill before the Windham County Agricultural Society, Oct. 6, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 50. Morrill to Ruth Morrill, Dec. 15, 1860 and Jan. 13, 1861, *ibid.*, Reel 5. Walton's Daily Journal (Montpelier), Dec. 13, 1861. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, p. 212. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1862, pp. 14-15. Morrill to Ruth Morrill, May 7 and 14, 1864 quoted in Parker, Morrill, p. 132.

until late in the war when it appeared that the Thirteenth Amendment would fail in the House. The Emancipation Proclamation was two years old, Sherman was in the Carolinas, Grant was besieging Petersburg, and yet the interment of slavery might still be delayed. At that time Morrill felt compelled to speak out loudly for freedom. He asked for passage of the amendment by a large bipartisan vote. Dismissing the Democrats' objection that control of slavery was reserved to the states, he pointed out that the people could cede the power to the federal government. The Democratic Party, Morrill said, could win a badge of distinction without abandoning principles since there were still many issues to divide the parties. He stressed that, since even the rebels were giving up slavery, a Congress of freemen could not be left as its sole support. Perhaps Morrill's plea was heeded because the Thirteenth Amendment unexpectedly passed. It could not have received the required two-thirds from the Republicans alone; yet, it passed with seven extra votes.²⁷

The uncertainty of the passage of the constitutional amendment indicates that the Congressional Democrats had been out of touch with national opinion on the slavery issue. By early 1865 Northern newspapers all across the

²⁷ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 172-74. Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), IV, 213-14. New York Tribune, Jan. 7, 1865, Vermont Watchman, Feb. 10, 1865.

opinion spectrum had indicated support for the amendment. As early as the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, the moderate New York Times had urged the end of slavery. Naturally, the New York Tribune and the Vermont Watchman agreed. A surprise was the strong support for the amendment by the staunchly Democratic Washington Evening Star.²⁸ It was surely the end of an era.

In spite of Morrill's long opposition to slavery, it should be pointed out that he did not believe in equality of the races. Although he supported the war effort even to the enlistment of black troops, when the Negro Soldiers Bill was under debate in January, 1863, Morrill proposed an amendment which would have placed black soldiers in a lower caste. He suggested that no Negro be given high rank or in any other way be allowed to command white officers or men, and that Negro privates be paid three dollars per month less than white privates. Although it was a bitter blow to Stevens, the amendment passed, and the unequal policy remained in effect for more than a year.²⁹

²⁸New York Times, Jan. 3, 1863. New York Tribune, Jan. 7, 1865. Vermont Watchman, Feb. 10, 1865. Evening Star, Feb. 1, 1865.

²⁹Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, p. 633. Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959), pp. 160-61. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 2470-75, 2908-9. On Morrill's devotion to antislavery also see Edward Magdol, Owen Lovejoy (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1967), pp. 230-32, 305, 349.

In the wake of the mass resignation of slave state congressmen, Morrill became eligible by seniority for the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee but declined in favor of Thaddeus Stevens. Morrill and Stevens were both beginning their fourth congressional terms but, because Stevens's service had been broken, Morrill was technically senior on the committee by one session. The offer may have been pro forma because all authorities seem to accept without comment that the more renowned Stevens would get the chairmanship since he had been denied the position of Secretary of the Treasury. However, pro forma or not, the offer was made and Morrill was free to take it. In later years he would assert himself more; but in 1861 Morrill's modest self-appraisal caused him to decline the powerful and thankless chairmanship, telling his wife that "the work is very great and I dursn't undertake it." Four years later when the position was again offered to him, he accepted.³⁰

As chairman of Ways and Means, Stevens made wise use of available talent by forming three subcommittees. Morrill, already recognized as an expert on tariffs, was also given responsibility for the war tax program. Stevens took appropriations as his own bailiwick and established a

³⁰ Parker, Morrill, pp. 125, 133. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 148-50. Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), I, 181-83.

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third subcommittee under Elbridge G. Spaulding of New York to handle the loan bill.³¹

During the special session of July and August, 1861, Congress did a commendable job, passing the emergency appropriations as they emerged from the Committee on Ways and Means. Stevens and Morrill worked in tandem to secure the necessary bills. Stevens easily managed the passage of army and navy appropriations to pay the deficits on all military activity following Fort Sumter and provide for the next fiscal year. Morrill then guided the military pay bill through the House. These bills passed only five days after Congress convened. However, the influence of Stevens and Morrill was truly tested on a bill to increase the army pay four dollars a month. The measure carried a rider ratifying all the military actions previously taken by Lincoln and, since the rider was vital, the bill had to pass. But both Stevens and Morrill thought the four-dollar raise was too much. Stevens was defeated on a motion to halve the sum, but the Senate later approved a bill which included the lesser increase. Morrill and

³¹Brodie, Stevens, p. 172. Wesley C. Mitchell, A History of the Greenbacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903), p. 45. Robert P. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party: An Economic Study of the Civil War and Reconstruction (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), p. 29.

Stevens exhibited their power by securing passage of the Senate version.³²

In the regular long session of the Thirty-seventh Congress (it opened in December, 1861) Morrill assumed the duties of floor manager of major appropriation bills. The task required a superior command of parliamentary skills and constant alertness lest a crippling amendment be proposed. Morrill performed the task well, securing passage of a number of appropriation bills, including those for the Post Office, Indians, and Navy, virtually as the Committee wished. Throughout the war Morrill managed the appropriation bills with increasing facility. Only occasionally did a member of the House succeed in attaching an amendment that Morrill disliked.³³

In debate on a number of bills Morrill grasped the opportunity to preach economy. During consideration of a large fortifications bill, several Philadelphia congressmen proposed additional batteries on the Delaware River. Since Morrill knew that the bill was already satisfactory to the War Department, and that one pork

³²Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, pp. 77, 448-49, 456-57.

³³Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 931-32, 1677. Morrill carried a share of these duties in the previous Congress. Cong. Globe, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 2851-52, 3197-98; 36th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, p. 1424; 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1862, pp. 168-70; 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 302-7, 321-48, 645, 1072-73, 1417-18.

barrel amendment would bring a rash of others, he fought the proposal and the bill passed without amendment. While supporting a bill to pay bounties to widows of volunteers, Morrill failed to get a reduction in the sum which he felt was overly generous. He also argued for postponement of the Pacific Railroad and other western public works until after the war. Morrill pointed out that the railroad would be unprofitable and that the government could not afford a subsidy. But a plank on the Pacific Railroad had been included in the Republican Platform of 1860, and strong support, including that generated by Stevens, successfully urged redemption of that pledge.

Morrill proved his devotion to economy in the midst of war when he opposed an increased budget for the Department of Agriculture in 1864. Morrill asked that the budget be held at the existing level, explaining that wartime was inappropriate for vast increases in spending within purely civilian Executive Departments. Since the area of agriculture was known to be close to his heart, his words should have convinced the most skeptical critic of his sincerity.³⁴

³⁴Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 380-84, 1833-35, 1708-9 and Statutes at Large, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, p. 489. Luthin, First Lincoln Campaign, p. 225. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1018-19.

In the midst of the crushing workload of war finance, Morrill made time to work for two more personal goals. One project was to establish a national statuary hall in the Capitol, the other to obtain abrogation of the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty.

In January, 1863, with the North still reeling from the disaster of Fredericksburg, Morrill affirmed his faith in the future of the Union by proposing a resolution that the Old Hall of the House of Representatives be dedicated as a national statuary hall. He explained that ever since the House moved into its new quarters in 1857 the former meeting room had been used only for storage. Out of his deep respect for those distinguished molders of the Union who had met in the Old Hall, Morrill asked that the room be consecrated to the nation's illustrious dead. Although he correctly assumed that there would be no real objection, the resolution was referred to committee where it died.

Morrill, never one to give up easily, reintroduced his statuary hall resolution in April of the next year. He carefully explained that it would cost almost nothing since the states would be invited to submit statues and the necessary remodeling would be paid for out of funds for the Capitol extension. Assured that

they could achieve a dignified end without expense, the House created Statuary Hall.³⁵

The resulting invitation for each state to send likenesses of two distinguished citizens met a wall of indifference. Five years after the invitation was issued, Morrill was still trying to get some state to take the lead. Perhaps the state governments were simply pre-occupied with postwar problems, but very likely their reluctance could be traced to the fact that the states paid the bill. Eventually, the several states agreed that the honor was worth the cost.³⁶

The idea of establishing free reciprocal Canadian-American trade in raw materials first gained favor in the late 1840's. Several attempts to achieve this by mutual legislation were lost in the press of business in Congress. A few years later the British government empowered Lord Elgin, the Governor-General of Canada, to negotiate reciprocity by treaty. An accomplished diplomat,

³⁵ Lonnelle Aikman, We, The People (Washington, D.C.: The United States Capitol Historical Society, 1969), pp. 87, 94-97. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, p. 194 and 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1736-37.

³⁶ Morrill to Lincoln, Jan. 25, 1865 and U. S. Department of State to Morrill, Feb. 3, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. Morrill to Governor Claflin of Massachusetts, Jan. 13, 1870, Claflin Papers, Hayes Library. The first statue, a marble likeness of Nathanael Greene, was presented by Rhode Island in 1870. Aikman, We, The People, pp. 97-98.

Lord Elgin quickly surmounted the obstacles barring negotiation and achieved ratification of the treaty.³⁷

During the war years Morrill worked toward the abrogation of the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty, a cause popular in his home state and around the nation. There was support for abrogation because the treaty seemed to work unfairly toward the United States and especially toward Vermont because of its proximity to Canada. Many Vermonters had opposed the idea from its inception. In 1852, two years before reciprocity went into effect, the Vermont Legislature passed a resolution against it. Generally, early reaction to the Reciprocity Treaty in the United States was favorable; however, after the treaty had been in operation for several years complaints began to arise.³⁸

Dissatisfaction centered not on the idea of reciprocity but rather on the way the current document seemed to favor Canada. As written, the treaty was largely a matter of convenience allowing for mutual exchange of raw materials at various points of the border,

³⁷ Frederick E. Haynes, The Reciprocity Treaty with Canada of 1854 (Baltimore: American Economic Association, 1892), pp. 12-18.

³⁸ Rodney Field to Morrill, Jan. 13, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 32. Gardiner Brewer to Morrill, Dec. 19, 1864, Morrill Papers, Reel 29. Horace White to Morrill, March 14, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. Walter Crockett, Vermont, The Green Mountain State (New York: The Century History Co., 1921), III, 409. New York Tribune, Feb. 16, 1856.

i.e., Nova Scotian coal to Boston, Pennsylvania and West Virginia coal to Toronto and Montreal. Yet in the opinion of many Americans, Canadians violated the spirit of the treaty by imposing high tariffs on imported manufactured goods. Thus, while raw materials from Canada flowed freely, finished products from the United States were impeded.³⁹

Morrill was forced to go slowly in working to kill the Reciprocity Treaty because, according to one provision, notice to abrogate could not be given until the treaty had been in effect for ten years. Because no action could be taken until 1865 Morrill contented himself with occasionally bringing the issue before Congress as he did in an 1858 resolution asking an investigation of treaty operations and by complaining in his 1860 tariff speech that reciprocity was disastrous to United States trade.⁴⁰

The Canadians, who eagerly sought to continue reciprocity, hurt their own cause by appearing too friendly

³⁹Vermont Watchman, Dec. 18, 1863. New York Times, June 12, 1863; Dec. 19, 1863. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, pp. 29, 41-51. Charles C. Tansill, The Canadian Reciprocity of 1854 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1922), p. 81. Robin Winks, Canada and the United States (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1960), pp. 342-43.

⁴⁰Vermont Watchman, Dec. 18, 1863. Cong. Globe, 35th Cong., 1st Sess., 1858, p. 715 and 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 1860, pp. 1835-36.

to the Confederacy. Joshua Giddings, the Consul-General at Montreal, indicated that Canadian attitudes had changed his favorable opinion of the treaty. He now believed that, since reciprocity had not won friendship, it ought to be abolished. To many in the United States, Canada appeared to be doing little to prevent Confederates and their sympathizers from organizing such operations as the raid on St. Albans, Vermont. When apprehended, the raiders were treated with leniency by Canadian authorities. Such acts seemed distinctly unfriendly. Perhaps by design the resolution of abrogation passed on the same day that Canada freed the St. Albans raiders.⁴¹

At the beginning of the Thirty-eight Congress Morrill introduced a resolution calling for abrogation of the reciprocity treaty. He asked that it be considered a domestic issue and, as such, be referred to the Ways and Means Committee, where his influence was strongest. Instead, the House sent the resolution to the Commerce Committee.⁴²

⁴¹Joshua Giddings to Morrill, Oct. 29, 1863 in Justin S. Morrill, "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (Nov., 1897), 143-44. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, p. 27. Winks, Canada and United States, pp. 244ff, 345-47. Vermont Watchman, Dec. 23, 1863. On Oct. 19, 1864, some 23 Confederate soldiers in civilian dress crossed from Canada to rob and burn in St. Albans, Vermont.

⁴²Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1863, p. 19. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, p. 22.

Morrill attacked the reciprocity treaty with the fervor of a man trying to plug a hole in a dike. Because imports of Canadian goods exceeded exports to Canada, the difference had to be paid in gold. That was a truly serious leak in the financial dike of a nation at war. However, in his speech on January 27, 1864, Morrill stressed that the most important point was that reciprocity was unconstitutional. His constitutional argument was advanced because he regarded it as the best means for achieving the end he sought--the retention of the taxing power by the House. Since reciprocity took the form of a special tariff within a treaty, he said

commercial treaties, of the character of the reciprocity treaty, go far to wrest from the House its proper constitutional authority, and the cooperation of the House puts in peril the rule which is one of the prominent safeguards of American liberty. So long as external taxation, or a duty on imports, or so long as internal taxation or a tax upon home productions, must be resorted to for the support of the Government, the House of Representatives had no right to surrender or even hold in abeyance any part of its legitimate functions touching the power of taxation. . . .⁴³

In order to build an airtight case against reciprocity, Morrill pointed out that it had failed to fulfill the hopes of its supporters. He claimed that its worst failure was as a commercial venture because "the ancient laws of trade have been reversed. While our exports to

⁴³ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, p. 377.

Canada used to be double our imports, since the treaty the reverse is true." He insisted that the Reciprocity Treaty had no chance to succeed because it was badly written. "What use," Morrill asked "to allow cotton free from Canada to the United States and grindstones from the United States to Canada when the flow of trade is directly opposite."⁴⁴

Morrill noted in conclusion that the treaty neither fostered friendship nor hastened annexation. Canadians vilified the Union and hoped for its defeat as much as Great Britain did. Annexation was no closer and Morrill was glad, because in his view the United States needed neither the people nor the treaty.⁴⁵

Further action was stalled until May 18 when the resolution was reported from the Commerce Committee with an amendment providing for negotiations on a new treaty. Congressman Elijah Ward of New York strongly defended the amendment on the grounds that reciprocity could be made to work. Since the United States would be badly hurt if

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 378-81.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 381-82. It seems that the most fervent annexationists were Canadians. Before the treaty they felt union with the United States was the only way to retain prosperity following repeal of the British Corn Laws, but once reciprocity was signed annexation agitation ceased. Southerners supported reciprocity to prevent annexation. While they were anxious to acquire potential slave territory, they had no desire for more free territory. Tansill, Canadian Reciprocity, pp. 9-19, 76-77. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, pp. 10-11.

all Canadian trade was forced back to Great Britain, Ward hoped to avoid that eventuality by negotiating a new treaty based on true reciprocity. Because the House subsequently voted to postpone the resolution until December, final action on the abrogation of reciprocity was not taken until the next session. Soon after the opening of the second session of the 38th Congress Morrill called for a vote and got his resolution passed.⁴⁶

Even though Congress had decided to end the special trade privileges with Canada, Morrill had to be vigilant lest some group exert pressure for reversal of the decision. Since the treaty did not expire until 1866, there was ample time for its proponents to work, but Morrill and others prevented action. Morrill continued to oppose any revival of the Reciprocity Treaty throughout his later career. In 1874, for example, he wrote Hamilton Fish, then Secretary of State, that he continued to feel reciprocity was unconstitutional and detrimental to United States trade.⁴⁷

⁴⁶Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 2333-38, 2508-9 and 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1864, pp. 31-33. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, pp. 20-22.

⁴⁷Morrill to William Pitt Fessenden, June 19, 1865, Morrill Papers, Harvard University Library. Morrill to Hamilton Fish, June 4, 1875, Morrill Papers, Reel 13.

The Congress voted to repeal the Canadian reciprocity treaty because it had failed and because of national anger at Canada's support of the Confederate cause. Reciprocity had been established through the combined efforts of groups with diverse motivation: one wished to expand trade, another hoped to foster international friendship, while others were for or against annexation of Canada. Most were disappointed. In addition, many people in the United States felt that Canadians were hypocritical in opposing slavery yet showing sympathy for the Confederacy during the Civil War.⁴⁸

Morrill led the effort for repeal because he felt the treaty was a failure and because he apparently was an Anglophobe. Since reciprocity had not produced better trade relations and had usurped the taxation privileges of the House, he, as a financial expert, refused to condone it. In addition, Morrill did not hide his distaste for the British and their institutions. He even opposed the Northern Pacific Railroad because it might benefit British North America more than the United States, just as reciprocity had. In 1865 he strongly condemned a proposal to grant cabinet members a voice on the floor of the House

⁴⁸W. Jett Lauck, "The Political Significance of Reciprocity," Journal of Political Economy, XII (1904), 495-524. New York Times, Jan. 17, 1865. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, pp. 19, 56-58.

because he thought a method used by the monarchist British government had to be unsuited for a republic.⁴⁹ His typical Vermont Anglophobia aside, Morrill had substantial motivation for his effort to abrogate the Reciprocity Treaty since it had become the symbol of all that was bad in Canadian-United States relations.

By the time the repeal of reciprocity was achieved, Morrill had become reconciled to the people's determination to keep him in Washington. Although he had attempted to retire a number of times, especially in 1863, on each occasion he was overwhelmingly renominated and reelected.⁵⁰

In the Spring of 1863 Morrill made plans to retire from Congress, content that his work was done. Convinced that every man strives to leave the basis of future

⁴⁹ Morrill to Henry C. Carey, Nov. 14, 1863, Gardiner Collection. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 2293-99; 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 421-25. Haynes, Reciprocity Treaty, p. 22. Morrill's argument that such a treaty was unconstitutional was first made by President Zachary Taylor and Secretary of State John M. Clayton in 1849. Tansill, Canadian Reciprocity, pp. 25-26.

⁵⁰ T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Nature's Nobleman: Justin Morrill, A Victorian Politician," Vermont History, XXX (Jan., 1962), 11-12. R. W. Clarke to Morrill, April 16, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. Peter L. Washburn to Morrill, July 27, 1860, Morrill Papers, Reel 40. Henry Winter Davis to Morrill, Aug. 1, 1860, James Hawley to Morrill, Aug. 6, 1860, James Harvey to Morrill, Aug. 8, 1860, and W. Sweatt to Morrill, June 2, 1864, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. Charles Sumner to Morrill, Sept. 11, 1864 in Morrill, "Notable Letters," Forum, XXIV, 278-79.

reputation behind him, Morrill felt that in the tariff, internal revenue, and land grant college bills his work was concluded. Worn out from the rigorous wartime labor on the Ways and Means Committee, he longed to return to the quiet life of a gentleman farmer that he loved.⁵¹

Many people ignored Morrill's intention to retire and worked to see that he succeeded himself again. In general, he had the strong backing of constituents, congressional colleagues, and the press. However, one newspaper, the Bellows Falls (Vermont) Argus, accused him of faking retirement to drum up votes as he had done before. Despite that sour note, Morrill accepted a draft and served again.⁵²

Morrill's past election strategy gave some foundation for the suspicions of the Argus. Each of

⁵¹Justin S. Morrill, Self-Consciousness of Noted Persons (Cambridge: John Wilson and Co., 1882), p. 184. Morrill to Portus Baxter, June 4, 1863, Morrill Papers, Cornell University Library. Morrill to O. P. Chandler, June 26, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. Morrill to Voters of Second District, April 27, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. The 1862 election was postponed until September, 1863, due to the war, Parker, Morrill, p. 153.

⁵²C. M. Stone to Morrill, June 24, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 39. Elihu Washburne to Morrill, May 30, 1863, Henry Winter Davis to Morrill, Aug. 11, 1863, and Schuyler Colfax to Morrill, Oct. 5, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. Brattleboro (Vermont) Phoenix reprinted in Vermont Watchman, May 22, 1863. Bellows Falls Argus, Jan. 15, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 49. Vermont Watchman, Sept. 4, 1863.

Morrill's election campaigns began with an offer to retire and ended with his reelection by an ever-increasing margin.⁵³ With the exception of 1863, the regular letter of intent to retire was largely a device to wake up his complacent supporters and get them out securing convention votes. At the same time Morrill probably would have quit on any occasion that a serious intraparty fight seemed imminent. Basically, offering to step down was an effective electioneering technique.

⁵³Bassett, "Nature's Nobleman," 11-12.

CHAPTER VI

THE TARIFF AND THE CIVIL WAR

Although the Morrill Tariff of 1861 was not designed to be a war tariff, it served as a base for the war revisions. Since this law entailed an overhaul of tariff structure in the switch to specific duties, further major changes were unnecessary. Basically, Morrill had only to tighten up the language in order to eliminate a few inequities and formulate a rational schedule of rate increases.

When Congress convened on July 4, 1861, for the special session called by President Lincoln, Morrill was reluctant to tamper with the tariff law which he had worked long hours to perfect. Visits to the customs collectors in Boston and New York had confirmed his feeling that the tariff was working well and needed only to be amended to increase rates. But a meeting with Secretary of the Treasury Salmon Chase convinced him that the Secretary favored a return to the ad valorem system. Both to prevent losing the specific duties, and to meet the

dire need for money, Morrill agreed to cooperate with Chase in drafting a new bill almost identical in form to the existing law but with substantially increased duties.¹

The gathering of Congress, members arriving intermittently, singly or in small groups, was perhaps symbolic of the disorganization accompanying the rallying of the North. The national situation had been utter chaos in the first weeks after Fort Sumter; it was better by early July but far from organized. Under President Lincoln's proclamations, volunteers had swelled the army from 16,000 to 186,000, assuring the safety of the capital city. At army headquarters plans were being made for the defense of Washington and for the initiation of offensive operations. The War and Navy Departments were struggling to organize the letting of hundreds of contracts, the recruiting of thousands of men, and the transporting of everything. Treasury Secretary Chase's painstakingly drawn estimates of costs quickly proved inadequate. Despite this situation of confusion and uncertainty, Congress had to legislate for future needs.²

While the North was still organizing for war, pressure for offensive action by the great host encamped

¹Morrill to Henry C. Carey, July 6, 1861, Gardiner Collection. Francis Curtis, The Republican Party 1854-1904 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), pp. 526-27.

²Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959), I, 148ff.

around Washington became unbearable. Early small unit successes had fed the hope of a swift victory. Critics demanded that the army move South and destroy the enemy in a single blow: "Forward to Richmond" became their cry. Thoughtful observers, aware of the difficulties involved in military preparations, deplored that heedless attitude. Morrill lamented "the senseless cry of 'On to Richmond!'" "Only show the Stars and Stripes and they will run!" He feared that the public clamor would force General Scott to move before the army was fully prepared for an assault. Although Morrill hoped for a short war, he knew that no single battle by an ill-prepared army would suffice.³

While the new tariff and other financial proposals were being drafted, the New York Times published a long editorial on war finance. The editors felt that a plan to finance military expenses through loans was justified, but that the ordinary expenses of government and the interest on the debt had to be raised through taxation. The loans must then be repaid from peacetime surpluses as rapidly as possible, but, the editors insisted, the government would have to be realistic about the repayment period. For example, there should be no promise to pay in a short time, such as three years, because that would be impossible

³ Morrill to Ruth Morrill, July 20 and 22, 1861 quoted in William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 126. Nevins, War for the Union, I, 211-14.

in the event of a long war, nor should there be a plan to pay in a single generation because the loans would be too large. As an alternative the editors of the Times suggested that the debt be distributed over a period as long as fifty years so that posterity might bear its share of the cost.⁴

On July 16 Chairman Thaddeus Stevens of the Committee on Ways and Means reported the new tariff and moved for immediate consideration. The proposed tariff was basically the same as the Morrill Tariff but with provisions designed to increase revenue. Coffee and tea, previously on the free list classed as necessities of life, were now to carry duties of five and fifteen cents per pound respectively. Besides the general increase in rates, the new tariff sharply raised the duties on luxury items such as distilled liquors, wines, sugar, and cigars. In addition, since revenue was the goal, prohibitive rates on iron, steel, and a few other items were lowered. The bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole and made a special order for the following day.⁵

The tariff was given priority on July 17, but Stevens's hope of immediate passage was frustrated. Although the debate was limited to one hour, several

⁴ New York Times, July 15, 1861. See also Walton's Daily Journal (Montpelier), July 24, 1861.

⁵ Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, p. 152. New York Times, July 17, 1861.

serious challenges arose. Clement L. Vallandigham, a Democrat from southern Ohio, offered a substitute bill which was essentially a return to the Tariff of 1857. He was especially upset because coffee and tea, admittedly necessities of life, were to be taxed. Several members successfully proposed amendments including one which lowered the rate on coffee to three cents per pound.

Morrill then urged passage of the tariff, even though he regarded it as imperfect, because the Treasury was empty. The rates were too high, he believed, but the tariff was a war measure and speedy approval was necessary. Morrill was also convinced that Stevens had set the revenue estimates too high. He pointed out that imports were bound to be lower than the previous year because the Southern market had been lost and people tended to hoard their money in troubled periods. Believing that the bill would not suffice, even with its high rates, Morrill warned the House that internal taxes, including a direct tax and an income tax, would be needed to finance the war. He concluded by agreeing with the Times that taxation had to pay the ordinary expenses of government and the interest on the public debt.⁶

Only two days after calling up the tariff, Stevens compelled its passage. He introduced a substitute which

⁶Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, pp. 171-76.

was actually the original bill with minute alterations. Stevens then demanded approval of the substitute bill as a vote of confidence in the Committee on Ways and Means. Under this pressure the House quickly passed the bill and sent it to the Senate.⁷

Between the passage of the tariff and the subsequent consideration of a war tax bill, the Congress shared the North's deep psychological shock in the wake of defeat at the First Battle of Bull Run. With the myth of a short glorious war rudely shattered, the nation and the Congress realized that they had to gird themselves for a bloody struggle of indefinite duration. The defeat probably opened the eyes of many congressmen who previously had hesitated to vote the unprecedented sums needed.

Under the disheartening shadow of prolonged war, the House resumed consideration of war finances when Stevens reported an internal revenue bill which included a direct tax. Urging rapid consideration, Stevens explained that the direct tax would fall on real estate and the internal taxes on personal property. Morrill then explained that even though Vermont opposed the direct tax as much as any other state, the Treasury had to have it.

⁷Ibid., pp. 204-5. In the Senate, Fessenden began a policy of strong support for war finance bills but Sumner opposed the tariff on grounds it would alienate British support. Charles A. Jellison, Fessenden of Maine (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), p. 133. David Donald, Charles Sumner and the Rights of Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 35.

Later, other means, especially an income tax, would be necessary. He pointed out that, although the war was to be financed by huge loans, the bonds would not sell unless this bill was passed to guarantee payment of the interest. Morrill insisted that the session would be wasted if the tax bill failed; even to postpone the bill would be tantamount to declaring withdrawal of the troops in the field and abandonment of the capital. His conclusion was a rhetorical question: "Do we sustain the war effort or not?"⁸

Despite the best efforts of Stevens and Morrill, the House was reluctant to pass the bill in its original form. To break the impasse, Congressman John McClernand of Illinois maneuvered to halve the direct tax from thirty to fifteen million dollars. At this point Stevens lost his temper and stated that any move against the original bill was an act of disloyalty. Morrill, acting quickly to ease the tension, suggested that the figure be set at twenty million because that would actually bring in twelve million dollars from the loyal states. McClernand accepted Morrill's amendment and the bill was returned to the Ways and Means Committee to be altered.

When the bill was again reported from the committee, it had been changed to include a twenty million dollar

⁸ Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, pp. 246-52.

direct tax and an income tax of 3 percent on all incomes above six hundred dollars. As an alternative, Schuyler Colfax of Indiana suggested that the federal government demand the return of the treasury surplus distributed to the states in 1836. After brushing aside that final challenge by explaining that the funds were a pure gift and long ago spent, Morrill got nearly unanimous approval of the substitute tax bill.⁹

Morrill tried to clarify the general public's confusion about the direct tax bill in a letter to Henry C. Carey, the protection advocate, who he knew would publicize it. He explained that the tax bill was moving so quickly that no one outside the House, not even the newspapers, had accurate knowledge of it. Morrill admitted that the burden of the two taxes would fall unequally because Vermont and Western farmers would be hard hit by the direct tax while the tax on nonfarm income would rest most heavily on people in the industrialized Atlantic states. However, Morrill seemed confident that patriotic citizens would bear all war taxes cheerfully.¹⁰

The direct tax bill stirred sectional controversy because it was soon clear that the West would be pressed hardest. The Ways and Means Committee quickly realized

⁹ Ibid., pp. 306-7, 323-31.

¹⁰ Morrill to Henry C. Carey, July 31, 1861, Gardiner Collection.

that they could not constitutionally tax personal property directly because a direct tax could only be levied on real estate. And almost all of the wealth in the Western states was in land and therefore taxable while much Eastern wealth was in untaxable personal property. Because of the constitutional restrictions, the average tax on all property in Illinois was 7 mills while in Massachusetts it was only 2.6 mills. Morrill feebly tried to ease the sectional squabbling by pointing out that Vermont shared the plight of the West, but he knew that fairness, not rhetoric, was needed. The income tax on nonfarm income over \$600 was the solution because it would tax Eastern wealth in salaries, securities, and other investments. Morrill placated the West by claiming that the income tax would raise two-thirds of the expected revenue. Unfortunately, events falsified his statement. The West bore the initial burden because the direct tax was collected while the income tax was suspended pending revision.¹¹

The tax and tariff bills were sent to the same House-Senate Conference Committee, which returned a hybrid act labeled as the Tariff Bill. Modifications included cutting the rate on coffee to four cents per pound, raising

¹¹Sidney Ratner, Taxation and Democracy in America (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), pp. 65-66. Nevins, War for the Union, I, 195-96.

the lower limit on taxable incomes to eight hundred dollars per year, and dropping all excise taxes. Both Houses of Congress agreed to the combined bill and thus the early, albeit inadequate, financial basis for the war effort was completed.¹²

Newspaper reaction to the financial package was generally favorable. Walton's Daily Journal seemed a bit confused by all the parliamentary maneuvering but favored the result. On July 24, as consideration of the tax bill was beginning, the editor appraised the tariff as an acceptable last resort in lieu of direct taxation. Ten days later the Journal claimed the combined bill was a masterstroke. The Evening Star praised the direct tax but condemned the increased duties. The New York Times agreed that the omnibus bill was necessary but predicted that, because it was rushed through, revisions would be required in the regular congressional session. The act's major fault was that the high tariff rates would probably stop trade rather than bring in revenue. As an additional note, the Times pointed out that the direct tax would have the

¹²Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 1st Sess., 1861, pp. 415-28. This first income tax in the nation's history was never collected because before its effective date another law was enacted. Edwin R. Seligman, The Income Tax (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), p. 435. Nevens, War for the Union, I, 195. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 65-66. Jellison, Fessenden, p. 134. The South had to pay its share of the Direct Tax after the war. F. H. Pierpont to John H. Gilmer, Jan. 5, 1866, Thaddeus Stevens Papers, Library of Congress. James L. Sellers, "An Interpretation of Civil War Finance," American Historical Review, XXX (Jan., 1925), 295.

welcome side effect of curbing government corruption because the people, now paying for government out of their own pockets, would observe how the money was spent.¹³

As the Times had predicted, the tariff structure adopted in the special session of the 37th Congress lasted only until the next session. Reforms began with emergency duties placed on tea, coffee, and sugar. By the time the Tariff Act of 1862 was completed, many additional revisions were included.¹⁴

Shortly after the House convened, Morrill reported a bill raising the rates on tea, coffee, and sugar. It increased the duty on sugar one-half a cent, coffee one cent, and tea five cents per pound. Secretary Chase hoped the proposed duties would generate an additional seven million dollars a year. However, Morrill stated that even if revenue should decrease because of a drop in imports, the result would be good since the coin needed to pay for

¹³ Walton's Daily Journal, July 24, 1861; Aug. 3, 1861. Washington Evening Star, July 20, 1861. The tariff acts of March and August, 1861, combined nearly doubled the rates from the Tariff of 1857. Samuel S. Cox, Three Decades of Federal Legislation: 1855-1885 (Providence, R.I.: Reid Publishers, 1888), p. 137 and Reinhard Luthin, "Abraham Lincoln and the Tariff," American Historical Review, XLIX (July, 1944), 627. Robert P. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), pp. 19-20. New York Times, Aug. 3 and 6, 1861.

¹⁴ Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), II, 211-13.

foreign goods would remain in the country. Finally, he explained that the Ways and Means Committee gave the bill priority because they wanted it applied to the import session beginning with the cessation of the North Atlantic winter storms.

Morrill's curious statement that he would happily see trade curtailed in order to keep coin at home suggested his concern about the troubled state of national finance. He was beginning to realize that, regardless of the increased duties, the tariff could never satisfy the Treasury's revenue needs. As a result of this realization, Morrill soon changed his philosophy, viewing the tariff simply as a means of balancing the internal taxes. Revenue would still be sought but the main purpose of the tariff would be to ward off foreign competition so that domestic industry would flourish and fill the Treasury with heavy excise tax payments. Morrill was also concerned that the loss of the Southern market, and coin hoarding by the public, would result in large annual trade deficits with the difference necessarily being paid in gold. As a hard-money man, he was increasingly concerned over the growing shortage of coin to finance war spending. The depressing annual report of Secretary Chase, along with the Trent Affair's threat of British intervention, had so shaken public confidence that bond sales were dropping, coin reserves in banks were falling, and the

nation was on the brink of a funding crisis. One week after Morrill's speech, on December 30, 1861, the major banks suspended specie payments.¹⁵

The only opposition to the Coffee, Tea, and Sugar Bill, by Vallandigham of Ohio, was too ineffectual to prevent its enactment in the minimum possible amount of time. Vallandigham proposed a tax on exports as an alternative, but, since that type of tax was specifically forbidden by the Constitution, Morrill had no trouble turning the idea aside and obtaining a majority for the bill. On December 24, the day after he reported the special tariff to the House, it was signed into law.¹⁶

Secretary Chase was overzealous in his application of the new rates and found himself condemned by the New York Times. Chase announced plans to tax stocks of coffee, tea, and sugar already in bonded warehouses as well as new imports. The Times rightly condemned this retroactive taxation on the grounds that the law's framers did not intend it. The editors supported their views by pointing to the specific exemption made in the tariff law

¹⁵ Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 68-69. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 25-28.

¹⁶ Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1861, pp. 169-70. U.S., Statutes at Large, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 330. Jellison, Fessenden, p. 133. Edward Stanwood, American Tariff Controversies in the Nineteenth Century (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1903), II, 127.

for goods afloat. They added that, since bonded goods had already been assessed and the tax paid in good faith, it would be oppressive to levy additional duty.¹⁷ The Times was most likely correct because, had Morrill planned to tax stock on hand, there would have been no point in rushing passage to beat the import season.

Through the initial phase of the war the mood of Congress was mixed and constantly fluctuating. At adjournment in August, 1861, Congress had been chastened by the Bull Run disaster. Successful amphibious operations, and Grant's victories at Forts Henry and Donelson, and later at bloody Shiloh, cheered the membership. McClellan's lack of action frustrated all, especially radicals. When McClellan finally moved, hope for a major Eastern victory was soon dashed by his failure in the Peninsular Campaign. In financial matters there was a great sense of urgency. The suspension of specie payments disrupted public and private credit badly. Congress immediately passed a resolution pledging to support the public credit by imposing a minimum of \$150 million in taxes and tariff.

The cost of the war was staggering and growing so rapidly that all estimates were soon outdated. In December, Secretary Chase unrealistically asked for only

¹⁷New York Times, Dec. 30, 1861.

\$50 million in new taxes, but in January Congress resolved to vote at least three times that amount. Chase estimated in mid-summer 1861 that the expenses for the next year would total \$320 million, but the cost was already approaching \$2 million per day. For example, the initial cost to clothe the 500 regiments authorized in July was \$10 million, but a soldier could wear out a good uniform in less than three months. The expansion of the armed forces, the immense consumption of equipment, and the suspension of specie payments exerted inflationary pressures that sent prices skyward.¹⁸

Because of a heavy workload, the Ways and Means Committee did not introduce the general tariff revision in the House until June 25, 1862. Although Stevens brought up the so-called temporary tariff increase, Morrill took charge of it.¹⁹ Morrill skillfully guided the bill through a hail of amendments virtually unscathed. He himself proposed fifty minor changes and got them all approved. Of the several amendments offered from the floor, the only one adopted restored rags (for paper) to the free list, a move which Morrill personally favored

¹⁸Nevins, War for the Union, I, 195, 303. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 50-52. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 471ff. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 68-69, 79.

¹⁹Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 2936-40.

because it aided education. The most serious challenge arose when Morrill was accused of unfairly supporting the woolen industry to aid Vermont woolgrowers. Morrill defended the woolen rate, weathered the storm, and guided the tariff to passage.²⁰

At this point Stevens took responsibility for getting the House bill into the statute books. When the Senate returned the bill with numerous amendments, Stevens won a motion to disagree and to go into conference committee where he preserved most of the House version. By July 14 the tariff was law.²¹

In a separate action, immediately following enactment of the basic tariff bill, Stevens ignored Morrill's objections and reported a bill to raise the duty on sugar by one cent per pound. Morrill registered his strong opposition because it would be a doubling of the rate as well as the second increase of the session. The effective rate, one cent per pound, he noted, was already high since sugar sold at only four cents per pound in Louisiana and Texas. The proposed increase was

²⁰Morrill to Henry C. Carey, July 12, 1862, Gardiner Collection. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 2936-40, 2978-86, 3050-55.

²¹Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 3213, 3268. Statutes at Large, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 543. The free list included 99 items, down from 182 in the Morrill Tariff. Stanwood, American Tariff Controversies, II, 127-28. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 78.

particularly unfair because it made the rate 50 percent of the market value and also failed to tax sorghum or maple sugar, the two great rivals of cane sugar. Despite Morrill's arguments, Stevens got his bill passed.²²

Regarding the Tariff Bill of 1862 and the Sugar Bill, Morrill again exhibited his devotion to the virtue of fairness even while upholding the principle of protection. Although he wrote in his personal notes that the nation had many varied industries which had to be brought under the guardianship of Congress, he was not a strict protectionist. That was proved by the complaints of Henry C. Carey and others that iron, coal, and additional special interests needed much more protection. The main point of the 1862 tariff, as the New York Times explained, was no longer revenue but rather to compensate for the new Internal Tax Bill. To keep native industry alive while paying large excise taxes, Morrill wanted to protect them from disastrous foreign competition.²³

²²Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 3332-33.

²³Justin S. Morrill, "Notes on the Tariff of June, 1862," Morrill Papers, Reel 1. Alfred B. Lindley, "The Copper Tariff of 1869," Michigan History, XXXV (March, 1951), 2. Morrill to Henry C. Carey, March 18, 1862, Gardiner Collection. Henry C. Carey to Morrill, June 22, 1862 in Justin S. Morrill, "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (October, 1897), 148-49. Morrill to Carey, July 12, 1862, Gardiner Collection. New York Times, Aug. 1, 1862. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 484, 490-91. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 77, 141ff.

Morrill, a lover of books, travel, and art, welcomed the adjournment of Congress which allowed him to return to his cherished leisure-time pursuits. He spent the summer of 1862 in Strafford, reading and resting. He often combined business and travel, going several times to Boston and, at least once, as far as Illinois to check his investments. A pleasant trip to St. Paul occupied the Morrill family during the summer of 1863. After the war, Morrill took the trip dreamed of by most lovers of books and art--the grand tour of Europe.²⁴

The Tariff question entered a period of relative quiet following the rapid changes of 1861 and 1862. Despite an abundance of ideas about possible modifications,²⁵ there was no significant attempt at tariff revision in the short session of 1863.

Shortly after Congress adjourned, the fortunes of the Union sank to their lowest ebb. The depressing defeat at Fredericksburg was followed in May by disaster at Chancellorsville. The premium on gold, fluctuating with the fortunes of war, rose sharply. Perhaps the only positive note was the absence of foreign intervention.²⁶

²⁴Parker, Morrill, pp. 46-47, 131, 154.

²⁵Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1959), p. 171. Gardiner Brewer to Morrill, Dec. 10, 1862, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. J. H. Clay Mudd to John Sherman, March 3, 1863, Sherman Papers.

²⁶Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 52.

By the time Congress convened in December, 1863, the fortunes of the Union had risen, but so had expenditures. July marked a military turning point with victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg. Union forces suffered a setback at Chickamauga, but recovered in November with victories at Chattanooga. But, while the war effort seemed on the upswing, Congress had to find ways to pay the bills. New troops needed equipment. Veterans had to be resupplied. The more frequent battles were consuming ever increasing quantities of clothing and equipment. The war was now costing \$2,250,000 per day. Secretary Chase estimated that the total cost of the war for 1863-64 would be \$750 million, but that figure proved to be on the conservative side. Prices climbed rapidly, and the dollar dropped to less than half of its 1861 value. The interest on the debt, pledged in gold, was constantly rising and had to be paid. At the same time, the customs receipts, needed to pay the interest, fell short of expectations--partly because of the successes of the Confederate navy. Again, it was up to the Congress to sustain the war effort.²⁷

With rising expenditures making rate increases inevitable, Morrill saw the need to counter a shippers' movement to sidestep the anticipated higher duties by

²⁷Ibid., p. 51. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 81-94.

stockpiling goods. To prevent a large revenue loss, Stevens proposed a joint resolution to increase duties until June 1 by 50 percent generally, and to place a 10 percent ad valorem duty on the free list. The motion was soundly defeated. Morrill reintroduced the resolution with the increases halved and suffered a similar defeat. Morrill returned a week later with a substitute which itemized the increases desired and extended the effective time to July 1. He claimed that the resolution would prevent a flood of imports while the major revision was being prepared. Morrill conceded that the temporary tariff was a crude measure but insisted that it was necessary. The revised resolution then passed, giving Morrill the time he needed for extensive tariff calculations.²⁸

On June 2, 1864, Morrill explained to the House that rising expenditures had created a need for tariff revision. Most of the additional revenue, he noted, would come from internal taxes, so that the purposes of the tariff bill would be to produce supplemental revenue and to protect home industries which could then pay increased excise taxes. In addition, an effective measure was needed for the duration of the war, whether the fighting continued for months or years.²⁹

²⁸ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1702-3, 1855-59.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 2672.

To accomplish its revenue goals the Committee on Ways and Means worked to balance the many factors involved in the rate system. In general, as Morrill explained, the duties were raised sharply on such luxury items as tobacco and spirituous liquors, and minimally increased on necessities like sugar. In a personal comment, Morrill mentioned that he hoped to see the high taxes discourage the use of alcohol and tobacco.³⁰ Thus, Morrill concisely explained the basic premise behind the rate structure and expressed his own puritanical principles.

Having generally covered the pending tariff bill, Morrill detailed the item most vital to his constituents-- wool.

The woolen manufacturing establishments have since [1861] prospered . . . The wool-grower has so far prospered, also, . . . and yet he has not kept pace with the wants of the manufacturers. . . . [Nevertheless] there is much of last year's clip of wool now on hand unsold. . . . This shows there is some defect in the law that must be remedied, and that the manufacturer is in a better position than the wool-grower. . . . I know sound policy dictates that for proper encouragement of manufacturers all raw materials should be free. . . . But until we reach the point of supply for our own country, I do not see why encouragement may not be given to the wool-grower as well as the manufacturer.³¹

Morrill, in conclusion, anticipated the most obvious objection by stressing that there were no prohibitory duties. Since the object was to gain additional

³⁰Ibid., pp. 2672-73.

³¹Ibid., pp. 2673-74.

revenue, that would be self-defeating. He admitted, though, that the new rates were far higher than usual in order to counteract the internal taxes placed on domestic industry.³²

In a long, bitter denunciation, Samuel Cox of Ohio predicted that the proposed tariff would precipitate the downfall of the nation by pushing it into financial chaos. The bill, he said, would efficiently transfer money from the many to the few--from labor to capital. Cox warned that the face of society would be changed within five years: the multitude would rise to cut the throats of the wealthy and then destroy itself through impatience.³³

Cox made a possibly valid point in his argument that the tariffs were pricing cheap foreign goods out of the reach of the common man and forcing him to pay inflated wartime prices for domestic goods. At the same time, he contended, the government was protecting the profits of wealthy factory owners in order to perpetuate tax receipts; and if these practices continued, there might indeed be a dangerous transfer of money from labor to capital. But Cox ignored the general improvement in the economy and the inescapable argument of war necessity. The face of society was changed, but not in the drastic way that the Ohioan predicted.

³²Ibid., p. 2674.

³³Ibid., pp. 2775-83.

Stevens defended the protection given to manufacturers as both just and necessary. He said that since the government collected one-half of its revenue from internal taxes on industry, manufacturers deserved protection while carrying such a heavy tax burden. In addition, Stevens pointed out, if industry was not protected, many companies would fail and tax receipts would plummet.³⁴

When all the angry words were spent, Morrill encountered only minor opposition as he shepherded the bill through the amendment procedure to final approval.³⁵

One of the most surprising aspects of the Tariff of 1864 was the little debate it produced. Aside from the speech of Cox, there was little discussion of the bill in the House. The newspapers and public seemed to take even less interest. The only section of the bill which elicited significant comment from Morrill's constituents was the wool duty: growers demanded protection and manufacturers argued that the growers did not need it. Perhaps people seemed indifferent because Morrill had

³⁴Ibid., pp. 2692-93. With the passage of this bill, duties averaged 47 percent of the goods' value. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power 1845-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), pp. 145-46. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 152.

³⁵Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., pp. 2717-22, 2743-51. Stanwood, American Tariff Controversies, II, 128-30. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 88-89.

justified the bill well enough to satisfy all objections. But, even though many recognized Morrill as the leading tariff expert in the House,³⁶ no man could satisfy all opponents in a single speech. Probably the opposition was minimal because it was common knowledge that more revenue was needed and no one had an alternative to suggest.

To the surprise of nearly everyone, including Morrill, the supposedly temporary Tariff of 1864, although often revised, remained in effect for nearly twenty years. Once the high tariff wall was firmly established it proved difficult to dismantle.³⁷

The long campaigns of Grant and Sherman had been costly. Victory was clearly near but new troops and new funding were needed. The troop increase authorized in July, 1864, had helped push the daily cost of the war to \$3,000,000. Constant fighting along the Petersburg front and along Sherman's line of march consumed supplies at an unprecedented rate. With the war nearly over, Congress

³⁶E. B. Bigelow to Morrill, March 8, 1864 and H. C. Meriam to Morrill, April 9, 1864, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. E. B. Bigelow to Morrill, July 23, 1864, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. Boston Traveller reprinted in Vermont Watchman, April 29, 1864. Bernard Steiner, Life of Henry Winter Davis (Baltimore: John Murphy Co., 1916), p. 347. Cox, Three Decades, p. 75.

³⁷F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), pp. 163-67, 170.

passed funding bills which finally brought the ratio of loans to taxes down from 8-1/2 to 1 in 1861-62 to a more respectable 3 to 1 in 1864-65.³⁸

As the short congressional session of 1865 waned, Morrill called up a bill to make a general increase in the tariff. After he explained that only immediate approval would give the Senate time to act in the three days before adjournment, the House limited general debate to one minute. Morrill turned aside the few proposed amendments with the explanation that the duties were necessary for the usual purposes of obtaining funds and balancing the planned increases in the internal taxes. Following the reading for amendments, Morrill easily secured a majority vote for the tariff. The Senate quickly passed the bill, and it became law on March 3, the last day of the session.³⁹

This final tariff increase of the war years did not pass so completely unnoticed by the press as had the previous act. The New York Times, strongly opposed to another rise in the duties, predicted that only a reduction in rates could bring in the revenue that the Treasury

³⁸Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 93-94.

³⁹Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 1205-8, 1255-56. Jellison, Fessenden, p. 133.

sought.⁴⁰ But with the Union forces on the verge of victory, there was little other complaint about increased taxation.

Throughout the war years Morrill sought to provide ever higher tariffs because he firmly supported the administration's goals--revenue and protection. In all his speeches he expressed the need for constantly increasing funds to prosecute the war. As a protectionist who called free trade un-American, he believed that national strength and independence required economic self-sufficiency, a status to be realized only under a system of protective tariffs. With the important exception of the wool duty,⁴¹ Morrill worked for the national interest rather than state or local interests. Morrill sincerely believed that protection was the salvation of the nation because it brought diversity of employment and increased the knowledge and wealth of the people. He claimed that the luster and intellectual caliber of a modern nation might be measured by the variety and extent of its industrial pursuits. All of these things, Morrill said, would

⁴⁰New York Times, Dec. 13, 1864.

⁴¹Morrill to Horace Greeley, Jan. 15, 1870 in Morrill, Forum, XXIV, 404. Morrill to J. Lawrence Laughlin, April, 1883, Morrill Papers, Reel 36. Morrill to Edwin Hammond, Feb. 17, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7.

happen behind a protective tariff.⁴² Although Morrill may not have been right in his devotion to protection, he was remarkably successful in putting his beliefs into law.

⁴²Morrill to J. Lawrence Laughlin, April, 1883, Morrill Papers, Reel 36.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTERNAL REVENUE

By the beginning of the first regular session of the 37th Congress in December, 1861, the government's need for funds had become acute and could only be satisfied by the extraordinary means of huge loans and a comprehensive tax program. During the special summer session, Congress had decided that taxes should pay the ordinary expenses of government and that loans should finance the war. To realize those aims, Congress resolved to raise \$150 million in taxes and a like amount in loans.¹ The taxes collected fell short of expectations, causing a decrease in the originally heavy bond sales as people lost confidence in the government's ability to pay the interest from tax receipts. Confidence also ebbed because the Battle of Bull Run had destroyed the hope for a short war and raised doubts about the ultimate victory of the Union.

¹Wesley C. Mitchell, "The Suspension of Specie Payments," Journal of Political Economics, VII (June, 1899), 308-9. Expenditures rose so prodigiously that the antebellum federal budget of \$70 million per year became barely enough for one month. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power 1845-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), p. 114.

Although the bond sale program began with excellent cooperation between bankers and the Treasury, and with the full support of the press, this effort was largely dependent on the willingness of the public to buy the bonds from the banks. On August 17, the major bankers pledged to take the first loan, amounting to \$150 million, over a five-month period, using their specie reserves as payment. The government would use the funds to buy supplies on the open market. The suppliers and others would then complete a financial circle by buying the bonds from the banks out of their profits. The system worked well; the banks fulfilled their pledge thirty days early, but then suddenly the public lost confidence. Two shocks in early December combined with military failure to break the money cycle: drastically revised estimates showing revenue down and expenditures up were published in Secretary Chase's first annual report; and the Trent Affair, with its threat of a foreign war, compounded the ill news. The public responded by hoarding specie rather than buying bonds. That trend forced banks and the Treasury to suspend specie payments. As the year 1862 opened, the nation's credit had collapsed.²

² Robert P. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party: An Economic Study of Civil War and Reconstruction (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), pp. 21-27. David Donald (ed.), Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1954), p. 39. New York Times, Aug. 17, 1861. New York Tribune, Sept. 7, 1861. Walton's Daily Journal, Sept. 14, 1861. Mitchell, "Suspension of Specie Payments," pp. 308-9, 314-16, 321-25.

Since the war effort depended on restoration of public confidence in the Treasury's financial stability, Thaddeus Stevens gave responsibility for the tax program to Morrill, who had already demonstrated his financial ability in tariff work. Morrill justified Stevens's trust by devoting long hours to drafting a workable law in a field of domestic taxation wholly without guiding precedents.

The financial crisis, climaxed by the suspension of specie payments, brought a sharply critical reaction from the press. The New York Times supported the suspension and suggested an issue of Treasury notes, the value of which would be guaranteed by making them payable for taxes. The Washington Evening Star strongly criticized Congress for allowing the crisis to develop and stated that taxes had to be raised sharply to provide needed income. The New York Tribune chided Congress for failing to establish a realistic tax structure and insisted that a minimum of \$100 million was needed from internal revenue. The editors also demanded retrenchment in the government. The Rutland (Vermont) Herald simply asked the legislators to realize that the financial crisis was the priority item.³

³ Washington Evening Star, Dec. 31, 1861. New York Times, Dec. 28, 1861. New York Tribune, Jan. 11, 1862. Rutland Herald, Jan. 16, 1862.

The Committee on Ways and Means acted to still the mounting criticism and thus give Morrill time to draft an adequate bill. It initiated a resolution which pledged Congress to maintain the public credit and acknowledged the principle, duty, and necessity of levying sufficient taxation. The New York Times predicted that the people would now regain their confidence in the government and buy government bonds.⁴

Only military victory would fully restore public confidence, but decisive battlefield success proved elusive. Victories were achieved: Grant and John Pope won a series of battles which opened the upper Mississippi River; the Monitor ended the threat of the Merrimac; and New Orleans fell to naval assault. All of these encounters encouraged the North; but the great expectations attached to George McClellan's appointment were never justified. He ultimately failed--and northern hopes for a resounding victory dimmed.

The first important financial measure to emerge from the Ways and Means Committee was a Treasury Note Bill which Morrill strongly opposed. The bill placed a total of \$150 million in United States Notes in circulation and

⁴Sidney Ratner, Taxation and Democracy in America (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), p. 69. New York Times, Jan. 16, 1862.

declared them Legal Tender, nonredeemable paper money.⁵

Unlike Morrill, most citizens, and a large segment of the press, approved the use of legal tenders in wartime. Six weeks earlier, on December 28, the New York Times had asked for such a measure. But Morrill distrusted paper money and never became fully reconciled to it.⁶ He denounced legal tenders as a dangerous expedient and insisted that taxation was the only solution. Morrill warned that the notes would not circulate at par with specie: contractors forced to take such notes would stop selling to the government, the poor would be crushed by racing inflation, and specie would be driven into hiding. Believing that government bonds would not sell if the interest was promised only in paper, he held that gold and silver must be the only legal tender. He predicted that without such a policy the government would soon have

⁵ New York Times, Jan. 23, 1862. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 31. The bill also provided for a loan of \$500 million in 6 percent bonds which would mature in twenty years.

⁶ Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), II, 212. Seth Hunt to Morrill, Jan. 31, 1862, Morrill Papers, Reel 35. A. A. Guthrie to John Sherman, Feb. 11, 1862, Sherman Papers. Rutland Herald, Feb. 11, 1862. New York Times, Dec. 28, 1861. Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959), pp. 173ff. John Sherman, Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet (Chicago: The Werner Co., 1895), pp. 274-78. Wesley C. Mitchell, A History of the Greenbacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903), pp. 46, 96, 111, 122. Personal Notes 1873, Morrill Papers, Reel 43. The New York Tribune reluctantly supported the bill, Feb. 15, 1863.

only the paper and would be forced to issue increasing amounts as inflation fed on itself.⁷

Because of his stand on the legal tenders, Morrill found himself in very unusual company. He, along with a handful of Republicans, including Senators Collamer, Foot, and Fessenden, joined the Democratic opponents of the administration on this issue. Morrill allied himself with such men as Clement Vallandigham, an Ohioan whose loyalty was widely questioned. The New York Times scolded Morrill for placing himself in company with such a man and for deserting the Treasury in a time of emergency.⁸

The debate over the Treasury Note Bill marked one of the few times Morrill's opinion did not prevail, probably because his arguments were weak. He short-sightedly continued to assume that the war would end soon; those who wished to be prepared for any eventuality were right. Although Morrill's point regarding payment of bond interest in specie was well taken, he continued to oppose the bill after it was amended to satisfy him on

⁷Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 629-32.

⁸Charles A. Jellison, Fessenden of Maine (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1962), pp. 147-48, 163. Donald (ed.), Diaries of Chase, p. 43. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 212. Sherman, Recollections, pp. 274-78. James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill Co., 1884), I, 425. James A. Bayard to Thomas F. Bayard, Jan. 28, 1862, Thomas Bayard Papers, Library of Congress. New York Times, Feb. 5, 1862.

that point.⁹ Morrill also insisted that the nation had enough wealth to pay for the war. This was a valid position, as subsequent events proved. But, most of the nation's wealth was not liquid, being tied up in land and other assets, and the gigantic war effort required a vast amount of liquid assets. That Morrill was less vehement in his opposition to the second and third legal tender bills indicated that he came to recognize the necessity of a large money supply even though he continued to oppose legal tenders in principle.¹⁰

Not always so serious and intense as he was during the Treasury Note Debate, Morrill often exhibited evidence of a dry wit. One example can be found in a reply to Henry C. Carey of Philadelphia. Carey had written complaining that one of Morrill's nephews had borrowed money from him and had then left Philadelphia without repaying it. Morrill expressed mock rage that one of the rascals should so disgrace the family name and offered to make restitution personally. Then Morrill gently showed that Carey had been duped by marveling that one of his nephews could have done that since they were all less

⁹New York Times, Feb. 14, 1862. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 212. Stevens urged payment in currency because specie would be too costly. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 174-75.

¹⁰Nevins, War for the Union, II, 213. Mitchell, History of Greenbacks, pp. 96, III. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 29ff.

than ten years old and living great distances from Philadelphia.¹¹

Early in March, 1862, Morrill reported the long awaited internal tax bill. He had the right as principal author to make the first speech on this naturally controversial act. Morrill's points were that the bill was generally fair and absolutely essential to the national welfare.¹²

Morrill declared that in wartime the government must demand the necessary funds and establish an agency of collection. He showed that the Treasury would need \$145 million per year and that in order to guarantee receipt of the funds "it is indispensable that the Government shall have within its own control--responsive to it at regular and stated periods--the means of meeting all its vast engagements. This can only be secured by its own agents under its own laws." The power of collection, Morrill said, would be vested in a department of internal revenue to be headed by a commissioner reporting to the Secretary of the Treasury. The commissioner would be assisted by a collector and an assessor in every state or district and as many deputies as became necessary.¹³

¹¹Morrill to Henry C. Carey, July 6, 1861, Gardiner Collection.

¹²Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1194-97.

¹³Ibid., pp. 1194-95. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 75-77.

Major blocks of taxes would come from just a few sources, Morrill explained. The largest amount, \$50 million, would be realized from a 3 percent ad valorem tax on all manufactured goods; however, the manufacturers would surely pass the increased cost on to the consumers. Another large share of the tax load was purposely placed on liquor and tobacco because, Morrill claimed, "a tax dependent on the habits and vices of men is the most reliable of all taxes." Since they could show a profit under heavy taxes, he predicted that spirits, malt liquors, and tobaccos would contribute \$24 million to the Treasury.¹⁴ In the case of vice, Morrill was accommodating himself to reality. He would rather have seen the vices die, but so long as they existed, they would help the war effort.

A month later, April 22, 1862, Morrill indicated his continued distaste for drinking when he introduced a resolution asking for the cashiering of any officer found drunk. His resolution was generated by a drunken general's failure to aid beleaguered Vermont troops at Yorktown during the Peninsular Campaign. The general ordered the Vermonters to attack superior forces and then became too drunk to send the necessary reinforcements. Although many, including his own wife, questioned the wisdom of the

¹⁴Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1194-96. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 69-75. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 213.

resolution, Morrill defended it saying that "I don't expect them to be saints. All I ask is that they be sober when they are spending Vermonters at the rate of 160 an hour." The resolution passed after being modified to read "habitually intoxicated."¹⁵

In concluding his speech on the internal revenue bill, Morrill mentioned that the income tax had been retained in the interest of fairness. He said the committee considered abolishing it but decided that it would tap any people missed by other taxes, assuring that all would pay their share.¹⁶

The most serious challenges to the tax bill related to the composition of the Internal Revenue Bureau. Congressman Timothy G. Phelps of California disputed the need for both a collector and an assessor in each district and moved to eliminate the latter. Phelps argued that the assessor was unnecessary since all taxes were paid to the collector and since the required monthly tax payments would make fraud difficult. After Morrill retorted that both the

¹⁵The incident took place at Yorktown on April 16, 1862. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, p. 1766. William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 130. The heavy taxation on whiskey did cause consumption to fall somewhat. Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), III, 229.

¹⁶Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1196-97. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 214.

volume of work and the need for a system of checks required the two positions, Phelps withdrew his amendment. Thomas Eliot of Massachusetts moved that the states collect the taxes, thus saving the Federal Government a huge sum in salaries. Morrill denied that it would save money because the central government would have to pay the state collectors to assume the additional duties. Morrill also doubted the proposal's efficiency because if a state failed to collect the revenue, the government would have to intervene with much lost time and ill feeling. Despite Morrill's arguments, Eliot insisted on a vote which saw his amendment defeated.¹⁷

Once the amendment process was completed, Stevens took charge of the bill to give Morrill time to work on tariff legislation. Stevens closed the debate with a short speech in which he defended the tax bill, and expressed his hope that the war would soon end, allowing rescission of the law in two years. The bill then passed the House on April 8. After the Senate returned the bill two months later, encumbered by 315 amendments, Stevens, supported by Morrill, got the amendments rejected en masse

¹⁷ Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1219-22, 1228. Charles Sumner was one politician who recognized the potential political influence of this new army of federal agents and made certain that those appointed in Massachusetts supported him. David Donald, Charles Sumner and the Rights of Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), pp. 74-75. Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 1219-24, 1241-45.

and sent to a conference committee. When he reported back from the joint committee, Stevens announced that nearly all of the Senate's amendments had been accepted. He explained that his original motion to nonconcur had been intended only to spare the House tedious hours discussing individual amendments: embodied in a conference report the amendments could be considered and adopted all at once.¹⁸

The internal tax bill was generally well received because both public and press realized the absolute necessity of taxation. If the Treasury had not received the funds, the Union would have plunged into the same disastrous inflation that the Confederacy suffered as a result of securing about 60 percent of its revenue from the printing press.¹⁹ While some people naturally grumbled about the added burden, the public had cooperated by submitting suggestions on the taxes both spontaneously and in response to Morrill's queries. Among those who helped Morrill were Henry C. Carey, who sent

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 1576-77, 2680-81, 2890-91. Edwin R. Seligman, The Income Tax (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), pp. 437-40. Jellison, Fessenden, p. 149.

¹⁹ Eugene M. Lerner, "The Monetary and Fiscal Programs of the Confederate Government, 1861-1865," J.P.E., LXII (Dec., 1954), 507. James L. Sellers, "An Interpretation of Civil War Finance," A.H.R., XXX (Jan., 1925), 282-95. Nevins, War for the Union, III, 43-44. Richard C. Todd, Confederate Finance (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1954), pp. 84-156.

information on railroads and on gas consumption, and Horace Greeley, who wrote about taxes on newspapers. Of course, letters were received from those who claimed their special interest was too heavily taxed, but there seemed to be less of this than usual.²⁰

Press opinion from all sections of the political spectrum agreed that the bill had to be passed. The Evening Star, favorable because the internal revenue act conformed to the editors' views on the need for higher taxes, foresaw that the people would pay their taxes cheerfully. The New York Tribune felt that although the bill had defects, they were due to the committee's extraordinary attempt to be fair. The editors suggested that it would have been better to tax just a few items heavily, especially liquor and tobacco, and they also advocated a mild confiscation act so that the rebels could pay an amount equivalent to their share of the internal taxes. A serious complaint was lodged against the tax bill by the New York Times when the editors, even though strongly supporting internal taxation, branded the proposed bill a "monstrosity." The Times joined Congressman Phelps in opposing the suggested Bureau of Internal Revenue on the

²⁰ Morrill to Henry C. Carey, Jan. 11, 1862, Gardiner Collection. Horace Greeley to Morrill, March 18, 1862 in Justin S. Morrill, "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (Nov., 1897), 271. Erasmus Plimpton to Morrill, March 20, 1862, Morrill Papers, Reel 5. William Warner to John Sherman, April 11, 1862, Sherman Papers.

grounds that the necessary funds could easily be realized without creating hundreds of new patronage positions.²¹

On the same day that the Internal Tax Bill passed, Morrill suffered a defeat with the enactment of the second Legal Tender Bill. On June 23, 1862, Morrill spoke against this issue of \$150 million in legal tenders, calling the increase a breach of faith with the banks which had taken United States bonds even when individuals refused. He said that, according to the bill, the banks were to be paid in promises and the promises paid in promises, a complete circle of worthless paper. Despite Morrill's plea, Stevens urged and obtained passage.²²

The issue of legal tenders was another area in which Morrill and the New York Times disagreed in the Spring of 1862. Morrill felt legal tenders were inherently worthless and thus dangerous to the war finance program on which he had worked so hard. The Times agreed with Stevens that legal tenders were a necessary part of national finance because the banks needed a sufficient supply of currency to make transactions while specie payments were suspended. They had faith that legal tenders would hold their value and be a boon to business and the

²¹Washington Evening Star, March 4, 1862. New York Tribune, March 22, 1862 and March 8, 1862. New York Times, May 27, 1862.

²²Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1862, pp. 2884-85, 2903-4.

Treasury because of their constant value throughout the country. Perhaps the disagreement was caused because Morrill and the Times spoke for different constituencies. The real issue was confidence. Morrill, and the common people he spoke for, had no confidence in paper money and failed to realize that the real focus of confidence was now the government not the paper.²³ Because either the Times editors spoke for sophisticated city people, or simply possessed foresight, they saw no reason why money backed by the government could not have value as a medium of exchange. Eventually, the latter opinion prevailed, as all paper money was made nonredeemable in specie a century later.

Gloomy military and financial situations greeted Congress when it met in December, 1862. A year of disappointing military campaigns was soon to be capped by a bitter defeat at Fredericksburg and a stalemate in the West. By the end of 1862, a new financial crisis had to be resolved. War costs increased greatly with the recruitment of hundreds of thousands of additional men, and the attendant expenses of supply and resupply necessary to sustain an army one million strong. Inflation, too, eroded large amounts of available revenue. The tax bill

²³ New York Times, March 31, 1862. Wesley C. Mitchell, "Value of the Greenbacks During the Civil War," J.P.E., VI (March, 1898), 143. Brodie, Stevens, p. 173.

needed only minor adjustment to increase rates, but vast new loans had to be authorized in order to maintain the war effort. Also, the nation faced a currency shortage and this time money of denominations less than a dollar was needed. Because inflation had made the metal in coins more valuable as bullion than as currency, small change disappeared. Substitutes appeared to solve the public's need for ways to make change. Since these tokens, called shinplasters, were illegal, the federal government had to issue official fractional currency.²⁴

The legislation designed to meet these many ends for the subsequent eighteen months, called simply the Ways and Means Bill, was reported by Stevens on January 12, 1863. He announced that the bill authorized borrowing \$900 million in bonds, \$300 million in interest bearing Treasury Notes, and \$300 million in noninterest bearing demand notes. Stevens immediately stated his personal opposition to the bill and moved a substitute which omitted the second provision. Speaking for the committee's majority, E. G. Spaulding of New York immediately retorted that the entire bill was needed; the nation must realize

²⁴Wesley C. Mitchell, "The Circulating Medium During the Civil War," J.P.E., X (Sept., 1902), 551-56. Nevins, War for the Union, II, 163-64, 168-69. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 79-80. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 51-52.

that the war would cost immense sums resulting in a huge debt.²⁵

On the following day, Morrill delivered the major speech for the bill in which he pointed out that the overburdening and constantly increasing demands of the nation's resources could be met only by total cooperation. He said that the \$900 million request was planned to carry the war effort for a year and a half; if the war should last longer, more would be needed, but no amount was too much to pay for Liberty and Union. Morrill's personal sacrifice was a promise to support the bill, even though it contained a provision for an additional \$300 million in legal tenders, because he felt that discontinuing the established policy could be disastrous.²⁶

Morrill began his explanation of the three main and several lesser features of the bill by emphasizing that the Committee of Ways and Means had been nearly unanimous in support of the bill as reported. He predicted that the \$900 million in long-term 6 percent bonds and

²⁵Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, pp. 283-85. As of March 31, 1865, the federal debt was \$2,367 million. Hugh McCulloch, Men and Measures of Half a Century (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1888), p. 243. Government securities were excellent investments throughout the war. Nevins, War for the Union, III, 258.

²⁶Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, pp. 294-98. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 80.

\$300 million in 5.475 percent Treasury Notes would be snapped up. The Secretary of the Treasury promised to use the additional \$300 million in legal tenders only in the most extreme necessity. Morrill mentioned that among the lesser provisions was one to authorize \$50 million in fractional currency and another to tax state banks out of existence. In regard to the latter, he felt simple regulation of their circulation would be sufficient.

Morrill then made this speech do double duty by discussing the National Banking System which was proposed in a separate but allied bill. The bills were connected because the Ways and Means Bill would impose the heavy tax needed to repress state bank circulation and free the market for national bank notes. Morrill, who rejected the new system in spite of the strong support it received from the Secretary of the Treasury, explained that he considered the proposal to be faulty because:

The purpose of this new national banking scheme is, not to regulate the currency . . . but to uproot all the State banks issuing currency which now exist, under whatever system established, in order to make room for funding United States bonds. . . . An examination . . . would show the banks have been more liberal in their contributions to support the credit of the Government than any other class in the country. It is neither just nor sound policy for the Government at this time to crucify its benefactors.²⁷

²⁷Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, pp. 296-97.

Turning his attention once more to the Ways and Means Bill, Morrill admitted that the health of the national finances depended on military success but emphasized that public indications of faith were a big help. Congress had shown its faith in the nation's future by passing nonwar legislation ranging from the Pacific Railroad to Homestead to the Agricultural Colleges. That the war could be supported while other projects continued was, Morrill implied, a sure indication of a strong government.²⁸

Elijah Ward of New York attacked the legal tenders because they were wrecking the nation by causing inflation, a condition imposed most cruelly on the soldier. The troops risked their lives for pay worth only half its face value. He felt the new issue of legal tenders would accelerate this inequity. Fortunately, Ward offered no amendment, for if he had, Morrill would have been placed in an uncomfortable position.

On the other hand, Amasa Walker of Massachusetts supported the entire bill, especially the bank tax provision. First, he stated that the government had an obligation to control paper money in order to eliminate fluctuations and instability, and then he added the deceptively simple clinching argument that bank

²⁸Ibid., pp. 297-98.

circulation should be taxed because the Treasury needed the money.²⁹

Morrill and Stevens crossed swords over the tax on state bank circulation. Stevens wanted a higher tax while Morrill tried to justify the original proposal saying that regulation, not repression, was the object. Stevens won the first round when he moved that the provision be expanded to cover city banks, but Morrill tried to reverse the decision.³⁰ Dismayed by the antibank statements of Stevens and several other members, Morrill protested their implications that banks were evil and deserved to be destroyed; he pointed out again that banks had done much for the nation both before and during the war. For example, if state bank circulation should be totally curtailed, the nation's produce could not be moved since buyers and sellers traditionally depended on bankers to increase their circulation at harvest time to facilitate sales. If state bank circulation was ended, he predicted, everyone would be driven into the arms of the big capitalist. To avoid that, Morrill asked the House to return to the original bill which supported the principle of regulation.

Since his amendment had already passed, Stevens ignored Morrill's arguments and opened a new subject by

²⁹Ibid., pp. 334-41. ³⁰Ibid., pp. 462-63, 480-82.

offering another substitute bill on the Treasury Note question. While his first substitute eliminated that type of securities entirely, Stevens's second substitute allowed the Secretary of the Treasury to issue unlimited 3.65 percent Treasury Notes which would be legal tender. Besides adding the legal tender clause, Stevens was offering an interest rate nearly 2 percent lower than in the original bill.

Morrill, almost completely exasperated at this point, struck back harshly at Stevens's proposal. He objected to the substitute as it would both devalue the old no-interest legal tenders and stop bond sales because people would buy the dual purpose notes to earn interest and pay their debts. Finally, Morrill pointedly mentioned that the plan would bring chaos to Stevens's long-standing effort to realize a uniform currency.³¹

Since Stevens's motion was the last amendment proposed in the House, Morrill took the steps necessary to reach a final vote. Following the defeat of Stevens's two substitute bills, the Ways and Means Bill was read the third time and it finally passed the House. After the amended bill was returned from the Senate, Morrill persuaded the House to accept those changes he approved and then to insist on a series of conference committees until

³¹Ibid., p. 490. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 179, 393.

all differences were reconciled. He had to agree to a provision authorizing the Treasury to issue \$400 million in notes which could be legal tender at the discretion of the Secretary, but his version of the circulation tax was adopted. Both Houses accepted the compromise, and the bill passed essentially as Morrill wanted it.³²

Apparently the only section of the Ways and Means Bill controversial enough to evoke public comment was the bank tax provision. One of Morrill's constituents, expressing views almost identical to the congressman's position, predicted that such a tax would cripple the patriotic country banks which, if left alone, would be able to contribute far more to the war effort through purchase of government securities. A dissenting voice on bank taxes was raised by Joseph Medill, publisher of the Chicago Tribune, who felt banks should be taxed on circulation. Morrill replied that banks were already heavily taxed: they paid a tax on their charter; stamp taxes on checks, drafts, and notes; and a 3 percent tax on all profits from dividends. Besides, he said, taxation must bear a relation to profits, and profits ran 6 to 10 percent for manufacturers and only 3 percent for banks.³³ Thus,

³² Cong. Globe, 37th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1863, pp. 520-22, 1037-41, 1313-14, 1352-54, 1398-99.

³³ John A. Conant to Morrill, Jan. 27, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. Morrill to Joseph Medill, Jan. 3, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 36.

Morrill had three reasons for opposing circulation taxes; a) the banks had patriotically bought United States bonds, b) they were already bearing their share of taxation, and c) he owned considerable stock in state banks.

Morrill's defeat of the repressive bank circulation tax was short-lived because the National Banking Act, which carried the same clause, soon became law. This bill brought order to the nation's bank notes by placing their issuance under federal control. After state bank notes were taxed out of existence, a system of national banks was established with the right to issue notes, a monopoly upheld by the Supreme Court. Capitalized at a minimum of fifty thousand dollars in small towns and twice that amount where the population exceeded ten thousand people, the new banks transferred at least one-third of their capital to the Treasurer of the United States in interest bearing United States Bonds to be exchanged for 90 percent of their value in circulating notes. Total national circulation was restricted to \$300 million, with half distributed to the states in proportion to representation in Congress, and half given to the cities in proportion to the volume of business transacted. All national bank notes were redeemable in United States Notes, the legal tenders. Finally, the government had created a uniform bank note

currency, as secure as the government itself because it was a national paper currency based on national stocks.³⁴

In opposing the National Banking System, Morrill found himself in the minority as men from both parties acclaimed it an excellent innovation. John Sherman, who guided the measure through the Senate, gave it his full support because he believed it would stabilize the currency by removing the existing variety of bank notes and by stopping most counterfeiting. Samuel Cox of Ohio, always a partisan Democrat, praised the new system without qualification. Although Thaddeus Stevens favored the Bank Act, he felt there was not enough federal control. Hugh McCulloch, president of the State Bank of Indiana, came to Washington in 1862 to aid Morrill in working against the proposal, but a year later McCulloch accepted the post of Controller of the Currency to organize the new system. Morrill's opposition was generated by fear that state banks would be forced out of business; but, contrarily, their conversion to national banks went smoothly.³⁵

³⁴ Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 224-31. Samuel S. Cox, Three Decades of Federal Legislation: 1855-1885 (Providence, R.I.: Reid Publishers, 1888), pp. 141-44. Nevins, War for the Union, III, 256. Nichols, Stakes of Power, pp. 146, 206. Donald (ed.), Diaries of Chase, p. 42.

³⁵ Edward Redington to Morrill, Feb. 3, 1863, Morrill Papers, Reel 39. McCulloch, Men and Measures, pp. 163-65. Sherman, Recollections, p. 298. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 225. Cox, Three Decades, pp. 141-44. Donald, Sumner and Rights of Man, pp. 144-45. Jellison, Fessenden, p. 165.

Comment in the influential New York press was almost as wholeheartedly favorable as the congressional reaction. At the time of passage, the Tribune said the banking proposal was necessary to reestablish the national credit on a sound, permanent basis. After the system had proved its usefulness in daily commerce, the New York Times editorialized that at least one good thing had come out of the war, the reassumption of the federal government's sovereignty over the currency: all other world governments had guaranteed the sound, uniform currency necessary for business and similar action by the federal government was long overdue. The editors pointed out that contrary to the intent of the Constitution, the states had assumed the power to print money; since the power to coin money was vested in the national government, obviously it should also control any substitute for coin. The Times particularly approved the forced change to national banks because it was accomplished with little distress to state banks.³⁶

Among the strongest proponents of the National Bank Act was Jay Cooke, the Philadelphia financier, who was already renowned for organizing the sale of government bonds. (As sole Treasury Agent for sale of several major war bond issues, Cooke advertised and sold over one and

³⁶ New York Tribune, Feb. 3, 1863. New York Times, Dec. 14, 1864.

a quarter billion dollars in federal securities almost entirely within the country.) After the National Bank Act was passed, Cooke and his associates quickly established a leading position in the National Banking System by organizing the First National Banks of Philadelphia and Washington and the Fourth National Bank of New York.³⁷

On the above issue Morrill was behind the times, instead of out in front as he had been on many previous issues. Since Morrill was a state bank director and held considerable stock in banks in the towns around Strafford, his reluctance to accept national banks could have been due to financial self-interest. However, if this was true, it was out of character for Morrill because there is no evidence of any other instance where he let personal gain influence his legislative actions. Probably the National Banking Act was one time when Morrill simply did not do his homework. Because the bill emerged from another subcommittee of Ways and Means, Morrill had no direct part in drafting it, and with the pressures of his own work, it would have been difficult for him to reflect on the banking bill sufficiently. Morrill was presumably sincere in fearing that the common people who owned state bank stocks would suffer serious financial loss. Having

³⁷Ellis P. Oberholtzer, Jay Cooke: Financier of the Civil War (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Co., 1907), I, 150-51, 219ff. Nichols, Stakes of Power, p. 136. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 245-46. Donald (ed.), Diaries of Chase, p. 175.

made up his mind on faulty assumptions, Morrill stubbornly maintained his opposition but later admitted the worth of the system and willingly worked to improve it.³⁸

The months of the congressional adjournment, March to December, 1863, brought a welcome upturn in the fortunes of the Union. The repulse of Lee's second invasion of the North at Gettysburg thrilled the Union, but was tempered by Meade's failure to pursue and destroy the rebel army. In the same week, Grant opened the Mississippi River when he captured Vicksburg following a long siege. Appointed to overall command in the West, Grant demonstrated his fitness for even higher responsibilities with his victories around Chattanooga. Early in 1864 Grant was promoted to Lieutenant-General and made General-in-Chief of the northern armies.

An incident in the North sadly marred this period of Union successes. Violent draft riots raged in New York City from July 13-16. Originating as a protest to the Enrollment Act of March 3, 1863, the riot soon became racial with crowds attacking Negroes. Local authorities failed to quell the disturbances and veteran troops from

³⁸List of Vermont Bank Stocks Owned by Morrill, 1855 - 1888, Justin S. Morrill Collection, Vermont Historical Society. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, p. 1379.

the Army of the Potomac were summoned. The federal troops restored order after hundreds had been killed.³⁹

The returning Congress, happy about the improved news from the battlefields, had also to confront the usual and unwelcome increase in expenditures. The steadily growing army consumed supplies and equipment at a staggering rate. By the end of 1863 the public debt was well over \$1 billion with ever greater sums demanded for interest payments. The daily cost of the war was climbing beyond \$2 million. Raging inflation and an unexpected low yield from the internal taxes compounded the need for increased revenue.⁴⁰

On January 14, 1864, when Stevens called up a special internal revenue bill designed to pump a quick injection of funds into the Treasury, he surprisingly found himself and Morrill facing their only major setback of the war years. The bill, which they thought would pass with little discussion, tripled the whiskey tax to sixty cents per gallon and imposed a two cents per pound tax on any cotton not otherwise taxed. Owen Lovejoy of Illinois startled Morrill and Stevens by moving that whiskey in warehouses pay forty cents and new whiskey pay sixty cents

³⁹ Nevins, War for the Union, III, 119-24.

⁴⁰ Vermont Watchman, Dec. 25, 1863. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 81-94. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 51-52. Nevins, War for the Union, III, 6-7, 270.

until July 1, when the tax on both would rise to one dollar per gallon. The first provision was a retroactive tax in violation of the warehousing section of the tax law of 1862 which allowed whiskey in bonded warehouses to pay the tax applicable when sealed. Morrill immediately responded that sixty cents was the highest possible effective tax and that the retroactive tax was unfair, illegitimate, and impractical.

Ordinarily a counterattack by Morrill brought success, but this time he and Stevens had been caught unawares, and the financial rebels pressed their advantage. The rebels' idea, to tax whiskey speculators, had enough merit to win votes but would severely hurt legitimate wholesalers who used the bonding system. Fernando Wood, a New York City Democrat, moved to make the retroactive tax sixty cents on all untaxed whiskey on hand, and forty cents on that which had been prepaid at the old rate. James G. Blaine then moved to make the cotton tax retroactive. Despite the best efforts of Stevens and Morrill, including their negative votes, the bill passed as amended.⁴¹

With strong encouragement from Morrill and Stevens, the Senate deleted the retroactive clauses, sparking a disagreement which required four conference committees to

⁴¹Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 215-18, 270-72, 282-88, 312-13.

resolve. The House accepted the deletion of the retroactive clause on cotton but doggedly insisted in retaining it on whiskey. After three weeks of argument the Senate capitulated, and the bill passed with the retroactive whiskey tax included.⁴²

Since the Whiskey and Cotton Bill was the only instance in which Morrill and Stevens wholly lost control of one of their own bills, it must have left them almost dumbfounded. The rebellion by the House was swift and complete. Certainly a few of the rebellious members sincerely believed that they were striking a blow at the evil speculators, but that does not explain the dogged determination of the House majority to pass the retroactive amendment. What took place was not less than an outright, albeit temporary, rejection of the House's financial leadership. The retroactive tax on whiskey presented the rare chance for the rank and file to brush the leadership aside while helping the war effort. Assuredly the retroactive clause was unfair to the honest dealers, but by their own admission they could safely absorb considerably higher rates.⁴³ In short, it was a

⁴² Ibid., pp. 660-64, 776-79, 892-93, 920, 933-35, 941.

⁴³ E. P. Smith to Thaddeus Stevens, c. Jan., 1864, Stevens Papers. Isaac M. Barrett to John Sherman, Jan. 26, 1864, Sherman Papers.

heady but safe rebellion. There was little Morrill or Stevens could do to prevent it.

The frequent presence of little James Morrill on the floor of the House lightened the spirits of Morrill and his friends during the hard weeks of 1864. The boy who, along with his mother, cured Morrill's loneliness, was also a special delight to Stevens. James, six years old in 1864, was a charming diversion for all whenever he came to the House with his father or his "Uncle" Thaddeus. Stevens fondly called him "Little Ways and Means" and playfully raised his hand during votes.⁴⁴

Following in the contorted wake of the Whiskey and Cotton Bill, the Internal Revenue Bill of 1864 was anti-climactic but nonetheless badly needed. The Commissioner of Internal Revenue indicated that only substantial rate increases would fill the coffers. Because the Whiskey and Cotton Bill, even with the dramatic inclusion of the retroactive tax on whiskey, was only a stopgap, the entire internal revenue structure needed revision to close loopholes, to eliminate inequities, and to incorporate large rate increases.⁴⁵ Morrill worked months to write the necessary law.

⁴⁴Richard N. Current, Old Thad Stevens (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942), pp. 203-4. Parker, Morrill, pp. 131, 151.

⁴⁵Vermont Watchman, Dec. 25, 1863. New York Tribune, Jan. 20, 1864.

Morrill reported the Internal Revenue Bill on April 19 and outlined the need for the additional funds to be collected under it. He admitted that the war had already lasted far longer than he or any member of the Ways and Means Committee had anticipated; obviously expenditures far exceeded estimates. "The demands upon the Treasury are unprecedented, but we have only to marshal our resources and they are equal to all emergencies, and to any campaign, good or bad."⁴⁶

To forestall potential criticisms Morrill pointed out the improvements made to close loopholes and to tighten allocation of the proposed new monies. He stressed that the Treasury was "receiving from forty to fifty percent more internal revenue this year than last, and when all of the officers shall have been properly taught how to enforce the provisions of the law, it may be expected to do better still." Next, Morrill mentioned that the new funds for the armed forces would go further because the army and navy were recruited and equipped, so that only resupply would be necessary. Finally, Morrill stressed that the internal revenue apparatus was so efficient that its cost was minimal.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1715-16. The Act of 1864 was intended to double the revenues. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 82. Internal Revenues reached \$109,000,000 in 1863-64 and \$209,000,000 in 1864-65. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 54.

⁴⁷ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, p. 1716.

Morrill said that the most important rate increases fell on manufactures, incomes, distilled spirits, and tobacco. The taxes on manufactures and incomes were increased from 3 to 5 percent. Whiskey and tobacco rates were greatly raised, with that on whiskey rising to 500 percent of its average value. With all of these changes, Morrill predicted the bill would produce a minimum of \$250 million, and with \$80 million from the tariff, the Treasury could collect as much as \$400 million per year.⁴⁸

Morrill's speech, a general recognition of the necessity for funds, and the aftereffect of the Whiskey and Cotton Bill, combined to make the passage of the Internal Revenue Bill remarkably smooth--ruffled only by an attack from Fernando Wood. Morrill spoke against two amendments which would, respectively, continue the retroactive tax on whiskey, and insert a graduated clause in the income tax. Morrill considered the latter discrimination against the rich. When the Senate again struck the retroactive whiskey tax, Morrill persuaded the House to concur. Thus, he got the revenue act through with only one significant alteration.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 1716-18. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 82. Nevins, War for the Union, III, 228.

⁴⁹ Seligman, Income Tax, pp. 440-44. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 1722-29, 1755-62, 1940-42, 2995-3021.

The few comments from the press on the tax bill were nearly all favorable. The Vermont Watchman congratulated Congress for strongly supporting the national credit and urged the people to do their part by buying bonds. The New York Tribune commented in almost the same words. The New York Times agreed with Morrill that the people demanded taxation sufficient to protect the government's credit.⁵⁰

A relatively minor tax bill, introduced soon after passage of the Internal Revenue Act, exemplified the fine degree to which Morrill's parliamentary skill had been honed by the middle of 1864. On July 2, he called up a temporary income tax bill to pay the bounties of new recruits. Since the bill was limited in object and duration, Morrill asked that it be passed unamended; but, a few items, including the retroactive whiskey tax, were added. After Morrill failed in an attempt to offer the original bill as a substitute, the amended bill was read the third time and passed. Faced with defeat, Morrill used his last card. He got reconsideration, consecutively, of the passage, the third reading, and the substitute.

⁵⁰Vermont Watchman, May 6, 1864. New York Tribune, May 7, 1864. New York Times, July 1, 1864 and July 27, 1864.

After working back to the substitute, his original bill, Morrill received a vote for passage.⁵¹

The year 1864 was momentous in both the political and military arenas. The reelection of Lincoln was in doubt for several months because of war-weariness in the North and a threatened radical revolt over his policies. However, the party majority, including Morrill, supported the president's candidacy. After military victories at Atlanta, Mobile, and the Shenandoah Valley encouraged the North, Lincoln was triumphantly reelected. But those victories, part of the continuous, coordinated campaigns directed by Grant, had been terribly costly in men and material. The continuing recruitment and resupply of the armies, along with the omnipresent inflation, pushed the cost of the war to \$3 million a day.⁵²

By the time Congress reconvened in December, 1864, the press was filled with suggestions on how the Treasury should obtain the needed additional funds. The New York Times praised the decision of the new Treasury Secretary, William Pitt Fessenden, to rely on loans instead of

⁵¹Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 1st Sess., 1864, pp. 3527-32. Seligman, Income Tax, p. 446. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 89-93.

⁵²Nichols, Stakes of Power, pp. 147-51. Current, Thad Stevens, pp. 198-203. Parker, Morrill, p. 161. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 93-94. Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), IV, 45. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 51-52.

issuing more legal tenders but it asked that Congress collect additional taxes so the volume of loans could be reduced. The Times also praised the public's patriotic response to taxes and suggested that the government match their sacrifice by committing itself to military retrenchment through elimination of redundant garrisons and unused ships. The New York Tribune published its own principles of taxation in which the editors suggested that: taxes should not discourage industry, diffusion of knowledge should not be hindered by taxation, luxury items should be heavily taxed, and taxes should be used to diminish the number of jobs which contribute nothing to the wealth or well-being of the nation or the human family.⁵³

Well aware that the press often expressed the thoughts of the public, Morrill began his nearly annual search for the fairest means to raise additional funds. Since alternatives were limited, the result was predictable--higher tariffs and taxes, and another bonding program.

Early in February, 1865, Morrill reported his last wartime tax bill and explained that it contained essentially a general increase, with adjustments being made for items which had reached the taxation limit.

⁵³ Nevins, War for the Union, IV, 207. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 93-96. New York Times, Dec. 8, 1864, Jan. 7, 1865. New York Tribune, Jan. 14, 1865.

Most taxes were boosted from 5 to 6 percent, but the whiskey tax, always increased previously, was left constant. Besides the raised rates, Morrill said, inequities would be ended and means legislated to collect from shirkers. Morrill then saw the bill through the House with only a single provision added, which he disliked, a sales tax. The bill was debated and passed in only nine days.⁵⁴

The final stroke in the financial picture was another loan bill which Morrill's colleague, Samuel Hooper of Massachusetts, reported. The bill authorized the sale of bonds and Treasury Notes to a value of \$600 million. When a member suggested restricting the issue to bonds, Morrill stepped in to defend the Treasury Notes because they allowed the Treasury needed flexibility and gave the small investor the chance to do his share. With little additional debate, the unamended bill passed the same day it was reported.⁵⁵

Congress adjourned with the end of the war and the death of Lincoln only weeks away. The North soon rejoiced at the news of the fall of Richmond and the subsequent

⁵⁴ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 695-96, 778-803, 879. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 97-98.

⁵⁵ Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 1162-66, 1204-5. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 98. Government securities sold very well in the final year of the war. Nevins, War for the Union, IV, 379.

surrender of Lee. Morrill and his constituents were proud that a Vermonter, General Edward Ripley, led the first unit into the rebel capital. But the death of Lincoln by an assassin's bullet cruelly ended the jubilation.⁵⁶

In seeking the motivation for Morrill's activities in Congress, the easiest to discern is his reason for drafting the wartime tax legislation. It was simply duty. Morrill made his greatest contribution of services in this work because he loved his country; he wanted to see slavery ended, but more importantly he wanted to help save the Union. He realized that the courage of the troops would be of little avail without financial backing.

In playing his role in creating the system of taxation, Morrill applied, on an unprecedented scale, the principles of business to national finance. To be successful a businessman must generally pay as he goes and only borrow against future profits during a temporary slump. That was Morrill's touchstone for government action. Since it was in a crisis, the government had to tax to the practical limit, and then borrow on the profits of future generations who would reap the benefits of a successful war effort. Morrill boldly stepped into a crisis situation and did more than his share to resolve it.

⁵⁶ Nevins, War for the Union, IV, 298.

CHAPTER VIII

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

In the first postwar Congress, the Thirty-ninth, Morrill chaired the Committee on Ways and Means. However, due to a reorganization, the chairmanship of Ways and Means was not the same job that Morrill had declined four years earlier. Samuel Cox of Ohio had instigated a rule change in 1865 which split the old committee into three parts: Ways and Means, Appropriations, and Banking and Currency. Although Morrill had not favored the change, he admitted that during the war the committee had been badly overburdened. Despite the division of responsibilities, the position of Chairman of Ways and Means suffered no apparent loss of prestige.¹

¹Stevens became chairman of both the House section of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction and of the Appropriations Committee. Richard N. Current, Old Thad Stevens (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942), p. 221. Vermont Watchman, Dec. 8, 1865. Samuel S. Cox, Eight Years in Congress (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1865), p. 62. David Lindey, "Sunset" Cox (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1959), pp. 89-90, 95. Cong. Globe, 38th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1865, pp. 1316-17. William H. Barnes, History of the Thirty-Ninth Congress (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1868), p. 29.

Since the war ended during the congressional adjournment, President Andrew Johnson was able to begin Reconstruction unhindered. He considered the work an executive prerogative and was determined to present Congress with a fait accompli when it convened in December. Under Johnson's plan, once a majority of the voters in a state had taken an oath of allegiance they would begin Reconstruction by electing delegates to a constitutional convention. The conventions would be obliged to nullify secession, repudiate rebel debts, and abolish slavery. Southern citizens could then immediately elect state officials and congressmen. Unfortunately, the South abused Johnson's leniency by electing former Confederate officials to high offices and quickly adopting Black Codes to restrict freedmen. The President did little to chastise such arrogant actions. The Negro question he carried little farther than the renunciation of slavery. However, the Congress had a more militant attitude, and when it convened, southern congressmen-elect and senators-elect faced a body determined to reject them.²

Congress sidestepped a lengthy confrontation on southerners' credentials by immediately appointing a Joint Committee on Reconstruction, composed of nine congressmen

² Rembert W. Patrick, The Reconstruction of the Nation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 29-33, 47. Kenneth M. Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction 1865-1877 (New York: Random House, 1865), pp. 62-81.

and six senators. Congress empowered them to investigate all questions concerning Reconstruction. Although the radicals conceived the committee and held a one vote majority, they did not dominate it. Senator Fessenden, a moderate, became chairman and kept control. The Joint Committee on Reconstruction bided its time, hearing witnesses and discussing legislation, while President Johnson's plans slowly collapsed. The first confrontations involved the Freedman's Bureau and the Civil Rights Bills, measures which were proposed by and had the support of the moderates. Johnson wrote an excellent veto message on the former, which might have gained him public support, but he quickly lost favor due to a speech on February 22, 1866, which denounced the Committee. Public and congressional opinion began to abandon Johnson so that, when he also vetoed the Civil Rights Bill, Congress overrode the veto. Congress took the initiative in the confrontation when Stevens proposed the Fourteenth Amendment.³

Although evidence continued to accumulate revealing ill-treatment of freedmen and unrepentance in the South, President Johnson refused to compromise with congressional leaders. Having rejected the pleas by the moderates to sign the Freedman's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills, Johnson

³ John Hope Franklin, Reconstruction After the Civil War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), pp. 59-61. Patrick, Reconstruction, pp. 65-75.

continued to alienate that group. Vicious anti-Negro riots in Memphis and New Orleans, unchecked by the new Johnson state governments, revolted Northerners. As the election of 1866 approached, Johnson stood virtually alone.⁴

The election of 1866 was a triumph for the radicals. Campaigning was unusually intense for a mid-term election year. The President threw himself into the fray with a stump-speaking tour called the "Swing Around the Circle." But Johnson soon learned that a technique fitted to the Tennessee hills failed in Northern cities. His single speech preceded him and after a time hecklers rather than listeners met him. The radicals ran an efficient campaign. Effective speakers dogged Johnson's route. Mass meetings were held to counter those of the pro-Johnson forces. On election day the Republicans swept Northern governorships and elected two-thirds majorities in both houses of Congress.⁵

With a mandate from the people and the radicals in the vanguard, Congress moved swiftly to begin Reconstruction anew. In the second session of the 39th

⁴Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959), pp. 243-46. Franklin, Reconstruction, pp. 57-65.

⁵Current, Old Thad Stevens, pp. 256-60. Patrick, Reconstruction, pp. 85-89. Franklin, Reconstruction, pp. 66-70.

Congress a host of bills were passed over presidential vetoes. Republican congressmen enfranchised Negroes in the District of Columbia, curbed presidential power in the Tenure of Office Act, and established the basis for Congressional Reconstruction in the First Reconstruction Act. By the last named act, state governments in the South, excepting Tennessee, were declared invalid and replaced by the military. The Reconstruction procedure involved electing constitutional convention delegates by universal male suffrage, excluding those who took part in the rebellion. After the people approved a constitution enfranchising all male citizens, elections could be held for state officials and congressmen. With ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment, the state's congressional delegation would be seated. In time the Southern states complied with the requirements and were readmitted to the Union.⁶

As a leading member of the House, Morrill sat on the Joint Committee, and, although his responsibility for financial bills restricted his participation, he indicated his approval of the committee's work by signing its final report. Morrill was a radical Republican, but his temperament and his duties on Ways and Means kept him from a strong leadership role. He left that to Stevens and

⁶Patrick, Reconstruction, pp. 91-99. Stamp, Era of Reconstruction, pp. 144-47. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 249-54.

others. But Morrill was no less harsh toward the South; he said readmission would "not be by my vote until they [Southerners] have repented and done works meet for repentance [sic]."⁷ He supported the radical bills, including the Fourteenth Amendment, and the changing of the date of congressional openings to March 4. The latter act kept Congress in continuous session and checked President Johnson. Morrill also favored suffrage for the freedmen which he supported by votes both in the Reconstruction Committee and on the floor of the House.⁸

Peace brought a dramatic drop in expenditures, but they remained much higher than in prewar years. Rapid demobilization cut military costs to a fraction of their wartime size. Yet, soldiers' pensions would keep the military budget a major item. The most important new peacetime cost was the enormous public debt, estimated by

⁷ Brodie, Stevens, pp. 242-46. Patrick, Reconstruction, p. 65. LaWanda and John H. Cox, Politics, Principle and Prejudice 1865-1866 (New York: Free Press, 1963), pp. 142-43. David Donald, Charles Sumner and the Rights of Man (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), p. 238. U.S., Congress, Report of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction, House Reports, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., II, No. 30, 1866. Ryland Gilecher to Morrill, Jan. 16, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 33.

⁸ New York Times, Sept. 24, 1866. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1866, pp. 31-32. George S. Boutwell, Reminiscences of Sixty Years in Public Affairs (New York: McClure, Phillips and Co., 1902), II, 37. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, pp. 453-54. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power 1845-1877 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1961), p. 168. Stamp, Era of Reconstruction, p. 147.

Treasury Secretary Hugh McCulloch to crest at \$3 billion. Interest had to be paid and a sinking fund established to cover the principal as it fell due. Nevertheless, estimates of surplus revenues indicated that tax reductions were in order.⁹

The challenge facing Morrill was the rapid, orderly dismantling of the war revenue programs. Internal revenue and tariff laws required radical surgery to ease the crushing burden carried so uncomplainingly by the public; however, the reductions had to be accomplished without losing revenues needed for government expenditures and payments on the public debt. Morrill decided first to turn his attention to the internal revenue and later to the tariff.¹⁰

On May 7, after months of careful work, Morrill reported the Internal Revenue Bill of 1866. He immediately explained that estimated receipts for 1865 would be \$500 million while postwar expenses should stabilize at \$350 million. However, an anticipated sharp reduction in revenues from the manufacturing tax, partially balanced by a large increase from cotton, would eradicate half of

⁹Sidney Ratner, Taxation and Democracy in America (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), p. 112.

¹⁰Allan Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), IV, 372-73, 382.

the surplus, leaving income for 1866 at \$425 million. Thus, Morrill said, he designed the proposed bill to eliminate the excess of \$75 million by tax reductions.¹¹

Morrill indicated that in the interest of fairness the Committee revised the tax structure in several ways: the general trend was downward, but a few items remained at the high level of 1865, and one important rate increased. Because the Committee felt a special obligation to repay the common people's loyal, cheerful bearing of a heavy tax burden, it removed or greatly reduced taxes on necessities of life, such as salt, sugar, and coal. Also, of significance, the rate on manufacturing fell from 6 to 5 percent. Morrill claimed that partial compensation for these losses lay in increasing the tax on raw cotton from two to five cents per pound. On the other hand, Morrill noted, the high levies on luxury items, whiskey, and malt liquors remained because their buyers "were among those persons best able to contribute something to the support of the government." Finally, Morrill stated, the Committee on Ways and Means reluctantly retained the income tax but eased its weight by raising the personal exemption from \$600 to \$1,000 and by setting a uniform rate of 5 percent.¹²

¹¹Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 2434-35.

¹²Ibid., pp. 2435-37. Edwin R. Seligman, The Income Tax (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911), pp. 449-50. Franklin, Reconstruction, pp. 40, 180.

Morrill opposed the graduated income tax at every opportunity because he considered it intrinsically unjust. He never wavered from the position that it was based on the principal that a man should be penalized because he was richer than another. Besides violating the principal of equality before the law, the graduated clause would, Morrill said, sap the initiative of ambitious men. Despite assertions by other members that the higher rates really tapped the luxuries available only to the rich, Morrill never reconciled himself to this type of taxation.¹³

In concluding his Tax Bill speech, Morrill noted that the government was in surprisingly good condition after four years of bitter war. He stressed that the confidence of the people in the government was unshakable, the vigor and elasticity of the nation's industry was without rival, national resources were growing, and untold wealth was still locked in the mountains. All that was asked of Congress, he said, was to save the national credit.¹⁴

Henry Raymond, a member of the House and editor of the New York Times, mildly criticized Morrill because

¹³Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 83-84, 113. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 2783-86. Seligman, Income Tax, pp. 449-54.

¹⁴Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, p. 2438.

he felt that the revenue estimates were too conservative and that more reductions and a reordering of reduction priorities were needed. He chastised Morrill for apologizing about the income tax because the increased exemption eliminated inequities, but he insisted that abolishing the graduated principle would be a mistake. Finally, Raymond suggested that food and clothing be untaxed and that the United States derive most of its revenue from whiskey and tobacco.¹⁵

Since nearly every member had some pet item he hoped to see exempted, the amendment process was involved, but Morrill's opinion generally prevailed. A member offered a potentially crippling amendment to the cotton tax by asking that the first six hundred pounds from each producer be exempt. Because the cotton tax was a key part of his revenue bill, Morrill stoutly defended it. He explained that the idea was faulty because soon every field hand would be listed as a producer with none growing over the minimum. Raymond sought support for two of his suggestions, the increased whiskey tax and the graduated income tax, but the whiskey tax remained as Morrill set it, while Raymond succeeded in adding the higher tax on large incomes. Declaring himself satisfied with the

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 2438-42. Seligman, Income Tax, pp. 450-51.

amended version of the bill. Morrill got a final vote in the House on May 28.¹⁶

The Senate returned the bill a month later with over six hundred amendments but only one major alteration, a cut in the cotton tax to two cents per pound. Morrill resolved the difference by reluctantly compromising at three cents per pound, and the bill passed.¹⁷

Public comment on the tax reduction bill was heavy and wide-ranging, perhaps because it was no longer unpatriotic to speak out about one's tax load. Among the protestors were whiskey and tobacco manufacturers who objected bitterly about their lot. Many individuals wrote to protest inequities in the law or arbitrary decisions by assessors, complaints echoed by the New York Times. A few people protested a proposal to tax banks. On the other hand, occasionally Morrill was thanked, as for keeping the rate low on the new domestic wine industry. However, when he was shipped a free case in appreciation, Morrill replied that he could not accept the gift due to his position and asked to be billed. Morrill did no special favors but simply followed a policy of taxing an

¹⁶ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 2473-80, 2630-36, 2783-86. Eric L. McKittrick, Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 370. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 304, 409.

¹⁷ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 2862-65, 3444-49. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 113-14.

industry only as much as he believed to be fair and equitable.¹⁸

Among the national newspapers, the New York Tribune and the Washington Evening Star, so often in disagreement, both backed Morrill's tax cut bill. The Tribune, particularly, defended the increased cotton tax on the grounds that the South paid few other taxes. The Evening Star requested even larger cuts, a request that Morrill fulfilled in the second session.¹⁹

The New York Times commented even more prolifically than its rivals in making suggestions on taxation. As early as July, 1865, the editors predicted internal revenue receipts of one million per day and high tariff revenues too. In March, 1866, the Times estimated an annual Treasury income of \$650 million which, as its editor said on the floor of the House, was far above Morrill's conservative estimate. Basically, the Times

¹⁸ Nichols, Stakes of Power, p. 200. James G. Blaine to Morrill, Nov. 15, 1865 in Justin S. Morrill, "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (Nov., 1897), 275. I. Stanffer to Stevens, Dec. 26, 1865, and "Nemo" of Baltimore to Stevens, Feb. 16, 1866, Stevens Papers. Albert G. Porter to Morrill, May 26, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. New York Times, Aug. 14, 1865. Henry Closson to Morrill, May 5, 1866, and C. A. Hamilton to Morrill, May 7, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. Perkins, Stern, and Co. to Morrill, Dec. 16, 1865 and Morrill to Perkins, Stern, and Co., Dec. 18, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6.

¹⁹ New York Daily Tribune, Nov. 19, 1866. Washington Evening Star, Dec. 20, 1866.

favored revising the revenue system, but sought much larger reductions than Morrill was willing to chance. Besides its direct comments on tax reductions, the Times published its principles of taxation. The points were: first, taxes should be levied on a limited number of items, especially luxury goods and whiskey; second, once established the system should not be disturbed by legislative tinkering; third, an item should be taxed at only one stage of processing; and finally, enforcement must be uniform and universal.²⁰ The Times's principles of taxation coincided almost perfectly with those of Morrill.

Tax receipts during 1866 proved that Morrill had underestimated revenues and could reduce taxes still further; indeed revenues had been closer to the \$650 million predicted by Henry Raymond and the Times than to Morrill's cautious appraisal. Expenditures were lower; the debt crested about a quarter billion dollars below estimates. But it was typical of Morrill to err on the safe side. The surplus could be removed by painless additional reductions, but if the earlier abatements had been too radical, he might have been forced into the nearly impossible position of restoring taxes.²¹

²⁰ New York Times, July 29, 1865; March 1, 1866; Aug. 14, 1865; May 11, 1866; and Aug. 4, 1865.

²¹ New York Times, March 1, 1866. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 971-77. John Sherman, Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet (Chicago: The Werner Co., 1895), p. 377. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, p. 119. Seligman, Income Tax, p. 471.

On February 13, 1867, Morrill opened his speech on the second tax reduction bill by lamenting that shirking on the whiskey, tobacco, and cigar taxes, prevented the elimination of most other taxes. But the confusion caused by changes in the revenue laws and frequent turnover in revenue officers helped unscrupulous individuals evade such taxes as the two dollars per gallon on liquor. In order to obtain revenue, Morrill pointed out, the Committee tightened the law in those areas but was also forced to lean temporarily on other articles.²²

Morrill explained that reductions can come either by reducing the overall percentage of tax or by exempting articles. He said that the Committee chose the later because by

exempting entirely from taxes such articles as salt, clothing, leather, pottery-ware, tinware, and cooperage of all sorts, . . . the committee feel that they . . . distribute equal favor over the whole country, and by removing the tax from some of the common necessities of life we shall perhaps indirectly actually aid all branches of industry.

Morrill expected that the proposed act would bring tax relief equal to the \$75 million cut off the first session.²³

²²Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, p. 1216.

²³Ibid. Morrill's income tax reforms passed in this bill mainly because it was agreed that the funds were no longer needed. Seligman, Income Tax, p. 454. The income tax accounted for one-fourth of the internal revenue. Rather, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 141-42.

As a result of the second round of reductions, the wartime tax structure would be essentially dismantled. Expenses, while much higher than antebellum, would be balanced by income. Morrill said that the Committee of Ways and Means planned "to so reduce the revenue that no large balance would remain in the treasury to tempt any one to disregard the wisdom of economy." Morrill assured the House that as a result of this bill the weariness of heavy taxation would pass and the nation's facilities for development of wealth and power would receive only temporary setbacks.²⁴

Opposition to the bill was almost nil, but William A. Darling of New York submitted an amendment intended to strengthen the whiskey section. Darling suggested that the proposed five hundred dollar distiller's license be doubled and be subject to review every three months. He also proposed placing inspectors on federal rather than local payrolls and requiring them to move frequently from one distillery to another.²⁵

Morrill delegated responsibility for guiding the bill past the reading for amendment to his colleague, Samuel Hooper of Massachusetts, who saw the bill through with only minor changes. The biggest battle arose over

²⁴Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, pp. 1218-20.

²⁵Ibid., p. 1219.

the whiskey license. Both Darling's amendment and the committee's proposal were defeated, so the license was left at one hundred dollars.²⁶

The Senate, preoccupied with reconstruction legislation, rushed the tax bill through in only three days. A few of the Senate's amendments were important changes, but Morrill was able to reach satisfactory compromises in conference. For example, the Senate wanted to cut the cotton tax from 3 percent to 2; the conferees settled at two and a half. Content with the modifications, Morrill asked the House to approve the conference report. The bill passed on March 2, 1867, the same day as the Tenure of Office Act and the First Reconstruction Act.²⁷

Reaction to this important bill was limited, but the New York Times made significant comments. On February 13, the Times hesitantly indicated that the bill should pass because nothing better was possible so late in the session. The editors felt that although most provisions were good, the general manufacturing and whiskey taxes should have been lowered. Two days later, after Morrill's speech, the Times accepted his explanation that

²⁶Ibid., pp. 1220-23, 1256-62, 1543-50.

²⁷Ibid., p. 1744. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 115-16, 120.

the small surplus expected prevented those reductions and urged passage of the bill without reservation.²⁸

In the two tax reduction bills of the 39th Congress, Morrill kept his pledge to the public that the internal revenue structure would be abolished as soon after the war as practical. Though criticized for moving too slowly, his policy worked well. While avoiding serious dislocations of the economy, he dismantled most of a complex tax system in the short span of fifteen months.

Despite the importance of tax reduction, it was overshadowed by another issue before Congress--the tariff. The tax bills sparked no major controversy because there was general agreement on the temporary nature of internal taxation. In the tariff bill, there was a return to an area of traditional political contention. Morrill had promised that the tariff rates would fall with the taxes, but he reneged.

The outcome of Morrill's tariff revision was foreshadowed by the fate of a special Canadian tariff in which he proposed to keep the best aspects of the defunct reciprocity treaty by charging Canadians just enough to counterbalance the internal taxes. The provision which proved decisive in the defeat of the bill was a 50 cents per ton rate on coal. Representatives of coal producing

²⁸New York Times, Feb. 13 and 15, 1867.

areas, including Thad Stevens, condemned Morrill for his apparent favoritism to New England which used Canadian coal, accused him of perpetuating reciprocity, and demanded the regular rate of \$1.25 per ton. Morrill defended himself against these charges by pointing out that he had killed reciprocity but saw no contradiction in trying to reinstate an equitable provision. He claimed that the coal rate was close to true reciprocity since exports and imports over various parts of the border nearly balanced. Because Morrill's arguments did not sway the ardent protectionists, the bill failed on a test vote.²⁹

Protectionists, having struggled to win their ascendancy, were not willing to relinquish the position which the war had allowed them to assume. Many special interests would lose if the tariff was reduced, but iron, coal, and wool men led the defense of protection. To them cuts were unthinkable. That the tariffs were only intended to counterbalance the pressure of internal taxes on industry was no longer important. Prices and wages rose during the war and that justified high duties.³⁰

²⁹ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 1210-11, 1218-20, 1242, 1249-50, 1345-46.

³⁰ F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (New York: B. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), pp. 174-76. Howard Beale, "The Tariff and Reconstruction," American Historical Review, XXXV (Jan., 1930), 276-94. Robert P. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party: An Economic Study of

In the months preceding introduction of his planned, moderately protective tariff, Morrill repeatedly exposed his own prejudice in favor of wool. During April, 1866, he introduced petitions from his constituents bearing thousands of names asking for increased wool duties. In a letter to the National Wool Growers Association, Morrill emphasized that he had always worked for protection on wool even though it was an exception to his basic policy of free raw materials. In a letter to a friend, he blamed the manufacturers for continuing the impoverishment of the growers by buying vast quantities of poor grade foreign wools which were duty free. His conclusion was that all imported wool must carry a specific duty.³¹

His constituents' outcry favoring a rise in wool rates was so overwhelming that Morrill could not have resisted had he wanted to. On most questions Morrill would get a scattering of letters, but this issue loosed a virtual deluge of mail which was mostly very favorable to higher wool duties. One writer expressed the position well in

Civil War and Reconstruction (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1959), pp. 151-52, 163. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 116-17. Among the leaders of the tariff reductionists was Samuel S. Cox of Ohio. Lindsey, "Sunset" Cox, pp. 112-17.

³¹ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 1820, 1876, 2032. Morrill to Henry Randall of National Wool Growers Association, Feb. 3, 1866, Morrill to Nathan Cushing, Feb. 1866, Morrill to Edwin Hammond, Feb. 17, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7.

complaining that the manufacturers hid behind prohibitive rates while the growers did not even have the protection level of a revenue tariff. Since Morrill was running for the Senate in 1866, he had to support vigorously the interests of that influential block of Vermont citizens.³²

When Morrill introduced the new tariff bill on June 28, 1866, he felt the need to explain the failure to honor his wartime promises of reductions. Morrill stated that industry needed protection because the ravages of war had deprived it of a large portion of the labor pool. In the North half a million men were dead or too badly wounded for heavy labor; the United States could not compete with industrial Europe in any major area because of the labor deficiency. Yet, he said, since every man should be employed, industry must be helped to compete. Morrill also warned his colleagues that the national economy was vulnerable to cheap imports because of "the disturbing flood of an exclusively paper currency." He was frustrated that little progress was being made toward retirement of the legal tenders; Congress refused to retire more than four million dollars in greenbacks a

³²J. Medill to Morrill, Dec. 19, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 8. J. W. Colburn to Morrill, July 19, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 30. Isaiah Mock to Morrill, Dec. 15, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. E. Seymour to Morrill, April 3, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7.

month. In essence, Morrill blamed high duties on both a depleted labor pool and continued paper money inflation.³³

Morrill saw a clear connection between currency contraction and tariff reduction. He knew that the workingman had suffered from depreciation of the currency and the rise in prices. Wages rose too, but had not kept pace with prices. If Congress did not contract the currency to force prices down before reducing the tariff, foreign competition might well cost the workingman his job. By eliminating competition, the high tariff both helped and hindered; employment might remain high but so would prices.³⁴

In the most strongly worded section of his speech, Morrill cited the plight of the woolgrowers as the final, compelling reason for tariff revision. He pointed out that

flocks of sheep in South America, in Australia, at the Cape, and elsewhere, have become so large, so much improved by mixed breeds, that they threaten to force the American wool grower to abandon a chosen and most attractive pursuit. . . . wool equal in grade to the average American growth can be brought in from South America for fifteen cents per pound. . . . but no American husbandman. . . . can compete with such prices. . . . Unless Congress shall do

³³Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 3465-66.

³⁴Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 137-41. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 63-64. Current, Old Thad Stevens, p. 238.

something to revive the courage of these men the stock of sheep that will be offered for slaughter the coming fall will exceed anything the country has heretofore witnessed. . . .³⁵

Morrill also discussed the void left by the expiration of the Canadian Reciprocity Treaty. He insisted that Congress had to act because "termination of the reciprocity treaty leaves the duties upon agricultural production, and upon lumber, fish, and coal at such rates as were imposed at times when it made no difference what those rates were." But the trade had become so mutually important economically that it should be fostered. Trade with the Maritime Provinces was to be particularly cultivated, Morrill felt, because "the people are very friendly and they have articles such as we require in large quantities, such as coal and plaster, for which they take of us flour and other articles in nearly equal quantities." The Committee, he said, suggested special rates, profitable to the nation and yet rewarding to its friends. Morrill's practical desire to salvage good aspects of the treaty he so recently denounced must have mystified many of his colleagues.³⁶

In closing his speech, Morrill emphasized that he had always favored protecting native industry from foreign

³⁵Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, p. 3466.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 3467-68.

competition and that the pending bill was the means to that end. He claimed that the rates were just high enough to protect laborers, producers, and manufacturers, while also safeguarding the internal revenue by keeping the economy operating at capacity. Morrill predicted that the tariff would fulfill both goals without diminishing the revenue from imports.³⁷

Ardent protectionists and other dissidents were ready with immediate rebuttals. Thaddeus Stevens, the first member on his feet, assailed the entire bill, calling it a free trade measure from beginning to end. Naturally, as a representative of coal and iron interests, he cited those rates as the worst. William D. "Pig Iron" Kelley, one of Stevens's Pennsylvania colleagues, branded the special Canadian coal rate unnecessary because, since the reciprocity treaty expired, mine owners had paid \$1.25 per ton without having to raise prices in New England. Members suggested prohibitory rates on woolen rags and shoddy, as well as other changes in the wool duty, but Morrill got them defeated.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid., p. 3468.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 3468-73, 3494-98, 3513-20. Brodie, Stevens, pp. 170-71, 304. Kelley was called "Pig Iron" because of his devotion to the industry. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, p. 69. Although the tariff bill was later defeated, the wool lobby had enough influence to see a special bill, the Wool and Woolens Act of March 2, 1867, passed for their benefit. Paul W. Gates, Agriculture and the Civil War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), pp. 173-76. Patrick, Reconstruction, p. 177.

In a number of areas, Morrill failed, but he expressed hope that the Senate would reverse the changes. The biggest disappointment was the loss of the special Canadian coal duty. He insisted that the provision was intended to benefit the West and Middle West, not New England, but his words were to no avail. Unfortunately, his faith in the Senate also proved disillusioning because the other house voted to postpone the bill until December.³⁹

Late in the second session of the 39th Congress, the Senate returned the tariff so drastically changed that Morrill faced failure in virtually his last effort in the House. Morrill asked that the amended bill be sent intact to a committee of conference to save time, but the House refused 85-86. On the following day, February 26, 1867, Morrill called up the Senate bill and made a strong but futile effort to save his tariff. Before proposing amendments, he offered a substitute which was his original bill with about fifteen additional rate reductions. Morrill then offered forty-six amendments to the Senate version and had all but seven accepted. Obviously he had a majority with him, but a two-thirds vote was necessary to stop debate and get the bill reported from Committee of the Whole to the House. Since the ultraprotectionists opposed

³⁹ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 3714-16, 3722-25, 3758. McKittrick, Andrew Johnson, pp. 373-75.

any bill which would set a precedent of rate reductions, they mustered their strength to defeat the discharge motion and with it the bill.⁴⁰ Losing this bill, Morrill's only defeat on a tariff, was a disheartening way to end his illustrious service on the Committee of Ways and Means. Three days later Morrill left the House; he returned to the Capitol the next day a Senator.

Press reaction to the tariff bill was as constant and vigorous as in prewar years. The New York Times, Washington Evening Star, and New York Tribune all praised the bill when first presented, but the first two papers had a change of mind as amendments were made. The Times moved from a position of total acceptance of Morrill's bill to one of total opposition. When Morrill reported his bill, the Times supported it on the grounds that he had written a good act including incidental protection compatible with revenue needs. But the next week, while still basically supporting Morrill, they criticized him for bowing to special interests on the wool duty and for favoring his constituents by the Canadian coal provision. The Times later commended the Senate for saving the nation from the ultras by postponing the bill. When it came up the next winter, the editors called for the bill's defeat because it was a capitulation to the coal, wool, and iron

⁴⁰ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, pp. 1541-43, 1590-95, 1601-9, 1656-58. Ratner, Taxation and Democracy, pp. 116-17.

interests. Even though, by their own estimate, Morrill's bill raised rates 50 percent on the average, the editors of the Evening Star initially supported the tariff because they felt that industry still was unable to compete with foreign producers. However, ten days hence, the editors asked for defeat of the bill because the protectionists had seized control of it. The Tribune claimed that the tariff status quo contained the lowest rates which would prevent a disaster to native industry. But the several wartime revisions were so confusing that the editors asked for an entirely new tariff with clearly stated specific duties. They expressed general satisfaction with Morrill's bill but said higher iron and steel duties would have been better. Thus, when amendments raised various rates, the Tribune's support grew stronger.⁴¹

Morrill never made public his personal reasons for supporting a protective tariff which evolved into a prohibitory one, but probably they were partly altruistic and partly selfish. His concern for the workingman was sincere and led him to defend their interests. Since he saw the greenbacks as the key to the inflation which seriously injured workers, Morrill fought for contraction of the currency. When Congress did not agree, Morrill was convinced that the only other alternative was a higher

⁴¹New York Times, June 5, 1865; June 26; July 1; and July 13, 1866; Jan. 29 and Feb. 15, 1867. Washington Evening Star, June 26 and July 5, 1866. New York Daily Tribune, Feb. 24, June 8, June 27, and Dec. 16, 1866.

tariff to equalize foreign and domestic prices. He wanted nonprohibitory rates, but since he valued the workingman's interests more, he accepted prohibitory duties rather than no increases at all. He was particularly handicapped in seeking general restraint in the election year of 1866 because he heeded his constituents who demanded substantial rate hikes on wool. Morrill supported this tariff both because he felt duty bound to check inflation and (possibly for the only time in his life) to further his political career.

The currency situation, which was partially responsible for Morrill's tariff stand, deeply concerned him because he felt that only a rapid contraction of the greenbacks, and subsequent resumption of specie payments, would stave off financial chaos. He urged that policy in two major speeches while Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.⁴² Morrill's viewpoint was shared by a large minority in Congress and by Treasury Secretary Hugh McCulloch. The New York Tribune and the Washington Evening Star both agreed with Morrill on contraction. However, the New York Times suggested that the return to

⁴² Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 971-73. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, pp. 722-27. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 66-68.

specie payments proceed slowly, allowing the economy to expand to meet the volume of currency.⁴³

Morrill reported a Loan Bill in February, 1866, which granted the Secretary of the Treasury unlimited power to contract the currency. Secretary McCulloch had already withdrawn \$25 million without authorization and Morrill's bill was intended partially to legitimize that action. Morrill pleaded with the House to trust the Secretary's discretion on the timing and amounts of contractions. Inflationists like Stevens opposed the basic idea. Morrill invited Stevens and McCulloch to dinner in an attempt to win Stevens's support, but the effort failed. Other members objected to placing so much power in McCulloch's hands. Eventually, a compromise authorized retirement of greenbacks at the rate of \$4 million per month, at which pace contraction could easily take ten years. Morrill and the other disciples of sound finance were disappointed; but, at least, contraction was started.⁴⁴

⁴³ Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 63-64, 72-77. Lindsey, "Sunset" Cox, pp. 110, 117-18. Irwin Unger, The Greenback Era (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 42-44, 121-24. Nevins, War for the Union, IV, 381. Ellis P. Oberholtzer, Jay Cooke: Financier of the Civil War (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs and Co., 1907), II, 4. Henrietta M. Larson, Jay Cooke (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), pp. 203-6. Washington Evening Star, March 17, 1866. New York Tribune quoted in Evening Star, March 17, 1866. New York Times, May 2, 1865.

⁴⁴ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, pp. 1608-14. James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill Co., 1884), II, 321-23. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 66-74. Current, Old Thad Stevens, pp. 238-39.

Those who disagreed with Morrill believed that contraction would bring deflation and economic stagnation that would be far worse than reasonable inflation during the generally anticipated growth of the economy. John Sherman, a leading advocate of this position, was convinced that the future of the national economy would be better served if Congress took steps to hasten its growth to par with the currency supply. A surprising ally of Sherman was Joseph Medill of the Chicago Tribune who usually criticized Morrill for being too liberal in financial policy. In the opinion of economist James K. Kindahl, specie resumption came as early as it safely could because it was not until 1879 that price levels in the United States fell to parity with European price levels. Kindahl felt that the only way to have resumed earlier would have been to face rapid deflation, a very unsatisfactory means.⁴⁵

It is impossible to assess the potential results of Morrill's currency proposal, but the reason it was offered is clear--elimination of the greenbacks. He opposed the legal tenders from the beginning and, while

⁴⁵Sherman, Recollections, pp. 374-76. J. Medill to Morrill, Jan. 22, 1867, Morrill Papers, Reel 36. James K. Kindahl, "Economic Factors in Specie Resumption," Journal of Political Economics, LXIX (1961), 38. Unger, Greenback Era, p. 44. Disagreements among Radical Republicans were common on financial matters. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party, pp. 77-80, 280-82, 303-4. Stamp, Era of Reconstruction, pp. 105-7. Franklin, Reconstruction, pp. 10-13.

he tolerated them in wartime, he was dedicated to their elimination once the conflict ended. Morrill's distaste for greenbacks was extreme. He almost certainly felt that deflation was a small price to pay for an end to such an unorthodox financial device.

Even as Morrill reached the pinnacle of his career in the House of Representatives, the Chairmanship of Ways and Means, he began working to leave that body for a seat in the Senate. His campaign was coterminous with his work on the tax reduction bills and the tariff. He had expected an easy campaign with little interruption to his work since he had generally been considered the logical successor to Jacob Collamer and had been annointed by the Senator personally.⁴⁶ But Collamer's untimely death in November, 1865, greatly complicated the anticipated smooth transition. Morrill kept alive his traditional public indifference to office by running a skillful noncampaign. From his Washington office he directed the efforts of friends and political debtors accumulated during the preceding twelve years. Redemption of favors due and his excellent record in Congress combined to usher Morrill into the Senate.

⁴⁶ Burlington Free Press, May 5, 1866. Morrill to C. W. Willard, Nov. 10, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 41. Vermont Watchman, June 22, 1866.

The campaign mainly consisted of exchanges of correspondence; Morrill received pledges of support and status reports from members of his informal staff and he responded with directives to guide their further efforts. Morrill also kept his friends well supplied with copies of his speeches (judiciously distributed to indicate his position on the issues) and with personal disclaimers of charges made by the opposition. The work began in the fall of 1865 before Collamer's death and was steadily intensified until September of the following year when the election was held.⁴⁷

The death of Senator Collamer worried Morrill because it gave Governor Paul Dillingham the opportunity to appoint a successor who, as an incumbent, might have an advantage in the election. Morrill did not want the unexpired term himself because he wished to serve out his

⁴⁷ E. J. Redington to Morrill, Oct. 25, 1865; S. M. Gleason to Morrill, Oct. 27, 1865; Stephan Thomas to Morrill, Nov. 17, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. Henry Randall to Morrill, Feb. 12, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 38. Morrill to C. W. Willard, Nov. 10, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 41. Hugh Henry to Morrill, April 4, 1866; Milo Bennett to Morrill, April 5, 1866; J. T. Drew to Morrill, April 29, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. S. M. Gleason to Morrill, May 28, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 41. W. C. Lewis to Morrill, June 7, 1866; D. L. Milliken to Morrill, June 20, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. David Chadwick to Morrill, Aug. 13, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 8. Morrill to E. P. Walton, March 31, 1866; Morrill to Milo Bennett, May 9, 1866; Morrill to C. W. Willard, March 30, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. Morrill to Crosby Miller, Feb. 28, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 37.

term in the House, but neither did he want an opponent appointed. Attempts were made to convince the governor to appoint an interim senator who would pledge not to run; but, unfortunately, Morrill's only announced Republican opponent, Luke P. Poland, got the seat. Poland, the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, was well respected but lacked both Morrill's immense reservoir of public good will, and experience in the lower house, often a credential of Vermont's senators.⁴⁸

The situation was further complicated when Senator Solomon Foot died in March, 1866, allowing a second appointment and election. The governor chose George Edmunds, a leading lawyer, which worked to Morrill's advantage because Edmunds, a Poland supporter, was now forced to split the Poland forces to secure his own election. It was the deathblow to Poland's always poor chances.⁴⁹

⁴⁸F. Tyler to Morrill, Nov. 13, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 40. Charles Barratt to Morrill, Nov. 17, 1865; Jason Strite to Morrill, Nov. 24, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. M. W. C. Wright to Morrill, April 9, 1866; Morrill to G. G. Benedict, March 19, 1865; E. J. Redington to Morrill, April 3, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7. Windsor Journal reprinted in Vermont Watchman, Dec. 15, 1865. Morrill indicated his lack of personal animosity by including Poland among fourteen he invited to dinner on January 31, 1866. Morrill to Poland, Jan. 29, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 6.

⁴⁹J. T. Drew to Morrill, April 4, 1866; E. P. Walton to Morrill, April 4, 1866; C. W. Willard to Morrill, April 5, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 7.

Morrill's election was assured when all parties agreed on a satisfactory compromise. Poland was nominated for Morrill's seat in the House and was elected to finish the last months of Collamer's term. Morrill easily beat his Democratic opponent for the full Senate term beginning March 4, 1867. George Edmunds was elected to complete Foot's term and became Morrill's colleague and friend.⁵⁰

Probably Morrill was never in serious danger of defeat because it was widely agreed that he had earned the Senate seat. In addition to the personal support he had built up over the years, most of the press in Vermont favored his elevation. The Vermont Watchman and the Burlington Free Press led a solid line of endorsement for Morrill. His colleagues in Congress also favored him.⁵¹ Despite all those votes of confidence, Morrill waged a hard and skillful campaign. His election by the legislature allowed him to leave the House of Representatives at the height of his power and prestige and move to a distinguished place as a United States Senator.

⁵⁰ B. W. Bartholomew to Morrill, July 24, 1866; David Chadwick to Morrill, Aug. 13, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 8. James G. Blaine to Morrill, Aug. 19, 1866, Morrill Papers, Reel 44. The governor's senatorial appointments were only effective until the next meeting of the state legislature. Thus Poland and Edmunds had to be elected to finish their terms.

⁵¹ Windsor Journal reprinted in Vermont Watchman, Dec. 15, 1865. Burlington Free Press, May 25, 1866. Vermont Watchman, June 22 and July 20, 1866.

EPILOGUE

SENATOR MORRILL

On March 4, 1867, Justin S. Morrill began one of the longest careers in the history of the United States Senate. Reelected five consecutive times, he served almost thirty-two years. Many sought the counsel of Morrill who was often referred to as the "Nestor" of the Senate in later years. Morrill died in office on December 28, 1898 at the age of 88.¹

Despite the distinction and honor inherent in such a lengthy term, Morrill's Senate service might be described as a period of relative leisure after his arduous work on the Ways and Means Committee. He took a full part in legislative work, often holding the chairmanships of the Finance Committee and the Public Buildings and Grounds Committee simultaneously, but he led no new legislative campaigns of major political significance. Morrill's

¹George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), II, 55.
William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), p. 332.

personal legislative goals and those in the Republican Party's platform of 1860 had been enacted into law; so, once reconstruction ended, Morrill and the party were primarily concerned with preserving the status quo.

Morrill scheduled his long-awaited European tour for the summer of 1867. The comparatively light duties of a freshman Senator and the easing of personal responsibility with the death of his mother allowed him to embark with James G. Blaine for the three-month journey. Although Blaine was twenty years younger than Morrill, each agreed after the tour that he could not have found a better companion.

The extensive wanderings of the two legislators took them to the well known and the remote areas of Europe. But no place did they find more interesting than Great Britain. Morrill and Blaine were received cordially at Parliament and in both Houses the leadership requested that they take seats of honor and attend as often as they wished. They did so at the beginning and end of their tours. Aside from the fascinations of official and of financial London, the travelers took the less traveled roads to meet the people of England and Ireland, and of much of the continent. Of course they saw the major sights, but they prided themselves on seeing more than the ordinary tourist usually saw. Morrill so enjoyed the trip that in 1880, when his wife's health was better, he

retraced his steps in company with her, James, and Louise, his sister-in-law.²

Efforts to impeach President Andrew Johnson, begun while Morrill was in the House, continued after he entered the Senate and culminated in a trial. Several attempts at impeachment failed between January, 1867, and February, 1868, when the House voted to begin proceedings. Although there were eleven articles, basically, Johnson was charged with violation of the Tenure of Office Act stemming from his removal of Edwin Stanton, the Secretary of War, without Senate approval. There were serious doubts about the charge since the act seemed to protect an appointee only during the term of the president who appointed him, and Stanton was a holdover from the Lincoln administration. Also in doubt was the nature of the proceeding; must Senators weigh evidence as in a court or could they vote on political grounds? Viewing themselves as jurors concerned with evidence, enough Senators voted not guilty to acquit Andrew Johnson. The remaining months of Johnson's term passed in relative quiet.³

²Parker, Morrill, pp. 185ff, 297-98.

³Eric L. McKittrick, Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 491-506. Richard N. Current, Old Thad Stevens (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942), pp. 300-8. Rembert W. Patrick, The Reconstruction of the Nation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 126-30.

With unswerving consistency Morrill supported the party's political positions and often acted as a conciliator. Although he harbored serious doubts about the political wisdom of impeaching Andrew Johnson, he voted yes both on impeachment in the House and on conviction in the Senate. Morrill believed Johnson to be guilty but worried that enough voters might be angered to throw control of Congress to the Democrats. However, the strong constituent support that he received must have greatly allayed his concern.⁴ Fearing above all that a party split would give the country to the Democrats, Morrill worked diligently as a conciliator to avoid disunity. At the time of Johnson's trial, he wrote a fervent note to William Pitt Fessenden urging his old friend to rejoin the party ranks and do his duty by voting guilty. Morrill worked most frantically at his self-appointed task during the Liberal Republican revolt of 1872 when he wrote both to Charles Sumner and Horace Greeley in an attempt to prevent a rupture of the party. He considered internal

⁴Morrill to Mrs. Ruth Morrill, June 28, 1867, Morrill Papers, Reel 9. James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress (Norwich, Conn.: Henry Bill Co., 1884), II, 374-75. Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1867, p. 321; 40th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1868, p. 411 Supplement. The only other member able to vote in both Houses was James W. Patterson of New Hampshire. John Gregory to Morrill, April 16, 1868; J. K. Parish to Morrill, April 25, 1868, Morrill Papers, Reel 9.

reform the only solution.⁵ Surely, Morrill had to be a loyal Republican to prefer, almost without hesitation, four more years under Grant to a split in the ranks.

As a defender of Republican policies, one of Morrill's tasks was to act as a guardian of the protective tariff. Since he was an avowed moderate protectionist, preserving what was basically his own tariff was no real burden. Protectionists sidetracked several attempts to lower the tariff, especially those made by the Tariff Commission of 1882 and by President Grover Cleveland. Thus, no real change was made and the average rate during the three postwar decades remained about 46 percent. Morrill occasionally supported spot reductions but strongly defended the high rates in general. The protectionists remained firmly in control of tariff legislation, almost without interruption, until after Morrill's death.⁶

⁵ Morrill to William Pitt Fessenden, May 10, 1868, Fessenden Family Papers, Bowdoin College Library. See also Francis Fessenden, William Pitt Fessenden (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1907), II, 205 and Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1959), p. 344. Justin S. Morrill, "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (Dec., 1897), 406, 411.

⁶ Morrill to American Protective Tariff League, March 21, 1891, quoted in Parker, Morrill, p. 340. This was an open letter. Henry S. Randall to Morrill, Jan. 13, 1868, Morrill Papers, Reel 9. Samuel P. Hays, The Response to Industrialism 1885-1914 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 132-33. Edward C. Kirkland, Industry Comes of Age (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), pp. 27, 184-85. F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1931), pp. 230, 250. Sidney Ratner,

Morrill turned closer attention to guarding and nurturing his labor of love, the agricultural colleges, with emphasis on the college for his home state. A commission headed by the governor marketed the scrip allocated to Vermont during the war; so that, when the fighting ended, they were ready to begin the work of establishing the school. At all stages of planning for the college, Morrill kept himself informed on developments and offered encouragement. When a serious obstruction arose because no town would donate land for the new college, a merger with the University of Vermont was proposed as an alternative. Morrill favored the idea and drafted the necessary bill for action by the state legislature. Success of the bill assured the future of the college, particularly since Morrill continued to guide it as a trustee.⁷

While in the Senate, Morrill continued to champion the agricultural colleges. As part of this policy, he

Taxation and Democracy in America (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967), pp. 131, 151, 159ff. Parker, Morrill, pp. 300-2, 319-20. Gilbert C. Fite and Jim E. Reese, An Economic History of the United States (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1965), pp. 467-69.

⁷ Burlington Free Press reprinted in Vermont Watchman, May 6, 1864. Morrill to Charles T. Dewey, June 3, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 48. George Benedict to Morrill, July 18, 1865; Morrill's Personal Notes, Oct. 10, 1865; James Hutchinson Jr. to Morrill, Sept. 23, 1865; Crosby Miller to Morrill, Nov. 6, 1865; Clark Chapman to Morrill, Nov. 7 and 9, 1865, Morrill Papers, Reel 6. Vermont Watchman, Oct. 27, 1865.

opposed a worthy bill submitted by George F. Hoar in 1869 to establish a national system of common schools in default of action by the states. Morrill disliked the idea because Hoar wanted the funding to come from land sales and various special funds which Morrill had claimed for the land grant colleges. On the positive side, Morrill worked for a supplemental appropriation for agricultural colleges because the original grant was often inadequate, as he probably knew it would be. Since he was a practical politician, Morrill had first asked for a moderate amount; then, after Congress had committed itself, worked to get the funding increased. Finally, in 1890, the second Land Grant College Act was passed. It provided an initial cash grant of \$15,000 with stipulations that the sum be increased by \$1,000 each year for ten years and then be continued at \$25,000 annually as long as that sum was adequate. Morrill also arranged for the colleges to be given preference as depositories of public documents.⁸ At his death, the land grant college system was thriving.

⁸Hoar, Seventy Years, I, 265. W. H. Scott to Rutherford B. Hayes, June 4, 1890, Hayes Papers, Hayes Library. Frederick B. Mumford, The Land Grant College Movement, Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 419 (Columbia: University of Missouri, 1940), pp. 18-22. Hayes to Morrill, Dec. 31, 1890, Morrill Papers, Cornell University Library. Morrill to Hayes, Jan. 2, 1890 [1891], Hayes Papers.

Even after the Republican party began to adopt imperialism, Morrill remained true to another lifelong principle, antiexpansionism. He and Fessenden were the only Senators who unalterably opposed the purchase of Alaska. In 1881, Morrill pleaded with President James A. Garfield to settle differences with Spain short of acquiring Cuba. He told his old friend that the presidency was honor enough; there was no need of becoming emperor of Cuba too. Seventeen years later Morrill strongly opposed the accession of Hawaii and was the only Republican to vote no. President William McKinley worried about opposition from such a distinguished senator but avoided a confrontation by utilizing a joint resolution instead of a treaty to achieve annexation.⁹

Morrill's Senate career was not devoted solely to defending old accomplishments and virtues, for he was influential in determining the future of the nation, even if he created no new legislative landmarks. He found a new outlet for his energies, the Committee on Public Building and Grounds. From this base he helped create architectural landmarks.

⁹ Glydon G. Van Deusen, William Henry Seward (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 543. Morrill to James A. Garfield, May 30, 1881, James A. Garfield Papers, Library of Congress. Hoar, Seventy Years, II, 307. Robert L. Beisner, Twelve Against Empire, The Anti-Imperialists 1898-1900 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968), pp. 147-48. Paradoxically Morrill believed in the inevitable absorption of Canada. Parker, Morrill, pp. 320-21.

Morrill's work on the beautification of the Capitol and the city of Washington, begun while he was still in the House, reached fruition in the slower-paced Senate years. His first effort was the dedication of the old Hall of the House of Representatives as National Statuary Hall. In 1866, he worked to restore the grandeur of the Capitol by urging the removal of various ugly exhibits and peddlers' stalls from the corridors. Later, among his acts as a Senator, Morrill opposed letting the Pennsylvania Railroad lay tracks across what is now the Mall. He lost but his judgment was vindicated 35 years later in 1907 when Congress paid \$1.5 million to have the tracks removed.¹⁰

Morrill also left his mark on many of the most stately buildings and grounds in Washington; Simon Cameron, Lincoln's first Secretary of War, called Morrill the man most responsible for the beauty of the capital city. Morrill helped get authorization to complete the Washington Monument and later sponsored a bill to protect it from vandals and souvenir hunters who defaced or chipped the stone. Morrill next worked to have pleasing and dignified landscaping installed around the Capitol Building and helped arrange for Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of New York's Central Park, to do it. However, his greatest

¹⁰ Cong. Globe, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., 1866, p. 860. John W. Reps, Monumental Washington (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 114-15. Parker, Morrill, p. 249.

triumph was the bill sanctioning construction of the Library of Congress. Morrill envisioned a magnificent structure worthy of a great republic and would not settle for less. Finally in 1886, after several tries over fourteen years, he got the first appropriation allowing site acquisition and planning, and two years later four to six million dollars was voted to begin construction. Morrill's final effort was to create a home for the Supreme Court so that the Court could be moved from the Capitol. In 1888 he began urging the purchase of a site. He felt that the Court deserved its own building, one commensurate with its great dignity and prestige. On December 13, 1898, only fifteen days before his death, Morrill saw passage of the bill approving purchase of the site where the Supreme Court Building now stands.¹¹

On December 28, 1898, forty-four years after his first election to Congress, Justin Smith Morrill died. His life had spanned nearly the entire nineteenth century; his political career the whole latter half. He was a legislator who learned the rules and used them well in

¹¹Simon Cameron to Morrill, Oct. 24, 1874, Morrill Papers, Reel 13. Parker, Morrill, pp. 249-50, 321. Lonelle Aikman, We, The People (Washington: The United States Capitol Historical Society, 1969), p. 61. Cong. Globe, 49th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1887, pp. 1284-86. Cong. Globe, 49th Cong., 1st Sess., 1885, p. 123. Statutes at Large, 49th Cong., 1st Sess., p. 12. Reps, Monumental Washington, pp. 44-45, 80-81. Cong. Globe, 55th Cong., 3rd Sess., 1898, pp. 138-40.

order to achieve his ends. Successful on the great majority of issues, he managed to win in a dignified way, never impugning the motives of an opponent. Although Morrill was ready to trade favor for favor if no principle was violated, he always defended principles first. Morrill was not a statesman; he was a great American legislator.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

The only published biography of Justin S. Morrill is William B. Parker, The Life and Public Services of Justin Smith Morrill (New York, 1924), a family-authorized work which contains a wealth of information but often lacks criticism. An early and still useful biographical sketch of Morrill is James Barrett, "Early Life of Justin S. Morrill," The Vermonter, II (Nov., 1896), while an excellent recent one is T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Nature's Nobleman: Justin Morrill, A Victorial Politician," Vermont History, XXX (1962). A brief profile is found in Jacob Ullery, Men of Vermont (Brattleboro, 1894). Insights into Morrill's thinking can be gained from his writings: Self-Consciousness of Noted Persons (Cambridge, 1882) and a series of articles entitled "Notable Letters From My Political Friends," Forum, XXIV (Oct.-Dec., 1897).

Primary Sources

Manuscripts

The most significant manuscript collection for this work is the Justin Smith Morrill Papers deposited in the Library of Congress. A microfilm copy of the

papers, located in the Michigan State University Library, was used for this study. It consists of fifty-two reels containing mostly political, business, and personal correspondence, but also includes a diary, a journal, and personal notes. Another small but useful collection of Morrill materials is the Justin Smith Morrill Papers at the Vermont Historical Society, a microfilm copy of which is in the Michigan State University Library. Additional minor collections of Morrill Mss are at the Chicago Historical Society, Cornell University Library, Duke University Library, and Harvard University Library.

The Henry C. Carey Papers in the Edward Carey Gardiner Collection at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania were very helpful on the tariffs. The papers of John Sherman and of Benjamin Wade in the Library of Congress were informative on the Morrill Tariff and the Agricultural Colleges respectively.

Several collections of papers were of minor aid. Useful sources in the Library of Congress include the papers of Thomas F. Bayard, William Pitt Fessenden, James A. Garfield, Joshua Giddings-George Julian, Abraham Lincoln, and Thaddeus Stevens. In the Rutherford B. Hayes Memorial Library, Fremont, Ohio, are the Mary Clemmer Ames Papers which throw light on Morrill's devotion to the arts, while those of William Claflin and Rutherford B. Hayes touch on aspects of Morrill's late career.

A published collection, helpful on the Morrill Tariff, is the Robert M. T. Hunter Papers, Annual Report of A.H.A., 1916, II.

Printed Government Documents

The Congressional Globe for the 34th through 39th Congresses, House Reports, 39th Cong., 1st Sess., II No. 30, and the United States Statutes at Large provide indispensable material on Morrill's congressional career. Also helpful are the debates of the 40th and subsequent congresses.

Memoirs

Although memoirs, recollections and reminiscences must be handled with care, they frequently contain invaluable insights. James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress (Norwich, Conn., 1884) holds the views of a close friend of Morrill. Samuel S. Cox, Eight Years of Congress (New York, 1865) and Three Decades of Federal Legislation: 1855-1885 (Providence, 1888) give the opinions of a member of the Democratic Party. John Sherman, Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet (Chicago, 1895) contains helpful references made throughout Morrill's career. Other works useful for this study were George Boutwell, Reminiscences of Sixty Years in Public Office (New York, 1902); David Donald, ed., Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War

Diaries of Salmon P. Chase (New York, 1954); Shelby M. Cullom, Fifty Years of Public Service (Chicago, 1911); George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (New York, 1903); Hugh McCulloch, Men and Measures of Half a Century (New York, 1888); and Edward L. Pierce, ed., Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner (Boston, 1893).

Newspapers

Invaluable sources, because of their interest in political affairs across the country, were several metropolitan newspapers. Among these was the New York Times, which was also indispensable because of its index. The leading Republican paper was the New York Tribune, while a strong counter for the Democrats was the Washington Evening Star.

The most important Vermont newspapers for this study were the Vermont Watchman and Walton's Daily Journal, both published at Montpelier by E. P. Walton Jr. Walton, a keen observer of the local political scene, was a close friend, sometime Congressional colleague, and constant political backer of Morrill. Other useful Vermont papers were the Burlington Free Press, Burlington Sentinel, Green Mountain Freeman (Montpelier), Rutland Herald, and Vermont Record (Brattleboro).

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Secondary Sources

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The best history of the period is found in the several Civil War volumes of Allan Nevins: Ordeal of the Union (2 vols.: New York, 1947), The Emergence of Lincoln (2 vols.: New York, 1950), The War for the Union (2 vols.: New York, 1959-60), and The War for the Union (2 vols.: New York, 1971 pub. posthumously). These were indispensable for this study.

Several other works were very helpful as background sources. Gilbert C. Fite and Jim E. Reese, An Economic History of the United States (Boston, 1965), was especially useful for its informative graphs and charts. Roy F. Nichols, The Stakes of Power, 1845-1877 (New York, 1961), provides an excellent analysis of issues in that era. His thesis that the lust for power was the potent force in these years is most convincing. Charles M. Wiltse, The New Nation, 1800-1845 (New York, 1961), in the same series as Nichol's work, is a valuable study of the early 19th century.

Biography

There are many biographies of Morrill's political contemporaries. The most important are studies of Republican leaders. Charles A. Jellison, Fessenden of Maine (Syracuse, 1962), is a good modern work on a friend

and colleague. Fawn M. Brodie, Thaddeus Stevens (New York, 1959), effectively analyzes a complex personality while Richard N. Current, Old Thad Stevens (Madison, 1942), is still a most useful work on political affairs. David Donald's two masterful volumes, Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War (New York, 1960), and Charles Sumner and the Rights of Man (New York, 1970), proved to be fruitful sources. Hans L. Trefousse, Benjamin Franklin Wade (New York, 1963), showed that Wade supported the Land Grant College Act and the Morrill Tariff out of long-standing personal commitments.

Several biographies were very useful. Ellis P. Oberholtzer, Jay Cooke: Financier of the Civil War (2 vols.: Philadelphia, 1907), is old but undoubtedly still the most valuable study of this key figure. See also Henrietta M. Laison, Jay Cooke (Cambridge, 1936). David Lindsey, "Sunset" Cox (Detroit, 1959), is a good and helpful study of that fascinating Democrat. Francis Fessenden, William Pitt Fessenden (2 vols.: New York, 1907), though superseded by Jellison's study, continues to have value. Mary Turner Carriel, The Life of Jonathan Baldwin Turner (Urbana, 1961), is a weak, superficial attempt to discredit Morrill and gain acceptance of the writer's father as author of the Land Grant College Act.

Other helpful works include Martin B. Duberman, Charles Francis Adams, 1807-1886 (Boston, 1961); Fred H.

Harrington, Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks (Philadelphia, 1948); Margaret L. Coit, John C. Calhoun (Boston, 1950); Arthur W. Brown, Always Young for Liberty: A Biography of William Ellery Channing (Syracuse, 1956); Willard H. Smith, Schuyler Colfax (Indianapolis, 1952), which proved disappointing because the author failed to explain Colfax's switch on Agricultural Colleges from pro in 1858 to con in 1862; Glydon G. Van Deusen, William Henry Seward (New York, 1967); Fawn M. Brodie, No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith (New York, 1945); and the fine study of Brigham Young by Stanley P. Hirshson, The Lion of the Lord (New York, 1969).

Special Studies

Among the books on Vermont, four proved the most fruitful. Walter H. Crockett, Vermont, The Green Mountain State (3 vols.: New York, 1921), was particularly beneficial for reviewing the place of the wool industry and of antislavery in the society. Dorothy C. Fisher, Vermont Tradition (Boston, 1953), describes the "flavor" of the state. David M. Ludlum, Social Ferment in Vermont, 1791-1850 (New York, 1939), and Earle Newton, The Vermont Story (Montpelier, 1949), are invaluable socio-political and socio-economic studies respectively. See also Wilbur H. Siebert, Vermont's Anti-Slavery and Underground Railroad Record (Columbus, O., 1937).

On Republican ideology, undoubtedly the finest study is the recent work by Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War (New York: 1970), which has fresh ideas. Very good on the radical wing is Hans L. Trefousse, The Radical Republicans (New York, 1969). For a more general study see Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York, 1948).

The nullification crisis is superbly handled in two works. Chauncey S. Boucher, The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina (Chicago, 1916), is older but still very useful, while the best study is William W. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836 (New York, 1966).

There are several excellent works on the sectional controversy and secession. The outstanding study of the pre-Civil War years, especially because of its excellent analysis of the political process, is Roy F. Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy (New York, 1948).

Another good work is Henry H. Simms, A Decade of Sectional Controversy, 1851-1861 (Chapel Hill, 1942). A recently reprinted classic contemporary viewpoint, that of the non-slaveholding southern white, is in Hinton R. Helper, The Impending Crisis of the South (New York, 1960). Two works on Lincoln's election by Ollinger Crenshaw, The Slave States in the Presidential Election of 1860 (Baltimore,

1945), and "Urban and Rural Voting in the Election of 1860," in Eric Goldman, ed., Historiography and Urbanization (Baltimore, 1941), were very informative. A most useful and penetrating study was Reinhard Luthin, The First Lincoln Campaign (Gloucester, Mass., 1964). Several works cover the secession crisis. George Knoles, ed., The Crisis of the Union, 1860-1861 (Baton Rouge, 1965), contains essays comprising a fascinating debate among scholars. Two excellent full-length treatments of secession are David Potter, Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis, 1860-61 (New Haven, 1962), and Kenneth M. Stampp, And the War Came: The North and the Secession Crisis, 1860-61 (Baton Rouge, 1950). Also see William E. Baringer, A House Dividing (Springfield, Ill., 1945).

Studies of the agricultural college movement are few but generally well done. An excellent background work is Paul W. Gates, Agriculture and the Civil War (New York, 1965). Frederick B. Mumford, The Land Grant College Movement (Columbia, Mo., 1940), is very useful. Alfred C. True, A History of Agricultural Education in the United States: 1785-1925 (Washington, 1929) is the standard work. Edmund J. James, The Origins of the Land Grant College Act of 1862 and Some Account of Its Author, Jonathan Baldwin Turner (Urbana, 1910), is a weak attempt to advance Turner's case.

A complex problem of the 1850's was that of the relationship between the Mormons in Utah and the federal government. Two valuable works on the Mormons are Nels Anderson, Desert Saints (Chicago, 1942), and Thomas O'Dea, The Mormons (Chicago, 1957). An excellent account of the abortive Mormon war is Norman F. Furniss, The Mormon Conflict, 1850-1859 (New Haven, 1960).

The tariff was one of the most controversial issues in the nineteenth century. Since there is no good recent analysis, older works are still the standard. Edward Stanwood, American Tariff Controversies in the Nineteenth Century (2 vols.: Boston, 1903), leans toward the protectionist view but is still useful. More balanced is F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (8th ed.: New York, 1931). Another work helpful in part, was Henry C. Carey, The Harmony of Interests (New York, 1967), a reprint of the classic. Of valuable service on the reciprocity issue were Frederick E. Haynes, The Reciprocity Treaty with Canada of 1854 (Baltimore, 1892), and Charles C. Tansill, The Canadian Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 (Baltimore, 1922).

Financial history is well treated in several excellent works. Sidney Ratner, Taxation and Democracy in America (New York, 1967), is a good modern survey. A balanced treatment of monetary policy is found in Robert P. Sharkey, Money, Class, and Party: An Economic Study of

Civil War and Reconstruction (Baltimore, 1959). For a useful contrast see Richard C. Todd, Confederate Finance (Athens, Ga., 1954). Edwin R. Seligman, The Income Tax (New York, 1911), sheds lights on a controversial topic. The most scholarly modern study of the post-Civil War currency issue is Irwin Unger, The Greenback Era (Princeton, 1964), but the older work by Wesley C. Mitchell, A History of the Greenbacks (Chicago, 1903), is also valuable.

Three modern and indispensable studies on Reconstruction are John Hope Franklin, Reconstruction after the Civil War (Chicago, 1961), Rembert W. Patrick, The Reconstruction of the Nation (New York, 1967), and Kenneth M. Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877 (New York, 1965). La Wanda and John H. Cox, Politics, Principle, and Prejudice, 1865-1866 (New York, 1963), emphasizes the civil rights issue in those years. Eric L. McKittrick, Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (Chicago, 1960), strongly criticizes Johnson as the obstacle preventing reconciliation of the North and South.

There are two valuable surveys of economic affairs. Without question, of superior scholarly quality is Edward C. Kirkland, Industry Comes of Age: Business, Labor, and Public Policy, 1860-1897 (New York, 1961). Also of use, especially for its measurement of the effect of

industrialization on American society, is the brief work by Samuel P. Hays, The Response to Industrialism 1885-1914 (Chicago, 1957).

Several other secondary works proved helpful in understanding particular aspects of the period. On Unitarianism, Elizabeth M. Geffen, Philadelphia Unitarianism, 1796-1861 (Philadelphia, 1961), and Stow Persons, Free Religion: An American Faith (New Haven, 1947), shed necessary light. Lonnette Aikman, We, The People (Washington, 1967), and John W. Reps, Monumental Washington (Princeton, 1967), were beneficial in the treatment of buildings and grounds beautification. Robert L. Beisner, Twelve Against Empire, The Anti-Imperialists (New York, 1968), was useful in seeing the changing Republican attitude on expansion.

Articles

The following articles were helpful on several areas of this work. Wilson O. Clough, ed., "A Journal of Village Life in Vermont in 1848," New England Quarterly, I (1928), and Bernard De Voto, "Brigham Young," Dictionary of American Biography, XX (1935), yielded useful background information. The former depicted daily life in rural Vermont and the latter the Vermont origins of Young. Three articles shed light on aspects of the Agricultural College Act. Carl W. Borgmann, "The Education of Free

Men," Vermont History, XXV (1957), and John T. Fey, "Morrill's Concept of Education," Vermont History, XXXI (1963), accurately analyze Morrill's motivation for and concept of the colleges. That westerners opposed the land grants, not the educational benefits, was well shown in Paul W. Gates, "Western Opposition to the Agricultural College Act," Indiana Magazine of History, XXXVII (1941). Valuable articles on the tariff included Howard Beale, "The Tariff and Reconstruction," American Historical Review, XXXV (Jan., 1930), Richard Hofstadter, "The Tariff Issue on the Eve of the Civil War," American Historical Review, XLIV (Oct., 1938), Alfred B. Lindley, "The Copper Tariff of 1869," Michigan History, XXXV (March, 1951), and Reinhard Luthin, "Abraham Lincoln and the Tariff," American Historical Review, XLIX (July, 1944). A useful article on reciprocity was W. Jett Lauck, "Political Significance of Reciprocity," Journal of Political Economics, XII (1904), in which he argued that many proponents saw it as a prelude to annexation. Several articles were of service on the monetary question. James K. Kindahl, "Economic Factors in Specie Resumption," Journal of Political Economics, LXIX (1961), convincingly argued that resumption could not occur before domestic price levels fell to parity with those in Europe. Interesting for purposes of contrast was Eugene M. Lerner, "The Monetary and Fiscal Programs of the Confederate Government, 1861-1865," Journal of Political Economics,

LXII (Dec., 1954). The excellent articles by Wesley C. Mitchell, "The Circulating Medium during the Civil War," Journal of Political Economics, X (Sept., 1902), "The Suspension of Specie Payments," Journal of Political Economics, VII (June, 1899), and "Value of the Greenbacks during the Civil War," Journal of Political Economics, VI (March, 1898), were most helpful. Also good was Samuel Rezneck, "Depression and American Opinion, 1857-1859," Journal of Economic History, II, (May, 1942). For an overview of finance see James L. Sellers, "An Interpretation of Civil War Finance," American Historical Review, XXX (Jan., 1925).

Unpublished Dissertations

Several unpublished dissertations were beneficial for this study. T. D. Seymour Bassett, "Urban Penetration of Rural Vermont, 1840-1880" (Harvard University, 1952), holds valuable information on the workings of politics and economic affairs in Vermont. Holman D. Jordan, Jr., "Ten Vermont Towns: Social and Economic Characteristics, 1850-1870" (University of Alabama, 1966) is a good in-depth study of social conditions in several towns, one of which appears very similar to Morrill's home town of Strafford. The place of the tariff in Republican principles is discussed in Thomas M. Pitkin, "The Tariff and the Early Republican Party" (Western Reserve University,

1935). William Edwin Sawyer, "The Evolution of the Morrill Act of 1862" (Boston University, 1948), contains the most complete study of the Land Grant College Act. For this important legislation Sawyer's work is indispensable, but unfortunately it is also marred by errors of fact and judgment.

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