SENATOR JAMES ROOD DOOLITTLE

AND THE

STRUGGLE AGAINST RADICALISM 1857-1866

by

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Preface

The advent of the agitation for the abolition of slavery sounded the disruption of the political unity of the United States. Senator Doolittle strenuously opposed federal emancipation on the constitutional belief that it was the right of the states to control their domestic institutions. Though not an Abolitionist, Doolittle recognized that federal emancipation would contribute to the preservation of the Union. Thus, he accepted emancipation. Thereafter, however, Doolittle battled fiercely against the radical demand for a vindictive reconstruction policy.

Finally in 1866, radical tactics and successes alarmed Senator Doolittle; and he became the most outstanding figure in a spectacular movement to rally the North to opposition to the radical doctrine that the Southern states were "conquered provinces" or had committed "suicide." Doolittle's call to arms culminated in the Philadelphia Convention. As the Senator conceived it, the convention was to be the crowning blow in his conflict with the Radicals. However, in order to secure the unquestioned success of the Philadelphia Convention, Doolittle and the other Conservatives had to convince the voters of the righteousness of the Johnson reconstruction policy.

Immediately, the Philadelphia Convention made a deep impression on the country. Nevertheless, the Johnson movement failed after a desperate struggle between the conservative Johnsonites and the Radicals for the approval of the voters. The crushing radical victory in the congressional election of 1866 ended Doolittle's struggle against the Radicals on a note

of failure. Yet, Senator Doolittle believed that the Philadelphia Convention would have succeeded if other factors had not intervened. The problem is to determine the importance of the Philadelphia Convention and the role of Senator Doolittle in the struggle against the Radicals.

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Chapter I

Climbing the Ladder: Early Life and Political Career

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the hardy and deeply religious New England Puritans streamed into New York State, settled for a short time in the eastern part, and, then, moved on toward Lake Erie. The Doolittle family was part of the stream of rugged and industrious pioneers who moved from frontier to frontier and, finally, reached the region bordering on Lakes Michigan and Superior. Reuben Doolittle, father of the future Senator, crossed from New Haven, Connecticut, into neighboring New York State. He stayed for a short time in Hampton, Washington county, where his wife, Sarah Rood gave birth to James. Then, the Doolittle family moved westward to Genesee county.[1]

In 1834, young James Rood graduated from Geneva College with highest honors. Taking up the study of law, he gained admittance to the bar in 1837. Later, that same year, he took Mary L. Cutting as his bride. From 1845 to 1849, Doolittle served as district attorney of Wyoming county.

As the slavery issue and intra-party strife rent the Democratic party in the State, Doolittle became an adherent of the Barnburner wing of the party. In 1847, at Syracuse, Doolittle drafted the "cornerstone resolution" which became part of the Free Soil platform of 1848 and which later found its way in modified form into the Republican platform of 1856.

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[1] Material concerned with the early life of Doolittle is to be found in James L. Sellers, "James R. Doolittle," Wisconsin Magazine of History, XVII (Dec., 1933), 168-178; (March, 1934), 277-306; and Joseph Schaefer, "James Rood Doolittle," Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1928), V, 374-375.

In the resolution, Doolittle and the other Barnburners declared their opposition to the extension of slavery into the territories. However, the main body of administration Democrats scorned the Barnburner resolution.

As a member of the Barnburner delegation, Doolittle went to the Baltimore Convention of 1848, refused to take the test oath formulated by William L. Yancey, the "Fire Eater" of Alabama, and walked out of the Convention with the other Barnburners. Subsequently, Doolittle attended the Free Soil Convention in Buffalo. Truly, the Democratic party in New York State was hopelessly split.

Probably disgusted with the political rift which threatened his political fortunes, Doolittle decided to go west; and, in 1851, he settled in Racine - a city which he believed had a better future than Milwaukee or Chicago. Two years later, he became Judge of the First Judicial District of Wisconsin. The new Republican party was gathering strength in the State, but Judge Doolittle was slow to join in the movement and avoided taking an active part in politics. However, he denounced the Kansas-Nebraska Act in private. Consequently, he resigned the judgeship, came out for John C. Fremont, and joined the newly organized Republican party.

In 1857, Doolittle took part in the scramble for the seat in the United States Senate.[2] The campaign reached its climax when Sherman Booth, a radical abolitionist leader, tested Doolittle and Timothy O. Howe,

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[2]James L. Sellers, "Republicanism and State Rights in Wisconsin," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XVII (Sept., 1930), 213-224.

another contender, on their views of the "state rights" doctrine. Whereas Howe had already flayed the nullificationists and had not changed his views, Doolittle strongly asserted the "state rights" doctrine which implied that a state could nullify a federal law. Thus, Booth and the other radicals brushed Howe aside and threw their support to Doolittle.[3] However, after the legislature had elected Doolittle, Lieutenant Governor Arthur McArthur ruled Doolittle ineligible, refused to certify his election, and declared that the runner-up should be the next senator. Fortunately, Wyman Spooner, speaker of the lower house, drew up a certificate of election and persuaded McArthur's secretary to sign it. The editor of the (Madison) Wisconsin State Journal thought the choice a good one and predicted that Doolittle would do well as senator.[4]

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[3] Richard N. Current, Pine Logs and Politics: A Life of Philetus Sawyer 1816-1890 (Madison, 1950), 35.

[4] (Madison) Wisconsin State Journal, Jan. 23, 1857, quoted in Sellers, "Doolittle," WMH, XVII (March, 1934), 282-283.

Chapter II

Swimming against the Tide: Struggle against Radicalism 1857-1865

As Doolittle finished his first year in the Senate, Northern and Southern Radicals aroused mutual suspicions in their respective sections, alarmed conservative Unionists, and made compromise difficult if not impossible. The Northern Radicals called down Heaven's wrath upon the "wicked" Southern slave-owner and threatened to abolish the institution of slavery. On the other hand, the hotheaded Southern Radicals cursed their Northern counterparts for scorning the Constitution and threatened the Union with secession. Differences over internal improvements, homestead legislation, and the protective tariff further embittered the sections, allied the North and Northwest against the South, and brought the sections to the brink of war.

Excitement reached a fever pitch as the Southerners demanded the extension of slavery into the territories, but Doolittle was a "strict constructionist" and consistently opposed the Southern demands. During the debate on an amendment to print the Dred Scott decision, he indignantly demanded that the Senate go on record as not sanctioning the "opinion that the Constitution of the United States, of its force" carried "the law of slavery into any State or Territory of the United States." Furthermore, he damned this "opinion" as the "most momentous and revolutionary doctrine" that had "ever been promulgated before the American people."[1]

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[1] Cong. Globe, 35 Cong., 1 sess., 665.

In spite of his desire to see the end of slavery, Doolittle had too much respect for the Constitution and too much common sense to cater to the radical demand for immediate abolition. Yet, he hoped to make a contribution to the easing of the tension by advocating the colonization of free Negroes. In August of 1859, the editor of the (St. Louis) Missouri Democrat worked hard to show that the South would demand the repeal of the Slave Trade Laws in the election of 1860 - the proposal was expected to provoke Doolittle and others to bring up the counter-proposal of the colonization of free Negroes.[2] Thus, at this early date, the Wisconsin Senator was familiar with the colonization solution. Meanwhile, the talk of war increased; but the incredulous Doolittle discounted the "considerable furor about war."[3]

In October, the abolitionist John Brown made his mad assault on Harper's Ferry; the South blamed the Abolitionists and laid the responsibility for the outrage at the feet of the Republicans. Yet, Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, thought Brown a hero because his "disinterestedness and consistent devotion to the rights of human nature" had prompted "his...desperate undertaking."[4] Northern Conservatives, however, denounced the brazen blows struck by Brown at Harper's Ferry.[5]

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[2]Howard K. Beale, ed., The Diary of Edward Bates 1859-1866 (Annual Report of the American Historical Association, vol. IV, Washington, 1930), 40.

[3]Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), June 1, 1858, Doolittle Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

[4]New York Tribune, Oct. 31, 1859, quoted in Avery Craven, The Coming of the Civil War (New York, 1950), 409.

[5]J.G. Randall, The Civil War and Reconstruction (Boston, 1937), 179.

Consequently, Doolittle defended the Republican party, belittled Brown, and lashed out bitterly at the Southern Secessionists. The angry Senator declared that if there were "such men" in the South "who, like this man Brown from the North," were "deluded with the idea" that they could break up the government, the Republican party should arrest them and hang them if they were found guilty of treason.[6] Thus, the sincere Wisconsin Senator slashed savagely at the Southern Secessionists and the Northern Abolitionists and termed them both "traitors."

Presently, the continued turmoil over the question of the extension or abolition of slavery disturbed Doolittle. In December of 1859, at a dinner celebrating the 54th anniversary of the founding of the New England Society of New York City, the troubled Senator bluntly stated that "no greater mistake" existed than to believe in the peaceful break-up of the Union. To the disgust of the Abolitionists, he hazarded the opinion that the "only question which could imperil the Union was the negro question - a question which lay deeper even than the Slavery question." Doolittle explained that the "underlying question" concerned the fate of the free Negroes. The plight of the latter saddened the Senator because "many of the Free States refused to receive them, and some of the Slave States were reenslaving" them.[7] Applause and hisses interrupted the Senator's remarks; but he continued, suggested an asylum for free Negroes, and advocated the solution of colonization. The next year, the editor of the (St. Louis) Missouri Democrat referred to

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[6] Racine Advocate, Dec. 28, 1859, quoted in Sellers, "Doolittle," WMH, XVIII (March, 1934), 285-286.

[7] New York Tribune, Dec. 23, 1859.

Doolittle as a "statesman" who had achieved a "National reputation," and stamped the Senator as the "unflinching champion of the Free Labor Cause and the great project of the colonization of the negroes."[8]

In the fall of 1860, at a Seward meeting at Madison, Doolittle broached the theme again, gave a fuller explanation, and, in the process, spoke for the moderate Republicans. The mission of the Republican party, stated the junior Senator, was to solve both the question of slavery and race. The first step was to prevent the extension of slavery into the territories. The second step was to institute a homestead policy for free white people. The final step was to solve both the question of slavery and race by adopting Jefferson's solution of emancipation and colonization.[9] Obviously, the Abolitionists and Doolittle did not see eye to eye on the colonization solution. However, the Wisconsin Senator considered himself an enemy of the Radicals. His peace-loving heart smouldered with resentment at the rabid abolitionist agitators. Their divisive activities fired in him a righteous indignation which boiled more furiously as the tide became more radical.

By December of 1860, John Brown's assault on Harper's Ferry had alarmed the South with the specter of a "Santo Domingo" race war; the Democratic party had split, and the election of Lincoln had spurred South Carolina to take the road to secession. Doolittle now recognized the existence of a "great apprehension of disunion and civil war." Furthermore, he blamed the threatening state of affairs on Greeley and others

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[8](St. Louis) Missouri Democrat (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 6, 1860.

[9]Ibid., June 24, 1861.

who were making matters worse by their "let them go in peace" attitude. The exasperated Senator wrote that Greeley's foolish attitude led the "secessionists to suppose" that secession was a "mere holiday affair like a general muster" and took "from the conservative and Union man of the South his strongest argument." The fearful Wisconsin Senator intimated that the talk of not using force to preserve the Constitution should cease.[10] Thus, he disagreed with President Buchanan who could see no constitutional basis for using force against a state. When it came to the preservation of the Union, Doolittle was an advocate of strong methods.

Later in the month, Doolittle warned the Southern Senators that the "people of the United States" did not believe that the Constitution was and would never consent to change the Constitution so that it would become a "slavery-extending Constitution by force of its own terms." On the other hand, Doolittle begged the Northern Radicals not to put upon the Constitution "that construction" which would "abolish slavery in any State or in any territory." Finally, he pleaded with both to "let the Constitution be as our fathers made it; let it be neutral - neither affirming nor denying." Then, there would be peace.[11] His position was forthright and clear - no extension of slavery and no abolitionism. His cry was for peace.

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[10] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), Dec. 2, 1860, Doolittle Papers.

[11] Cong. Globe, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 197.

Furthermore, Doolittle ripped the mask from the hideous Abolitionists and called upon the Southern Senators to view the appalling sight of disunionists. These Abolitionists had denounced the "Constitution as being a covenant with hell;" and, raising their eyes to Heaven, they fervently prayed for the breakup of the Union.[12] The aroused Senator smashed pointedly at William Lloyd Garrison, abolitionist leader, and charged that the "Abolitionists of the Garrison school of the North" were just as anxious to break up the Union as the men in the extreme cotton States, or in South Carolina."[13] Later in the session, Doolittle supported the Corwin Amendment which provided that Congress had no power to interfere with the domestic institutions of the states.[14] His efforts for peace were part and parcel of the compromise attempts to prevent the breakup of the Union. Doolittle was a member of the Committee of Thirteen, and his voice was the voice of most of Congress that it should never interfere with slavery in the states.[15] Nevertheless, secession stared him in the face; and he met it by presenting an amendment which declared that no state had or ever would have the power to secede.[16]

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[12] Ibid., 198.

[13] Ibid., 199.

[14] Sellers, "Doolittle," WMH, XVII (March, 1934), 295.

[15] J. G. Randall, Lincoln the President: Springfield to Gettysburg (2 vols., New York, 1945), I, 222-224.

[16] Cong. Globe, 36 Cong., 2 sess., 1370.

After the bombardment of Fort Sumter, Doolittle's anger knew no bounds; and he launched a torrent of abuse upon the previous Buchanan Administration. The Racine Advocate reported that, on April 21, the infuriated Senator accused the Buchanan Administration of having harbored "traitors" - "traitors, compared with whom, Burr and Arnold were patriots and saints."[17] In October, the angry Senator spoke of a rebel conspiracy to overthrow the government.[18] Doolittle loved the Union and would not yield one inch to the contention that disunion was possible. Similarly, the Senator opposed abolitionism; but his love of the Union and the necessity of succeeding in a war upon which depended the preservation of the Union shattered his powers of resistance, and he talked himself into an acceptance of the radical doctrine of abolitionism.

Clearly and bluntly, Doolittle stated that "if the Constitution and slavery" did not "harmonize" and if the Unionists could not preserve both, then slavery must yield.[19] Yet, he continued to advocate federal non-interference in the domestic institutions of the states. The policy of non-interference was a basic Republican policy. Lincoln, himself, had already stated that the Republican Administration had no intention of interfering "with the institution of slavery in the States."[20]

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[17] Racine Advocate, April 24, 1861, quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, May 2, 1861.

[18] La Crosse Republican (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Oct. 28, 1861.

[19] Racine Advocate, April 24, 1861, quoted in Ibid.

[20] Roy P. Basler, ed., The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (9 vols., New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1953), IV, 263.

Lincoln was not an abolitionist president.[21] Furthermore, the great mass of the people in late 1861 approved of the policy of non-interference.[22] Doolittle was of the same mind - his views were the popular views.

Nevertheless, a correspondent of the New York Herald pointed out that "circumstances" controlled the actions of the "military commanders and legislative bodies" regarding slavery.[23] The continued progress of the Union army engulfed hordes of Negroes in its wake.[24] Furthermore, many Radicals in Congress felt that the Government could use any means to preserve its existence.[25] Doolittle had already voiced this last possibility. Consequently, Lincoln urged emancipation and colonization.

At first, the President favored "gradual emancipation" with compensation.[26] When Lincoln presented his compensated-emancipation plan to Congress, Representative John Hickman of Pennsylvania proved to be the prophet when the "Quaker State" Radical predicted that emancipation was coming and hinted that Lincoln was becoming an "abolitionist."[27] The Hickman prediction, however, was premature for the House of Representatives rejected a universal emancipation bill - an action which the

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[21] Randall, Lincoln the President, II, 127.

[22] (Appleton's) Annual Cyclopaedia, 1862, 788.

[23] New York Herald, Jan. 24, 1862.

[24] Randall, Lincoln the President, II, 130-132.

[25] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1862, 275.

[26] Lincoln, Works, V, 145.

[27] Cong. Globe, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 1175.

correspondent of the New York Herald believed was a "salutary lesson to the radicals."[28]

On March 19, 1862, Doolittle made a major speech advocating a policy of emancipation and colonization for free Negroes in the District of Columbia.[29] During the debate on emancipation in the District, Doolittle presented an amendment which provided for the sum of $100,000 to be used by the President for the colonization of free Negroes. The Senator argued that the God-designed areas for the whites were those in the temperate zones, while those of the Negroes were in the tropics. There could never be, claimed Doolittle, any social and political equality between the white and colored races. He added that "it was simply an impossibility. Our very instincts" were against it.[30] Furthermore, Jefferson who knew "as much about this question as the new lights" of the time had declared that the two races living "side by side in anything like equal numbers" could not and would not "live together upon a footing of equality."[31]

Still, Doolittle doggedly held to the view that the Republican party was not an abolitionist party. Every Republican in the Senate, emphasized the Senator, who had taken part in the campaign of 1860 had declared a

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[28] New York Herald, March 13, 1862.

[29] Cong. Globe, 37 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 83-86.

[30] Ibid., 83.

[31] Ibid., 84.

"hundred times over" that they "had neither the constitutional power nor the purpose to interfere with Slavery within the States." Again, the Senator affirmed that the question of emancipation belonged "mainly to the people of the States."[32] The colonization program, declared the Senator, would afford the slave states the opportunity to emancipate their slaves whom the Federal Government would colonize (if the free Negroes consented) in Haiti and Liberia.

The editor of the Philadelphia Press singled out Doolittle's "non-interference" declaration for high praise. He felt that Doolittle was speaking for Lincoln and for a substantial portion of the Republican party. Furthermore, the editor recognized that the emancipation question was a source of continued controversy, and he hoped that Doolittle's proposal could solve the dilemma. However, the editor of the Press did reveal a loophole when he conceded that the Federal Government could interfere with slavery in the states as a "punishment to rebels in arms."[33]

Subsequently, Doolittle advocated emancipation in the District of Columbia.[34] He felt that Federal "non-interference" with the institution of slavery pertained only to the states and not to the District of Columbia. At the same time, the Senator supported Lincoln's "compensated-emancipation" plan, thought the pending resolution on the subject

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[32] Ibid., 85.

[33] Philadelphia Press (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, April 7, 1862.

[34] Ibid., March 22, 1862.

implied and looked to both compensation and colonization, and argued that most of the people wanted both.[35] However, the Senator's emphasis on colonization irked the Radicals.

Consequently, certain New York and Philadelphia newspapers insisted upon misrepresenting his views. The editor of the New York Times declared that Senator Doolittle had said that he opposed "any scheme of emancipation, which did not embrace the colonization of the blacks."[36] The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, in turn, defended Doolittle, criticized eastern newspapers for garbling the Senator's views, and judged that the speech exhibited "much research" and was "able and patriotic."[37] Furthermore, the President put forth three conditions before he would sign the emancipation in the District bill - one of them being the colonization of the free Negroes.[38] Therefore, Doolittle's colonization amendment was in accord with Lincoln's views; and the Sentinel editor gave credence to the common belief that the speech reflected the "sentiments" of the President.[39] Moreover, the same editor crowed when

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[35] Cong. Globe, 37 Cong., 2 sess., 1371.

[36] New York Times, March 20, 1862, quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, March 25, 1862.

[37] Ibid., March 29, 1862.

[38] New York Herald, April 6, 1862.

[39] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 12, 1862.

Doolittle voted for the bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.[40]

On April 11, irritated by the misrepresentation of his views, Doolittle vigorously defended himself by pointing out that he had voted for the emancipation in the District bill.[41] With an eye to the congressional appropriations necessary for a successful colonization program, the persistent Senator fired a barrage of arguments at the radicals. He asked the radicals to look at the facts and admit the presence of "prejudices."[42] Furthermore, the Senator urged the radical members of the Senate who desired emancipation "to favor colonization" because of the hope that an emancipation party would arise in the slave states. Slave state senators and "every man, woman, and child" who came from those states had told Doolittle that it was "utterly impossible for them to talk of emancipation...without connecting with it the idea of colonization."[43]

Although the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel disagreed with his representative in the Senate, he still respected Doolittle. He felt that colonization was unimportant.[44] Even Horace Greeley of the New York

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[40] Ibid., April 8, 1862.

[41] Cong. Globe, 37 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 94.

[42] Ibid., 96.

[43] Ibid., 98.

[44] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 22, May 2, 1862.

Tribune took notice of the speech and regarded it as a "forcible argument in favor of the Colonization of the Negroes." However, after paying due respects to Doolittle's views, Greeley knifed the colonization proposal, claiming that "Negro Expatriation" was "merely a pretext for holding on to Slavery." Greeley raved that "many nations" had "at one time or another, abolished Slavery," but "not one of them" had been "mad enough to exile its freedmen."[45]

Nevertheless, both Houses passed the emancipation-in-the-District bill with the colonization amendment; but there was some uncertainty as to what the President would do.[46] Presently, Lincoln made up his mind and signed the bill. In his message to Congress, the President revealed his gratification "that the two principles of compensation and colonization" were "both recognized and practically applied in the act."[47] Thus, the editor of the Wisconsin State Journal concluded that Doolittle's colonization amendment prevented a presidential veto.[48] There are indications that Doolittle was the "mouthpiece" for his fellow Republican in the White House.

The Radicals, however, criticized Doolittle, misconstruing his position and misrepresenting his views. David Noggle, Wisconsin abolitionist, notified the Wisconsin Senator that he was losing "friends" and condemned

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[45] New York Tribune, May 2, 1862.

[46] New York Herald, April 15, 1862.

[47] Lincoln, Works, V, 192.

[48] (Madison) Wisconsin State Journal (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, May 24, 1862.

the position of the moderates whom Doolittle represented. Noggle preached the radical doctrine of universal emancipation and urged the Senator, in conjunction with other, to make a "good" Republican out of the President.[49] In rebuttal, Doolittle wrote to his wife that the radical solution would lead to the slaughter of the Negro race. He believed that the Southern whites would turn upon the Negroes and "butcher them by thousands upon thousands." He railed against that "hell born fanaticism" which had always bathed the "world in blood."[50] For Senator Doolittle and Lincoln, colonization was the ideal solution.

By this time, Lincoln had decided to take the bold step of proclaiming the emancipation of the slaves in the "rebellious" states but waited for an opportune moment to issue the proclamation. In the meantime, the Radicals opposed the colonization program, stifled it, and demanded unqualified emancipation.[51] Furthermore, the Radicals bitterly and unsparingly denounced all Northerners who refused to adopt the radical demand for immediate and universal emancipation as "secessionists" and "traitors."[52] For the "tenth or twentieth time," Salmon Chase, Secretary

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[49] Quoted in Sellers, "Doolittle," WMH, XVII (March, 1934), 303.

[50] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), June 3, 1862, Doolittle Papers.

[51] Randall, Lincoln the President, II, 139.

[52] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1862, 792.

of the Treasury, said at a cabinet meeting that "the time for the suppression of the rebellion without interference with slavery had long passed."[53] Nevertheless, the patient President continued to wait for the right moment before issuing the proclamation. When Horace Greeley issued his "Prayer of Twenty Millions," the President replied that his "paramount object" was "to save the Union" and was "not either to save or destroy slavery."[54] The Lincoln view was in tune with the "sentiments of the great mass of the people in the Federal States, and including a large portion of his own party."[55]

In spite of his private decision to issue the proclamation, Lincoln was unwilling to admit publicly that he did intend to interfere with slavery in the states. Finally, after the battle of Antietam, the President issued the preliminary proclamation which "freed" the slaves in states or parts of states which were still in rebellion on January 1, 1863. Later the President confessed, "I claim not to have controlled events but confess plainly that events controlled me."[56] Consequently, Doolittle came to Lincoln's support and began to herald a retreat. Late in 1862, in one of his "God and Lincoln" speeches, the Senator confessed

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[53] David Donald, ed., Inside Lincoln's Cabinet: The Civil War Diaries of Salmon P. Chase (New York, 1954), 105.

[54] Lincoln, Works, V, 388.

[55] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1862, 792.

[56] Lincoln, Works, VII, 282.

that it was not "God's purpose" that the institution of slavery should remain "intact."[57]

In this revolutionary period, the conservatives were "incapable of coping with the determined radicals."[58] The radicals were more positive in their approach to the question of slavery. Thus, the hopes of Lincoln and Doolittle for the success of the colonization program failed to materialize.[59] The constant radical pressure, the necessity of finding a solution to the constant stream of Negroes into the Union lines, and the fear that a foreign state would recognize the Confederacy influenced Lincoln and Doolittle to accept the abolition of slavery in the rebellious states as a war measure.

Nevertheless, the President's proclamation failed to mollify the Wisconsin Radicals. Angry with Doolittle's moderation on the slavery question, the state radicals threatened to thwart the Senator's bid for re-election. In spite of his burning desire to return to the Senate, the thought of possible defeat caused the worried Senator to consider resuming his judicial career.[60] Doolittle's emancipation and colonization speeches came under such heavy fire that the Senator wrote to his wife

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[57] Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 1, 1862.

[58] T. Harry Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals (Madison, 1941), 5.

[59] Randall, Lincoln the President, II, 141.

[60] Sellers, "Doolittle," WMH, XVII (March, 1934), 305.

that it was likely that his political career was coming to an end.[61] However, he had no regrets; he was conscious of having done his duty, and he hoped of having done the country some service.

Subsequently, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel continued to support the Senator, heaped praise on him, and defended him against the radical editors. Moreover, his support of the emancipation and colonization bill must have attracted the support of the more reasonable Republicans. Ultimately, the support of the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel and Doolittle's moderation made him a strong contender for re-election. However, Lincoln's emancipation proclamation, war weariness, suspension of the habeas corpus, and national conscription were important factors in the remarkable Democratic gains in the fall elections of 1862. In Wisconsin, the Republicans suffered heavy losses but not enough to lose control of the legislature.[62] Therefore, the Republican candidate was practically assured of victory.

Some two months before the January election, the newspapers of the state began to come out for Doolittle. The editor of the Wisconsin State Journal who had not supported Doolittle in 1857, came out for the Senator and even the editor of the Waupun Times thought him the best choice.[63] By the end of the year, most of the Republican editors of Wisconsin had

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[61] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), March 17, 1862, Doolittle Papers.

[62] Milwaukee Sentinel, Nov. 12, 1862.

[63] Wisconsin State Journal (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Dec. 13, 1862; Waupun Times (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Dec. 15, 1862.

made Doolittle their "first choice."[64] Only the radical editors of the Racine Journal and Janesville Gazette continued to criticize and oppose him Loyal John Tapley, Doolittle's campaign manager, informed the Senator that the "elements of discord" were "mustering their forces" against him.[65] James Paine, Wisconsin abolitionist, and other radicals were going to Madison to work against the Senator, but Tapley did not fear them. Furthermore, Tapley told Doolittle that the "Janesfille fanatics" continued to "rail." The radicals and ambitious politicians were consistently and cleverly campaigning against the Senator. All through the month of December, a party fight had been developing; and the Democrats hoped for a split in Republican ranks.

The political air rang with the radical charges that the Senator had not done enough for local interests, that he was not radical enough, and that he misrepresented the state on the colonization issue.[66] Nevertheless, friendly editors gave Doolittle valuable support. When the radical editor of the Janesville Gazette charged the Senator with misrepresenting Republican sentiment on the colonization issue, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel staunchly defended the Senator, took the Janesville journalist to task, and patiently explained that Doolittle did not favor the deportation of the Negroes but simply wished to help the freed Negroes

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[64] Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, Dec. 21, 1862, Doolittle Papers.

[65] Ibid., Dec. 29, 1862.

[66] Milwaukee Sentinel, Nov. 29, Dec. 16, 29, 1862.

find "climes and conditions where they could have their rights unmolested."[67]

The editor of the Kenosha Telegraph came out for Doolittle, professed willingness to listen to other claims, and calmly and intelligently presented the reasons for his decision. Doolittle, stated the Telegraph's editor, was "peculiarly fitted for the position, both by qualification and experience." Furthermore, the voters of Wisconsin wanted "men of commanding influence" in the Senate during the critical times - men who could not only "see and appreciate the right" but who also could use that influence on a national scale. The editor concluded that Doolittle was "such a man."[68] The editor's reasons notwithstanding, the radicals continued to work for the Senator's defeat.

John Potter, recently defeated congressman, appeared as a formidable opponent.[69] Moreover, an old grudge between Alexander W. Randall and Doolittle threatened to cause trouble for the Senator. Doolittle's son had criticised Randall for failing to keep his promise to obtain a military appointment for him. Whereupon, Randall seized upon the remarks and "absolved" Doolittle from all obligation to aid him in obtaining a civil appointment. In a sharp reply, the angry Senator defended his son and berated Randall for turning against "one" who had "in spite of the remonstrances and denunciations of his friends" conferred upon Randall

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[67] Ibid., Dec. 29, 1862.

[68] Kenosha Telegraph (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Dec. 27, 1862.

[69] Brodhead Independent (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Dec. 29, 1862.

"great and important advantages."[70] Undoubtedly, Randall's followers were working against Doolittle.

The Potter "boom," however, attracted the attention of Doolittle's supporters. Christopher Latham Sholes, a Milwaukee inventor and Doolittle's supporter, wrote that it was probable that Potter would not "second the movement very cordially" and might even oppose it.[71] On the other hand, Tapley was more suspicious of Potter. Potter's supposed support of the Senator, asserted Tapley, would evaporate whenever the defeated congressman felt that he had a majority. Furthermore, Potter was playing a coy political role, refusing to come out for Doolittle and, yet, leaving himself very much in the race. Tapley had lost "confidence" in Potter "entirely" and accused him of "doing more to break down the party in the state than all the causes put together."[72]

In spite of the Potter "boom," Doolittle forged to the front in the early part of January. By the 13th, the Senator was the popular choice.[73] The last hurdle was the Republican caucus, and the possibility of a "dark horse" shadowed the Senator's bid for re-election. However, a Sentinel correspondent reassured the readers of the paper that the

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[70] Letter, James R. Doolittle to Alexander W. Randall, Dec. 26, 1861, Doolittle Papers.

[71] Letter, Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, Dec. 16, 1862, Doolittle Papers.

[72] Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, Dec. 21, 1862, Doolittle Papers.

[73] Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 13, 1863.

supporters of Potter and Doolittle would not allow a third party to slip in and carry off the prize.[74] Publicly, interest in the contest was beginning to decline; and the Madison reporter of the Sentinel was confident of Doolittle's re-election.[75]

In the Republican caucus, however, there were some fireworks as supporters of Potter boldly accused Doolittle of not being a "good" Republican. Tapley, angry over the baseless charges against the Senator, painted a colorful picture of unscrupulous politicians using every form of political knavery to unseat Doolittle. The devoted campaign manager informed the Senator that the "Janesville clique" resorted to any argument or "monstrous" lie to prejudice the caucus against the Senator. Bitterly, Tapley wrote that Doolittle's opponents magnified "Potter's virtues" in order to win him votes. Furthermore, Wyman Spooner, president of the State Senate, who had obtained the certification of Doolittle's first election had turned against him. Spooner's caucus speech exasperated Tapley who ominously advised the Senator to "set down Spooner as your enemy."[76]

However, the opposition was futile, and the Senator ran away from the other contenders on both the informal and regular ballots.[77] On the latter ballot, the Senator ran strongly with 53 votes while Potter was far behind with 18 votes. The caucus unanimously endorsed Doolittle,

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[74] Ibid., Jan. 17, 1863.

[75] Ibid., Jan. 22, 1863.

[76] Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, Jan. 26, 1863, Doolittle Papers.

[77] Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 21, 22, 1863.

and Democratic hopes for a split in Republican ranks faded. The Republicans stood solidly behind Doolittle, and the Senator swept past Edward G. Ryan, the Democratic standardbearer, to victory in the legislature. On January 22, Doolittle garnered 73 votes to Ryan's 57 votes.[78]

The editor of the Racine Advocate expressed the common satisfaction over the result, declared that the result was a "noble vindication" of Doolittle's "official career," and believed that the "loyal people of Wisconsin" and "of the whole Union" would rejoice "that so able a statesman and true patriot" was "to remain in the Senate."[79]

Thus, Doolittle thwarted the radical efforts to defeat his re-election, assured himself of six more years of struggle against the radicals, and was prepared to give stalwart support to the President in the war effort and the conciliatory reconstruction policy.

Yet, in 1863, Doolittle, troubled over the Democratic gains of 1862, discovered that he had to cooperate with the power-hungry radicals in order to restore the strength of the Republican party on the state and local levels. For their part, the chastened radicals tempered their criticism of the president and launched a blistering campaign of abuse of the "Copperhead" Democrats. The cooperation of these antagonistic elements, the moderate and radical Republicans, was absolutely necessary for the ill-effects of the emancipation proclamation, failures in war, discontent over conscription, corruption in government, and arbitrary arrests augured a bleak future for the Republican party.

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[78] Ibid., Jan. 23, 1863.

[79] Racine Advocate, Jan. 28, 1863.

The emancipation proclamation, especially, caused a furor among the constitutionally-minded Republicans and the War Democrats. James Gordon Bennett of the New York Herald found little to praise in the proclamation, considered it "practically a dead letter," and thought it "unwise, and ill-timed, impracticable, and outside of the constitution."[80] Although the proclamation did not affect the loyal slave states, and, thus, disappointed the radicals, the latter seized upon the proclamation as extending the object of the war to include the abolition of slavery. Brushing aside the contention that the object of the war was the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery, Doolittle continued to labor mightily and tirelessly for Lincoln, the Union cause, and the Republican party.

In the spring of 1863, the New England States became a political battleground as the Republicans and Democrats battered each other with epithets and accusations. Republican campaigners poured into Connecticut; furloughed soldiers streamed home, and Republican officeholders stumped for the party.[81] Doolittle campaigned in the state and, no doubt, enjoyed the Republican victory.[82] In New England, the Republicans made a promising comeback; and the pattern for victory emerged from the spring contests and became standard for later campaigns - a hard-hitting battery of prominent

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[80] New York Herald, Jan. 3, 1863.

[81] Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals, 281.

[82] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 20, 1863.

speakers and federal aid through the furloughing of Republican soldiers.[83]

Still campaigning for the Union cause, Doolittle struck back savagely at the "rebels." In a July speech in Milwaukee, the Senator accused the South of looking for a pretext to secede.[84] In early September, at a huge mass meeting at Springfield, Illinois, Doolittle, unflinching in his support of the president, exhorted the loyal voters to vote the Union ticket.[85] James C. Conkling, a friend of Lincoln, wrote that Doolittle and others had delivered "splendid speeches" which were of the "most earnest, radical, and progressive character."[86] Thus, Doolittle was cooperating to such extent with the radicals that he seemed to have become a "radical." However, Conkling was wrong for the Senator was merely emphasizing the importance of unity in the war effort in order to whip up support for the president.

Continuing his Union cause campaign, Doolittle stormed into his home state of Wisconsin, angrily lambasted John C. Calhoun and others for conspiring to dissolve the Union, and defiantly attacked the Northern Peace-Democrat argument that Northern Abolitionism was responsible for the War.[87] The Republican campaign was very effective. The emphasis

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[83] William B. Hesseltine, Lincoln and the War Governors, (New York, 1948), 320.

[84] Milwaukee Sentinel, July 7, 1863.

[85] Ibid., Sept. 7, 1863.

[86] Quoted in J. G. Randall, Lincoln the President: Midstream (New York, 1952), 261.

[87] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 28, Oct. 9, 14, 23, 1863.

upon the Union ticket won Democratic votes; and, with the aid of the soldier votes and the victories of Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the Republican dominated Union party carried almost all of the Northern States.[88] However, the Republican victories made the radicals less fearful of the Democrats, more inclined to increase their abuse of the moderate Republicans, and further stimulated their craving to control the military direction of the war and the reconstruction policy.

In early 1864, Doolittle rested uneasily in abolitionist ranks and defended his new position by the argument of "necessity." In the Senate, he boldly laid the blame for abolition upon the South. The appeal of the secessionists to war had changed the issue from the extension of slavery in the territories to one where the very existence of the Union was at stake.[89] Chagrined at the turn of affairs, the candid Senator castigated the Southern "champions of slavery" for bringing on the war and, thus, forcing upon the country the greater issue of "whether liberty and Union" should live or "slavery die upon the soil of every State of the United States."[90] Verbally, he stood in abolitionist ranks; but his heart was heavy for his great colonization scheme had foundered, and there was no place to go except among the radicals whom he despised.

On the other hand, the radicals, jubiliant over the victories of 1863, were more dissatisfied than ever with the president's conservatism

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[88] Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals, 293.

[89] Cong., Globe, 38 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 42.

[90] Ibid., 43.

and pressed for an amendment to the Constitution which would abolish slavery. After a slow start, the senatorial radicals emerged victorious. On April 8, 1864, the senate passed the joint resolution to amend the Constitution by a vote of 38 to 6.[91] Doolittle and the other moderate Republicans voted with the radicals. However, the House rejected the resolution on June 15 by a vote of 93 to 65.[92]

In the meantime, the radicals, infuriated over Lincoln's conservatism, were rashly promoting a movement to deprive the president of re-nomination. In early May, however, Doolittle defied the radicals, courageously declared his continued support of Lincoln, and urged the Lincoln's re-nomination and re-election.[93] The struggle between the moderate and radical Republicans became more intense as the radicals struck out boldly for control of reconstruction.

In reply to Lincoln's conciliatory reconstruction policy, the radicals passed the Wade-Davis bill on July 2. This time, Doolittle stood by the President and voted against the bill; but the radicals slammed the bill through both Houses. The Senate vote was close - 18 to 14.[94] However, Lincoln refused to yield to radical pressure and pocket vetoed the bill. Consequently, the radicals, raging over the veto, further intensified their efforts to prevent the president's re-nomination. Chase, who

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[91] Ibid., 1479.

[92] Ibid., 2994.

[93] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 18, 1864.

[94] Cong. Globe, 38 Cong., 1 sess., 3491.

coveted the presidency, wrote critically that Lincoln had "pocketed the great bill" and believed that "neither the President not his chief advisors" had abandoned "the idea of possible reconstitution with slavery."[95]

Consequently, Benjamin Wade of Ohio and Henry Winter Davis of Maryland blasted back at the President with the "Wade-Davis Manifesto." The radical Congressmen lashed the President for vetoing the Wade-Davis Bill and for refusing to accept the cooperation of Congress in reconstruction. Shocked, Secretary of the Navy Welles wrote that the "protest" was "violent and abusive," that the Wade-Davis Bill contained "many offensive features," and that a "Presidential election" was approaching.[96] Welles was right, for Wade, Davis, and the other radicals intended to use Lincoln's pocket veto of the Wade-Davis Bill as an argument against his re-election. In truth, the President's courageous veto of the bill and the "Wade-Davis Manifesto" signified the beginning of unrelenting warfare between the moderate and radical Republicans.

In the summer of 1864, the hard-hitting Doolittle waged a vigorous campaign to secure Lincoln's re-election. At Springfield, Illinois, the Wisconsin Senator delivered a "God and Lincoln" speech which electrified the audience and won support for the President. In spite of the fact that Governor Richard Yates of Illinois had revealed his doubts of Lincoln's

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[95] Chase, Diaries, 230.

[96] John T. Morse, ed., Diary of Gideon Welles: Secretary of the Navy under Lincoln and Johnson (3 vols., Boston, 1911), II, 95.

re-election, Doolittle, confident of the President's popularity, cried out. "Fellow citizens, I believe in God. Under Him I believe in Abraham Lincoln." The tremendous crowd cheered, sobbed, and embraced in a never to be forgotten scene.[97] Thus, Doolittle and the other moderate Republicans aroused popular support for the president. Consequently, as the Frémont "boom" dissipated, the radicals scampered back into the fold and reluctantly supported Lincoln's re-election. In the fall, Doolittle waged a hard and vigorous campaign in Wisconsin where he aided such congressional aspirants as Philetus Sawyer.[98] Nevertheless, the efforts of Doolittle and the other moderate Republicans were not the only factors in Lincoln's re-election. Sherman occupied Atlanta in September, and the Republicans found it easy to distort Clement L. Vallandigham's "peace" platform as "treasonous."[99] However, in certain states, the deciding factor was the size of the Republican soldier vote.[1]

After the election, some of the radicals believed that Lincoln had become an "abolitionist" and that the president was "ready to take bolder strides toward radicalism" if it was "necessary to save the country."[2]

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[97]Duane Mowry, cont., "A Memorable Speech at Springfield and a Bystander's Account of it," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society, II (April, 1909), 40-43.

[98]Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 1, 29; Nov. 1, 5, 1864; Current, Philetus Sawyer, 43.

[99]Randall, Civil War and Reconstruction, 554, 619-623.

[1]Hesseltine, Lincoln and the War Governors, 379-383.

[2]New York Independent, Nov. 17, 1864, quoted in Williams, Lincoln and the Radicals, 332-333.

These radicals were wrong, for Lincoln and Doolittle had never been radicals. They were moderates, and their acceptance of abolition was the result of the pressing necessity to use all available means to save the Union.

With the re-election of Lincoln, Doolittle returned to the Senate to voice his acceptance of abolition. In January of 1865, the Wisconsin Senator finally threw in the sponge on the abolition question. During the debate on a joint resolution to grant freedom to families of colored soldiers, the harassed Senator pointed out that the resolution was unnecessary for the Senate had already passed the future 13th Amendment and it would soon become part of the Constitution.[3] Doolittle contended that no further controversy was necessary. Finally, the weary Senator sighed that the adoption of the amendment would dispose of the "vexed question" and would end the "agitation of the question." The Senator was right about prompt action on the amendment for the radicals in the House got the ball rolling and passed the languishing joint resolution by a vote of 119 to 56.[4] The radicals, elated over the passage of the future Amendment, now pressed for a vindictive reconstruction policy and Negro suffrage. Consequently, Doolittle was again on the firing line, volleying burst after burst of constitutional arguments against the "state suicide" and "conquered province" theories.

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[3] Cong. Globe, 38 Cong., 2 sess., 113.

[4] Ibid., 531.

On February 3, the pugnacious Doolittle tangled with the radicals over the question of whether the "seceded" states were still in the Union or not. Angry over what he considered to be an unjust attack on Lincoln's reconstruction policy, the aroused Senator referred to Benjamin Wade of Ohio and L. W. Powell of Kentucky as "Pilate and Herod."[5] Patiently, Wade bore the violent attack of the Wisconsin Senator. During the same debate, Jacob Howard of Michigan insisted that the Southern states were territories in a "conquered state." Immediately, Doolittle was on his feet and angrily denounced the "doctrine" that said that the Southern states were "no longer States" as "one, huge, infernal, constitutional lie."[6] The Wisconsin Senator's sharp attacks irked the radicals; and, before long, the radicals were blasting back at Doolittle.

On February 8, Wade abandoned his silence and struck back at Doolittle. Adding fuel to the mutual recriminations was a published letter of Wade's accusing Doolittle of conspiring with Lincoln to kill the congressional bill for the reconstruction of Louisiana. Doolittle denied the charge, and the angry Wade delivered a scorching rebuttal in which the Ohio Senator took Doolittle to task for being a "friend" of the President.[7] The war between Doolittle and the radicals was on in earnest.

Any hope that Doolittle or Lincoln would become radicals went up in smoke as both fought back for a conciliatory reconstruction policy.

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[5] Ibid., 575.

[6] Ibid., 578.

[7] Ibid., 659.

Unfortunately for Lincoln and Doolittle, the radicals enlisted new recruits in their cause. Even Doolittle's colleague, Timothy O. Howe, was becoming a radical. Just before Lincoln's death, Howe wrote of his dissatisfaction with Lincoln's reconstruction policy, and wished that the "President w'd tell the rebels" that he could "only grant pardons" and "that only Congress" could admit States.[8] In spite of this disturbing sign of the increasing strength of the radicals and Lincoln's untimely death, the valiant Doolittle determined to carry on the struggle against the radicals after Andrew Johnson took over as pilot of the ship of state.

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[8] Letter, Timothy O. Howe to Doolittle, April 13, 1865, Doolittle Papers.

Chapter III

Radical Tide Grows Stronger: Struggle Against Radicalism 1865-66

The death of Lincoln left the reconstruction program in the less skilled hands of the new president, Andrew Johnson. At the time of his death, the Radicals were planning a campaign of abuse against Lincoln.[1] Consequently, the Radicals shelved the plan because of their belief that Johnson was a "radical."

The day after Lincoln died, Doolittle spoke to a troubled audience in Racine. The Senator reassured them that Johnson was a "sober man." The innauguration spectacle, Doolittle explained, was due to stimulants prescribed by Johnson's physician because the Vice-President was very sick. Furthermore, Doolittle was very confident that the President would not "permit himself to indulge in the use of intoxicating drinks, and thus endanger that republic" for which he had "done and suffered so much." The fear that Johnson would be too stern with the "rebels" disturbed the Senator.[2] The belief that Johnson would rule the South with an iron hand was a common one.[3]

Therefore, the Radicals were delighted with the new president's temporarily vindictive attitude toward the "Rebels." However, in a short

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[1] Howard K. Beale, The Critical Year: A Study of Andrew Johnson and Reconstruction (New York, 1930), 59.

[2] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 18, 1865.

[3] Burke A. Hindsdale, ed., The Works of James Abram Garfield (2 vols., Boston, 1882), I, 228; John Sherman, John Sherman's Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate, and Cabinet: An Autobiography (2 vols., New York, 1895), I, 359.

time, Doolittle's fear proved groundless; and the Senator wrote to his wife of the close kinship among Johnson, Preston King, the president's intimate advisor, and himself. The three Conservatives, Doolittle wrote, formed a "trio whose hearts and heads" sympathized "more closely and more deeply than any other trio in America."[4] Consequently, at the first inkling of Johnson's lack of radicalism, the slanderous Radicals dusted off the same old plan against Lincoln.

From the first, Doolittle was an active supporter of Johnson's liberal reconstruction policy. In his home state, the Wisconsin Senator skillfully secured support for Johnson's reconstruction policy in spite of a heavy barrage of radical criticism. In September of 1865, the Union party of the state met in convention to prepare for the coming campaign. The main issues facing the delegates concerned the question of congressional or presidential reconstruction and the radical demand that the Southern states should adopt Negro suffrage as a condition precedent to re-admission to the Union. Doolittle agreed with Johnson that the suffrage was a state question and that the president could "reconstruct" the "rebel" states without congressional cooperation. Furthermore, the state legislature had passed a resolution proposing to amend the state constitution to extend the franchise to Negroes. The voters were to vote on the proposed amendment in November. Doolittle knew that the Radicals intended to press for the convention's approval of the proposed amendment; but, being opposed to this radical demand, the Senator planned to thwart the Radicals.

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[4] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 36.

Immediately, the astute Doolittle scored a tactical victory when the delegates adopted a motion for the appointment of a committee on resolutions with the Senator as chairman.[5] Thus, the Senator could dominate committee, report a pro-Johnson set of resolutions, and defeat the efforts of the radical minority on the committee to put a Negro suffrage plank in the platform.

The Doolittle majority report included a declaration of satisfaction with the determination of the administration to retain the military occupation of the South until the defeated section gave evidence of loyality, obedience to the Constitution, acquiescience in abolition, and a willingness to protect the rights of the freedmen.[6] In addition, the majority report recognized that Johnson's policy was substantially the Lincoln policy, and it pledged the support of the Wisconsin Unionists to the President. Without much dissent, the delegates adopted the majority report; but the presentation of the radical minority report caused a storm. Under the leadership of James Paine, a pre-war abolitionist, the Radicals fought for the minority report which demanded that the Southern states adopt constitutions which would contain a non-discriminatory clause with regard to the suffrage. The delegates saw fit to table the radical report, and Doolittle chalked up another tactical victory.

The radical press, however, reacted vigorously. Later, an "old admirer" volunteered to give the true account of Doolittle's political

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[5] (Madison) Wisconsin State Journal, Sept. 7, 1865.

[6] Appleton's Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865, 822.

"trickery." The "old admirer" charged that Doolittle planned his own appointment to the chairmanship of the committee on resolutions, cleverly waited until many of the delegates had gone home before taking up the majority report, and lost no time in sending the minority report to political oblivion on the convention table. In all these maneuvers, Doolittle showed "all the smirk, cunning, and sophistry of a fifth-rate political pettifogger."[7] The editor of the Burlington Standard laid the tabling of the minority report to the dishonesty of the chairman of the convention.[8] Thus, the Radicals found excuses for their defeat.

Bursting with pride, Doolittle sent the resolutions and a letter to Johnson. The Senator foresaw the radical maneuver for the inclusion of the Negro suffrage plank which found its constitutional basis in the "conquered province" theory - that "crazy idea" of Sumner, Chase, and Greeley.[9] Therefore, he decided to "go, and take the bull by the horns." No doubt, Johnson praised Doolittle's political sagacity. Secretary of the Navy Welles noted that Senator James W. Grimes of Iowa had expressed his "disapproval of the radical movements in the Iowa State Convention" and added that Doolittle had been "still more emphatic in Wisconsin."[10] Moreover, the editor of the Wisconsin State Journal thought the platform a good one and that all good Unionists would approve of it.[11]

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[7] Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 20, 1866.

[8] Burlington Standard (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Sept. 23, 1865.

[9] Letter, James R. Doolittle to Andrew Johnson, Sept. 9, 1865, Doolittle Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

[10] Welles, Diary, II, 379.

[11] Wisconsin State Journal, Sept. 8, 1865.

The radical demand for Negro suffrage as a necessary condition for the re-admission of the "rebel" states was a national one. General William T. Sherman gave a good reason for this insistence upon extending the franchise to the Negro. The hero of the "march to the sea" believed that the politicians were agitating for Negro suffrage not because the Negro asked for it or wanted it but "merely to manufacture that number of available votes for politicians to work on."[12] On the other hand, Edwin L. Godkin, editor of The Nation, feared that a bitter controversy over the "negro question" would create a long period of "sectional" turmoil.[13] Furthermore, Godkin declared that "nobody, whose opinion" was "of any consequence," maintained "any longer" that the Negro's claim "to political equality was "not a sound one."

The minority report of the Wisconsin Radicals might well have been part of a national concerted effort to force the Union party to embrace the radical doctrine of Negro suffrage, for Stevens, Sumner, and other Radicals had already begun their campaign to "educate" Northern public opinion. Consequently, the tabling of the minority report at the state Union convention sent the state Radicals scurrying for their poisoned pens and vitriolic ink.

The reporter for the Janesville Gazette, a critic of Senator Doolittle, remained unconvinced that "expediency was better than justice."[14] The

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[12]Quoted in James F. Rhodes, History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850 to the McKinley-Bryan Campaign of 1896 (8vols., New York, 1920), VI, 58n.

[13]The Nation, July 6, 1865.

[14]Janesville Gazette, Sept. 8, 1865.

editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel joined hands with his radical partner in Janesville and added words of criticism. The Sentinel editor contended that the resolutions were unsatisfactory - "They stop short of saying what ought to have been said, and generally are pervaded by a cowardly, evasive, shuffling spirit."[15] Furthermore, the junior Senator, Timothy O. Howe, expressed his disgust over the "cowardly" action of the convention.[16] The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel lost no time in returning to the attack. By insolent innuendo, the editor practically convicted Doolittle of subverting the Union party to his own personal ends.[17] The editor of the Monroe Sentinel joined the critics and wrote a blistering criticism of the Senator. He regretted "that a United States Senator would truckle to expediency at the expense of the dearest rights of humanity." The same editor no longer viewed Doolittle as the honorable representative of the party. Hereafter, he would regard the Senator as a "hypocritical trickster."[18]

Consequently, the radical criticism stirred Doolittle to action. In a published letter, he promised to speak in defense of the action of the convention. For the time being, he dashed off a preliminary defense in the

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[15] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 9, 1865.

[16] Janesville Gazette, Sept. 11, 1865.

[17] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 14, 1865.

[18] Monroe Sentinel (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Sept. 16, 1865.

letter itself. Doolittle pointed out that the question of Negro suffrage was a state question.[19] Therefore, both Lincoln and Johnson preferred to respect the Constitution and leave the question to the states. Furthermore, Doolittle feared that by advocating Negro suffrage, the Union party would lose control of several states, Congress, and the presidency, cause the defeat of the 13th Amendment, and drive "thousands of War Democrats" out of the Union party. In spite of the rising strength of the Republican party in Wisconsin, Doolittle maintained that the inclusion of a Negro suffrage plank in the platform would bring about the defeat of the Union ticket.[20] The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, disagreeing violently with the Senator, contended that hostility to the proscribing of any man on account of "birthplace, race, religion or COLOR" was a sacred Republican principle.[21] Moreover, the angry editor charged that Doolittle would not have opposed putting the Negro suffrage plank into the platform if it had been "in favor in Washington." In last week of September, Matthew Hale Carpenter, noted Wisconsin orator and politician, joined the radical attack on the conservative course which President Johnson and Doolittle advocated.[22]

Late in September, the Wisconsin Radicals, enraged over the defeat of the Negro suffrage plank at the Madison Union convention, assembled

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[19] Ibid., Sept. 27, 1865.

[20] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865, 823.

[21] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 27, 1865.

[22] Ibid., Oct. 2, 1865; E. Bruce Thompson, Matthew Hale Carpenter: Webster of the West (Madison, 1954), 106.

at Janesville to draw up a radical platform. On September 27, the resourceful and determined Radicals under the leadership of two extremists, James H. Paine and Sherman Booth, held a poorly attended "State Convention" in that town.[23] But Paine and Booth had reckoned without Doolittle. The ubiquitous Racine politician "just happened" to be in Janesville at this time and had "without malice aforethought" made provision to speak at the court room, the most logical site in town.[24] In spite of the Senator's prior reservation of the room, Paine and the other obstreperous Radicals were angry enough to threaten to use force to gain possession of the court room. The informants of this bitter bit of byplay reported in the Janesville Gazette that the gentlemanly Doolittle refused to make a fuss and left the raging Radicals in possession of the room.

The Radicals in a convention-like manner proceeded to consider resolutions declaring that the Southern states should not be treated as states on an equal footing with the loyal states, that reconstruction was a cooperative congressional and presidential function, and that loyal men, including Negroes, should vote in reconstruction.[25] Shamelessly, the two-faced Radicals tendered their support and good will to the President.

Furthermore, James H. Paine took the floor and savagely criticized Doolittle. Without due respect for the truth, the Wisconsin Radical

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[23] Wisconsin State Journal, Sept. 29, 1865.

[24] Letter to Janesville Gazette (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 5, 1865.

[25] Ibid., Sept. 28, 1865.

accused the Senator of being a "rebel" sympathizer.[26] Examine the Senator's record, challenged Paine, and you would "find all his influence and votes in favor of the oppression of the colored men." Moreover, Paine charged, Doolittle had spent his whole senatorial career in "pro-slavery work." The radical convention at Janesville indicated the Radicals would stop at nothing to purge Doolittle or to force the stubborn Senator into radical ranks.

On the 28th, the indomitable Doolittle delivered an address on the scene of his recent unbloody defeat and declared that a state could not secede nor commit suicide. Obviously, the Wisconsin Senators were now clearly divided, for Howe had taken the opposite position. Near the end of his speech, Doolittle desperately suggested that the North and the South join in a brotherly campaign against the French in Mexico.[27]

Thoroughly aroused, Doolittle struck back sharply at the Radicals in another speech in Milwaukee. Very shrewdly, he related Lincoln's biting comment on Frémont. Lincoln had said that Frémont was "the leader of a school or class of minds, whose natural inclination" was "always to be dissatisfied with being in the majority." Striking back at the Radicals from under the shelter of the toga of the martyred President, the sly politician deftly scored again by relating Lincoln's comment on the "dis-solvers" who did "very well in the minority party" which had "no responsi-bility, and nothing to do but to oppose everything and approve nothing."[28]

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[26] Ibid., Sept. 29, 1865.

[27] Ibid., Janesville Gazette, Sept. 29, 1865.

[28] Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 3, 1865.

The indignant editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel concluded that he had looked "in vain" in Doolittle's speech "for one word of recognition of justice or right or principle."[29] Consequently, the radical editor of the Janesville Gazette also asserted that "equality of rights" was a long-time Republican principle.[30]

All the Republican editors, however, did not denounce Doolittle. The editor of the Wisconsin State Journal, for example, brushed aside the radical criticism and stood by the Senator. The editor complained that the Republican editors who thought that Doolittle opposed Negro suffrage were mistaken.[31] Doolittle's position, he explained wearily, was that the suffrage question in Wisconsin was a popular question and not a party question.

Sly as Doolittle was, he was no match for the damaging radical propaganda. Deceitful criticism had severely impaired his usefulness during the campaign. Lucius Fairchild, Union candidate for Governor, wrote that Doolittle's speeches had raised a "perfect storm about his ears" and added naively that he guessed that the Senator would "outlive them."[32] According to T. J. Allen, a friend of Lucius Fairchild, the Unionists of Mineral Point were not eager to have the senator speak there. However, there was no personal feeling against him; and Allen

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[29] Ibid., Oct. 4, 1865.

[30] Janesville Gazette, Oct. 3, 1865.

[31] Wisconsin State Journal, Oct. 5, 1865.

[32] Letter, Lucius Fairchild to Chas. Fairchild, Oct. 8, 1865, Fairchild Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

advocated putting a stop to the "onslaught made on him by many of the press and politicians."[33]

Consequently, Doolittle became such a source of controversy that he was not able to wage his usual active campaign. However, the Senator was confident of victory. The strategy, as Doolittle explained later, was to hold the War Democrats in the Union party. He felt that the Negro suffrage plank would drive many of the War Democrats out of the political coalition and, thus, defeat the Union ticket.

In the election, the Governorship went to the Union candidate, Lucius Fairchild, who received 58,232 votes to Harrison Hobart's 48,330. On the amendment to the constitution providing for Negro suffrage, there were 46,588 "yes" votes and 55,591 negative votes.[34] Thus, the Union slate was successful while the Negro suffrage amendment went down to defeat. Later, Doolittle pointed to the results of the election as indicating that his strategy was right.[35]

Nevertheless, the Union victory did not fully soothe the Senator's hurt feelings. The furious radical verbal onslaught stung Doolittle, and he complained to Lucius Fairchild of the vicious calumny - the charge that he was supporting Johnson for a price.[36] His only "aspiration,"

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[33]Letter, T. J. Allen to Gen'l Fairchild, Oct. 8, 1865, Fairchild Papers.

[34]Annual Cyclopaedia, 1865, 823.

[35]Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2165.

[36]Letter, James R. Doolittle to Lucius Fairchild, Dec. 5, 1865, Fairchild Papers.

he claimed, was to "save the Union and the Constitution by saving the Union party to the administration." Doolittle vowed that he would "stand by the administration" even if it meant sacrificing the Union party.

Consequently, the Radicals would test the Senator's determination to stand by Johnson. The congressional Radicals, especially, were determined to control the reconstruction program. Shortly before the beginning of the 39th Congress, the Republican Congressmen held a caucus to prepare a legislative program for the coming session. During the caucus, Thaddeus Stevens, radical master of the House of Representatives, threatened to "break up the caucus if the members did not adopt his reconstruction program." Many of the Republican Congressmen fell in line. Subsequently, on the very first day of the session, Stevens pressed for the passage of a resolution providing for a joint committee of nine representatives and six senators to investigate the conditions in the "rebel" states and report whether they were entitled to re-admission to Congress. Until the committee made its report and Congress acted upon it, neither House could admit members from those states. Furthermore, both Houses had to refer all papers relating to the admission of members from the "rebel" states to the committee without debate. As the new members watched helplessly, Stevens rammed the resolution through the House.[37]

On December 12, the Senate took up the resolution providing for the joint committee on reconstruction.[38] Doolittle was well aware of the

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[37]Richard N. Current, Old Thad Stevens: A Story of Ambition (Madison, 1942), 221; Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 6; Welles, Diary, II, 392.

[38]Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 24.

fact that passage of the resolution would place control of the reconstruction program in the hands of the Radicals. Swiftly and skillfully, the Wisconsin Senator pitilessly exposed the weaknesses in the resolution.

Doolittle objected to the resolution on the grounds that the Senate did not stand on a level of equality with the lower House, could not re-admit any state until the committee made its report, shared its exclusive control over admission of Senators with the House, and had to refer every paper on the question of re-admission to the committee without debate.[39] Boldly, Doolittle intimated that the adoption of the resolution would place the Senate under the control of the Radicals. Angry over the encroachment on the constitutional powers of the Senate, Doolittle exclaimed that the Radicals would lead the Senate "like a lamb to the slaughter." Referring to that provision which stated that neither House should admit representatives from the "rebel" states until the committee made its report and Congress acted upon it, Doolittle declared that it would dissolve the Union by act of Congress.

Moreover, the perceptive Senator did not refrain from relating Stevens' highhanded and tyrannical tactics in pushing the resolution through the House. Disregarding consequences, the courageous Senator called the Pennsylvania Representative an extreme radical who was "most bitterly, uncompromisingly hostile to the policy of the present administration on the subject of reconstruction." Doolittle, furthermore, charged that Stevens steam-rolled the resolution through the House in

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[39] Ibid., 25-26.

order to beat the President's annual message.

During the debate on the resolution, Jacob Howard, Republican Senator from Michigan, referred to the Southern states as "conquered communities."[40] Inspired, Doolittle majestically pointed to the flag atop the Capitol and proclaimed that it bore "thirty-six stars" and each star represented a state in the Union. Then, he challanged the Michigan Senator to answer whether the flag spoke the "nation's truth" or whether it was a "hypocritical, flaunting lie." Stubbornly, Doolittle informed his fellow senators that he would not vote for the resolution unless both Houses were put on a footing of equality.[41] Nevertheless, the Senate brushed aside the "threat" and passed the resolution.[42]

In the meantime, Doolittle's stubborn opposition to the resolution irked William Fessenden, Republican Senator from Maine. Fessenden indicated that the impulse behind Doolittle's objections was the latter's anxiety to protect the presidential reconstruction policy, and he cruelly rapped Doolittle for his consistent and aggravating defense of the President.[43] The Maine Senator trusted that there were "no such things as exclusive friends of the President" in the Senate. Delighted with this cue, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel accurately pointed out that Fessenden was referring to the Wisconsin Senator and remarked dryly that

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[40] Ibid., 24.

[41] Ibid., 28.

[42] Ibid., 30.

[43] Ibid., 27.

Doolittle was so "exclusive" that he left the Republican party and voted with the Democrats to "show how much a President's man" he was.[44]

The debate on the resolution for a joint committee on reconstruction conclusively revealed that Doolittle would place the reconstruction policy of the President above that of Congress. James Blaine, Republican Congressman from Maine, predicted that the Republican defenders of the Johnson policy would "ultimately become merged in the Democratic party."[45] When the editor of the New York Herald praised Doolittle for his opposition to the resolution, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel concluded that the Senator had "abandoned the Republican majority in Congress."[46] However, the editor of the La Crosse Democrat whined that the Radicals dominated the House; for constructive legislation, one must "look to the Senate where Doolittle and others" struggled "against fanaticism and revolution."[47] Consequently, the aroused radical editor of the Racine Advocate, noticing the Democrat's endorsement of Doolittle, besmirched the Senator by linking "Brick" Pomeroy, "copperhead" editor of the La Crosse Democrat, to Doolittle's opposition to the resolution.[48]

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[44] Milwaukee Sentinel, Dec. 15, 1865.

[45] James G. Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress: From Lincoln to Garfield (2 vols., Norwich, Conn., 1886), II, 126.

[46] Milwaukee Sentinel, Dec. 16, 1865.

[47] La Crosse Democrat (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Dec. 19, 1865.

[48] Racine Advocate, Dec. 20, 1865.

On December 19, Doolittle, like a chivalrous knight, again went to the defense of the President. Johnson had sent Carl Schurz and General Grant to investigate conditions in the Southern states. Thus, the President hoped that by submitting their "unbiased" reports he could gain congressional and public support for a liberal reconstruction policy. Consequently, Johnson sent the reports of Grant and Schurz along with a message to Congress. In the Senate, the Sumner caustically referred to the accompanying message as being similar to the "whitewashing message of Franklin Pierce with regard to the enormities in Kansas."[49] Shocked, Doolittle strongly requested that the inveterate Radical modify or retract his "expression."[50] Sumner replied: "Nothing to modify, nothing to qualify, nothing to retract."[51] Nevertheless, Doolittle's defense of the message found supporters in many Republican journals.[52] The editor of The Nation found Sumner's remark in "bad taste" and testified to the fact of Johnson's truthfulness.[53] The editor of Harper's Weekly also deprecated the aspersion and believed that Sumner's "unfortunate expression" indicated a hostility and impatience which could only lead to mischief.[54]

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[49] Cong. Globe, 39, Cong., 1 sess., 79.

[50] Ibid., 79-80.

[51] Ibid., 80.

[52] Edward L. Pierce, ed., Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner (4 vols., Boston, 1893), IV, 272.

[53] The Nation, Dec. 28, 1865.

[54] Harper's Weekly, March 10, 1866.

In early January, Doolittle continued his defense of the Johnson policy. Defying the Radicals, the Senator presented a resolution for the immediate organization of provisional governments and scorned the "conquered province" concept by declaring that the "political functions formerly granted" to the Southern states had only "been suspended."[55] Furthermore, Doolittle asked the Senate whether it was not of any "practical importance" for these states to govern themselves under a republican form of government or should Congress hold them as "subject vassals?"[56] Recklessly, he claimed that to tax and govern a people without representation was the most justifiable cause for rebellion.[57] His repetition of the argument about the "thirty-six stars" stimulated the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel to gibe that the readers of the paper should no longer believe "the absurd dictum of Demosthenes" on the "essence of eloquence" being "action, action, ACTION" because their "own Demosthenes" had improved it to be "stars, stars, STARS!"[58] On the other hand, "Brick" Pomeroy of the La Crosse Democrat found the speech a "lengthy and able defense of President Johnson's policy" and generously promised to "find room for a portion, if not the whole of it."[59] Furthermore, Pomeroy found no comparison between "Doolittle's bold and patriotic

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[55] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 266.

[56] Ibid., 267.

[57] Ibid., 274.

[58] Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 19, 1866.

[59] La Crosse Democrat, Jan. 22, 1866.

utterances" and the "chop-logic and sectional sentiments of his colleague," Timothy O. Howe.[60] Pomeroy's continued unabashed tributes to the Doolittle oration moved the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel to exclaim that "it was high time for the people to question the Republicanism of its author."[61] It did not seem proper to the Sentinel editor, that Wisconsin's most notorious "Copperhead" should be so lavish in his praise of a Union Senator.

Undoubtedly, the speech was a brilliant defense of Johnson's policy. A correspondent of the Sentinel, after referring to the "thread-bare illustration about 'thirty-six states' and 'thirty-six stars,'" reluctantly conceded that much of the speech was "thoughtful and weighty."[62] M. B. Anderson, an old-time friend residing in Rochester, N. Y., praised Doolittle for his "clear, able, and triumphantly conclusive speech on the monstrous heresy of state suicide."[63]

Meanwhile, Lyman Trumbull, Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, had reported a Bill to Enlarge the Powers of the Freedmen's Bureau.[64] The moderate Senators were not sure whether the President would approve such a bill or veto it, but Trumbull thought he had Johnson's blessing.[65] Even Doolittle said later that had he been present when the Senate passed

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[60] Ibid., Jan. 29, 1866.

[61] Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 30, 1866.

[62] Ibid., Jan. 23, 1866.

[63] Letter, M. B. Anderson to Doolittle, Feb. 12, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[64] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 209.

[65] Beale, Critical Year, 80.

the bill he would have voted for it.[66] The congressional approval of the bill influenced a special correspondent of the Sentinel to believe that a radical tone had taken hold of Congress.[67] However, it was not a tone as much as it was a strategic retreat on the part of the Moderates to forestall more extreme radical measures. The Moderates believed that if Johnson signed the bill the moderate Republicans would stand by the President in the latter's resistance to further radical measures. A veto would drive some of the Moderates into radical ranks. Thus, some of the Moderates had come to believe that the President would sign the bill. Actually up to the last minute, Johnson was undecided as to what to do. Finally, Johnson decided to veto the bill; and the veto fell like a thunderbolt upon a hopeful Senate.

Secretary of the Navy Welles felt than an open rupture was in the offing between the President and part of the Republican members of Congress, and he waited anxiously to see how many would line up with the Radicals.[68] With the gallery crowd boiling with excitement, Lyman Trumbull attacked the veto in the "calmest, most logical and statesmanlike speech of the session."[69] However, Trumbull's speech failed to influence Doolittle

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[66] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 639.

[67] Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 12, 1866.

[68] Welles, Diary, II, 435.

[69] The Nation, March 1, 1866.

who scampered back to the President's side and helped to sustain the veto by the vote of 30 to 18.[70] The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, furious over the Senator's support of the veto, remarked acidly that Doolittle had voted "with the copperheads" to sustain the veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill and, thus, proved himself "false to the party which elected him."[71]

After the veto, the sagacious Doolittle drew up a rough plan of a bill which he showed to the President.[72] Recognizing the success of the radical propaganda in kindling the emotions of the public, the Wisconsin Senator felt that something should be done to pacify popular opinion. On the other hand, Welles, Senator Edgar Cowan of Pennsylvania, and, possibly, Johnson preferred "non-action." When the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel got wind of Doolittle's intention, he cracked that the Senator would "introduce a new Freedmen's Bureau Bill after the President's own heart."[73]

Consequently, the veto caused a storm among radical congressmen and editors. James Blaine, Maine Congressman, believed that the sustaining of the veto came as a surprise to the public and noted that Republican Senators feared that the "deserters" on the veto were irretrievably lost to the party.[74] However, the Republicans soon found nothing to fear

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[70] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 943.

[71] Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 22, 1866.

[72] Welles, Diary, II, 437.

[73] Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 22, 1866.

[74] Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress, II, 170-171.

in the cases of Senators Edwin Morgan of New York and Peter Van Winkle of West Virginia. Nevertheless, the editor of Harper's Weekly regretted the conflict between the President and Congress and intimated that both should exercise "forebearance" and should compromise. Furthermore, the editor warned that a "different spirit must prevail upon both sides at Washington, or very serious consequences" would follow.[75] On the other hand, the editor of the Cincinnati Gazette, a journal always noted for its radicalism, was more critical and listed Doolittle among the "black sheep." The Gazette editor defined the "black sheep" as those Republicans "who voted with the Copperheads" to sustain the veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill.[76] Horace Greeley of the New York Tribune was also critical of Doolittle and commented on Doolittle's absence from a Republican caucus that the Senator showed "good taste."[77] In a later caucus, Thaddeus Stevens singled out Senators Edgar Cowan, James Cowan, and Doolittle as objects of his sardonic and stinging wit. At the caucus, the secretary was calling the role; when he called out, "Cowan, Dixon, Doolittle," the sarcastic Stevens exclaimed, "I rise to a point of order. I thought this was a Union caucus."[78]

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[75] Harper's Weekly, March 10, 1866.

[76] Cincinnati Gazette (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 26, 1866.

[77] New York Tribune, Feb. 24, 1866.

[78] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 7, 1866.

In spite of all this criticism, Doolittle plunged deeper into the struggle against the Radicals. Edward Bates, Attorney General in Lincoln's Cabinet, informed the Senator that cabinet opinions on the admission of West Virginia contained material damaging to the "conquered province" theory.[79] Undoubtedly, the Wisconsin Senator brought this information to the notice of the President, for the latter wrote to Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury, requesting the latter to allow Doolittle to examine the opinions.[80]

Shortly after the sustaining of the veto, supporters of the President gathered before the White House, called upon the President to speak, and spurred him on to reckless accusations against Congress and abusive remarks about Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, and Wendell Phillips. The speech "shocked" the country. In Wisconsin, it caused a furor among Republicans. Elisha W. Keyes, prominent Republican politician, wrote that the speech provoked an outburst of anger in the Capital and thought it very fortunate that the Legislature was not in session. Furthermore, Keyes believed that the Wisconsin Legislature would pass a resolution supporting the course of the House of Representatives and warned the Senator that the Wisconsin Radicals were on the warpath - "determined to introduce resolutions requesting you to resign."[81] In the radical

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[79] Letter, Edward Bates to Doolittle, Feb. 17, 1866, Doolittle Papers (Copy).

[80] Official Memorandum, Andrew Johnson to Hugh McCulloch, March 3, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[81] Letter, Elisha W. Keyes to Doolittle, Feb. 27, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

stronghold of Janesville, a meeting adopted a resolution disapproving of Doolittle's vote on the veto.[82]

Meanwhile the Senate had passed the Civil Rights Bill and had sent it to the House.[83] Doolittle was absent on the day of the vote but later asserted that he would have voted against it.[84] The House passed the bill, and an executive veto was a certainty. On March 25, the Wisconsin Senator called on Welles and showed the latter an "elaborate bill." Doolittle felt that something had to be done; but Welles disagreed, and the two went over to see Senator Edwin Morgan.[85] However, nothing came of it.

Consequently, the Senate Radicals, determined to override the expected veto, moved swiftly to marshall the necessary number of votes. Seizing on the fact that the State Legislature of New Jersey had chosen John Stockton by a plurality instead of a majority, the Senate Radicals demanded that the Senate declare his seat vacant. A rough parliamentary struggle ensued; but on March 23, the Moderates squeezed through to victory as the approval of the resolution to declare Stockton seated passed by a hair - 22 to 21![86]

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[82] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 8, 1866.

[83] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 606-607.

[84] Ibid., 1805.

[85] Welles, Diary, II, 463.

[86] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1602.

Encouraged, the Radicals went to work, pressured William M. Stewart of Nevada to absent himself, and convinced George Riddle of Delaware to change his vote.[87] A successful motion for reconsideration opened the way for an unscrupulous but victorious reversal. On March 27, the Senate voted to unseat Stockton by a vote of 23 to 20.[88] Doolittle voted in the negative. Welles pointed out that had Stockton voted to override the veto on the Freedmen's Bureau Bill, the Radicals would not have maneuvered the Senate into declaring his seat vacant.[89] Still, the Radicals faced the veto with trepidation. Charles Sumner wrote that the "division" would "be very close."[90]

In Wisconsin, the State Legislature turned the heat on the two senators who represented the "Badger State" in Washington and passed a concurrent resolution instructing them to vote to override the veto.[91] Howe replied that he would obey the instructions. Doolittle replied that he would put duty first.[92] When Johnson's veto message reached the Senate, the Radicals desperately stalled for time. They gained an extra

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[87] Beale, Critical Year, 89.

[88] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1677.

[89] Welles, Diary, II, 465.

[90] Quoted in Pierce, Sumner, IV, 275.

[91] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 5, 1866.

[92] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1808.

vote when the Governor of Vermont appointed an anti-Johnson man to succeed Solomon Foot, who had died. The new senator from Vermont took his seat on April 5.[93] The President, of necessity, must count more heavily on Doolittle and the other moderate Republicans. The next day, the Wisconsin Senator must have listened to the voting with a heavy heart for Morgan had already informed him that he would vote to override the veto. When Morgan voted "aye," the galleries applauded. Consequently, the President went down to his first serious defeat by a vote of 33 to 15. Doolittle felt that had Morgan not defected, James Dixon would have come to the Senate, although he was seriously ill.[94]

Gravely, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel pointed out to its readers that Doolittle had voted to support the President.[95] Moreover, a regular correspondent of the paper reported correctly that Doolittle claimed that a speech of Representative Columbus Delano of Ohio convinced him that the bill was unconstitutional, but the correspondent pointed out that Delano changed his mind and voted to override the veto.[96] Furthermore, the editor of the Sentinel boldly contended that Doolittle should

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[93] Rhodes, History of the United States, VI, 70.

[94] Welles, Diary, II, 479; Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1809.

[95] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 17, 1866.

[96] Ibid.,; Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1805, 1861.

have placed more faith in the "testimony" of Northerners living in the South and of "such staunch and incorruptible southern patriots" as William "Parson" Brownlow, Governor of Tennessee.[97] Nevertheless, faithful John Tapley, Doolittle's political aide, praised the Senator for his vote on the veto and warned him that the Wisconsin Radicals had undermined his position in the state Republican organization - "so far as our present organization is concerned you are excommunicated that is sure."[98] "Time will do you justice," encouraged Tapley.

The session proved to be a long period of dismay and disappointment. The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel continued to badger the harassed Senator; and in early May he accused Doolittle of holding "the old state rights doctrine that he was obliged to swallow in order to get into the United States Senate in 1857."[99] Gleefully, the same editor related how Senators Henry Wilson and James Nye severely handled Doolittle in the Senate on May 10.[1] Moreover, a correspondent of the Sentinel claimed that the Senator was now the "reorganized opposition leader in the Senate."[2]

As the radical onslaught continued, Doolittle, exasperated over radical criticism, complained that the Radicals were "crucifying" him,

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[97] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 13, 1866.

[98] Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, April 11, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[99] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 15, 1866.

[1] Ibid., May 17, 1866; Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2522-2529.

[2] Milwaukee Sentinel, June 9, 1866.

but the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel replied cryptically that Doolittle had abandoned the Union party.[3] In the Senate, Timothy O. Howe, Wisconsin's junior senator, continued to revile the senior senator and to accuse Doolittle of supporting Johnson for a price. Doolittle, charged Howe, always happened "to have just those convictions which bore the highest price in the market."[4] Moreover, the junior Senator painted a vicious picture of the twists and turns in Doolittle's political career.

Thus, the intense struggle between Doolittle and the Radicals continued to mount in fury. Nevertheless, the Senator was a pillar of strength to the President. Consequently, Doolittle's support of Johnson endangered his political career.

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[3] Ibid., Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2985.

[4] Ibid., Appendix, 226.

Chapter IV

To Purge or not to Purge: Struggle Against Wisconsin Radicalism 1866

Wisconsin Radicals whose support had eased Doolittle into the Senate damned the obstinate Senator for resisting conversion to the radical church. Infuriated after their unsuccessful attempt to deprive Doolittle of a well-earned second term in the Senate, the raging Radicals aroused further storms of hostility against the Senator, especially when Doolittle battled bravely for the Lincoln-Johnson reconstruction policy. To add to their cup of deserved woe, the sturdy Senator proved to be a thorn in the side of the congressional Radicals, constantly discerning and exposing their motives and plans. Therefore, the Radicals poisoned public opinion, prodded the press, and pressured politicians to procure the Senator's abdication.

Doolittle's close political friend in Wisconsin, John Tapley, scouted the radical stratagems and encouraged the Senator to remain in the Senate.[1] No one understood better than Tapley the importance of the Senator's resistance to the demands for his removal from the Senate. The wise Tapley thought that Doolittle was "doing good service" in the Senate and would regret to see "a rampant opposer of Mr. Johnson's policy" in Doolittle's place. Consequently, the Radicals wished to destroy the unselfishness of Doolittle's support of Johnson by insidiously implying that the President had promised the Senator some reward for his loyalty. One rumor reached

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[1]Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, Dec. 28, 1865, Doolittle Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

the ears of Lucius Fairchild that Doolittle expected an appointment to a diplomatic post. In no uncertain terms, the Senator scotched the rumor in a reply to Fairchild.[2] Persistent radical-inspired rumors that Doolittle preferred a cabinet position of a supreme court judgeship forced the Senator to make an official denial through the editor of the Wisconsin State Journal.[3]

Nevertheless, the radical editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel pounced on the occasion of the denial to unleash a scurrilous attack on Doolittle.[4] The Senator wanted to be minister to France so badly, claimed the editor, that he ceased opposing a bill giving freedom to families of colored soldiers and took pains not to aggravate the congressional Radicals; but, in the end, the unfortunate Senator did not get the appointment. The keen-witted editor pictured the Senator as a crawling job-seeker under Lincoln, but the latter was "too good a lawyer" to appoint Doolittle to the Supreme Court. Consistently, the bare-faced editor printed contumelious comments of correspondents. After the veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill, the Washington correspondent of the paper shamelessly accused Doolittle, "Wisconsin's recreant and dishonored Senator," of forsaking his convictions for a cabinet post.[5] Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the editor's aim was to sully the

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[2]Letters, Lucius Fairchild to Doolittle, Nov. 30, 1865; James R. Doolittle to Lucius Fairchild, Dec. 5, 1865, Doolittle Papers.

[3](Madison) Wisconsin State Journal, Dec. 20, 1865.

[4]Milwaukee Sentinel, Jan. 1, 1866. For further rumors, see Ibid., Dec. 21, 27, 1865. On cabinet changes with Doolittle as Attorney General, see New York Tribune, Jan. 15, 1866.

[5]Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 27, 1866.

reputation of a well-respected politician; and these rumors coincided with the radical campaign of misrepresentation of Johnson and his policy.[6]

Frequently, friends of Doolittle informed him of their efforts to secure a change in the editorial policy of the Sentinel. Christopher Latham Sholes kept in touch with the Sentinel editor and urged the latter to be more fair to the Senator by printing more of his speeches.[7] John Tapley looked forward hopefully to the appointment of a new editor and Sholes strived to see a glimmer of hope for a more just treatment of the Senator.[8] Finally, Sholes abandoned all hope and advised Doolittle to "totally expunge the sheet from all recognition in the state or any other department of government."

Consequently, Doolittle burned his bridges behind him and secured the transferral of government printing from the Sentinel to the Milwaukee Daily Wisconsin. Previously, Andrew Jackson Aikens, editor of the Daily Wisconsin, had diligently solicited government advertising; and his assertion that the paper would not desert the administration also influenced the Senator to break with the powerful Milwaukee Sentinel.[9] Immediately, an uproar flared among the important Republican papers of the state.

The Madison correspondent of the Janesville Gazette charged with some truth that the Sentinel's support of Howe was the major reason for the

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[6]Beale, Critical Year, 77-79.

[7]Letter, Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, Nov. 12, 1865, Doolittle Papers.

[8]Letters, John Tapley to Doolittle, Dec. 28, 1865; Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, Jan. 1, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[9]Letter, Andrew Jackson Aikens to Doolittle, Dec. 18, 1865, Doolittle Papers.

change. On the other hand, the editor of the Wisconsin State Journal politely retorted that Aikens' neutrality and the Sentinel editor's partisanship were the matter-of-fact reasons; and he belittled the importance of the change by declaring that the government advertising was of "little importance in a pecuniary point of view."[10] Embittered, the editor of the Sentinel informed the paper's readers that the "SENTINEL confidently expects to survive this little manifestation of senatorial wrath."[11]

Now thoroughly aroused, the editor of the Sentinel fired a barrage of smears at the Senator. Boldly, he printed a letter in which the writer intimated that a large majority of the Union party would welcome action by the State Legislature inviting Doolittle to resign and asked if the Senator represented the "Copperhead" party.[12] An occasional correspondent pointed out correctly that the "Copperheads" approved of Doolittle's course.[13] However, the editor failed to mention that the Senator did not approve of the "Copperheads;" and, thus, the smear stuck to the Senator.

In truth, the "Copperheads", by their frank praise of the Senator's course, seriously undermined his strength in the Union party. With incredible boldness, the most disreputable "Copperhead" in the state,

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[10] Janesville Gazette (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 5, 1866; Wisconsin State Journal, Feb. 2, 1866.

[11] Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 7, 1866.

[12] Ibid., Jan. 20, 1866.

[13] Ibid., Jan. 30, 1866.

Marcus Mills Pomeroy of the La Crosse Democrat, was casting honeyed words of praise toward the embattled Doolittle. Furthermore, Doolittle's senate speech of January 17, defending the indestructibility of the states raised hymns of praise from the lips of Democratic editors. Even more so, the impudent Pomeroy offered to forget his past disagreements with Doolittle and to stand staunchly beside him on the platform of "Johnson and the Union as it was with none of the states out" in return for some small government favor.[14] Inadvertently, the embarrassed Doolittle and other pro-Johnson Republicans had attracted to their ranks the conviving "Copperheads" and ambitious Democrats who perceived an opportunity to return to power if Congress were to re-admit the Southern states. Hence, fear of a Democratic return to power forced many officeholders to march fervently in radical ranks. The fear was general, and Wisconsin was no exception. However, as Doolittle steered a straight constitutional pro-Johnson course, he could not avoid picking up the "shipwrecked" Democrats.

Thus, it happened that Doolittle's nimble rebound to the President's side on the veto of the first Freedmen's Bureau Bill occasioned happy yelps of joy from the editor of the La Crosse Democrat, thereby, detonating an explosive editorial clash between Pomeroy and the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel. Malevolently, the latter pointed out how "Democratic" the Senator had become since such a "Copperhead" as Pomeroy now supported him.[15] Piously, and perhaps correctly, "Brick" Pomeroy purred that it

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[14] Letter, Marcus Mills Pomeroy to Doolittle, Feb. 5, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[15] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 3, 1866.

was a "significant fact" that he, as editor of the Democrat, had always supported "constitutional principles."[16] In rebuttal, the fiery editor of the Sentinel shot back at Pomeroy some of the latter's choicest "copperheadisms" of the war era.[17] As a result, one of the general complaints against Doolittle was that he was becoming a "Democrat."

The editor of the ('Albany') Green County Journal went even farther, declaring that deep in his heart the Senator was a "Democrat" and that his speech of January 17, sounded very much like Harrison C. Hobart's, the Democratic candidate for governor in 1865.[18] Yet, the editor of the more moderate Watertown Republican felt that "loyal men" would like to agree with Doolittle but could not until they saw "better and more satisfactory evidence of sincere repentance of the people of the South for their great crime."[19] In the latter case, the radical maneuver which sent Carl Schurz southward to collect material for radical propaganda was having its effect.[20] In truth, Johnson had requested Schurz to make an "unbiased" investigative tour of the South; but Schurz, to Johnson's consternation, was working with the Radicals. Consequently, when Doolittle voted to sustain the veto of the first Freedmen's Bureau Bill, the angry

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[16] La Crosse Democrat, March 5, 1866.

[17] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 8, 1866.

[18] (Albany) Green County Journal (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Feb. 5, 1866.

[19] Watertown Republican (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Feb. 9, 1866.

[20] Beale, Critical Year, 70-73.

Radicals resolved to make more vigorous efforts to secure the Senator's resignation.

The Madison reporter of the Milwaukee Sentinel found one Union Legislator so wrought up over Doolittle's support of the veto that he hotheadedly declared that he intended to introduce a joint resolution calling upon the Senator to resign.[21] In spite of the waves of criticism, Doolittle supporters stood like sentries throughout the state, watched the political situation closely, and tried to prevent an open rupture between the nervous Legislators and the Senator. Elisha W. Keyes, Madison Postmaster and Republican political leader, asked Doolittle to send more of his speeches, promised to give them wider distribution, and informed him that "quite a number" of Legislators wanted to send them to their constituents.[22] Unfortunately, the Radicals had gotten most of the Republican press of the state into their clutches. Therefore, the hardpressed Senator had to depend on his loyal followers and on the not-too-reliable officeholders to obtain for him a fair hearing in the state. To make matters worse, Johnson abandoned his former dignified silence, lost his political wits, and emptied his wrath upon Thaddeus Stevens, Charles Sumner, Wendell Phillips, and John "Dead Duck" Forney on Washington's Birthday of 1866.

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[21] Milwaukee Sentinel, Feb. 22, 1866.

[22] Letter, Elisha W. Keyes to Doolittle, Feb. 27, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

George Templeton Strong, New York Lawyer, wrote that the speech was a "national calamity."[23] However, the Radicals had severely provoked the President with their insults, insinuations, and lies; and the speech though not in "good taste" displayed "gentlemanly forebearance."[24] The Radicals made the speech sound much worse than it did. Welles wrote that Johnson's remarks were "earnest, honest, and strong."[25] Nevertheless, the Wisconsin Radicals took the bull by the horns and introduced a resolution in the Republican caucus requesting the Senator to resign.[26] On the other hand, the shrewd Radicals mildly reproved the President while endorsing the congressional plan of reconstruction. Obviously the process of educating public opinion to the radical viewpoint had not enmeshed a sufficient number of moderate Republicans to warrant precipitating an open break with the President. In any case, the fanatical Radicals were resolved that Doolittle must walk the plank. Therefore, the Radicals embarked on a state-wide campaign to whip up popular opinion and pressure the State Legislators to "request" the Senator to resign.

Throughout the state, "enlightened" Republicans signed petitions; Lieutenant-Governor Wyman Spooner called boldly for strong action on the part of the Legislators, and the eagle-eyed editors of the Elkhorn

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[23] Allan Nevins and Milton Hasley Thomas, eds., The Diary of George Templeton Strong (4 vols., New York, 1952), IV, 71.

[24] Beale, Critical Year, 85.

[25] Welles, Diary, II, 439.

[26] Letter, Elisha W. Keyes to Doolittle, March 1, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

Independent and Monroe Sentinel professed to see general dissatisfaction with Doolittle.[27] Not to be outdone, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel bellowed that the Senator was "doing all in his power" to overthrow the "party."[28] By the end of March, 1, 1866, a radical-controlled press, radical-inspired petitions, and radical-instigated politicians were bombarding the besieged Legislators with anguished pleas for the political execution of Doolittle. Undoubtedly, the Radicals were trying to convince the Legislators that there was an indignant popular demand for the Senator's resignation. From his tower, the sharp editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel cut viciously at Doolittle with rapier-like strokes of masterful sarcasm. The resignation of the Senator would not cause him serious harm, cracked the editor, because Doolittle didn't need the money; and, besides, his friends would find him another job.[29]

Under such heavy pressure, some of the Legislators began to wilt. On March 7, the Radicals induces Charles C. Sholes, State Senator from Kenosha, to introduce resolutions requesting the Senator to resign.[30] Untruthfully, Sholes declared that Doolittle was "misrepresenting" the state and sang the radical refrain for the benefit of the Wisconsin State Senators.[31] The Kenosha State Senator asserted that Congress stood on the side of the people and represented the Republican party. Furthermore, the party,

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[27] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 2, 3, 12, 1866.

[28] Ibid., March 2, 1866.

[29] Ibid., March 5, 1866.

[30] Ibid., March 8, 1866.

[31] Ibid., March 16, 1866.

claimed Sholes, could not support the President without abandoning its principles, "giving up the fruits of victory, restoring rebels to power, and demoralizing and breaking up the Republican party." Furthermore, Sholes squalled that Doolittle was one of the "evil counsellors" of the President, owed his election to the Radicals, and had joined the Republican party not on principle but for "power, patronage, and pelf." Though Sholes moved that the resolutions be referred to the Committee on Federal Relations, Cassius Fairchild expected the resolutions to pass the State Senate but not the Assembly.[32]

Undoubtedly, the Radicals were instigating the apostolic Sholes to convert "unenlightened" State Senators to join the chorus requesting Doolittle's resignation. More to the point, the Radicals saw clearly the urgent need of more radical strength in the United States Senate if that body was to override the President's veto of future radical measures; and Doolittle's vote would be one of the crucial votes.

To make matters worse, crafty Democrats sought to isolate the Radicals while "capturing" Doolittle. In some cases, the Radicals effectively checked the Democrats by the use of the term "Copperhead;" and, in other cases, a sharp salvo of sarcasm sufficed. When the editor of the Watertown Democrat claimed that Doolittle was "acting in harmony with the convictions of the great majority of his constituents," the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel demolished his rival by retorting that "we would not have thought that office-holders were so numerous."[33] The retort was

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[32] Letter, Cassius Fairchild to Doolittle, March 7, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[33] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 12, 1866.

clever but not true for the officeholders were in the main pro-radical and were causing Doolittle much distress.[34]

The pattern was clear. A manufactured popular pressure and the Republican politician's fear that the Radicals would label him a "copperhead" would see the demand for Doolittle's resignation safely to port. Yet, the Milwaukee Board of Councilors braved the wrath of the Radicals, endorsed Doolittle, and hoped that he would not "see fit to resign."[35] In spite of the radical pressure, Doolittle supporters sought to stem the tide, but floundered helplessly without national leadership while the congressional Radicals skillfully manipulated the numerous radical puppets throughout the country.

Just before the overriding of the veto on the Civil Rights Bill, George B. Smith, Democratic political leader, wrote that he agreed with Doolittle that they were passing through "political storms;" but Smith optimistically believed that the skies were "brightening" and that "reason" would "soon resume its sway."[36] Proudly, Smith informed Doolittle that the Radicals had labeled him a "Copperhead" for participating in a pro-Johnson meeting. However, there was no room for such optimism because the State Legislators instructed both Wisconsin Senators to vote with the anti-Johnsonites to override the veto of the Civil Rights Bill. But the gallant Doolittle refused to temporize. As the Senator saw it,

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[34] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), April, 6, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[35] Milwaukee Sentinel, March 12, 1866.

[36] Letter, George B. Smith to Doolittle, April 2, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

the instructions implied a threat to end his political career; and, courageously, the badgered Senator proclaimed that duty came first and promptly cast his vote in an unsuccessful attempt to sustain the veto.[37]

Obviously, the Wisconsin Radicals had impaled the Senator on the horns of a dilemma. If he obeyed the instructions, the Radicals would have secured a valuable recruit; if he disobeyed, the shrewd fanatics had an added reason for declaring that Doolittle no longer represented the sentiment of the state. Therefore, the wavering Conservatives could request his resignation with clear consciences. Immediately, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel took the Senator to task for disobeying the instructions and maliciously referred to the devout Senator as "Judas A. Doolittle."[38] Furthermore, Doolittle's annoying practice of reading letters from Southerners to prove that the "rebel" states were ready for re-admission to Congress prompted the exasperated editor of the Milwaukee newspaper to cry out, "Let him represent Louisiana - Alabama - any state but loyal, patriotic Wisconsin." Obviously, the "political storms" were becoming more violent; and the weak-willed politicians in the State Legislature could no longer withstand the radical-manufactured popular pressure.

Consequently, the disheartened but ever faithful John Tapley informed the embattled Doolittle that the Legislators would call upon him to resign.[39] However, Tapley hinted that radical terroism had frightened some of the politicians into taking an action which deep down in their hearts

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[37] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 1808.

[38] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 9, 1866.

[39] Letter, John Tapley to Doolittle, April 11, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

they opposed. Therefore, these cowardly Conservatives did not expect the Senator to resign. Be that as it may, both Houses passed the resolution declaring that it was Doolittle's duty to resign.[40] In the State Senate, the vote was 18 to 11. Lurking in the background anxiously awaiting the resignation of the "treacherous" Senator was a senatorial aspirant, Matthew Hale Carpenter, who, no doubt, found the suspense unbearable as the rumor flitted about that Doolittle had made up his mind to accept a "first Class European embassy."[41] However, the strong-hearted Senator disregarded the request of the Legislators; and the Radicals nettled Doolittle by instigating Timothy O. Howe, junior Senator, to lay the resolution before the United States Senate.[42] Distressed by this breach of courtesy, Doolittle upbraided his colleague for acting without consulting him.[43] In the last run, the wise and successful use of the patronage was one of the last means left to halt the radical onslaught.

Here too, confusing advice and unsuccessful appointments confounded Doolittle. Christopher Latham Sholes thought that it wouldn't be advisable for the President to change officeholders for disagreeing with the administration.[44] However, Sholes hoped that when commissions expired the President would "discriminate in favor of his friends as a

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[40] Milwaukee Sentinel, April 11, 12, 1866.

[41] Ibid., April 20, 1866; Thompson, Matthew Hale Carpenter, 108.

[42] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2192.

[43] Ibid., 2454, 2458, 4299-4302.

[44] Letter, Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, Jan. 1, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

matter of public duty." Needless to say, Doolittle was too good a politician not to realize the importance of removing the treacherous pro-radical officeholders but, unfortunately, moved as slow as a snail in attacking the problem. In April, Doolittle's despondency over the state of the President's patronage annoyed and discouraged Johnson; and the latter pointed out the Senator's laxity in his own state.[45] However, at this point, Doolittle had made up his mind, gritted his teeth, and steeled himself for the herculean task of brooming the disloyal officeholders in Wisconsin out of the President's house. In early April, Doolittle wrote that he, Alexander W. Randall, and others had decided to recommend three men for offices in Fond du Lac county, who would "constitute a power for Mr. Johnson's policy."[46] Meanwhile, the foxy Radicals scented the danger, gathered their officeholding allies between their paws, and sought to foil the new pro-Johnson clean-up policy. The struggle for the control of the patronage was a crucial one for the Radicals were consistently using the President's own patronage against him.[47]

On April 30, Lyman Trumbull, Republican Senator from Illinois, proposed an amendment to a pending bill, which would restrict the President's prerogative to make appointments during the period when the Senate was not

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[45] Welles, Diary, II, 481.

[46] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), April 6, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[47] Beale, Critical Year, 121.

in session; but the alert Doolittle and others defeated it.[48] During the debate, John Sherman, Republican Senator from Ohio, hardly startled the Senate when he declared that Trumbull's purpose was "prevent the President from removing men for their political opinions."[49] Irritated, Doolittle criticised Trumbull, "I think Trumbull can be as small as any man in the Senate."[50] In the end, the Senate Radicals hampered presidential use of the patronage, held up appointments, and succeeded in crippling this good "right arm" of the President.

In Wisconsin, the situation went from bad to worse. Alexander Mitchell, a Milwaukee supporter, was dissatisfied with Doolittle's appointments and did not think that the new appointees were "likely to be any better administration men than the old- if as good."[51] When Doolittle removed the United States marshall for Wisconsin, Mitchell thought that the Senator made a serious mistake.[52] Furthermore, the Washington correspondent of the Detroit Tribune revealed that the marshal was instrumental in Doolittle's re-election in 1863 and accused the Senator of an ingratitude which had "but few parallels."[53] Such deplorable dismissals could only

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[48] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2274, 2429, 2559.

[49] Ibid., 2421.

[50] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), May 20, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[51] Letter, Alexander Mitchell to Doolittle, May 14, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[52] For further removals and appointments, see Milwaukee Sentinel, April 24, May 3, 24, 1866.

[53] Detroit Tribune (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., June 28, 1866.

dismay "neutral" officeholders and drive them pell-mell into radical ranks. Nevertheless, Marvin H. Bovee, a Racine friend, urged Doolittle to "let the axe fall."[54] Brimming with optimism, Bovee thought that recent appointments, such as that of Rufus Cheney, Whitewater Johnson supporter, were working wonders for the President's policy.[55] Even Alexander W. Randall was optimistic and wrote Doolittle that "things" were "working admirably" and that the "enemy" was "getting scared."[56]

However, there was a darker side to the picture. The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel called upon the Senate not to confirm the new appointments and claimed that the "Doolittle-Randall-Dixon school of politicians" were mistaken when they whistled cheerfully that the rank and file of the Republican party were "with them in their war against Congress."[57] Consequently, the radical Senators peppered the new appointments with objections, put up roadblocks against the Doolittle patronage policy, and crippled the officeholding counterattack.[58] Horace Rublee of the Wisconsin State Journal rejected a consular appointment, and it became apparent that old "friends" were deserting the Senator.[59] Furthermore, in June, Joseph Geiger, a

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[54] Letter, Marvin H. Bovee to Doolittle, May 24, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[55] Cheney was an ardent advocator of using the "axe" on officeholding critics of Johnson. See Letter, Rufus Cheney to Doolittle, Oct. 15, 1865, Doolittle Papers.

[56] Letter, Alexander W. Randall to Doolittle, May 15, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[57] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 19, June 9, 1866.

[58] Letters, Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, June 15, 1866; Judson Marsh to Doolittle, July 24, 1866, Doolittle Papers. The Senate rejected Marsh for a post office appointment.

[59] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 31, 1866.

Johnson supporter in Ohio, painted a pathetic picture of avid and office-hungry Johnsonites watching the Radicals feasting on Johnson's own patronage.[60] As a result, loyal Johnson supporters fretted, complained, and gave the President little and unenthusiastic support while the radical officeholders raked the President with fusillades of falsehoods and foul-mouthed epithets.

All in all, the vilified Johnson and the tormented Doolittle failed miserably to recruit and mobilize the loyal officeholders. Only too late did the befuddled President move vigorously to bounce the Radicals out of his official family.[61] Here then was an important cause of the declining fortunes of both Johnson and Doolittle; but both stalwart politicians cursed the Radicals, grimly held on, and planned further counterattacks in defense of the Union against the Radicals.

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[60] Letter, Joseph Geiger to Doolittle, June 25, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[61] Beale, Critical Year, 121.

Chapter V

Call to Arms: The Philadelphia Convention 1866

During the summer of 1866, the fanatical Radicals continued their campaign to bludgeon their conservative opponents into submission. The congressional Radicals continued to rail at Johnson's restoration policy, and rabid radical revilers roasted the conservative defenders of the President in the press. Behind the scenes, worried business men who had benefited from government favors and who feared a political reunion of the South and West supported the radical reconstruction policy. In spite of the fact that some Republicans, such as Lyman Trumbull and John Sherman, moved closer to the radical position, Senator Doolittle stood stubbornly on the Senate floor and struck back sharply at the Radicals. Finally, reeling under the savage but some sometimes subtle radical criticism, the Wisconsin Senator cast caution to the winds, planned to isolate his fanatical opponents by forming a political coalition of pro-Johnson Republicans and Democrats, and destroy his hated rivals by popular vote in the fall elections. Thus, the courageous Senator imperilled his position in the Republican party.

Spurring him to cross the Rubicon was Doolittle's love of the Union. For it he had accepted the abolition of slavery, had waged a deadly struggle with the radical Republicans, and had created the Union party in Wisconsin.[1] Ever loyal to the Republican party, the Senator declared

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[1] Thompson, Matthew Hale Carpenter, 74-75.

that Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe had founded it; but, in 1832, Martin Van Buren had introduced a new element, the Democratic-Republican element, which eventually became the Democratic party.[2] When the Democratic party "broke the golden bowl of peace" with the destruction of the Missouri Compromise, the Republican party "sprang into existence with the newness of life." Moreover, the "ideas of the old Republican party" of Jefferson and Madison formed the basis of the "new" Republican party. Confidently, Doolittle asserted that the "real Republican party" had truth as its foundation; and, "in the nature of things," it would never die. Recounting the rise of the Republican party, the Wisconsin Senator sincerely predicted that the "genuine Republican party" would "pass away" if it proved false to its basic principles.

When the speeches of Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner plowed furrows of hate and vindictiveness throughout the country, Doolittle counselled Johnson that there should be no hesitation in meeting the menace before "wise statesmanship magnanimity and returning affections and loyalty" could "have a fair chance."[3] Burning with anger, the Senator cursed "Northern Disunionism" as he had "Secessionism," felt that victory over the Radicals was certain, and defiantly wrote: "Let the fanatics and madmen rail as much as they may, the Union lives, and will live forever."[4]

Consequently, the alliance of "such men as Doolittle, Dixon & Raymond" with the Administration and the trading interests frightened the radical

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[2] Cong. Globe, 38 Cong., 2 sess., 856.

[3] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 115.

[4] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), Jan. 1, 1866, Doolittle Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

Orestes Brownson, editor of Brownson's Quarterly Review, who rashly wrote that the three Congressmen were "far more dangerous than downright Copperheads."[5] Therefore, Johnson's determination to defend the Constitution scuttled the radical plot to make him an honored member of the radical circle. As a result, the congressional Radicals intrigued, maneuvered, and lashed Congress into opposition to the executive.

Nevertheless, the President's restoration policy found favor with many Republicans although there was grave danger that Johnson would alienate them by his passionate attacks on Congress or by becoming too friendly with the Democrats who now strongly supported the President.[6] James G. Blaine, Republican Representative from Maine, believed that certain unnamed persons had deceived the "innocent" Johnson into believing that Doolittle and other eminent Republicans would secure a Democratic-Republican coalition in Congress which would permit the President to control at least one branch of Congress.[7] In any case, Pro-Johnson Republicans formed a National Union Club in preparation for a nation-wide movement if the extreme Radicals pressed too hard and too fast for the subjugation of the South and the institution of Negro suffrage.

After the passage of the Civil Rights Bill, Doolittle and other pro-Johnson Republicans, feeling the hot breath of the jubilant Radicals on their necks, initiated an obvious program to stir up support for the stubborn President. In May, Doolittle addressed the Union-Johnson Club of

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[5] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 116-117.

[6] (Appleton's) Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 753.

[7] Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress, II, 162.

Philadelphia. Before a full house, the Senator defended the President, flayed his congressional opponents, and drew loud and numerous outbursts of applause from his friendly audience.[8] When Doolittle declared that "Mr. Johnson's opponents" had been "recreant to their party and their principles," the Philadelphia Johnsonites rocked the hall with their loud applause.

Modestly, the Senator wrote that he thought that the hour-long speech was a "good one," but the hostile editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel refused to print the speech and rudely but wittily referred to Doolittle and Edgar Cowan, Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, as the "Siamese twins of apostasy."[9] When the editor of the Philadelphia New Era charged that the "Mossies" (Doolittle, Cowan, and others) got drunk on Sunday, the indignant editor of the Sentinel unbraided his fellow journalist for putting forth such a calumny because it would only "infuse into him, afresh a little of the breath of life."[10] Probably, without meaning to do, Doolittle had launched the pro-Johnson movement as a nation-wide affair. The time was propitious for the "prevaling sentiment of the country was clearly with the President."[11]

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[8] New York Herald, May 20, 1866.

[9] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), May 20, 1866; Milwaukee Sentinel, May 23, 1866.

[10] Ibid., June 6, 1866.

[11] New York Herald, May 19, 1866.

In Washington, supporters of the President twice postponed a serenade of Johnson and the Cabinet.[12] On May 22, in his home bailiwick of Auburn, N. Y., William Seward followed up Doolittle's success, plugged for the President's restoration policy, and called for "reconciliation between all parts of the country."[13] In rebuttal, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel caustically commented that the address was a variation of Doolittle's doctrine that when the Union armies crushed the rebellion the Union party "captured" the Democratic party.[14] The next day in the capital, Washington Johnsonites cruised through the town, serenading the President Johnson and the Cabinet in order to get their "opinions" on political questions.[15] Most probably, the guiding hand in the serenade belonged to Alexander W. Randall of Wisconsin, Assistant Postmaster General.

Displeased with the serenade method of arousing support for the President, Welles said curtly that he "approved the policy of the Administration and was for the union of the States and the rights of the States." Hugh McCulloch, Secretary of the Treasury, thought Johnson's policy commendable and boldly declared that the Union party must accept the President's policy or die. Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War, read a long well-prepared address, stating that he had decided against Negro suffrage because of the practical difficulties involved and Johnson's conviction that

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[12] New York Tribune, May 18, 22, 1866.

[13] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 753.

[14] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 25, 1866.

[15] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 753; New York Tribune, May 24, 1866; New York Herald, May 24, 1866.

it was unconstitutional. William Dennison, Postmaster General, regretted the differences between the President and Congress and naively asserted that there was no cause for separation between the two. With a pen dripping with mild sarcasm, Welles wrote that Dennison made a "soothing speech for the party; said everything was lovely."[16] Neither James Speed, Attorney-General, nor James Harlan, Secretary of the Interior, made remarks. Curtly, Welles concluded that "Speed ran away and Harlan would not show himself." However, Speed explained that he was unable to cooperate because of "shortness of time" and "pressing engagements."[17] Harlan wrote Randall that his views were well known, and there was no need to call on him. Thus, the long-delayed campaign to smoke out the neutralists and pro-radicals in the Cabinet moved into high gear.

Scenting the political trend emanating from the capital, local and state Johnsonites began to stir, sensed the closing of ranks, and planned pro-Johnson rallies. In Wisconsin, the Madison correspondent of the Milwaukee Sentinel reported that the Madison "Copperheads" planned to hold a large meeting at which Doolittle and Randall would speak.[18] Moved to action, the mean but alert editor of the Sentinel ignobly referred to the projected rally as the "Bread and Butter" convention and permitted an unnamed correspondent to insinuate that the sponsors of

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[16] Welles, Diary, II, 513.

[17] New York Herald, May 24, 1866.

[18] Milwaukee Sentinel, May 16, 1866.

the convention intended to support ex-Governor Randall for the senate.[19] In spite of this fear-inspired criticism, the prospects for the convention were good; and Christopher Latham Sholes, Milwaukee Johnsonite, wrote Doolittle that there was talk of "no lack of names."[20]

However, the editor of the Madison Union revealed that Doolittle and Randall could not leave Washington until the adjournment of Congress.[21] Therefore, the convention was heading for a postponement. Immediately, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel scoffed at the explanation, pretended that the real reason was lack of interest, and commented maliciously that "everybody" understood that the purposes of the convention were to make Randall senator and "carry bread-and-butter into the camps of the famishing copperheads." Furthermore, continued the editor, the "copperheads" and Randall who was "avowedly at the head of a third, or Johnson party" were marching into Republican ranks "via the Doolittle bridge."[22]

Throughout the country, pro-Johnson Democratic clubs were forming; conservative Republicans in the capital were discussing "political affairs," and ambitious political leaders hungry for political power began to jump on the bandwagon in the Johnson "third party" parade. The stage was set, and the time was ripe for the fruition of the conservative conviction that only a national convention could provide the springboard

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[19] Ibid., June 4, 1866.

[20] Letter, Christopher Latham Sholes to Doolittle, June 12, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[21] Madison Union (n. d.), quoted in Milwaukee Sentinel, June 12, 1866.

[22] Ibid.

for a successful counterattack against the Radicals in the fall elections. This conviction was quite common among Conservatives, and no one deserved the laurels for fathering it.[23] However, once the movement was under way, Doolittle became the outstanding figure in preparing the groundwork for the national convention.

On June 11, Doolittle, Orville H. Browning, Republican Senator from Illinois, and others went to see the President to discuss the "condition of the country and the measures necessary to be adopted."[24] Humbly and earnestly, Johnson said that he was willing to give his all to rescue the "power" from radical "hands" and avert the subversion of the government and the ruin of the country. All agreed that they should call a convention of the "friends of the country." The President's plight seriously disturbed the conservative Republicans, but the latter were few and far between. Therefore, for added strength, the Conservatives had to turn to their rivals - the Democrats.

The Johnson Republicans were in close political contact with the former War Democrats, and they kept the latter informed of the plans to bolster the Executive in his struggle with Congress. Doolittle wrote to John A. Dix, respected New York War Democrat, asking him to come to Washington to talk over "political matters."[25] Unable to oblige, Dix suggested that the Senator get in touch with Judge Edwards Pierrepont,

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[23] Beale, Critical Year, 123.

[24] Theodore Pease and James Randall, eds., The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning (2 vols., Illinois State Historical Collections, Springfield, 1925), II, 79.

[25] Letter (Copy), John A. Dix to Doolittle, June 14, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

another War Democrat and prominent lawyer, whose opinions reflected "fairly those of the War Democrats" in New York. Thus, letters went back and forth between politicians of both parties; consultations took place among Congressmen, and the President and Doolittle formed the center of a popular movement to oppose the Radicals with might of a national party.

On June 15, Welles and Doolittle conferred with the President; and Doolittle agreed to draft a call for a national convention.[26] In the preparation of the call, the Wisconsin Senator adhered to political custom, consulted others, and resorted to the tried and true policy of compromise in order to give the movement a good solid base of prominent political names. Consequently, there cropped up a good deal of personal animosity and disagreement over principles. Montgomery Blair, a Johnson advisor, warned Welles that "Democratic leaders" couldn't stomach Seward and that the retention of the Secretary of State would endanger the Democratic support of the President.[27] Furthermore, there was much discussion as to whether a denunciation of the proposed 14th Amendment should appear in the call. Finally, over Welles' strong dissent, Doolittle omitted any objection to the amendment. Another problem was to attract Henry J. Raymond, chairman of the National Committee of the National Union party, to the movement. Only after Johnson, Seward, and Thurlow Weed, New York State Republican politician, convinced the editor of the

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[26] Welles, Diary, II, 528.

[27] Ibid., 529.

New York Times that they did not contemplate a new party did Raymond agree to support the new political maneuver.[28]

Nevertheless, all these disputes did not disturb the sanguine Senator from Wisconsin, and his letters to his wife spotlighted his zealous determination to crush the Radicals. Promptly, Doolittle wrote his wife that he had drafted a call, that only a national convention could save the country from another "Civil War," and that the Radical "Disunionists and persecuting fanatics" were becoming as "intolerant and overbearing as Wigfall Toombs & Davis."[29] The Senator sincerely believed that the Union was in grave danger and wailed that the "people must rally to save the country from Disunion."

When Doolittle finished the call on June 23, Welles still lamented the omission of a denunciation of the proposed 14th amendment and, ever suspicious of Seward, grumbled that, while Doolittle fathered the call, the meddling hand of the Secretary of the State was evident in the final draft.[30] Nevertheless, confident that the "masses of the people" approved of the President's restoration policy, Doolittle and other Johnson Republicans sent the call out on June 25.[31] The 26th found Browning hard at work "writing letters and sending off calls" although the possibility of a cabinet post partially accounted for Browning's

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[28] Henry W. Raymond, ed., "Extracts from the Journal of Henry J. Raymond," Scribner's Monthly, XX (1880), 277.

[29] Letters, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (wife), June 20, 24, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[30] Welles, Diary, II, 538.

[31] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 754.

industry.[32] Undoubtedly, ambition accounted for some of the momentum in the anti-radical crusade.

Unknown to the Radicals, Doolittle had completed the draft; and only three members of the cabinet knew of the sensational manouver. The day following the issuance of the call, the Cabinet met; and an impressive silence regarding the call characterized the meeting.[33] No doubt, the call came as a shock to Harlan, Dennison, and Speed. Still, Doolittle worked for more recruits. On the 28th, the aggressive Senator attempted to persuade Ira Harris, New York Senator, to join the movement. Foolishly, Doolittle argued that if the movement was not successful in 1866 it would be successful at the "next election" in 1868.[34] Harris was a "trimmer" up for re-election in the fall and would hardly attach himself to a movement which had to wait so long for certain victory.

Nevertheless, Doolittle felt that the call was a great success, that it commanded the "minds of all the great men," and that it meant, "action Union and victory for the sake of the Union."[35] Furthermore, he believed that the call would "organize or rather reorganize the National Union party in contrast with the present treacherous intolerant sectional Disunion party." Delighted, he wrote that the call had produced a "great

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[32] Browning, Diary, II, 81; New York Herald, June 28, 1866.

[33] Welles, Diary, 541.

[34] Ibid., 543.

[35] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), July 1, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

commotion among these wild and fanatical men." Gratified, he chirped that the Conservatives had made a "flank movement" on the Radicals "by appealing directly and boldly to the people upon idea, and policy, and not upon questions of patronage and office." Unfortunately, the wily Senator had not grasped the importance of arraying the agricultural and anti-protectionist Northwest against the industrial, government-favored, and protectionist East. Johnson had chosen to combat the Radicals on the reconstruction issue when it might have been better had he chosen economic issues.[36] Furthermore, the enthusiastic and prompt response of the Democrats, both Northern and Southern, embarrassed the Johnsonite Republicans, fettered the movement with despised "Copperheads" and unrepentant "rebels," and provoked the Northern and Southern Radicals to violent action.

On July 4, a number of Democratic members of Congress issued an address "to the people of the United States" in support of the call.[37] Immediately, many office-hungry Democrats went into action to secure "full and able delegations." In the Southern States, the call awakened the dormant hopes of the discontented, bitter and still proud Southerners for the early re-admission of their States without having to accept further humiliating conditions. The call received such a hearty reception in the South that the frightened Southern Radicals lost no time in calling a convention of their own.[38] Moreover, a veritable political turmoil buffeted the

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[36] Beale, Critical Year, 117.

[37] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 754.

[38] Ibid., 756; La Crosse Democrat, July 16, 1866.

country as angry denunciations shot from Republican lips; and the great mass of the Republican party condemned the call.

Obviously, the call had backfired; and Doolittle's hope for a Union party embracing a solid core of conservative Republicans was swiftly evaporating into thin air. The political battle line soon revealed that most Republicans, including many moderates, stood rooted in the Republican party while, in the Johnson party, the Democrats predominated with too many "Copperheads" and notorious "Rebels." Consequently, the Radical reaction of violent abuse and fierce vituperation disconcerted the more moderate Republicans who refrained from defending the President or even joined the Radicals in their attacks.

Horace Greeley, editor of the New York Tribune, drummed Johnson, Doolittle, and the other conservative Republicans out of the party and charged that the call was a "formal proclamation of withdrawal by the Johnsonites from the National Union party."[39] In Wisconsin, the call drove Radicals to the point of virtual madness. A Wisconsin Radical who preferred to sign a deadly and loaded verbal missile, "Four-Fifths of Wisconsin," insanely urged Doolittle to imitate the sad death of Senator James H. Lane of Kansas (who had committed suicide) by putting a "ball" through his "rotten" head.[40] The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel printed

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[39] New York Tribune, June 27, 1866.

[40] Letter, "Four-Fifths of Wisconsin" to Doolittle, July 3, 1866, Doolittle Papers. Lane was seriously ill which probably accounts for his suicide. See New York Tribune, June 27, 1866; Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress, II, 185; and Claude G. Bowers, The Tragic Era: The Revolution after Lincoln (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1929), 120.

a letter, signed most appropriately a "Leading War Democrat," in which the writer contended that the feeling against Doolittle and Randall was "intense," that there was likelihood of personal violence, and that personal "warm" friends of the Senator "said" that they would not even shake hands with him.[41] The Wisconsin Radicals were grimacing and growling like hurt animals and, undoubtedly, agreed with the "Leading War Democrat" that when Doolittle and Randall came back to Wisconsin they would find travelling across the State "rougher than the road to Jordan." While the Wisconsin Radicals were filling the air with curses and threats, the work of unifying all the pro-Johnson elements moved swiftly and, on the surface, smoothly along.

On July 9, two important pro-administration groups met in the committee room of Doolittle's Committee on Indian Affairs, formed a new combination with an old name, National Union Club, and appointed a national executive committee.[42] To force the neutrals and pro-radicals out of the Cabinet, particularly the hated Stanton, the chairman of the committee was to request a written reply to the call from each member of the Cabinet. Prominently present were a number of Democrats who now formed the backbone of the movement.

The news of the formation of the National Union Club enabled the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel to infer that the movement involved a despicable alliance of the Democrats and Johnson Republicans, to inform

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[41] Milwaukee Sentinel, July 6, 1866.

[42] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 753; Browning, Diary, II, 83; Milwaukee Sentinel, July 12, 1866.

The readers of the paper that the two groups signed the "articles of capitulation" in Doolittle's room, and to berate the Democrats for denying any longer that Doolittle had "captured" the Democratic party. Moreover, the journalistic bully boldly predicted that Doolittle, Randall, and the Democrats under their "new fangled name, National Union" would take a "bad whipping next fall." While the editor of the Sentinel was accusing Doolittle of adopting Democratic principles, Welles was groaning that under the influence of Seward and Raymond, the Senator was honestly but foolishly clinging too long to the hope that he could control the Republican party and "retain it intact."[43] The suspicious Secretary of the Navy believed that the New York State Democrats were the true friends of the President while the Radicals were the "special friends" of Seward, Weed, and Raymond.[44]

Meanwhile, the chairman of the executive committee of the National Union Club addressed to each cabinet member a letter, the call, and a request for a reply. Seward and Welles, who knew of the conservative action, answered with carefully drafted replies of approval, but Speed, Stanton, and Dennison were on the spot. Doolittle despised Speed as the "laughing-stock of the court and of the first lawyers" and anxiously prayed for the Attorney-General's resignation; but, on July 14, Speed's reply to Doolittle

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[43] Welles, Diary, II, 550.

[44] Ibid., 551.

[45] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 755-756; Welles, Diary, II, 552.

carried a sting and showed more "stamina" than the Senator believed that the Attorney-General possessed.[46] Speed wrote that he approved of many principles of the call but not the call itself, charged correctly that the call tended to divide the Republican party, and announced his support of the proposed 14th Amendment. The last statement sealed Speed's fate.

However, the slippery Stanton sent no reply, thwarted the efforts of the Conservatives to force him out of the Cabinet, and stubbornly remained within Johnson's "house." When the exasperated Welles asked Stanton why he didn't show his "flag," the disloyal Secretary of War coolly and arrogantly answered that he scorned to make a reply because he "did not choose to have Doolittle or any other little fellow" draw an answer from him.[47] However, Stanton had written a critical and abusive reply but had never sent it.[48]

Thus, the clever conservative scheme to unify the Cabinet succeeded to the extent that Speed, Dennison, and Harlan resigned. Blaine believed that Dennison and Harlan were reluctant to resign for the obvious reason that they were protecting radical officeholders.[49] For the first time since he became President, the vacillating Johnson stood before the country with an almost unified Cabinet. Only the treacherous Stanton remained.

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[46] Ibid., 480; Milwaukee Sentinel, July 17, 1866.

[47] Welles, Diary, II, 573.

[48] Beale, Critical Year, 128.

[49] Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress, II, 218.

With the appointment of the Johnsonites, Randall, Browning, and Henry Stanberry, Johnson had a fighting chance that he could array a loyal group of officeholders against the Radicals. The successful attempt to place the patronage in the President's hands caused consternation in radical ranks, and the congressional Radicals pressed vigorously for legislation to prevent the wholesale removal of radical officeholders.

On July 11, with Dennison's resignation impending, the Republican Congressmen met in caucus.[50] In the course of heated discussions, the Radicals heaped abuse upon the President, hurled defiant taunts at the White House, and scathingly denounced the Philadelphia Convention. Loud applause reverberated throughout the room as George S. Boutwell, Massachusetts Congressman, barked that the Radicals would resist Johnson if he attempted "to force the rebels" into Congress.[51] Moreover, the Massachusetts Radical ranted that the Philadelphia Convention was part of the wicked President's scheme to get the "rebels" into Congress. William D. Kelley, Pennsylvania Representative, savagely denounced the convention as a "conspiracy of traitors" and angrily pointed out that the editor of the New York Times "upheld and favored the convention." The last remark drew a sharp retort from Raymond that he would not support the convention if it proved to be a scheme to destroy the Union party. Cooly, the confident Thaddeus Stevens offered a resolution denouncing the convention; and

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[50] Welles, Diary, II, 552; John A. Krout, "Henry J. Raymond on the Republican Caucus of July 1866," American Historical Review, XXXIII (July, 1928), 835-842.

[51] Ibid., 838.

Senator Henry S. Lane of Indiana excitedly cried out that a "million soldiers would flash to the capital to sustain Congress against the tyranny of the President."[52] Under heavy fire, Raymond stood his ground; but the caucus adopted the Stevens-sponsored resolution. Thus, the masterful Radical from Pennsylvania fired back at the Philadelphia Convention; but Stevens' effort to prevent the adjournment of Congress revealed clearly that the Republican Senators fretted under his strong hand and were reluctant to follow his leadership.

During the second caucus held two days later, Senator John Sherman of Ohio, moderate in thought but radical in deed, severely criticized the President but, at the same time, brushed aside the wishes of Stevens on adjournment.[53] The Ohio Republican declared that Johnson was "no longer with the Union party," that the party could "maintain its ascendancy" regardless of what the President did, and pertinently pointed out that the "Union members were needed at home to attend to the coming election." Calmly but vigorously, Stevens opposed adjournment and sadly asked the reason for "this unseemly haste to desert our post and abandon our friends to the tender mercies of the enemy?" Without success, the sullen Stevens moved to lay the resolution for adjournment on the table; but the Representatives rebuffed the Pennsylvanian and voted to adjourn by a vote of 64 to 40.[54]

Thus, the Doolittle call had thrown a scare into the Republicans, haunted some of them with fearful specters of defeat in the fall elections,

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[52] Ibid., 838-839.

[53] Ibid., 841.

[54] Ibid., 842.

and convinced them that Washington was no place to be when political fences back home needed mending. On the other hand, the call further incensed the Radicals who, consequently, heaped vituperation and abuse on the Conservatives. Furthermore, the call forced the moderate Republicans to choose between political ambition and principle - and too many chose the former. Doolittle had failed miserably to enlist such moderate friends as Sherman and Trumbull in the new movement. In the end, the President lost the support of the important moderate Republicans whose prestige strengthened the Republican Radicals.[55]

Nevertheless, the response to the call was gratifying to the supporters of the Philadelphia Convention. Edward Bates, Missouri Republican and former Attorney General, felt that the country had "warmly" answered the call.[56] James Dixon, Connecticut Senator, wrote that "everything" looked "well" in the state, predicted an able delegation, and wisely questioned: "Can't we keep such men as Fernando Wood and Vallandigham away?"[57] Iowa Democrats favored the convention, and Solon Chase, Maine Johnsonite, cheerfully notified Doolittle of his support but unnecessarily added that the Senator could not expect much from rock-ribbed Republican Maine.[58] Even though Democratic enthusiasm raised a dark cloud

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[55]Beale, Critical Year, 106-112.

[56]Bates, Diary, 562.

[57]Letter, James Dixon to Doolittle, July 21, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[58]La Crosse Democrat, July 16, 1866; letter, Solon Chase to Doolittle, July 25, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

over the movement, Doolittle's struggle against the Radicals showed promise of "saving" the country.

Particularly frustrating and requiring the utmost degree of political tact, manipulation, and compromise was the imbroglio which occurred in New York State upon the issuance of the call. Shortly after the call, Fernando Wood, noted New York City "Copperhead," swung into action, directed a call for a city delegation, and asked Alexander W. Randall whether there was "any state authority to issue a call for a state convention."[59] Wood's prompt response to the call was typical of the "copperhead" reaction, was an evil omen for the pro-Johnson party, and demonstrated the ambiguity of the call. Consequently, moderate Republicans who loathed the "Copperheads" found another reason for lining up with the unloved Radicals. Furthermore, the radical press made effective use of that explosive campaign charge that the "Copperheads" controlled the anti-radical movement.

Moreover, the New York State political picture mirrored a hot bed of ambitious and venomously opposed political factions. So prominent had William Seward become in the new movement that the Barnburners who regarded the Secretary of State with extreme detestation were reluctant to give the new movement their support. The idea that the Philadelphia Convention was a "Seward & Weed concern" caused David Dudley Field, New York Barnburner leader, to warn Doolittle of the impossibility of obtaining the support of the "Democratic element in the Republican party."[60] On

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[59] Letter, (Copy), Fernando Wood to Alexander W. Randall, July 7, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[60] Letter, David Dudley Field to Doolittle, July 14, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

the other hand, Thurlow Weed, Republican leader and Seward's close political associate, hitched himself to the Johnson band wagon, maneuvered skillfully to outwit Wood and Field, and boldly took command of the Union-Johnson movement in the state. For Weed the movement was a long-awaited opportunity to organize a third party which would oppose both the Radicals and the "Copperheads."[61] Furthermore, Weed's alarm over the decline in his political power accounted for the fervor with which he embraced the pro-Johnson movement. On the other hand, Johnson, Seward, and Doolittle were most anxious to obtain Weed's cooperation in getting the new movement under way for the New York politician had acquired valuable political experience in his long tenure as a political power.[62] Thus, Weed became a prominent figure in the Johnson movement, but the Seward-Weed prominence in the party movement angered the Barnburners, induced the suspicious Welles to fear for the success of the projected convention, and caused Dix and Doolittle many a tedious and exasperating worry.

At first, Dix thought that he had settled the differences among Weed, Field, and Wood. On July 20, Dix wrote with unconcealed pleasure that the members of the state Democratic organization would go to the convention as individuals and wisely urged that the "Union men should be prominent" in order to make the convention successful.[63] However, on July 23, Dix wrote

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[61] Glyndon Van Deusen, Thurlow Weed: Wizard of the Lobby (Boston, 1947), 320.

[62] Welles, Diary, II, 527, 535, 538, 548.

[63] Letter (Copy), John A. Dix to Doolittle, July 20, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

in an urgent, almost desperate, tone to Doolittle that the two should consult either in New York City or in Washington and that the political situation in New York State demanded the Senator's personal attention.[64] The diligent Dix had gathered Field, Weed, and Wood at his house where Doolittle could see them "quietly," but the Senator did not show up. Moreover, the Seward-Weed faction had drawn up a call for a state convention which would have excluded Field and the "old Democrats of the Republican party." Worried, Dix wrote that "this will not do."

From Ohio and Pennsylvania came more disturbing news as the Democrats of these States chose Democratic delegations. The bewildered Dix groaned that the "Republicans and War Democrats should take the lead and let others come in as individuals."[65] Nevertheless, the Democrats refused to waste this golden opportunity to return to power; and their adherence to the third party movement only stimulated the excitable radical journalists to fill the air with anguished cries of Republican "traitors." The editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel nonchalantly shifted his position, dismissed Doolittle's claim that the Union party had "captured" the Democratic party, and charged that the despised Democrats had instead "captured" the Democratic party, and charged that the despised Democrats had instead "captured" the "bread and butter squad."[66] A. C. Sanford, Radical editor

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[64] Ibid., July 23, 1866.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Milwaukee Sentinel, July 7, 1866.

of the Racine Advocate, was even more brutal in his criticism.[67] He rashly accused Johnson of joining hands with the "Copperheads," of "using the patronage to build up a party hostile in principles to the National Republican party," and thundered that Doolittle and Randall were the leaders of the "traitors" in Wisconsin.

However, Johnson supporters refused to flinch in the face of venomous Radical criticism. Unselfishly, Alexander Mitchell, a Milwaukee Johnsonite, wrote Doolittle that he advocated working with everyone who was in the "right" in 1866 irregardless of past mistakes and urged a conciliatory policy toward the "Rebels."[68] In rebuttal, the fault-finding editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel crushed the conciliatory point of view of a volley of exaggerations. First, the "Rebels" had made no sign that they were not still the "deadly enemies of the Union;" and second, in "gratitude" for Johnson's "unparalleled clemency" the "Rebels" had passed the "black codes which for atrocity" found "no equal in the annals of Russian serfdom." Another defender of the convention, Benjamin Curtis, prominent constitutional lawyer and later one of Johnson's defending lawyers during the impeachment trial, looked hopefully to the Philadelphia Convention but warned of the pitfalls of sectional passions, party schemes, and the "sordid and petty scramble for offices."[69] In spite of his little faith

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[67] Racine Advocate, July 25, 1866.

[68] Milwaukee Sentinel, July 30, 1866.

[69] Letter, Benjamin Robbins Curtis to Orville Hickman Browning, July 25, 1866, quoted in Benjamin R. Curtis, ed., A Memoir of Benjamin Robbins Curtis (2 vols., Boston, 1879, I, 390-394.

in conventions, Curtis drew hope from "all honest expressions of popular feeling" and felt that the convention might be "such an expression."[70] Therefore, toward the end of July, Doolittle's call had sent the anti-radical movement hopefully on its way but, unfortunately, had aroused the Radicals to action and had driven important Republican politicians into the arms of the Radicals.

In the meantime, the Congressional Radicals continued to press for vindictive but politically advantageous reconstruction legislation. Craftly, the Radicals argued that the immediate admission of the Southern States meant the end of Republican power, the loss of the patronage, and the return of the unrepentant "Rebels" to power. Stimulated by their victory over the President on the Civil Right Bill, Stevens, Sumner, and Wade scored successive victories with the passage of the proposed 14th Amendment, the Second Freedmen's Bureau Bill, and the "restoration" of Tennessee. For good measure, the Radicals blustered, bullied, and berated a dwindling number of Pro-Johnson Republican Senators.

The future 14th Amendment was a compromise between the moderate and radical Republicans. Extremists, such as Sumner and Stevens, preferred the inclusion of a provision for Negro suffrage; but many Republicans feared an adverse political effect in their Northern constituencies for there was vigorous opposition to giving the Negro the franchise in the Northern States. In the end, a proportional reduction in Congressional representation proved acceptable to most Congressmen. Yet, Doolittle was quick to

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70 Letter, Benjamin Robbins Curtis to George Ticknor, July 27, 1866, quoted in Ibid., I, 389.

point out that the motivation behind the section declaring that Negroes were citizens were certain doubts on the part of members of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction as to the Constitutionality of the Civil Rights Bill.[71] In rebuttal, William Fessenden, chairman of the committee, challenged the Wisconsin Senator and denied the existence of the doubts; but Doolittle tartly asked why amend the constitution at all in this regard. Consequently, Fessenden hedged, refused to give a direct answer, and weakly encouraged Doolittle to answer the question for himself.

Doolittle had scored a point in the debate, but the Radicals had the votes. The most important and disputed section was the one disqualifying practically the entire natural leadership of the South for it required the exclusion from office of all "Rebels" who had held a pre-war civil and military office which required an oath of allegiance to the United States. The Radicals understood that someone must hold office in the South and by excluding the old aristocracy, the task of ruling the South would fall to the Negro. Therefore, the Radicals disdained to re-admit the Southern States to the Union but preferred to create a situation where the Republican party would rule the South through the Negro officeholders and Radical whites.

The politically-alert Doolittle saw through the Radical strategy and struck boldly, but unsuccessfully, by moving that the Senate vote on each section separately as amendments. However, the Radicals were in command

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[71] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 2896.

of the situation and crushed the Doolittle motion by a vote of 33 to 11.[72] On the final vote, the Radicals brushed aside weak opposition, and the Senate adopted the future amendment by a vote of 33 to 11.[73] Doolittle voted against the amendment but actually voted against the section disqualifying the "Rebels" from holding office. However, the Senator failed to foresee that the Radicals would later claim that the Conservatives opposed the entire amendment.[74]

On July 21, on the joint resolution to "restore" the state of Tennessee, Doolittle voted with the Radicals in spite of Governor William "Parson" Brownlow's illegal and brutal methods.[75] In order to secure a quorum, Brownlow deliberately arrested and detained by force two conservative opponents, and a "rump" legislature ratified the 14th Amendment. The jubilant "Parson" wired Congress that the state had "ratified" the amendment and basely added: "Give my respects to the dead dog of the White House." Nevertheless, "dead dog" Johnson accepted the "restoration" of the state but firmly notified Congress of his doubts as to the constitutionality of the congressional action.[76]

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[72] Ibid., 3040.

[73] Ibid., 3042.

[74] Beale, Critical Year, 205.

[75] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 4007; Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 729.

[76] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 3957; James Richardson, comp., A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897 (10 vols., Washington, D. C., 1896-1899), VIII, 3593-3595.

On July 28, during the closing hours of the session, all the bitterness toward the Wisconsin Radicals welled up in Doolittle's heart burst over into a stinging criticism of his radical colleague.[77] His voice ringing with indignation, Doolittle verbally chastised Howe for not consulting him before presenting to the Senate the resolutions of the Wisconsin State Legislature requesting Doolittle's resignation. Attacking the radical charge of inconsistency, the high-principled Doolittle declared that a man who did not change his vote when "convictions of duty" required was a "moral coward." Nevertheless, a partisan regular correspondent of the Milwaukee Sentinel scorned the moral emphasis of Doolittle's defense and concluded that the Senator had delivered an "insulting reply."[78] On the other hand, Howe's rebuttal was "as remarkable for its simple eloquence, transparent logic, and integrity of purpose, as to that which it was made was marked with arrogance, egotism and destructive malignity." When Welles learned that Congress had agreed to adjourn, the acidilous Secretary of the Navy prayed sarcastically: "May God speed them home."[79] However, the adjournment did not mean a rest for Doolittle because the hard-working and weary Senator started on a political tour of the western states.

On August 1, Doolittle was in Madison attending the Union Convention; and, although the Senator found the entire tour gratifying, the editor

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[77] Cong. Globe, 39 Cong., 1 sess., 4299-4301.

[78] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 3, 1866.

[79] Welles, Diary, II, 563.

and Madison correspondent of the Milwaukee Sentinel found much to disparge in the convention. As usual, Doolittle "dictated" the resolutions; attendance was poor, and the Senator spoke to a "small" audience in the evening.[80] The readers of the Sentinel learned that the convention was a "miserable failure," that few Republicans stayed to the end for the customary handshake, and that "straight Democrats" chatted with the Senator at the close of the convention. However, at the convention, the important charge of "copperhead" control of the Philadelphia Convention came up; and M. A. Fox, a Doolittle supporter, found it necessary to assert that men, such as Doolittle, Randall, and Cowan, would control the Philadelphia Convention and not the "Copperheads" and "Rebels."[81] No amount of defense could allay the "copperhead" charge because of Clement Vallandigham's well-known intention of playing an important role in the coming convention.

Thus, the Radicals found a vulnerable spot in the Johnson movement and constantly carped on the "copperhead" theme. Blessed with political foresight, Dix had warned Doolittle of the danger that "men" whose cooperation the Conservatives did not want would "get in to cover up their past political sins."[82] In spite of Dix's warning, Doolittle displayed an unfortunate laxity in excluding Democrats of "ill-repute;" but, by this time, it had become obvious that Johnson was heavily dependent on Democratic support and could not afford to antagonize the Democratic supporters of Vallandigham.

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[80] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 3, 1866.

[81] Ibid., Aug. 4, 1866.

[82] Letter (Copy), John A. Dix to Doolittle, July 10, 1866, Doolittle papers.

By the end of July, Vallandigham proved to be a millstone around the neck of the projected convention. When the Ohio "Copperhead" appeared at a Washington meeting of the national executive committee of the National Union Club, the much-disturbed Browning foresaw the danger, successfully protested against admitting the Ohioan to the meeting, and professed to see a "scheme" to identify Vallandigham with the convention. Tersely and prematurely, Browning wrote that the "scheme" had failed.[83] In New York City, George Templeton Strong, lawyer and friend of Dix, found much interest in the convention, predicted that it would be a "bolt" from the Republican party, and mentioned talk of its being a "Copperhead movement."[84] The possibility of Vallandigham and Wood being delegates caused Strong to ask, "Will the convention receive these vermin?" Furthermore, Strong caustically commented that if a "single-well-known Northern Copperhead Peace-Democrat" was to be prominent in the convention it would "come to naught." In early August, the general impression was that the Philadelphia Convention would likely receive "into brotherhood and communion the Woods and Vallandighams of the North, and also any and every bitter rebel from the South."[85]

The radical press pointed out to its readers the "copperhead-rebel" aspect of the growing Johnson movement. When Simeon Mills, a long-time

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[83] Browning, Diary, II, 84-85.

[84] Strong, Diary, IV, 95.

[85] Ibid., 97.

Wisconsin Democrat, declined to be a delegate to the convention, the radical editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel informed the readers of the paper of the "obvious fact" that the convention was to be a "convention of traitors and copperheads."[86] Obviously, the "copperhead" interest in the convention was embarrassing, but Doolittle studiously avoided a public denunciation of the "Copperheads." As if the charge of "copperheadism" was not enough to worry the Johnson men, unfortunate incidents in the South furnished more opportunities for the radical journalists to inflame the passions of the Northern Unionists.

On July 30, a radical attempt to regain power in Louisiana precipitated a bloody clash in New Orleans between Negroes and Southern whites. In New York, Strong wrote that "a few more outrages" like the New Orleans Riots would "teach all Northern men (Copperheads excepted) that the "Southern wolves" were not yet "so humanized as to be fit to share the government of the sheepfold."[87] On the other hand, Welles manifested the conservative reaction and wrote correctly that "a fragment of an old convention held in 1864 met for the purpose of overturning the government."[88] However, Welles rashly wrote that there was "little doubt" that the riots "had their origin with the Radical Members of Congress."[89] To a great extent this was true for Stevens and the other congressional Radicals had

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[86] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 6, 1866.

[87] Strong, Diary, IV, 96.

[88] Welles, Diary, II, 567.

[89] Ibid., 569.

instigated a group of Southern Radicals to hold the "convention," but the former did not plot the riots for partisan purposes of propaganda.[90] Nevertheless, the radical press pilloried the "Rebels" for their "brutality" but minimized the responsibility of the Louisiana Radicals and the Negroes.

In spite of the increasing crescendo of radical criticism, the call for the Philadelphia Convention continued to draw a promising response throughout the country. Welles found the "Philadelphia movement" gaining strength; and Doolittle, on his return from the western tour, reported to Johnson that "things" were "moving well" and that a "very strong delegation" would come from Wisconsin.[91] James Gordon Bennett, editor of the New York Herald, found indications that the call had aroused the whole country and was confident that the members of "all parties" and "shades of political opinion" would "unite to put down the revolutionists."[92] With these favorable views of ultimate success, the delegates streamed into the "City of Brotherly Love" for a truly national convention. However, a pre-convention crisis endangered the promised peace and harmony.

To Browning's dismay, both Wood and Vallandigham boldly appeared in the city but received a cold welcome from the politically-wise delegates. Browning foresaw "trouble" if the two "Copperheads" attempted to "force themselves upon the convention."[93] Realizing the strength of the

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[90] Beale, Critical Year, 352n.; Current, Old Thad Stevens, 254.

[91] Welles, Diary, II, 571; Doolittle quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 130-131.

[92] New York Herald, Aug. 12, 1866.

[93] Browning, Diary, II, 89.

opposition, Wood bitterly withdrew but not until he had insisted "vehemently" that the delegates should admit himself and Vallandigham "without question."[94] However, Vallandigham was more stubborn, found himself the subject of considerable pressure, and encountered the possibility of attending the convention under resolution that no member of the Ohio delegation could make a speech without consent of the delegation.[95]

On August 14, the Johnsonites gathered in an unfinished "wigwam" for the opening of the convention. For the first time in years, the country witnessed a truly national convention with almost every state and territory represented.[96] The anti-radical movement blazed into a fiery display of emotional fervor as Major-General Dorius Nash Couch and Governor James L. Orr of South Carolina walked "arm-in-arm" into the convention in a undoubtedly carefully staged maneuver. As the two walked down the aisle, Browning, Randall, and Doolittle jumped to their feet, cheered lustily, and waved their hats enthusiastically.[97] As the delegates quieted down and prepared to resume their seats, Doolittle bellowed: "Three cheers for thirty-six States, and all loyal!"[98] Pandemonium broke out again. Doolittle and Randall cleverly got the convention off to a rousing start. Harmony reigned; Dix spoke, and the convention adjourned till the next

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[94] New York Herald, Aug. 13, 1866.

[95] Ibid., Aug. 14, 1866; Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 15, 1866.

[96] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 757.

[97] New York Tribune, Aug. 15, 1866.

[98] New York Herald, Aug. 15, 1866.

day after the appointment of various committees.

Later in the day, the suspicious Strong unimpressed with the Convention's enthusiasm wrote critically: "Philadelphia Convention met this morning. Rebels and Copperheads mostly." Sadly, the New York diarist sighed that General Dix was in "bad company."[99] Behind the scenes, the Southern delegates displayed unmistakable signs of political power. The delegates from Louisiana, Georgia, and North Carolina plugged for Doolittle as permanent president, and a majority of the Southern delegates "warmly" advocated the exclusion of Vallandigham.[1]

The next day, enthusiasm continued to mount; and a "storm of applause" shook the "wigwam" as Montgomery Blair proposed Doolittle as permanent president of the convention.[2] Probably, the Senator was disappointed for he had presumed "that he would be chairman of the committee on resolutions."[3] Greeley cracked at Doolittle by headlining him as the "Southern Choice for President." On the 16th, the editor of the Tribune continued to blast away at the Wisconsin Senator and asserted that Doolittle had "attained the highest summit that could "be reached by a public man" who forewook "his duty" to the loyal North "to go South for a constituency."

Before taking the chair, the Senator drew many burst of applause with a fine display of oratorical appeal to emotions; and he had his audience

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[99]Strong, Diary, IV, 97.

[1]New York Herald, Aug. 14, 1866; New York Tribune, Aug. 15, 1866.

[2]Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 16, 1866.

[3]Letter, James R. Doolittle to John Tapley, July 14, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

in "tears of joy" as he related the touching "arm-in-arm" episode. Pleased, Doolittle took the chair and ran into his first problem. One of the delegates revealed that he had a letter from Vallandigham and moved that it be read. According to the Tribune of the 16th, Doolittle looked disgusted at the mention of the noted "Copperhead's" name. In any case, the Wisconsin Senator tried to prevent the reading of the letter by asking for the unanimous consent of the delegates. One delegate objected, and Doolittle seemed pleased. However, angry supporters of Vallindigham raised an uproar, and the delegates overruled Doolittle. Carefully concealing his chagrin, the Ohio "Copperhead" withdrew in a brief address.

Vallandigham had no choice for as he himself intimated in his letter his presence would have disrupted the convention. However, the editor and the correspondents of the Tribune were impressively and openly hostile, scoffed at the withdrawal of the "Copperheads" as deceitful, and professed to see a Democratic conspiracy to control the new party. Greeley grunted that "Blair, Doolittle, Randall and Co.," were keeping the "Copperheads" quiet by promising them "office and power." A Tribune correspondent reported that "a member of the Democratic National committee" supposedly chuckled that if the convention was "only managed half right" it would "give the next Congress to the Democrats." Nevertheless, Strong wrote that the withdrawal of Wood and Vallandigham was a "good and hopeful sign."[4]

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[4] Strong, Diary, IV, 97.

In a fine display of harmony, the delegates "vehemently" cheered the reading of the President's telegram. The much maligned Johnson very wisely sent a brief, encouraging, and calm message, shied away from attacking Congress, and expressed his unshaken faith in "ultimate success."[5] Yet, this harmony was deceptive for Doolittle's work as permanent president was of incalculable value as the Wisconsin Senator kept tight rein on the speakers and "padlocked" the mouths of loose-lipped delegates. Strong noticed this evidence of Doolittle's political skill and later referred to the convention as the "silent convention."[6]

Behind closed doors, the members of the committee on resolutions were preparing the platform of the convention. There was remarkable agreement on most points, including the abolition of slavery. Impressed by the sincere Southern acceptance of abolition, Raymond remarked that if the convention could go to the country with that plank in the platform it would strengthen the conservative "case very much."[7] However, there was less harmony on a proposal to praise the Union soldiers and sailors for saving the Union.[8] The proud Confederates felt much aggrieved at the obvious indirect reference to the "disloyal Rebels." A heated discussion arose, but compromise prevented a show of disharmony on the convention floor.

An outstanding characteristic of the convention was the demonstration of Southern political power which had declined only slightly in spite of

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[5] New York Herald, Aug. 16, 1866.

[6] Strong, Diary, IV, 98, 100.

[7] "Raymond's Journal," Scribner's Monthly, XX (1880), 279.

[8] Ibid., 279-280.

the war. Instead of resolutions, the committee reported a "Declaration of Principles"[9] The declaration began on a pious note thanking Almighty God for the end of the war and the return of peace. The Declaration defiantly declared that the war had "maintained the authority of the Constitution,..., unabridged and unaltered," asserted that neither Congress nor the "general Government" had "any authority or power to deny" the right of congressional representation to any State, and urged the election of a Congress which would re-admit the Southern States. Moreover, the Declaration reaffirmed the right of each State to "prescribe qualifications for the elective franchise," proscribed secession or exclusion of any State by Congress, and solemnly vowed that the Union of the States was perpetual.

The Declaration defied the Radical pressure to secure the adoption of the 14th Amendment by asserting that "all the States of the Union" had an "equal and indefeasible right to a voice and vote" in proposing and ratifying amendments. Nevertheless, it accepted part of the amendment by proclaiming the invalidity of the rebel debts, the sacredness of the debt of the "nation," and "equal protection in every right of person and property" for "enfranchised slaves" in all the States. Noticeably absent was any sign of approval of the radical portion of the 14th amendment which disqualified the natural leadership of the South, including many of the Southern delegates at the convention. The key article declared that the Southern States did not desire nor propose to bring slavery back. In order

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[9] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 17, 1866.

to catch the soldier vote, the Declaration further recommended that the "national government" should meet promptly and fully all "just and rightful claims" of Federal soldiers and sailors, and promised "most generous and considerate care" for veterans, widows, and orphans. Finally, it recognized in Johnson a "Chief Magistrate worthy of the nation" and assured him of the convention's support.

In a prepared maneuver, undoubtedly, the reader of the Declaration omitted the article on the Southern acceptance of abolition. Whereupon, the shrewd Doolittle called attention to the omission, had the article read, and, thus, emphasized effective campaign material. Finally, Doolittle gavelled the convention to a close in a spirit of harmonious unity.

Optimism reached a truly great height as Doolittle wrote Johnson that the convention "ensured the success" of the President's "patriotic and unwavering efforts to heal the breach between the two great sections of the Union."[10] However, the moderate Republicans, such as John Sherman of Ohio, and Lyman Trumbull of Illinois, were conspicuous by their absence, had, in fact, already turned against Johnson, and decided to remain in the radical-dominated Republican party. As Charles Sumner pointed out, the Philadelphia Convention had "no constituency behind it except the Democracy."[11] Moreover, the undaunted Massachusetts Radical ventured to assert that the Republican party stood "unmoved," that the West was "very firm," and that the fall elections would vindicate Congress. As the

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[10] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 137.

[11] Quoted in Pierce, Sumner, IV, 297.

anti-radical movement reached its height with the Philadelphia Convention, the politically-sagacious Sumner hesitated to predict victory with certainty but smugly took consolation from Doolittle's fateful failure to "capture" any prominent part of the Republican party.

Shortly after the close of the convention, Doolittle and Browning hustled to Washington and called on Welles. They impressed the latter with "their success and the achievements" of the convention.[12] Then, the three hopeful conservatives hurried to the White House where Doolittle and Browning made a verbal report to the delighted President. Furthermore, Doolittle bluntly told Johnson that the delegates were most emphatic in their demand that the President bounce Stanton out of the Cabinet, and both Doolittle and Browning shrewdly suggested that Grant be present at the reception of the official committee of the convention. It was a bold move on their part to strengthen the President's hand with presence of Grant, to ignore Stanton, who would not be present, and to steal a march on the Radicals.

The next day, Doolittle and Reverdy Johnson headed the official committee at the White House and presented a copy of the proceedings of the convention to the President.[13] As Johnson began to speak, Grant walked in and significantly stood by the side of the President as Doolittle and the committee applauded. Depending on Grant's prestige and his well-known conciliatory attitude toward Robert E. Lee and the Confederates to

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[12] Welles, Diary, II, 581.

[13] New York Herald, Aug. 19, 1866.

gain the nation's approval of what he was about to say, Johnson sharply criticized "one department of the government" for making every effort to prevent "the restoration of peace and harmony in the Union." Furthermore, Johnson claimed that Congress represented only part of the States, lambasted the radical charge of executive tyranny, and defiantly declared that he had always been against "despotism." With gusto, the elated Welles wrote that the President replied "extemporaneously, but happily and well."[14] Grant's appearance at the reception was a brilliant stroke of political genius on the part of Doolittle and Browning. It startled the Radicals, threw them into a "panic," and forced them to resort to the untruthful explanation that Johnson ordered Grant to be present.[15] With the Philadelphia Convention and the reception over, the first phase of the anti-radical movement ended in startling success.

Subsequently, the delegates dispersed to duel the Radical-dominated Republican party for the voters' approval of the "Declaration of Principles." Doolittle and the other Conservatives had executed a brilliant political maneuver which seized the imagination of the country and in no way harmed the economy of the country. James Gordon Bennett of the New York Herald saw in the rise in the value of the government securities a favorable result of the "harmonious action of the Phila Convention."[16] However, Bennet was unhappy over the omission of any reference to the "financial shortcomings of Congress, its schemes and jobs, taxation and tariff." Surely, economic issues would provide effective vote-getting campaign

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[14] Welles, Diary, II, 582.

[15] New York Herald, Aug. 21, 1866; Beale, Critical Year, 305.

[16] New York Herald, Aug. 18, 1866.

material; but the Conservatives had chosen to do battle on the constitutional issue of "once a State, always a State."

Nevertheless, the latter issue was not without effect for Strong wrote that the convention had put forth a "strong, well-written address," predicted victory for the President, and thought that the "Radical project of Negro suffrage" would react in Johnson's favor.[17] The only answer to the constitutional argument of the "Johnsonists," asserted the New York Diarist, was the "proposition that Salus Populi Suprema Lex."[18] Geroge B. Smith, Madison Democratic political leader, wrote that the Philadelphia Convention had done "nobly," and that it had been "well-managed." He hoped that it would do "good."[19] In truth, the convention had aroused such a favorable feeling towards Johnson's restoration policy that the Conservatives were confident of victory in the fall elections.[20]

On the other hand, the radical journalists condemned the convention, aroused the passions of the people against the "Copperheads" and "Rebels," and upbraided the "apostate" Republicans for betraying the Union. In Wisconsin, the radical editor of the Racine Advocate rebuked Doolittle for his course and accused him of securing his re-election by political trickery.[21] Subtly, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel tarnished

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[17] Strong, Diary, IV, 98.

[18] Strong meant that the radical excuse for measures of doubtful constitutionality was that they were for the good of the loyal people.

[19] George B. Smith Diary, Aug. 17, 1866, George B. Smith Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

[20] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 758.

[21] Racine Advocate, Aug. 15, 1866.

Doolittle's reputation by printing an item about a Colorado delegate, of whom the Senator thought highly, being arrested like a common thief with a stolen bar of gold in his pocket.[22] Whether true or not, the editor had sullied the reputation and belittled the judgment of the Senator. More bluntly, the editor referred to General Darius Couch and James Orr as "political prostitutes;" and Orr, particularly was, that "perjured traitor of South Carolina."[23] There was even a plausible but detractory explanation for the withdrawal of Vallandigham and Wood. In a masterful but half-truthful harangue, the Sentinel's editor raved that the delegates forced the two "Copperheads" to withdraw "not because of their principles" but to avoid confessing that Johnson had gone "over body and soul to the enemies of the country and of human liberty." Whimsically, the radical editor enjoyed printing a quote from the Philadelphia North American about the South Carolinian who punched a Massachusetts "gentleman" in the eye.[24]

The radical journalists were most diligent in finding treasonous, belligerent, and just plain criminal politicians at the convention. With a crucial campaign in the offing, the Radicals gave the Conservatives sufficient notice to prepare themselves for a torrid and tempestuous time on the political circuit.

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[22] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 17, 1866.

[23] Ibid., Aug. 18, 20, 1866.

[24] Philadelphia North American (n. d.), quoted in Ibid., Aug. 25, 1866.

Chapter VI

Radical Flood-Tide: Election of 1866

One important fact crowned the Radicals as kingpins in the Republican party - the Republican party was a minority party through the country as a whole. Therefore, Republican politicians who had tasted the sweet fruit of political power recognized that victory for Johnson rendered inevitable a re-union of the Democratic parties of the North and South. Furthermore, ambitious politicians, loathing the "Copperhead" wing of the Democratic party or finding the gateway to political success in that party closed, willingly followed the radical Republican leadership. With the re-admission of Southern Congressmen, dark indeed, would be the future of the Republican party.

On the other hand, the Philadelphia Convention and Grant's appearance at the ensuing White House reception cast an aura of unity about the conservative Johnson cause and stamped the Radicals and their "moderate" Republican allies as sectional in sentiment and partisan in politics. Thus, for a brief time, the future looked dark for the radical cause. In Michigan the Radicals were in serious trouble, and a Johnsonite correspondent ascribed the radical difficulties in that state to the Philadelphia Convention.[1] With relish, the pro-Johnson reporter related the rows among the radical journalists. Furthermore, political observers tolled the bell of doom for the radical Senator Zachariah Chandler. The Philadelphia Convention had so seized the imaginations of the sanguine supporters of

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[1] New York Herald, Aug. 25, 1866.

Johnson that they tended to attribute every radical adversity to it. Thus, conservative hopes had soared to fanciful heights.

The elections, however, were some time away; and the Radicals were seasoned campaigners. Besides, material was plentiful for radical propaganda. Consequently, the Radicals, voracious for victory, set before the veteran, the Irish Democrat, the liberal German, and New England and Western Puritans a tasty dish of succulent sophisms.

In late August, Johnson with an impressive troupe of prominent persons left on a political pilgrimage to dedicate the new monument to Stephen Douglas at Chicago. Meanwhile, Doolittle and Governor Lewis Parsons of Alabama, continuing the arm-in-arm strategy, went to Maine to carry the fight against the Radicals in a heavily Republican state. Undoubtedly, the conservative aim was to reduce the Republican majority in the state. Otherwise, an increased majority would be tantamount to a crushing radical victory, would fragment that favorable feeling toward the President which the Philadelphia Convention had awakened, and would spur the Radicals to continue the tactics which proved to be successful in Maine. Presently, both sides threw their forces into Maine.

Against Doolittle, the Radicals pitted Senator Henry Wilson, Massachusetts Radical. On August 23, the "Bay State" Radical, deeply solicitous for the welfare of the Southern Loyalists, painted a touching picture of "loyal men" in agony under the "rebel" heel. Furthermore, the Massachusetts Radical sharply attacked Johnson for following a policy which gave control of the "Rebel region" to the "Rebels" and darkly insinuated that the "Rebels" would soon control the "whole country." Thoroughly

warmed up, Wilson, versed in verbal venom, misrepresented the Philadelphia Convention as an "assemblage of Rebels, Copperheads, and Soreheads."[2] Thus, Wilson got the radical campaign train with its freight of misrepresentation and abuse off to a rousing start.

On the same day, Doolittle and Governor Lewis Parsons "spoke earnestly in favor of the conciliatory and peace policy" of the President and defended the Declaration of Principles of the Philadelphia Convention.[3] A few days later, at Boston, the Senator delivered an "elaborate address" before an enthusiastic audience.[4] Doolittle sharply criticized radical "disunionism" and beseeched his audience to answer whether they lived in the "United States or in the dis-United States." Consequently, the campaign commenced on a caustic key. There was unusual interest in the off-year election. Furthermore, Welles noticed that an "intense partisan bitterness" prevailed and predicted that the campaign would become even more bitter.[5] Besides, the editor of the London Times declared that the Radicals had "gained the supremacy" and were "reluctant to part with it."[6] Obviously, the Radicals were in no mood to surrender their political dominion.

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[2]New York Tribune, Aug. 24, 1866.

[3]Ibid., New York Herald, Aug. 24, 1866.

[4]New York Tribune, Aug. 28, 1866; New York Herald, Aug. 28, 1866.

[5]Welles, Diary, II, 587.

[6]London Times, Aug. 31, 1866, quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 315.

Meanwhile, the President under severe provocation from radical hecklers banded words with his harrassers, rashly attacked Congress, and talked of hanging Thaddeus Stevens. Consequently, the radical editors, jubilant over the President's mistakes, spread vivid reports of his undignified encounters with the radical hecklers, and, thus, damaged the conservative cause. Sympathetically, Edwin L. Godkin of The Nation asserted that Johnson's resort to stump speeches was a "gross political mistake, in the present condition of the public mind."[7] Nevertheless, Welles pointed to the evidence of "hostile partisan manifestations," the effectiveness of Johnson's remarks "among his hearers," and the partisan political "misrepresentation" of the President's speeches.[8] In truth, the President was doing his best for the conservative cause. On another front, Johnson threw the weight of the presidential patronage into the struggle. Especially in Maine, Johnson hit hard in removing radical officeholders. However, the appointment of "Copperheads" hardly helped the conservative cause.[9]

In retaliation, the Radicals hammered at Johnson's dependency upon the Democrats and circulated the contemptible charge that the President was involved in the assassination of Lincoln. James A. Garfield, Ohio

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[7] The Nation, Sept. 6, 1866.

[8] Welles, Diary, II, 589-590.

[9] New York Herald, Aug. 30, 1866; Welles, Diary, II, 596-599; Strong Diary, IV, 105-106.

Republican Representative, declared that the Democratic press affectionately referred to Johnson as an "old-fashioned Democrat."[10] In Wisconsin, Doolittle found that the baseless charge of Johnson's complicity in the death of Lincoln had produced "such a state of phrensy and insane madness, that no man" could "read the future."[11] Nevertheless, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel circulated the calumny. Besides, the same editor, announced a reduction in the price of the paper, abused the President, and singled out the adoption of the 14th Amendment as the primary campaign issue.[12] The Sentinel editor, furthermore, announced that Doolittle would meet Matthew Hale Carpenter, one of Wisconsin's most formidable orators.[13] Within a few weeks of the Philadelphia Convention, the Radicals had recovered from their discomfiture, had taken the offensive, and were waging an effective campaign against Johnson. Senator Charles Sumner, Massachusetts Radical, wrote that New York State was the "only State" about which the Radicals were worried.[14] In early September a spirit of boisterous confidence warmed radical breasts.

The first election in Vermont went Republican, but no one seemed to care. Radicals and Conservatives, however, turned to the Maine election

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[10] Garfield, Works, I, 223.

[11] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 361.

[12] Milwaukee Sentinel, Aug. 29, 1866.

[13] Ibid., Sept. 1, 1866.

[14] Quoted in Pierce, Sumner, IV, 299.

with deep interest. As election day neared, the radical campaign grew more vigorous. Hannibal Hamlin, former Vice-President, lustily defended the radical cause, sharply attacked the President's reconstruction policy, and called him a "traitor."[15] A veritable army of radical campaigners pommeled the Conservatives with vicious vituperation and a vigorous volume of epithets. On election day in Maine, James Gordon Bennett of the New York Herald ruefully admitted that a radical victory was in the offing but desperately clung to the hope of a reduced Republican majority.[16]

Subsequently, Doolittle and Alexander W. Randall were in Wisconsin when the voters of Maine poured an avalanche of Republican votes into the election boxes.[17] The crushing Republican victory surprised even the Radicals. Uncomfortable in his pro-Johnson position, Bennett grumbled that a "number of Democratic Irish cast their votes with the radicals."[18] Thus, the radical tirades against Johnson's firm handling of the Fenian attempts to invade Canada had influenced some of the Irish to vote Republican. On the other hand, the Maine defeat scared the Conservatives. Senator James Dixon, Connecticut Conservative, wrote that the Conservatives "certainly" lost many Irish Democratic votes in Maine.[19] The thought of losing Hibernian votes in Connecticut frightened Dixon who urged Johnson

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[15] New York Herald, Sept. 7, 1866.

[16] Ibid., Sept. 10, 1866.

[17] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 11, 1866; New York Tribune, Sept. 11, 1866.

[18] New York Herald, Sept. 11, 1866.

[19] Quoted in Beale, Critical Year, 304.

to appease the Irish. However, Godkin of The Nation, skeptical of the Fenian explanation for the conservative defeat, countered with the acid allegation that the Hibernian explanation might be "only one of the excuses" which "a badly beaten party" was "apt to make."[20] Nevertheless, The Nation editor praised Johnson for his course toward the Fenians, thought that the President would lose many Irish votes in New York State, and scorned the Radicals for "cajoling the Fenians with promises of impunity in the next raid."[21] In spite of Godkin's skepticism, Johnson did lose some Irish Democratic votes in Maine. Regardless of the reason for the crushing conservative rout in Maine, the radical victory rumbled throughout the states, influenced undecided voters to support the Radicals, and threatened to start a stampede to the radical ranks.

Furthermore, some Johnson supporters started to retreat. Bennett, having great faith in public opinion, professed to see nothing "very objectionable" in the 14th Amendment, thought that Johnson's "quarrel and rupture with Congress was an unfortunate mistake," and warned the President that further opposition to the amendment would sink the conservative cause.[22] By this time, the Democratic editor of the New York World had lost patience with Bennett and accused him of deserting the Democratic party. Haughtily, the Herald editor pouted, "When did we belong to the democracy?"[23] Besides Bennett's about-face, Henry J. Raymond turned

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[20] The Nation, Sept. 13, 1866.

[21] Ibid., Sept. 20, 1866.

[22] New York Herald, Sept. 13, 19, 1866.

[23] Ibid., Sept. 22, 1866.

repentant and sought radical absolution. On the other hand, Thurlow Weed was made of sterner stuff and continued to support Johnson.[24]

Consequently, some of the Democrats lost heart.[25] The Democrats, however, were too partisan to see that their prominence in the campaign was hurting Johnson. Secretary of the Navy Welles unlimbered some burning criticism at the Democrats, lashing them for being as "demented and absurd" as the Radicals - too many Johnson candidates were conspicuous "Copperheads" or opponents of the war.[26] Consequently, Godkin of The Nation, plumbing the depths of political wisdom, wrote that the Democrats intended to rehabilitate their political fortunes "under Mr. Johnson's auspices."[27] Besides, The Nation editor paid high tribute to Doolittle's political skill. Doolittle had managed the Philadelphia Convention so well that the Democratic attempt to turn the Convention into a Democratic rally failed. Once the convention was over, however, the Democratic state organizations bulled their way into control of the Johnson movement on the state levels. Without Doolittle's supervision, the Democratic characteristic of the Johnson movement became so obvious that the public revolted against the conservative cause. Finally, Godkin sang a requiem over the corpse of the Philadelphia Convention and the Johnson movement.

In Wisconsin, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, delighted with the radical victory in Maine, twitted Doolittle about his fruitless efforts

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[24] Van Deusen, Thurlow Weed, 323.

[25] Strong, Diary, IV, 106.

[26] Welles, Diary, II, 595-596.

[27] The Nation, Sept. 27, 1866.

in the state.[28] Furthermore, the Radicals pressed for a debate between Senator Doolittle and their new paladin, Matthew Hale Carpenter. Doolittle, however, thought discretion the better part of valor, for Carpenter was a celebrated orator. The Senator preferred to tackle some less able Radical, such as his senatorial colleague, Timothy O. Howe. Although, they never did meet in oral combat, Carpenter and Doolittle briefly exchanged verbal stilettoes.

Shocked, Doolittle criticized Carpenter and expressed amazement that the latter should be on the radical side. Carpenter, asserted Doolittle, had already endorsed Johnson's policy "in the most unequivocal terms" and had urged him "to stand firmly" by Johnson.[29] Finally, Doolittle pointed to his heavy campaign engagements in other states as an excuse to avoid meeting Carpenter. Undisturbed by this charge of being a "turncoat," Carpenter boldly alluded to the "senator's chronic habit of publishing private conversations" and sharply questioned Doolittle's veracity.[30] However, Doolittle later proved that his charge was true.[31] Finally, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel demolished Doolittle's excuse by pointing out that the Senator would be in Wisconsin for a month after his out-of-state engagements. "Who's afraid of fair and honorable debate?" chortled the Sentinel editor.[32]

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[28] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 12, 1866.

[29] Ibid., Sept. 15, 1866.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Thompson, Matthew Hale Carpenter, 107.

[32] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 16, 1866.

After squirming out of the debate with Carpenter, Doolittle left for a heavy campaign tour in Pennsylvania. At the same time, the Radicals were holding a Soldiers' and Sailors' Convention in Pittsburgh. James Blaine, Republican Representative from Maine, thought the radican convention the most important one of the campaign.[33] Blaine was probably right, for the veterans were swiftly forming themselves into a compact group capable of wielding great power in national affairs. Furthermore, veterans and war heroes, such as John A. Logan and Benjamin Butler, did yeoman work for the Radicals during the campaign. As members of the Wisconsin delegation, Governor Lucius Fairchild, who had lost an arm in the war, and "Old Abe," the state's celebrated battle-scarred eagle, contributed to the dignity and prestige of the convention.[34] To add to Doolittle's woes, the Radicals had nominated General John W. Geary, war hero, for the gubernatorial contest. His Democratic opponent was Heister Clymer, a noted "Copperhead." Previously, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel had taunted Doolittle by asking the Senator if he dared to campaign against a "war hero."[35] In spite of these radical advantages, Doolittle continued to stump the state for Johnson.

Furthermore, the news of Johnson' undignified clashes with radical hecklers during "the swing around the circle," dismayed the Doolittle,

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[33] Blaine, Twenty Years of Congress, I, 230-233.

[34] New York Tribune, Sept. 22, 1866; New York Herald, Sept. 24, 1866.

[35] Milwaukee Sentinel, Sept. 18, 1866.

and he admitted that the "effect of the President's speeches" had hurt the conservative cause.[36] On September 29 at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Thaddeus Stevens slashed viciously at Johnson and Doolittle and delighted his partisan audience with a remarkable display of stinging wit. Stevens, amused over Johnson's talk of hanging him, cracked that the President's tour was a "very remarkable circus" and maliciously referred to Johnson's companions as "clowns." Moreover, the Pennsylvania Radical, taking notice of Doolittle's hard and earnest campaigning in the state, added that "in the East, they called his monkey Senator, Doolittle, because he looked so much like one."[37] Consequently, Godkin of The Nation, disgusted with Stevens' speech, deplored it as "unworthy" of the Republican cause.[38] In spite of virulent attack, Doolittle and the other Johnsonites battled the Radicals over every inch of the state.

Before the October elections, Doolittle returned to Wisconsin. On October 4, at Kenosha, he faced Howe and radical hecklers.[39] The cry of "New Orleans" rose from radical throats, and the Doolittle experienced difficulty in making himself heard. Consequently, Sherman Booth, venerable abolitionist and radical emeritus, took pity on Doolittle and graciously called upon the hostile hecklers to give the Senator a hearing. To boot, a young heckler exchanged taunts with Doolittle and finally verbally bludgeoned the Senator with the brash remark that he had served four

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[36] Letter, James R. Doolittle to "Mary" (Wife), Sept. 23, 1866, Doolittle Papers (Wisconsin State Historical Library).

[37] New York Herald, Sept. 29, 1866.

[38] The Nation, Oct. 4, 1866.

[39] Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 8, 1866.

years in the army "fighting such men" as Doolittle.

Furthermore, an "old intelligent gentleman" interrupted Doolittle's remarks on the assumption of the "rebel" debt, asserted that the Southerners "could buy up just such traitors" as Doolittle, and anathemized the Senator as a "traitor to liberty." According to the Sentinel editor's unimpeachable source, Doolittle berated the old gentleman in a very offensive manner. When Doolittle blustered that he had given one son to the Union cause, the old gentleman stopped him cold by remarking how fortunate Doolittle's son was in not having survived "to witness the shame of his father." Later, Dudley Cass, President of the Kenosha County Agricultural Society, criticized the Sentinel editor, contending that Doolittle had not been offensive toward the old gentleman.[40] Nevertheless, the same editor scoffed at the Cass' version, rested his own case on the unimpeachable "veracity" of his source, and with undiminished crust cudgeled Doolittle for addressing his patriarchal persecutor "in a very offensive and haughty manner." Undoubtedly, the editor's veracious version of Doolittle's verbal exchange with his aged adversary stamped the senior Senator as an insulter of senile citizens.

On the same day of the Howe-Doolittle "debate," Halbert E. Paine, radical candidate for Congress, raked Doolittle's past, discovered that the Senator had demanded severe punishment for "traitors," and declared that Doolittle was now in "close alliance" with "those same conspirators and traitors."[41] Against such misrepresentation and distortion, Doolittle

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[40] Ibid., Oct. 17, 1866.

[41] Ibid., Oct. 8, 1866.

was fighting a losing battle to gain a hearing for Johnson's reconstruction policy.

As Doolittle battled the Radicals in Wisconsin, the Pennsylvania campaign continued to the accompaniment of riots, burning buildings, and bloody encounters.[42] Returning to Washington from heavy campaigning in the state, Montgomery Blair foretold victory for the Conservatives.[43] On the other hand, James Gordon Bennett whined that the failure of the Philadelphia Convention "to organize a new national party" resulted in the election being a mere repetition of the Union-Copperhead campaign of the war years.[44] Furthermore, Bennett predicted more Republican victories. George Templeton Strong, New York diarist, disgusted with Johnson's "indecent demogogical blather" and appointments of the "vilest Copperheads" to office, prayed fervently for the President's defeat.[45] Bennett was right. The Republicans were victorious in Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, and Pennsylvania.[46]

Consequently, Horace Greeley of the New York Tribune, jubilant over the radical victories, insisted that the Northern states had sustained

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[42] New York Herald, Oct. 7, 1866.

[43] Welles, Diary, II, 613.

[44] New York Herald, Oct. 8, 1866.

[45] Strong, Diary, IV, 107.

[46] New York Herald, Oct. 10, 1866; (Appleton's) Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 405, 615.

Congress and that the North wanted "future guarantees against future rebellions." Furthermore, the Tribune editor pointed out that the Johnson party had not even made any progress toward winning enough seats to sustain the President's veto.[47] However, in Pennsylvania and Indiana, the Radicals elected Congressmen in some of the districts by close votes.[48]

On the other hand, the result of the October elections discouraged Orville H. Browning and Doolittle. The Wisconsin Senator felt that Johnson's speech of February 22 had cost the conservative cause 200,000 votes.[49] Browning wrote that "folly" had ruled all the conservative "movements" after the Philadelphia Convention and that Democratic efforts to use the convention as "a lever to lift the old democratic party into power was disastrous." Furthermore, Browning had warned Johnson not to make speeches on his political tour to Chicago.[50] Even Welles, bitter over the successive radical victories, stated that the Democratic insistence on having "Copperheads or men of extreme anti-war feeling" as candidates defeated the conservative cause.[51] Therefore, enough voters were voting against "Copperheadism" to insure the Radicals of victories in bitterly contested congressional districts. Consequently, the radical victories discouraged Doolittle; but being a good trouper, he carried on

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[47] New York Tribune, Oct. 11, 1866.

[48] Beale, Critical Year, 392-393.

[49] Quoted in Browning, Diary, 93 n.

[50] Letter (Copy), Orville H. Browning to Doolittle, Oct. 13, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[51] Welles, Diary, II, 615.

the campaign in Wisconsin.

At Appleton, Doolittle spoke to a large well-behaved audience; but the old power to electrify crowds was gone. At the end of Doolittle's address, the crowd gave "three rousing cheers" for Congress, Howe, and Stevens.[52] In the last weeks of the campaign, the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, clearly bent on confusing and frightening the voters, battered back at the Senator with a barrage of distortions and ugly bursts of vituperation. Johnson was not following Lincoln's policy, asserted the Sentinel editor, because Johnson had turned ten governments over to "redheaded, black-hearted, perjured traitors."[53] Furthermore, only the adoption of the 14th Amendment could prevent the federal assumption of the "rebel" debt.[54] After all, "rebel" bonds had increased in value in the English market after the Philadelphia Convention. Moreover, the Confederate bonds, raved the same editor, could easily form the basis of a corruption fund which the "Rebels" could use to buy Northern "venal renegades" and subsidize the Northern press. Thus, Doolittle's contention that the Congressmen of the North and Northwest could prevent any attempt to assume the "rebel" debt fell on deaf ears. To the effective use of clever arguments, the Radicals added the pomp and prestige of prominent speakers.

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[52] Milwaukee Sentinel, Oct. 15, 1866.

[53] Ibid., Oct. 17, 1866.

[54] Ibid., Oct. 18, 1866.

Thus, Doolittle found his match in such fiery radical campaigners as Benjamin Butler and Schuyler Colfax. Colfax, recently re-elected to the House of Representatives, ridiculed Johnson's accidental accession to the presidency and charged that John Wilkes Booth cast the only vote for Johnson for president.[55] Butler, now riding high as a respectable war hero, campaigned heavily in the state.[56] However, Butler's shady activities in Louisiana did not escape the attention of the more gifted Johnsonites. Some of the latter facetiously painted on "public places" in Waukesha a meaningful remark - "Butler is coming - look out for your spoons."[57] This "piece of blackguardism" shocked the editor of the Milwaukee Sentinel, and he severely criticized the Johnsonites for such calumny. Thus, the campaign neared the final elections in November. Godkin found "something almost alarming about the silence" which had reigned "at Washington" since the October elections.[58] Obviously, the Conservatives were a tired and practically beaten group; but they still clutched desperately to the last shred of hope.

Shortly before the November elections, Bennett trumpeted that any hope for enough Johnson victories to sustain the veto was gone.[59] On the other hand, Greeley, intoxicated with the radical October victories,

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[55] Ibid., Oct. 24, 1866.

[56] Ibid., Oct. 22, 26, 1866.

[57] Ibid., Oct. 24, 1866.

[58] The Nation, Oct. 25, 1866.

[59] New York Herald, Nov. 5, 1866.

pugnaciously declared that the November vote "must add volume to the unanimous thunder-tone" of the previous elections "which recorded a triumph over the treachery and abasement of our Chief Magistrate."[60] Cast your votes for an "honest, able, and intrepid Congress," commanded the radical Tribune editor.

The issue was never in doubt. The vote was close in some states, particularly in New York State; but the Radicals rolled up victories in almost every Northern state. Whereas Greeley asserted that the voters had answered Johnson with "Radical majorities," Bennett professed to see the elections as a "conservative" victory.[61] Furthermore, the Herald editor, confidently feeling the pulse of public opinion, warned "Stevens, Sumner, and their little disturbing radical faction" to act "wisely" and drop "into the wake of public opinion." Undisturbed by Bennett's stargazing, the Radicals claimed a popular mandate for more radical measures.

In Wisconsin, the Radicals inflicted a humiliating defeat on Doolittle and the other Johnsonites. Most humiliating was the radical sweep in Racine county whose voters gave Halbert E. Paine a sizeable majority. In the city of Racine, Charles C. Dwyer, an outspoken critic of Doolittle, rolled up a handsome majority.[62] In the congressional

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[60] New York Tribune, Nov. 6, 1866.

[61] Ibid., Nov. 8, 1866; New York Herald, Nov. 8, 1866.

[62] Racine Advocate, Nov. 7, 1866.

vote, the Radicals secured a crushing majority of 23,907, and elected 5 Republican congressmen out of 6.[63]

In spite of the inexorable gloom which compassed the conservative cause, Doolittle still hoped for ultimate victory. The Senator, however, admitted that the "elections" were "over" but believed that the Conservatives had suffered a temporary defeat.[64] Furthermore, Doolittle, unwilling to concede ultimate victory to the Radicals, predicted that the conservative cause would "live." Immediately, he planned to defeat the Radicals in the election of 1868. Godkin, on the other hand, concluded that the Republican victory was the "most decisive and emphatic victory ever won in American politics."[65]

Whereas Doolittle and Browning blamed the ambitious Democratic politicians and the "shocking" effect of Johnson's speeches, Welles added in most acid terms the bungling political tactics of Weed and Seward. Pathetically, the cabinet diarist wrote that Randall, Seward, and Weed had "deceived" Doolittle. Thus, Doolittle "softened" the call and "omitted" principles.[66]

In spite of Welles' criticism, Doolittle had drafted a call which led to the successful Philadelphia Convention. Moreover, Doolittle

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[63] Annual Cyclopaedia, 1866, 771-772.

[64] Letter (Copy), James R. Doolittle to Orville H. Browning, Nov. 8, 1866, Doolittle Papers.

[65] The Nation, Nov. 15, 1866.

[66] Welles, Diary, III, 251.

successfully prevented the Democratic politicians from seizing control of the Johnson movement at the convention or disgracing it with tactless and partisan attacks on the Republican party as a whole. Whereas, the Southern Democrats had great faith in Doolittle, the Northern Democrats were less amenable to Doolittle's discipline. Nevertheless, the Wisconsin Senator scored a tactical victory as the convention stirred the earnest desire for unity slumbering in breasts of peace-loving Northerners. There is no doubt that the tide had turned, and the Johnson movement continued to show promise for some time after the convention.

In late August, Doolittle believed in victory in the fall elections of 1866. However, he had not lost sight of the fact that the Conservatives might have to wait until 1868 for ultimate victory. Therefore, he hoped for enough Johnson victories to sustain the president's veto. The vital point is that the campaign had a least common denominator - the securing of enough victories to sustain the veto. This fact is the nub of the problem. Furthermore, time would have told in the President's favor. With enough victories to sustain the veto, the Conservatives would have had two precious years in which to work for and to fuel the inevitable reaction of the voters to "fanaticism."

Therefore, Doolittle had scored brilliantly with the Philadelphia Convention. The tide had turned. But as Godkin pointed out, once the hand of the skillful Wisconsin politician left the throttle of the conservative campaign the conservative cause fell into the hands of the "Copperheads" and other Democratic opponents of the war. Consequently, the veteran vote, probably the most important single new political group,

shifted to the radical side.

Unfortunately, it was true that the President's speeches hurt the conservative cause. Doolittle's belief that Johnson's speech of February 22 cost the conservative cause 200,000 votes lends vigor to the view that Johnson's personal frailties prevented the Johnsonites from securing a majority in both Houses for the entire radical majority in the election did not run over 400,000. Yet, when it comes to the least common denominator of securing enough seats to sustain the veto, the President's speeches were not the only factors in the loss of so many bitterly contested districts.

On the other hand, Johnson's speeches during his political tour to Chicago had an important effect on the political position of Grant. John A. Rawlins, Grant's alter ego, felt that Johnson's cause was lost and that Grant must lean to the radical side. However, Grant had not definitely gone over the radical side. Therefore, Grant was still the most likely conservative anti-Copperhead and anti-Peace-Democratic candidate. Under Doolittle's skillful leadership, the Conservatives could have secured enough victories to sustain the veto - providing that the Democrats cooperated. All the radical claptrap and vituperation would not have sufficed to prevent enough victories to sustain the veto.

Consequently, it would have been sufficient for the Conservatives merely to show an increase in congressional strength. The tremendous struggle which the Radicals waged to secure the passage of the Military Reconstruction Act indicates the degree of conservative strength in the 39th Congress. The following Congress would have been more conservative

if the Johnsonites had been more successful in the elections of 1866. Under Doolittle's leadership, the conservative cause could have achieved victory with Grant as the presidential candidate in 1868. Furthermore, Doolittle opposed only one section of the 14th Amendment - the section disqualifying Confederate leaders. His influence with the Southern Democrats might well have resulted in the adoption of the 14th Amendment without the obnoxious section. In this case, the conservative position would have been impregnable.

This, then was the promise of the Philadelphia Convention and Doolittle's leadership. The situation was not lost until the October elections. However, there was one big question - would the Northern Democrats follow Doolittle's leadership? The answer was no, and in that answer is the explanation for the military reconstruction of the South. In any case, the failure of or the impossibility of the delegates at the Philadelphia Convention to form a new political party under Doolittle's leadership practically doomed the Johnson cause.

Postscript and Evaluation

One of the most important forces in American history during Doolittle's senatorial career was Radicalism. From the very beginning, Senator Doolittle struggled against the radical doctrines of Secession and Abolitionism. As a moderate Republican of Democratic antecedents, the Wisconsin Senator staunchly supported Lincoln's efforts to defeat the radical doctrine of Secession by means of armed force. Consequently, the cauldron of war dispatched the doctrine of Secession to political oblivion.

On the other hand, Doolittle found the struggle against the Northern Radicals more grueling and less successful. Consequently, the Senator supported Lincoln's moderate Republican policy of non-interference with slavery in the states. Nevertheless, the preservation of the Union forced Lincoln, Doolittle, and the other moderate Republicans to yield to the radical demand for the abolition of slavery.

Thus, Doolittle typified the moderate Republican who reluctantly took the road to federal emancipation. Furthermore, the withdrawal of the Southern Congressmen from the national legislature placed the control of the federal government in the hands of the moderate Republicans. Consequently, the abolition of slavery and the end of the war left the moderate Republicans in a dilemma. If they followed the Lincoln-Johnson reconstruction policy and re-admitted the Southern Congressmen, the Republican party, would become a minority party. If they followed the radical congressional policy, they must accept the radical leadership and radical issues. In solving the dilemma, most moderate Republicans chose

the radical leadership and partisan politics. On the other hand, Senator Doolittle broke with the Republican party and chose to follow his principles.

Thus, Senator Doolittle forced the Radicals to resort to dubious means to obtain control of the Republican party and the national government. Moreover, Doolittle's opposition to the Radicals was crucial for the Radicals could have more easily dominated political life if they had secured his cooperation. Consequently, Doolittle's vote against radical measures, including the impeachment of Johnson, prevented a radical congressional dictatorship.

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