

A REHTORICAL ANALYSIS OF
JOSEPH L. BRISTOW'S TARIFF SPEECHES

by

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Preface

Joseph Little Bristow, junior Senator from Kansas 1909-1915, debated about the tariff issue three different times during his term in the United States Senate. In 1909 he joined with other Midwestern Senators known as the progressives, who believed that unnecessarily high tariff duties were not in the public interest. Diametrically opposed to the progressives was a group of conservative Senators from the Rocky Mountain states, the Pacific coast, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Louisiana. Calling themselves protectionists, these conservatives controlled the Senate, and their leader Nelson Aldrich from Rhode Island was the domineering chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.¹

In April 1909 the progressives and protectionists became involved in one of the greatest tariff debates in the nation's history when President Taft called a special session of Congress to modify the rates of the 1897 tariff act. More commonly known as the Dingley act, the tariff of 1897 was the longest lived of all general tariff acts of the United States, remaining in force for twelve years.² The progressives argued that the Dingley tariff fostered monopolies and was therefore a symbol of graft and greed. Consequently, they urged the lowering of duties for the new protective tariff. The protectionists attacked the "insurgent" ideas of the progressives. Aldrich's crowd accused

the progressives of reducing protective duties in an attempt to destroy the industry affected by the duty.³

Each progressive Senator chose to study one aspect of the tariff issue. Joseph Bristow concentrated his efforts on the sugar schedules. In May, 1909 he spoke about the "Tariff Rates on Sugar," and in August he explained his "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill."

Unsuccessful in their attempt to lower duties in 1909, the progressives renewed their campaign in 1911 when they introduced amendments to Taft's reciprocal trade treaty with Canada. The amendments, which called for a reduction in many rates, were again opposed by the conservatives. On July 13 in his "Reciprocity with Canada" speech Bristow explained why he could not support the Canadian bill, and on the 14th he offered his amendment to the "Duty on Sugar." However, the progressives were once again unsuccessful in their attempt at tariff reform.

The 1912 elections found a Democrat in the White House, new liberals in the Senate, and another tariff bill in Congress. Even though this latest tariff bill called for reductions in some duties, the progressives were quick to point out that the reductions were not for the consumer's benefit. Bristow remarked on "The Underwood Tariff Bill" (May 13, 1913), attacked the Sugar trust in August in "The American Sugar Industry and the Tariff," and in October presented his "Analysis of the Underwood-Simmons Tariff Bill from the Kansas Point of View."

In his six years in the Senate, Bristow presented seven persuasive speeches about the tariff issue. He spoke not only

to his Midwestern colleagues, but also to "old guard conservatives" bitterly opposed to his point of view. Therefore, it was to his advantage that he utilize strong persuasive techniques to support his case. The purpose of this study is to discover what persuasive devices Bristow employed in his tariff speeches.

The study will be divided into six chapters. Since the speeches should not be studied in isolation from the historical events at the time, chapter one will contain a historical sketch of the protective tariff as background for understanding the reasoning behind the enactment of high tariff duties and the circumstances of Bristow's involvement with the tariff. Chapter two will contain an explanation of the method of analysis, which will focus on Aristotle's artistic proofs and aspects of audience adaptation from contemporary rhetorical critics. Bristow's speeches will be analyzed in chapters three through five; the 1909 speeches about the Payne-Aldrich bill in chapter three, the speeches about the 1911 Reciprocity with Canada in chapter four, and the 1913 speeches over the Underwood-Simmons tariff in chapter five. The results of the study and a conclusion will be discussed in chapter six.

Footnotes

¹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1968), pp. 89-93.

² F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (7th ed.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1923), p. 361.

³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates on Sugar," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p.3. Pagination of entire volume is not consecutive, although pagination of each speech is.

History and Background

Early in its history America had a sparse agrarian population. In order to stimulate the growth of American industries and to encourage the establishment of factories from abroad, Alexander Hamilton advocated in 1792 that a protective tariff be imposed upon manufactured articles imported from Europe. America was a country of vast underdeveloped resources, and it was to develop those resources that he proposed protective tariffs. For one hundred and thirty years the Republican Party contended that protection was a wise policy not only to spur the development of resources, but also to protect the wages of American workmen.¹

Then, in 1908, the tide of public opinion shifted. According to Robert La Follette, progressive Senator from Wisconsin, President Theodore Roosevelt had skillfully delayed a showdown in Congress on tariff revision and therefore "that thorny problem fell to the unfortunate Mr. Taft."² Ever since 1897 the high schedules of the Dingley tariff had contributed heavily to the profits of many great trusts and had caused increasing popular resentment.³ Therefore, in its 1908 campaign platform the Republican Party promised to revise the tariff. William Howard Taft, soon to become President, pledged his efforts to secure a revision, "revision" being understood by Senator Joseph L. Bristow and the other progressive Republicans

who had supported Taft to mean primarily reduction.⁴

Accordingly, after his election, Taft called a special session of Congress in March 1909 for the purpose of modifying the Dingley tariff rates. The chamber was crowded with listeners anticipating an important tariff message. Everyone was alert as the clerk began to read Taft's message; at the end of two minutes he stopped. "There was a hush," said Robert La Follette, "an expectation that he would resume. But he laid aside the paper. A look of amazement was on every face." Bristow and the other progressives were disappointed. They had expected Taft's first paper "would be a vigorous demand for downward revision of the tariff." However, "the only thing emphasized was the importance of disposing of the tariff as quickly as possible to avoid disturbing business."⁵

During his campaign Taft had pledged to revise the tariff rates downward. After Sereno E. Payne's tariff bill passed through the House during the special session in March, Taft indicated to La Follette that he would veto any bill that failed to carry out his campaign pledge. The progressives were especially opposed to Payne's bill because it was not all that they desired even though it contained substantial reductions for many rates, (thus indicating a trend toward "real revision.") When urged by the progressives to send a special message to Congress denouncing Payne's bill, Taft replied, "I don't much believe in a President's interfering with the legislative department while it is doing its work. They have their responsibility and I have mine." But he continued encouragingly,

"You and your associates in the Senate go ahead, criticize the bill, amend it, cut down the duties--go after it hard. I will keep track of your amendments. I will read every word of the speeches you make, and when they lay that bill down before me, unless it complies with the platform, I will veto it."⁶

The progressives faced a strong opponent in Nelson Aldrich, the unflinching protectionist who headed the Senate Finance Committee. He had little regard from their point of view or for their constituencies who strongly felt that the tariffs fostered monopolies. When the tariff bill came before his committee in April, Aldrich went so far as to exclude the public from the hearings, although he conferred with representatives of the larger protected interests. Between April 10 and April 12 Aldrich's committee increased six hundred of the eight hundred rates set forth in the House version of the bill.⁷

Shocked at this turn of events, the progressives prepared for vigorous opposition by banding together. Frequent meetings found La Follette, Bristow, Johnathan Dolliver of Iowa, Albert Beveridge of Indiana, and Moses Clapp of Minnesota as "the group who worked together." It became clear to them that a bipartisan coalition would resist all important reductions in tariff rates; but even then they refused to alter their position. They continued to expose the inequities of the bill and constantly emphasized the right of the consumer to equal consideration with the manufacturer.⁸

Once involved with the tariff issue, each opponent of the Aldrich bill concentrated his efforts on a particular aspect of

the tariff schedules. Joseph Bristow chose to study the lead and sugar rates, both of which affected his constituents. At first, Bristow was not well informed on the rates and made no claim to be so. In fact he was overpowered when he entered the early debates.⁹ This first encounter, which proved to him that the progressives must first of all be informed, prompted him to write, "To become familiar with the tariff is the work of a lifetime."¹⁰

He began his work by contacting many of his former associates, who furnished him with valuable information on the sugar issue indicating that the Aldrich rates were slightly higher than the Dingley rates. Bristow's case was strengthened by Dolliver's findings that new manufacturing techniques and labor saving machines suggested protective tariffs were no longer a necessity. Consequently, the reports they received spurred the progressives to work harder than ever.¹¹ Bristow complained that he "could not find enough hours in the day or sufficient physical strength to grasp and comprehend the innumerable and intricate details of the bill."¹² On April 19, 1909, he wrote to his son Frank, who was raising poultry, "I believe I would rather take care of the chickens than to try to make a tariff, although the tariff discussion is going to be intensely interesting."¹³ Bristow became even more determined to present a strong case for the low tariff when many of his fellow Kansans including senior Senator Charles Curtis urged him to change to the high tariff side.¹⁴ Still believing tariff

reductions were in the public interest, Bristow intensified his campaign to expose the high tariff as a symbol of graft and greed.

Concentrating his efforts on the sugar issue, Bristow especially asked for the repeal of the Dutch standard, an obsolete color test that the United States had been using to grade unrefined sugar. In a speech on May 20, he called the Dutch standard "a device that enables the sugar trust to regulate the price paid to the producer of raw sugar as well as the price of refined sugar paid by the consumer." Through the use of the Dutch standard, "much of the imported raw sugar was graded so low that it had to pass through American refineries before reaching the consumer." At the same time, "the lighter, higher quality brown sugar was assigned higher rates so that its use by the consumer was not economical." Bristow explained that 110 out of 117 nations had discarded the Dutch standard in favor of a polariscope test which "measured the saccharin purity of the substance." However, he had to work persistently for three years before he defeated what he termed, "the most infamous thing that was ever put in a tariff bill."¹⁵

The debates on the tariff schedules began in May, 1909, and were as severe as the opposition to revision. With the Aldrich supporters constantly deriding the progressives, Bristow accurately described his associates' feelings about the atmosphere on the Senate floor during the debate. "When I rise, or any other man who is not subservient to the gang that runs the Senate, we are greeted with sneers and insulting remarks

from the Aldrich coterie. There never was a machine convention in the worst days of machine supremacy in Kansas that was more intolerant than this Senate machine, and I never have seen a convention in either state or county in Kansas where the participants in political controversy were so discourteous and insulting in their attitude."¹⁶ It was possible only for those who participated in the conflict to realize the tense feeling that pervaded the entire session.

Bristow himself described the situation, "We got licked on every roll call and every vote, but that still doesn't discourage us."¹⁷ Furthermore, the Senator lavished praise on his colleagues for their part in the discussions. Speaking of La Follette, he said he had "never seen a little fellow so charged with electric force and power,"¹⁸ and he exclaimed that Dolliver's speech on the cotton schedules was "the greatest speech I have ever heard."¹⁹ One Washington correspondent reported that Bristow was the "sensation of the tariff fight and brought out even better than Dolliver the unreasonable rates of the proposed bill."²⁰ But the progressives' oratorical ability could hold no more than fourteen Senators at most. Frequently support from the Democrats collapsed with more supporting Aldrich than opposing him.²¹

When the Aldrich bill passed the Senate on July 8, only ten Republicans, including some who were not progressives, voted against it. Bristow's associates were disappointed in Taft's failure to demand downward revision, but they still hoped he might do something while the bill was in conference

between the two houses.²² In a letter to William Allen White, Bristow wrote that "at heart" the President was with the progressives.²³ Beveridge wrote a similar message to his wife, "One o'clock. Just home. Saw Taft, he is with us;"²⁴ and La Follette received a comparable impression when he visited Taft at the White House, July 12. When the President asked what he was to do with the bill, La Follette replied, "Mr. President, you ought to veto it. You remember you said you would unless it was a better bill than when it passed the House. Instead of being bill, it is much worse. Hundreds of increases have been made in the Senate." When Taft asked what changes he should insist upon, La Follette outlined the duties that should be reduced. The President made notations and asked La Follette to write a letter "stating succinctly the things he thought ought to be done."²⁵

However, by July 23 other reports circulated indicating that Aldrich's forces had won. The reports were well founded, too. In the closing hours of the debates Taft left the progressive wing of his party isolated and threw his support to the Republican machine. In defense of his position, he explained that in order to carry out the rest of his legislative program he could not afford to lose the conservative wing of his party over tariff reform.²⁶

The Payne-Aldrich bill that emerged from the conference committee was still a high tariff proposal. It assigned advantages to Eastern manufacturers at the expense of producers

of raw materials in the West. The six Senators and twenty Congressmen who voted against the Payne-Aldrich bill on August 5 declared that it did not live up to the Republican's campaign promises, and leading Republican newspapers throughout the Midwest condemned it and called for the overthrow of the conservative leadership of the party. However, Taft, outraged by four months of liberal opposition and the "muckraking" press, upheld the Payne-Aldrich tariff as the best ever passed. He branded the liberals "assistant Democrats," denounced Bristow, Clapp, and La Follette as "hopelessly lost to the Administration," and refused to invite them to join the Presidential train as it toured the country in the fall of 1909.²⁷

In spite of these denunciations, Bristow and his liberal associates refrained from public criticism of Taft. In his private correspondence Bristow cautioned against an open break with the President. On September 20, 1909, he wrote to Albert Cummins of Iowa that he was "surprised" at Taft's attitude. He saw "no prospect for rest" and planned to "treat the President with respect" while fighting "for genuine and honest revision."²⁸ According to Bristow, the real issue was whether the Midwest "would accept the leadership of Aldrich, Hale, Cannon and Payne," or join the progressives in an effort to "rise against the forces of corruption and entrenched conservatism."²⁹

The tariff controversy again became a major issue in February, 1911, when the progressives became embroiled in another

legislative battle against the Administration. At that time Taft called a special session of Congress for the sole reason of introducing a reciprocity treaty with Canada which required passage through both houses. Essentially, the bill proposed that certain goods manufactured in the United States should be admitted duty free to Canada, while Canadian raw materials and farm products would be admitted duty free to the United States.³⁰ The progressives opposed this particular bill because they believed it would sacrifice American farmers to Canadian competition, while strengthening American trusts by giving them cheaper raw materials. Bristow explained why he would not support it, "As a revision of the tariff it is a deception and a fraud, as a revenue measure it is a failure, and as a free trade proposition it is neither equitable nor just."³¹

Other progressives who sympathized with Bristow joined together in June to sponsor a series of amendments to the trade bill aimed at lowering the rates on manufactured goods. They called for the reduction of tariffs in the interests of all consumers including farmers "who are compelled to carry all the burden of the President's lopsided pact."³² In an amendment introduced on July 13, 1911, Bristow attacked the sugar issue, urged the repeal of the Dutch standard, and emphasized the inequities of the Canadian bill. He argued that the treaty "takes the tariff off of the articles that are not controlled by trusts and retains the tariff on the articles that are."³³

Once again another coalition of conservative Republicans and Democrats defeated the progressives' attempt to lower tariff duties. However, to everyone's surprise the bill that was signed into law in the United States was defeated in Canada. The Liberal party there, which had agreed to it, was overthrown by the Conservatives following an election campaign in which the treaty was the sole issue.³⁴

The tariff again became a major Congressional issue in 1913. Shortly after his election Woodrow Wilson called a joint session of Congress for the purpose of revising the rates of the 1909 Payne-Aldrich tariff. Wilson was determined to make a public record through tariff reduction and had little difficulty in securing passage of the new Underwood-Simmons bill in the House. However, after the bill reached the Senate on May 9, it was delayed by long debates.³⁵

As was to be expected, Bristow was on the opposing side during the debates. His viewpoint was consistent with the position he held during Taft's administration. He remarked, "I voted against the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill. I have not changed my opinion of that measure and believe the criticisms I then made were fully justified. This bill is more indefensible from the standpoint of principle than is the Payne-Aldrich law." As further explanation that the wrong interests benefitted from reduced duties, Bristow claimed that the bill was "most hostile to the farmer, the market gardener, and the producer of livestock...the products of the giant manufacturing concerns

that our Democratic friends for half a century have been denouncing . . . are treated with generosity by this bill."³⁶

For a third time Bristow's arguments were ignored, and another tariff bill was passed and signed into law. In spite of that defeat, Bristow contributed two noteworthy accomplishments. He was finally successful in ending the use of the outdated Dutch standard for sugar tariffs, and he joined with La Follette in a move to require Senators to list their holdings that might be affected by the new tariff proposal. This resulted in the public exposure of aggressive lobbies working for higher schedules.³⁷

Joseph L. Bristow genuinely believed that protective duties were necessary to "measure the difference in the cost of production at home and abroad," to "preserve American industry" and to "protect the wages of American workmen."³⁸ But, he also believed that when duties were advanced beyond what was necessary, they ceased being legitimate protective duties. Instead of sustaining established industries the tariffs began to foster monopolies.

Throughout his term in Congress Bristow was sincere in his opposition to unnecessary advancements in tariff duties. He constantly tried to curtail the power of vested interest groups, and he fought for honest downward revision when he thought it was in the public interest. While he gathered information on many tariff schedules, Bristow gave the most thorough study to the sugar issue, on which he delivered seven persuasive speeches

before Congress. The questions then arise as to (1) what persuasive devices may be found in his speeches and (2) how did Bristow's rhetoric affect his audience? The following chapter will explain a method of analysis for examining his tariff speeches in order to answer these questions.

Footnotes

¹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates on Sugar," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 3.

² Robert M. La Follette, La Follette's Autobiography: A Personal Narrative of Political Experiences (Madison, Wis.: Robert M. La Follette Co., 1913), p. 436.

³ F. W. Taussig, The Tariff History of the United States (7th ed.; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1923), pp. 361-75.

⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, pp. 3-5.

⁵ Robert M. La Follette, Autobiography, p. 438.

⁶ Bela C. La Follette and Fola La Follette, Robert M. La Follette (New York: MacMillan Co., 1953), p. 273.

⁷ La Follette and La Follette, p. 273.

⁸ La Follette and La Follette, p. 428.

⁹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1968), 90-91.

¹⁰ Joseph Bristow personal letter to L. A. Hodge, April 5, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 91.

¹¹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 91.

¹² Joseph Bristow personal letter to E. C. Manning, April 23, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 91.

¹³ Joseph Bristow personal letter to Frank Bristow, April 19, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 91.

¹⁴ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, pp. 91-92.

¹⁵ A. Bower Sageser, p. 93.

¹⁶ Joseph Bristow personal letter to Harold Chase, May 22, 1909, cited by La Follette and La Follette, Robert M. La Follette, pp. 274-75.

¹⁷ Joseph Bristow personal letter to D. A. Valentine, May 14, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 92.

18 Joseph Bristow personal letter to George M. Hull, May 15, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 92.

19 Joseph Bristow personal letter to Fred Jackson, May 15, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 92.

20 Quoted in the Kansas City Star, May 9, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 92.

21 Joseph Bristow personal letter to George Innes, May 15, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 92.

22 Bela C. La Follette and Fola La Follette, Robert M. La Follette, pp. 276-77.

23 Joseph Bristow personal letter to William Allen White, June 8, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 93.

24 Albert J. Beveridge personal letter to Mrs. Beveridge, June 12, 1909, cited by La Follette and La Follette, Robert M. La Follette, p. 277.

25 Robert M. La Follette, Autobiography, p. 451.

26 A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 94.

27 George E. Mowry, The Era of Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Harper, 1958), p. 246-47.

28 Joseph Bristow personal letter to Albert B. Cummins, September 20, 1909, cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 95.

29 Undated manuscript in Bristow Papers cited by Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 96.

30 F. W. Taussig, Tariff History of the United States, p. 414.

31 Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada and the Duty on Sugar," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 2.

32 Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 2.

33 Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 3.

34 F. W. Taussig, Tariff History of the United States, p. 414.

35 A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 135.

36 Joseph L. Bristow, "The Underwood Tariff Bill," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, pp. 1-2.

37 A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 137.

38 Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates on Sugar," p. 4.

Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to construct a method of rhetorical analysis. Rhetoric is defined by Aristotle as "the faculty (power) of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion."¹ The method of rhetorical analysis will be used to discover the means of persuasion that Joseph L. Bristow utilized in his tariff speeches.

The speeches to be considered are deliberative. According to Aristotle, political (deliberative) oratory is concerned with future events, and the point at issue is something we should or should not do.² In his speeches Bristow sought to persuade his fellow Senators to accept his point of view about passing, amending, or eliminating a law. Therefore, his speeches fall within the range of political or deliberative oratory.

All deliberative discourses are concerned with what we should choose or what we should avoid. Aristotle observed that the end which determines what men choose and what they avoid is happiness and its constituents. Therefore, he considered the ultimate special topic for deliberative discourse to be future happiness.³

The speaker who utilizes arguments relating to happiness and its elements exhorts someone to do something that is either good (worthy of being pursued for its own sake) or expedient (a relative good because of what it can do for us or what we

can do with it.)⁴ In Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, Edward P. J. Corbett explains the difference between the good and the expedient. He observes that "it is easier to demonstrate that the study of poetry is a good in itself than to demonstrate that the building of a bridge is a good in itself. In the latter case it would be wiser to exploit the topic of the advantageous. One is more likely to impress the taxpayers by demonstrating the usefulness of such a bridge than by showing its aesthetic value."⁵ So, in order to persuade, the speaker must prove that his point of view is either good in itself or advantageous to many.

On the other hand, the speaker who dissuades employs arguments relating to unhappiness and its elements. He contends that the proposal urged by the opposition is unjust and explains how that particular proposal contains no elements of the worthy or expedient. Finally, he argues that this proposal has not the importance the opposition gives it.⁶

In accomplishing this Aristotle said that a speaker persuades others by three means: 1. by the appeal to their reason (logos), 2. by the appeal to their emotions (pathos), and 3. by the appeal of the speaker's personality or character (ethos). The speaker may use one of these means predominantly or may use all three. The specific means will be determined by the nature of the speaker's thesis, by current circumstances, and by the kind of audience he is addressing. Before he speaks on any given subject, a speaker must consider the strategies

of each of the means of persuasion.

The first mode of persuasion is logos, the appeal to reason. Aristotle observed that the most important ingredient of a speech is rational demonstration through severe argumentation, that intellectual substance (knowledge, meaning, thought) has been and continues to be the core of communication, and that a speaker appeals to his audience's reason or understanding when he utilizes the rational appeal.⁷

The orator reasons by utilizing either deductive or inductive arguments or arguments by example. Aristotle explained that the latter is best suited to deliberative discourse.⁸ In this method of logical persuasion the speaker cites an example analogous to the present situation. The argument by example does not really prove anything, for frequently the example leads to a mere probability. But if the probability is what usually happens or what is believed to happen, the example has persuasive value.⁹

In the instance of argument by example, evidence is the material used to establish proof. It may include the testimony of individuals, personal experiences, tables of statistics, illustrative examples, or any so-called factual items which induce in the mind of the hearer a state of belief, i.e., a tendency to affirm the existence of the fact or proposition to which the evidence attaches and in support of which it is introduced.¹⁰

Therefore, the function of rhetoric is to persuade an

audience. And in matters where the truth cannot be readily ascertained, rhetoric can persuade an audience to adopt a point of view or a course of action on the basis of the merely probable, that is, on the basis of what usually happens or what people believe to be capable of happening.

A second means of persuasion is the emotional appeal. Aristotle explained that this occurs when "persuasion is effected through the audience, when they are brought by the speech into a state of emotion; for we give very different decisions under the sway of pain and joy, and liking and hatred."¹¹ So, if the orator is to play upon man's emotions, he must know what these emotions are and how they can be triggered or subdued. In Book Two of The Rhetoric Aristotle listed these emotions and their opposites: anger (placability), hate (love), fear (confidence), shame (shamelessness), benevolence (lack of benevolence), pity (indignation), envy (emulation).¹² Corbett explains how the orator can elicit those emotions.

Corbett writes that an orator must get at the emotions indirectly. He cannot arouse an emotion, either in himself or in others, by thinking about it directly. He must arouse emotion by contemplating the object that stirs the emotion. So if he seeks to arouse the anger of an audience, he must describe a person or a situation that will make his audience angry. His description is calculated to stir emotion in the audience by appealing to their imagination; and the imagination can be seized in this kind of word-painting by the use of sensory,

specific detail. He explains that another method used by speakers to stir emotions does not so much "earn" an emotional response as it "begs" for one. This is the method that relies for its effect mainly on the use of emotion-laden words. The speaker utilizes words with favorable or unfavorable connotations that will touch an audience.¹³

So, because rational appeals are often not enough to move an audience to action, an orator must conjure up the scene, situation or person that will make his audience experience the desired emotion. Therefore, the emotional appeal plays a vital part in the persuasive process.

The third mode of persuasion is ethos, the ethical appeal. All of an orator's skill in convincing the intellect and moving the will of an audience can prove futile if the audience does not esteem and cannot trust the speaker. This is especially true for deliberative discourse. Quintilian felt that of the three kinds of rhetorical discourse, deliberative oratory had the most need for the ethical appeal. As he said in Institutio Oratoria, "For he who would have all men trust his judgement as to what is expedient and honorable, should possess and be regarded as possessing genuine wisdom and excellence of character."¹⁴

Aristotle explained that the ethical appeal stemmed from the character of the speaker. "The character of the speaker (ethos) is a cause of persuasion when the speech is so uttered as to make him worthy of belief." Therefore, if a speaker can

create the impression that he is a man of intelligence, benevolence, and probity, he can gain the trust and admiration of his audience. And, continues Aristotle, "It is not true, as some writers on the art maintain, that the probity of the speaker contributes nothing to his persuasiveness; on the contrary, we might almost affirm that his character (ethos) is the most potent of all the means of persuasion."¹⁵

How then can a speaker convince his audience that he is a man of sound sense, high moral character, and benevolence? If a discourse is to exhibit an orator's good sense, it must show that the speaker has an adequate grasp of the subject he is deliberating, that he observes the principles of valid reasoning, that he is capable of viewing a situation in the proper perspective, and that he has good taste and discriminating judgement. If a discourse is to reflect the orator's moral character it must display his abhorrence of unscrupulous tactics and faulty reasoning, his respect for the commonly acknowledged virtues, and his adamant integrity. Finally, if the discourse is to manifest the orator's good will, it must display his sincere interest in the welfare of his audience and his readiness to sacrifice any self-glorification that conflicts with the benefit of others.¹⁶

Therefore, the entire discourse must maintain the image that the speaker hopes to establish. To be effective the ethical appeal must be persuasive throughout the discourse. The speaker's entire persuasive effort may be destroyed by a single

lapse from good sense, good will or moral integrity.

While the ethical appeal is maintained throughout the discourse as a whole, there may be found places in the discourse where the speaker makes an obvious attempt to establish his credibility. The two most conspicuous places are in the introduction and conclusion. The speaker does not explicitly announce that he is seeking to impress or placate his audience, but his effort is nonetheless calculated.

The ethical appeal, therefore, has an important role in the persuasive process. The most clever and sound argument can be ignored by an audience who reacts unfavorably to a speaker's character. Aristotle recognized the importance of ethos in persuasion and so did Cicero and Quintilian with their insistence of "the good man speaking well."¹⁷

Aristotle was shrewd enough to see that an orator bases persuasive arguments not only on what usually or generally happens but also on what people believe to be true. For that reason, the orator who seeks to persuade a select audience must inform himself of the generally held opinions of that group. In Book Two of The Rhetoric Aristotle emphasized that the orator must be aware of the nature of various forms of government, the characteristics of different periods of life (youth, middle age, old age) and of different conditions of life (wealth, poverty, education, illiteracy, health, sickness).¹⁸ Essentially, he is stressing the idea that the speaker who is aware of the disposition of people at various ages and in various conditions of life can

adapt his tone and his sentiments to fit his audience. In Kenneth Burke's terms, the orator is "identifying" with his audience. Burke wrote in A Rhetoric of Motives, "You persuade a man insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his."¹⁹

Hugh Duncan expands the idea of identification in Communication and Social Order. Explaining how a speaker can utilize the identification concept, he says, "The speaker persuades through stylistic identification, in which he tries to identify himself with the audience's interests; and the speaker in turn draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and the audience."²⁰

Another contemporary viewpoint of the identity concept is found in Dorwin Cartwright's study, "Achieving Change in People: Application of Group Dynamics Theory." The unifying concept of Cartwright's study is identification by individuals with a group. Stating the general proposition that "the behavior, attitudes, beliefs, and values of the individual are all firmly grounded in the groups to which he belongs," Cartwright concluded that whether an individual will change or resist change will depend upon the groups to which he is or aspires to be a member.²¹ Cartwright developed a set of principles that aided in the understanding of how a persuader can use a group to persuade. His principles will be employed as a tool for discovering Bristow's relationship to various groups and his use of the

group as a medium of change. The following principles from the study will be employed:

1. "If the group is to be used effectively as a medium of change, those people who are to be changed and those who are to exert influence for change must have a strong sense of belonging to the same group"
2. "The more attractive the group is to its members the greater is the influence that the group can exert on its members"
3. "In attempts to change attitudes, values, or behavior, the more relevant they are to the basis of attraction to the group, the greater will be the influence that the group can exert upon them"22

Cartwright's principles of group identification can be used as a tool for understanding Bristow's means of achieving persuasion. Identification according to Duncan is that "mystical moment in which we commit ourselves to act under a certain name."²³ Identification with a particular group can exert change on individual actions.

In summary, the method of rhetorical analysis must be specifically adapted to deliberative discourse. It must focus on the process the orator uses to prove a policy expedient or not expedient. The purpose of each speech will be located. Bristow's selection and arrangement of persuasive appeals will

be analyzed. The speaker's relationship to various interest groups in the Senate will be discussed. Finally, the influence of the group as a medium of change will be examined.

Footnotes

- ¹ Aristotle, The Rhetoric of Aristotle, trans. Lane Cooper (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, 1932), p. 7.
- ² Aristotle, p. 17.
- ³ Aristotle, pp. 18-19.
- ⁴ Aristotle, p. 29.
- ⁵ Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 134.
- ⁶ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, p. 233.
- ⁷ Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism (2nd. ed.; New York: Ronald Press Co., 1970), p. 388.
- ⁸ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, p. 233.
- ⁹ Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric, p. 69.
- ¹⁰ Lester Thonssen, A. Craig Baird, Waldo W. Braden, Speech Criticism, p. 399.
- ¹¹ Aristotle, Rhetoric, p. 9.
- ¹² Aristotle, pp. 90-131.
- ¹³ Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric, pp. 87-90.
- ¹⁴ Edward P. J. Corbett, p. 80.
- ¹⁵ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, p. 9.
- ¹⁶ Edward P. J. Corbett, Classical Rhetoric, p. 81.
- ¹⁷ Edward P. J. Corbett, p. 80.
- ¹⁸ Aristotle, The Rhetoric, pp. 131-141.
- ¹⁹ Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 55.
- ²⁰ Hugh D. Duncan, Communication and Social Order (New York: Bedminster Press, 1962), p. 154.

²¹ Dorwin Cartwright, "Achieving Change in People: Some Applications of Group Dynamics Theory," Human Relations, IV, p. 387.

²² Dorwin Cartwright, pp. 338-390.

²³ Hugh D. Duncan, Communication and Social Order, p. 112.

Analysis of Joseph Bristow's 1909 Speeches

At its 1908 national convention the Republican party adopted a platform calling "unequivocally for the revision of the tariff immediately following the inauguration of the next President."¹ A few months later in October, William Howard Taft, Republican candidate for President, expressed his view of revision, "After ten years' operation of a particular schedule, it ought to result that the cost of production in this country is much less . . . and therefore the duties ought to be reduced."² Accordingly, after his election, Taft called a special session of Congress in March, 1909 for the expressed purpose of revising the tariff rates downward as his party had promised. In the House version of the bill a number of rates were substantially reduced, but when the bill reached the Senate, the Finance Committee not only reinstated the original high rates but also raised a number of others. Instead of a general downward revision of duties the new Payne-Aldrich bill contained increases for over 600 rates. Disappointed with the Finance Committee's revisions, Joseph Bristow and other Midwestern Senators joined in opposition to the Payne-Aldrich bill. In the ensuing debates Bristow delivered two noteworthy speeches which will be analyzed in this chapter.

Early discussion of the Payne-Aldrich bill had been proceeding on the assumption that Senators who "endeavored to

reduce an existing duty were attempting to destroy the industry affected by the duty." Furthermore, Aldrich's group declared that the progressives were "making an assault on the protective tariff system" Therefore, when Bristow began his May 26 speech, "Tariff Rates on Sugar," it was important for him to immediately establish his credibility by identifying with the group in power. He identified himself as a "Senator . . . interested in preserving the sugar producing industry," as a Republican "earnestly devoted to the fundamental principles of the party," and as a protectionist because he believed "it is a wise policy."³

In order to be successful in his attempt to amend the tariff bill, Bristow had to persuade his colleagues that he belonged to the same group and shared the same interests as the originators of the bill. He aligned himself with the old guard Republicans favoring protection when he said, "We contend today, as a party that protection is a wise policy when it can be used to develop an underdeveloped resource." He continued by firmly declaring himself in favor of imposing a tariff "equal to the difference in the cost of the unit of production here and abroad," and he even championed the idea of giving American industry ample opportunity to compete with foreign markets.⁴ Up to this point he aligned himself with the powerful conservative leaders in the Senate, but with his next remarks he alienated himself from the group with which he earlier sought identity.

Openly declaring himself against the Finance Committee's high duties that "gratified the greed of men in control of the

industry," Bristow defended his fellow progressives from insinuations that they were "against the protective policy." In addition, he branded the men (implying Aldrich) who demanded increased duties as "the worst enemies of protective policy," and concluded that instead of trying to make the protective policy a symbol of prosperity and progress, the old guard was "making it the symbol of graft and greed."⁵

After he established himself as a stanch opponent of the Payne-Aldrich bill, Bristow offered two amendments to the bill. In evaluating Bristow's remarks, one must keep in mind the purpose of the amendments, for the purpose controlled his selection and adaptation of persuasive materials.

The purpose of the first amendment was to abolish the Dutch standard, a device established by the Dutch government in the early 1800's for measuring the purity of raw sugars imported into Holland from the West Indies. A number of other nations, including the United States, adopted the standard because at that time there was no method of testing the purity of sugar except by color. According to the standard, the lower colors, on a scale of 1 to 20, represented the baser sugars while the higher colors represented the purer sugars. Later during the development of the sugar industry the polariscope test was adopted, and was considered very accurate because it measured the actual saccharine purity of sugar. Therefore, believing it expedient to solely rely on the polariscope test, Bristow adamantly urged the abolition of the Dutch standard.⁶

He reasoned that he could best achieve his purpose if he

supplied logical instances exemplifying the expediency of repealing the color test. Consequently, he utilized the rational appeal to examine a number of analogous instances where he considered the standard to be a liability, and he made the generalization that it should therefore be eliminated.

His first argument was that the standard was obsolete and unscientific because "color does not measure the purity of sugar . . . a sample may be light in color but low in saccharine quality."⁷ Knowing that his assertion alone would not convince hostile members of his audience, he cited authoritative testimony from Dr. Harvey W. Wiley of the Agriculture Department. Writing not as a political economist or as a legislator but as a scientist in 1898, eleven years prior to Bristow's amendment, Wiley said,

"From a strictly scientific point of view, the only objectionable feature of the sugar schedule is the Dutch standard of color. In former times, when the Dutch merchants dealt only in Java sugars, and the polariscope was not in commercial use, the color standard was a useful method of discriminating between sugars of different saccharine strength. Now it is possible to make a nearly white sugar which will not give a polariscope reading of above 85, and a very dark one--below No. 16, in fact--which will polarize nearly 100."⁸

As further proof that the Dutch standard no longer had commercial value, Bristow cited Kelley's Customs Tariffs of the World, 1908 as the source which listed the nations that had abandoned the Dutch standard in testing sugar. He found that "only 8 nations out of 45" used the standard in any way whatever, "that not a leading nation of Europe used it" and that "Holland

herself has abandoned it."⁹

Bristow supplemented his first argument with one which undoubtedly antagonized the group in power. He contended that the standard perpetrated fraud thus implying that those conservative Senators who favored the standard favored fraudulent activities. His argument was that the standard was introduced into law for the "purpose of preventing lighter grades of raw sugar coming into the market at the duty they would come in under according to the polariscope." Therefore, in order to market raw sugar without paying the excessive duties imposed by the standard, the manufacturer would use lime to discolor his sugar so it would come in at a lower rate.¹⁰ That was what he considered to be "fraud." He once again relied on Wiley's impartial testimony that evasion existed. According to Wiley,

"It is a pitiable spectacle to see a great nation, the largest sugar consumer in the world, confiding the standard of revenue from this great staple to an irresponsible foreign broker. The makers of sugar the world over will fill the orders from the importers of this country with a product over or under No. 16, as may be desired. The grade of color will have no consistent relation to saccharine strength. It is easy to see that there will be no burning desire among our importers to pay the differential of 12.5 cents per hundred pounds. When, by dumping a little molasses or lime into the kettle during manufacture, the same saccharine grade of sugar can be secured with a dark color, and that amount of duty saved."¹¹

Bristow's final argument was that the standard served the interest of the sugar trust. In this instance he identified himself with the consumer. He explained that when importers adulterated raw sugar to escape the high duties of the color

test, their sugars had to pass through American refineries before reaching the consumer. He emphasized a number of times that the "refinery takes a toll of about 90 cents per hundred pounds from the American people," and he asked the Senate if it thought it was "justified in keeping such a provision."¹²

His arguments were sound. He reasoned that the standard was an obsolete color test, that it kept high quality raw sugar from being economical, and that it forced imported sugar to pass through American refineries, thus increasing the cost to the consumer. Therefore, he concluded, it would be expedient to eliminate the law. While his reasoning was sound, he failed to persuade powerful conservative Senators that the Dutch standard should be abolished because he simply identified with the wrong groups. He was a protectionist until tariff duties were increased past the point of "legitimate protection." He was an "insurgent" progressive who attempted to lower duties of the Payne-Aldrich bill. He sided with the consumer against an obsolete color test, and he attacked an American industry located in a state represented by a conservative.

Bristow, having previously established himself as a progressive favoring downward revision of duties, proceeded to offer his second amendment to reduce the duty on pure 100⁰ (refined) sugar. The original duty was \$1.95 per hundred pounds; the House bill reduced the duty to \$1.90; Bristow proposed it be amended to \$1.82 $\frac{1}{2}$. The purpose of his amendment was to take away what was termed the "differential," that is the difference

in the duty of raw sugar compared to the cost of that sugar after refining.¹³

He attempted to re-identify with the group in power by explaining that, like them, he did not wish to harm an American industry, but he wanted to change the law. He stated, "I have no desire to strike at the American Refining Company any more than I would at any other institution that has, as a result of the phraeseology of the law, an opportunity to take an unfair advantage of the commercial conditions and reap an unjust and exorbitant profit for handling a staple commodity."¹⁴ However, his contention that it was not the producer or American consumer but rather the refiners who benefitted from the differential probably appeared to the conservatives to be a direct attack on the sugar industry.

Laying the foundation for his arguments against the differential, Bristow first traced the history of the differential and cited figures from actual transactions. He explained that "when the Dingley bill was passed we imported sugars from many countries, and all of them paid the full duty provided--\$1.685 on 96⁰ sugar; so that the differential at that time between 96 sugar and refined sugar was 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ cents--the difference between \$1.685 and \$1.95." However, the United States entered into reciprocal trade agreements so that "less than one-third of the sugar imported into the United States paid the full duty in 1908. The other two-thirds came in free (Puerto Rico) or with a concession of 20 (Cuba) or 25 (Philippines) per cent." He

argued that the reciprocal agreement had the effect of lowering the average duty on raw sugar, furthermore he provided statistics as evidence: "The duty paid last year was \$1.277 per hundred pounds. Ten years ago it was \$1.685. The duty on refined sugar has remained at \$1.95, so that the differential under the law as it exists is 67.3 cents."¹⁵

After establishing the differential at 67.3 cents, Bristow announced that "the large beneficiaries of the tariff reductions that have been made to tropical countries have been the sugar refiners and not the public."¹⁶ He emphasized this premise throughout his speech.

Bristow's explanation that the refiner was the sole beneficiary of the differential undoubtedly appeared to the conservatives to be another attack against the industry. Furthermore, it was possible that they saw Bristow siding with such groups as sugar producer, government, and consumer against the American refiner. The Kansan stated that "the refineries beat down the Cuban and Puerto Rican prices." He explained that the government lost revenue "because the American refiners were so greedy . . . they reduced the price so low that it was more profitable to Cuban planters to market in Great Britain than in New York."¹⁷ He exemplified how United States sugar producers were at the mercy of the trust because the trust had "driven down the price of sugar in Louisiana from 30 to 40 cents a hundred pounds below the world's market."¹⁸ And, finally he explained the American consumer still paid high prices in that "every dollar taken from the Cubans has been paid to the

refiner and he in turn has not yielded anything of consequence to the American consumer."¹⁹

Each example he used probably further infuriated the Senate leaders whom he needed to identify with if he hoped to pass his amendments. Knowing how they might react to his reasoning, he concluded by reaffirming his identity as a Senator interested in changing a law not destroying an industry. He stated,

"I am here asking the Senate not to injure a legitimate American enterprise, not to destroy any American institution that has been built up under the protective policy, not to antagonize the findings of the Committee on Finance; but to change this phraeseology, thereby permitting the American market to be opened somewhat to the sugars that might come in from other countries, or in competition with the sugar refineries."²⁰

The conclusion he wanted his colleagues to reach was that it would be expedient to adopt his amendment to lower the differential. However, Aldrich's powerful Eastern cabal came to a different conclusion. They assumed that because Bristow wanted to eliminate the Dutch standard and lower the differential he was an insurgent who aimed at destroying the sugar industry. None of his attempts at identification with the conservatives were persuasive enough to convince them to adopt his amendments.

Although the tariff fight in May was severe, the progressives remained undaunted. Bristow himself explained, "We got licked on every roll call and every vote, but still that doesn't discourage us."²¹ Therefore, it was not surprising that he delivered another speech, "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill," in August while the bill was in conference between the

House and Senate.

In an attempt to identify himself as a loyal Republican Bristow began his speech by reading selected passages from the Republican national platform and from Taft's campaign addresses. In referring to the tariff, the platform read that "protection is best maintained by the imposition of such duties as will equal the difference between the cost of production at home and abroad." Taft's understanding of the platform, repeated many times during the campaign, was that "all industries that need it (protection) shall be protected by a customs tax equal to the difference between the cost of production here and abroad." Having established the purpose of the protective tariff, Bristow declared himself "in absolute accord with the declarations of the President," and stated he was "now ready to vote for any duty that is provided in this bill upon such a basis."²²

However, Bristow explained that Aldrich's Finance Committee, which had been assigned to determine "whether the duties recommended were in harmony with the declarations of our Republican national platform and the pledges of our candidate for the Presidency," failed to furnish any evidence that the bill which they presented had been "formulated in harmony with the pledges made." On the other hand, he identified himself as a loyal Republican Senator who had "endeavored to carry out faithfully the pledges which my party made." Being in accord with his President, he had voted for a protective duty when he "believed it measured the difference in the cost of

production at home and abroad," and he had "voted against duties that were excessively high and measured more than the cost of production" ²³ His remarks, which were intended to discredit the Finance Committee, the group in power, provoked Aldrich and his supporters to work harder than ever to stop the insurgent movement.

Hoping that he had established himself in accord with his President and in opposition to Aldrich's "legislative pirates" Bristow was ready to state the purpose of his speech. He explained that he could not vote for the bill because it did not conform "to the pledges made by the Chicago convention and reiterated by the party leaders in the campaign." In addition, he claimed that many duties represented "much more than the difference in the cost of production . . . and the most excessive rates in the existing law have not been reduced, but on many important items greatly increased." He hoped to arouse indignation against the Finance Committee for increasing rates when figures supplied by the Department of Labor and Commerce proved that the rates had been increased "far in excess of the difference in the cost of production." He developed examples aimed at sustaining a feeling of indignation against the bill and its sponsors. Furthermore, he hoped to appeal to the Republican's sense of duty by reminding them that the high rates were in "direct violation of pledges made to the people in this campaign." ²⁴

Finding that 14 per cent of the duties on chemicals, oils

and paints were increased while 78 per cent of the high rates were maintained,²⁵ the Senator developed an example aimed at evoking anger and indignation against the bill and its sponsors. He argued that the products from which paints were made were charged excessive duties. According to his findings,

"The duty on pig lead is fixed at \$12.50 a ton more than the duty on the lead in the ore, while the evidence shows that the entire cost of reducing the lead from ore to pigs does not exceed \$8 per ton and the maximum difference in the cost of such reduction in this country over that in any other country in the world does not exceed \$4. Yet in this bill a duty of \$12.50 a ton is provided to cover that difference."²⁶

This example had persuasive value to the consumer who was charged the resulting exorbitant prices, but Aldrich viewed it as an insurgent attack against his Republican machine.

In another instance, Bristow noted that some schedules did show an overall reduction in duties but that the reduction was misleading. The schedule on metals showed an insignificant reduction of "a little over 1 per cent" which was made on articles that did not need protection because "they were made in this country as cheaply or more cheaply than in any other country in the world." However, he noted that the benefit that might have come from the reductions was taken away by a 40 per cent increase on structural steel. Here he attempted to evoke pity for the consumer who would be charged higher prices for such necessities as cast iron vessels, razors, watch movements, and electric light bulbs.²⁷

Continuing to attack the Finance Committee, Bristow

explained how insignificant duties had been lowered while the duties that protected vested interests had been raised. He explained that although the lumber schedule had been reduced 2 per cent overall, the home builder would receive little benefit because of "unwarranted increases of 66 per cent in the duty on shingles and 33 1/3 per cent on heavy timbers."²⁸ He wanted his colleagues to realize that they represented home builders who would be charged higher prices for lumber products.

Like most progressives, Bristow was not a free trader. However, when he discussed the schedule on lumber he argued that the Committee had proposed a shortsighted policy that would hasten the exploitation of a great natural resource. Speaking as an ecologist he explained why he thought that any duty on lumber was indefensible,

"There is practically no difference in the cost of production here and in Canada, and, in addition to that, our forests are being depleted and are fast disappearing. They should be preserved. Nor is this slight reduction in the lumber schedule what the people expected or what they had a right to expect. Lumber should be admitted free. This we owe not only to ourselves, but to our children. The supply upon which they depend in the future we are by our present policy ruthlessly wasting."²⁹

This example, which appealed to the public and Democrats favoring free trade, did not move the ultra-high protectionists who represented the manufacturers.

The next schedule the Senator discussed was the one relating to sugar and molasses. Disappointed that his amendments had not been adopted in May, Bristow struck out at the bill for containing "all the indefensible features of the Dingly law."

He hoped to arouse indignation against the bill by using emotion laden words that compared the refiners to tyrants. He realigned himself against the refiners "who levied a tribute upon the American people for the purpose of enriching themselves." Airing his disappointment that the schedule had not been readjusted, he claimed that "the graft of the band of criminals that sit around the table of the board of directors of the American Sugar Refining Company is by this bill to be continued."³⁰ His open attack on an American industry probably convinced the conservatives that he was determined to destroy that industry.

Moving to a discussion of the schedule which related to agricultural products, the Kansas progressive endeavored to evoke pity for the farmer and indignation toward the Eastern Senators who had removed the principle duty from which the farmer had received any benefit. Bristow furnished statistics showing that the duty on hides was abolished while the duty on finished leather goods was increased 5 to 15 per cent.³¹ By continuing to cite increases on a number of other schedules, Bristow hoped to sustain a feeling of anger toward the Finance Committee. His statistics showed that the duty on wool was 3 to 5 times the difference in the cost of production.³² Showing that the duty on cotton goods increased from 44.84 to 50.62 per cent, Bristow contended that the bill seemed "to be drawn wholly in the interest of the makers of cotton cloth." He reminded the Senate that the cotton manufacturers were located in New England, the same states represented by Aldrich's forces.³³ According to Bristow the paper and pulp schedules also seemed to be made

in the interests of the manufacturers. As support, he cited a House Committee report which clearly showed that the United States was manufacturing paper as cheaply as Canada, its nearest competitor. The committee recommended a \$2 per ton duty, but "the mill owners wanted more . . . the increased duty was given."³⁴ No doubt the New England Senators were outraged at Bristow's statement that their manufacturers profitted at the public's expense. However, Bristow's arguments were based on fact and supported by the Department of Labor's statistics.

Directing his arguments to the Senators whose constituencies would be affected by the high duties, he asked how they could "pay this tribute without complaint of protest." He surmized that if the Senators representing other sections of the country were as devoted to their constituencies as New England's Senators were to the manufacturers, the bill would be defeated. It is possible that with these remarks Bristow antagonized a number of Senators. He explained that because the New England states had such great political and financial power, other Senators hesitated to contend against it. He assumed that they apparently preferred to "content themselves with the favors that New England's industrial and political leaders see fit to bestow upon them." Bristow announced that he could not "consent to such a programme."³⁵

Concluding his address, the Kansas Senator identified himself as one who believed in party fealty and the necessity of party organization. However, he argued that no "desire for party regularity" could induce him to vote for a Republican

sponsored bill that openly violated campaign and Presidential promises. Speaking as a Republican Senator, he asked other Republican Senators if "the bill fulfills the obligations we owe the people as a result of the election, and is a measure that we ought to send to the President as the fulfillment of those obligations." He stated that he did not want to place Taft in the embarrassing situation of signing the bill into law "not because he is satisfied with it, but because he believes it is the best he can get from this Congress." No matter what the outcome, Bristow declared himself in support of Taft and "confident that because of his (Taft) broad views and great judicial mind his ultimate decision will be the wisest and the best."³⁶

Saying that he loved the President and that Taft had honored him with his friendship, Bristow stated that he would "never vote to send him a bill for approval, that is a violation of his party's pledges . . . fundamentally wrong and in many of its details inequitous." He ended declaring that he "set up no standards for other Senators. Every man should vote as his conscience and judgement dictate."³⁷ Bristow felt that should he vote for the bill he would be unfaithful to the people who sent him to Washington, and throughout his speech he attempted to convince other Senators that they were faced with the same responsibility.

So, throughout his speech, the Midwestern Progressive lavishly praised Taft while he constantly attacked Aldrich and other New England Senators as the symbols of vested interests.

Quite possibly Bristow might have thought that there was a chance the President would side with the progressives. After all, Taft had earlier invited Bristow to the White House for a briefing on the sugar schedule and had not tried to interfere with his stand against the bill.³⁸ However, in the final analysis Taft used every device of party pressure to force progressive Senators to vote for the conference committee's report. Senators and Congressmen were threatened that patronage would be withheld. Preceding the final vote an effort was made to break insurgent lines by inviting progressive Senators Dolliver, Beveridge and Cummins to the White House. Bristow, Clapp and La Follette were excluded because they were regarded as hopelessly lost to the administration. On the day of the final vote, party loyalty caused some of the near progressives to capitulate. When the Payne-Aldrich bill finally passed August 5, only 7 Republicans voted against it: Beveridge, Bristow, Clapp, Cummins, Dolliver, La Follette; the seventh was Knute Nelson of Minnesota who was not a member of the progressive group.³⁹

Footnotes

¹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 3.

² Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 4.

³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates on Sugar," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 3.

⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," pp. 3-4.

⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 4.

⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 5.

⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 5.

⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 13.

⁹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," pp. 15-16.

¹⁰ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 6.

¹¹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 14.

¹² Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," pp. 14-16.

¹³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 17.

¹⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 28.

¹⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," pp. 20-21.

¹⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 25.

¹⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 24.

¹⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 40.

¹⁹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 25.

²⁰ Joseph L. Bristow, "Tariff Rates," p. 43.

²¹ Joseph Bristow personal letter to D. A. Valentine, May 14, 1909 cited by A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1968), p. 92.

²² Joseph L. Bristow, "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 3-5.

²³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 5.

²⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 6.

²⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 5.

²⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 5.

²⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill." pp. 6-7.

²⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 7.

²⁹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 7.

³⁰ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 7.

³¹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 7-8.

³² Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 10.

³³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 8-10.

³⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 10-11.

³⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 13-14.

³⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," p. 14.

³⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Against the Tariff Bill," pp. 14-15.

³⁸ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, p. 93.

³⁹ Bela C. La Follette and Fola La Follette, Robert M. La Follette (New York: MacMillan Co., 1953), p. 278.

Analysis of Joseph Bristow's 1911 Speeches

The tariff issue laid idle until April, 1911, when President Taft ignored fervent pleas of conservatives and called a special session of the new Sixty-second Congress to consider passage of the Canadian Reciprocity bill. Taft had urged passage to the old Congress, but the high-tariff standpat Republicans, who feared that the bill would lead to new questions about the Payne-Aldrich tariff schedules, joined to defeat the measure with a combination of Republican progressives and Democrats, who opposed the bill on the ground that it gave more protection to already overprotected manufacturers at the expense of the farmer. Taft insisted that it be approved by the new Congress.¹

Although Bristow wrote in February that he was undecided about the proposal, he had made up his mind by April. Declaring himself against the Reciprocity treaty, Bristow joined La Follette and Cummins in sponsoring a series of amendments that took "from the manufactured products in this country some of the excessive protective duties that they now enjoy."² He expressed his opinion on July 13 and 14 in a two part speech, "Reciprocity with Canada and The Duty on Sugar."

In this speech the Kansas progressive announced that before he offered his amendment to the bill he wished to "submit a few general observations on the measure." The purpose of his observations was to make public the motives of the various

groups involved with the Canadian measure. Selecting illustrative examples that clearly demonstrated the inequities in the new proposal, Bristow emphasized that the progressive group was the only one which urged the defeat of the bill. On the other hand, he explained that the President, Democrats and standpat Republicans had ulterior motives in wanting the bill passed.³

Laying the groundwork for his speech by first explaining the provisions of the new bill, he used examples containing elements of both logical and emotional appeal to clarify the Canadian pact and at the same time to evoke pity for the farmer and indignation toward the manufacturer. Bristow first explained that the "Canadian bill takes the tariff off of the articles that are not controlled by trusts and retains the tariff on the articles that are." He immediately restated the same idea when he argued that the bill placed "the products of the American farmer on the free list and gives the trusts and combinations, to which he sells his products, the benefit of a high protective duty." Again emphasizing the idea that the bill was unfair to the farmer, he explained that it forced the farmer to sell "his own products in his own home market in free competition with the Canadian, his great competitor."⁴

Having declared the bill full of inequities, Bristow next said he would not support it because "as a revision of the tariff it is a deception and a fraud, as a revenue measure it is a failure, and as a free trade proposition it is neither equitable nor just."⁵ However, in spite of its faults the bill

had backers. Bristow felt that the only way to prevent the undesirable legislation was to publicize the hidden motives of those supporting the reciprocity treaty. He did so by using examples that demonstrated the advantages the President, Democrats, and conservative Republicans would accrue from passage of the treaty. As in earlier examples, he continued to combine elements of logical and emotional appeals. The logical element was his statement of fact, what was actually happening; and the emotional element, the feeling he wished to evoke, was usually indignation or anger.

For example, Bristow contended that the President had promoted the treaty to temporarily satisfy public demand for tariff revision rather than to honestly revise the tariff. He reasoned that if the bill had been "an honest attempt to relieve the American people from the burdens of excessive tariff taxation, the high duties on trust controlled products would have been first attacked." Furthermore, he claimed that the duties under attack "had never been a burden to the American people because they have never greatly increased the price of the products upon which they were imposed." In this case, besides presenting the facts, Bristow wanted people to realize that Taft had not been honest with them. In another instance the Senator wanted the public to feel that Taft put his personal satisfaction before anything else. Bristow explained that if the bill passed, Taft "gets even with the newspapers, a friendship which he has sorely needed during the past two years."⁶

Wanting the public to be aware of the Democrats motives, Bristow explained that the Democrats originally had opposed the treaty but now favored it because if it were to be passed they would have an issue for the 1912 campaign. This assertion was aimed at arousing indignation against a party that was more interested in preserving a campaign issue than in securing "sound, wholesome tariff legislation." Also attacking members of his own party for upholding the measure, Bristow condemned the conservative Republicans for robbing the American farmer of his rights while advancing the avarice and greed of manufacturing interests. He felt that the standpatters had avoided "with great care the Republican platform and every Republican declaration of principles."⁷

Hoping others would share his indignation, Bristow explained that the conservatives betrayed the party platform, that the Democrats were only interested in creating a campaign issue and that the President was using reciprocity as "a weapon to destroy the protective tariff." After attacking the President, the "standpat Republicans and their Democratic cohorts," after totally alienating them, Bristow reversed his position and asked them to support his amendment.

In order to be successful in his attempt to amend the reciprocity treaty, Bristow had to convince everyone involved that his amendments would not interfere with their interests. Speaking to placate the President, he said that his amendments would "in no way change the provisions of the agreement." However, he made no attempt to adapt his provision to the

Democrats' interests, and he openly antagonized the standpat Republicans by stating that his amendment would "take off from the manufactured products . . . some of the excessive protective duties that they now enjoy."⁸ He alienated the Republicans further by declaring his intention to vote for the amendments sponsored by Cummins and La Follette, progressives who had also incurred resentment from the conservatives.⁹ Thus, there was little hope that his amendment, similar to the one he had proposed in 1909, would be passed.

Before presenting his amendment Bristow briefly commented on the current situation. He explained that at that time the duty on sugar was made up by levying a tax of 95 cents per hundred pounds on sugar that tested 75° pure by the polariscope test. For each additional degree of purity 3½ cents was added, making the maximum duty on raw sugar \$1.82½. There was also a provision in the law stipulating that sugar above number 16 Dutch standard in color should pay a duty of \$1.90 a hundred pounds regardless of its saccharine purity. So when the sugar in the process of manufacturing became whitened until its color was above number 16, the duty then was assessed at \$1.90, regardless of its purity.¹⁰

The purpose of the new amendment was to reduce the duty on refined sugar from \$1.90 a hundred pounds to \$1.75½ and to eliminate the Dutch standard. Bristow reasoned that he could best achieve his purpose if he supplied logical instances exemplifying the expediency of lowering the duty and eliminating the color test. As in his 1909 speech, he utilized the rational

appeal to examine a number of analogous instances where he considered the Dutch standard and \$1.90 duty as liabilities, and he generalized that it would be expedient for them to be eliminated.

His first argument, one he had unsuccessfully used in 1909, was that the Dutch standard was used "to prevent light-brown sugar from being sold by the manufacturers to the public direct." This time, instead of antagonizing the group in power by contending that the standard perpetrated fraud, Bristow used statistics and actual examples to support his contention. He explained that if the Dutch standard provision were taken out, the duty on 10⁰ sugar "would be 35 cents less than \$1.82½, or \$1.47½, but being lighter than 16 it is assessed, instead of \$1.47½, at \$1.90." No one could argue with the figures or with his conclusion that "the difference in duty is so much that light sugars are barred from coming into the market except in the refined state, and the duty on the refined sugar is so high that it is so prohibitive and prevents importation."¹¹

After discussing the color test and briefly relating the history of the differential, he explained the similarity between the proposed Canadian treaty and the 1903 Cuban reciprocity. Arguing by example and using statistics as support, he claimed that the Cuban reciprocity had taken \$10,000,000 out of the United States' Treasury and had "put it into the profits of the sugar refiners," and he concluded that the Canadian treaty would do the same thing.¹² This led him into his next reason for amending the treaty.

Contending that the refiner was receiving better protection than when the Dingly bill was passed, Bristow cited a number of statistics as proof. He explained that "since the Dingly law had been passed there had been a gradual reduction in the amount of duty that was required to be paid by the importing refiner." The duty under the Dingly law, \$1.68 $\frac{1}{2}$ a hundred pounds on sugar testing 96⁰, was reduced to \$1.348 while the price of refined sugar only dropped from \$1.95 to \$1.90. This resulted in the 26.5 cent differential under the Dingly law increasing to 55.2 cents by 1911. Using these statistics to elaborate on a familiar theme, he stated that the refiners had protested against a reduction in duty because they were "animated with the same avarice and greed that seems to have inspired their conduct for the last decade."¹³ His frequent use of this argument in 1909 had antagonized the Senators who represented the refiners and it undoubtedly had the same effect in 1911.

Another reason why Bristow felt that the duty should be reduced was that he did not believe high protection was "necessary for the continuous development of the beet-sugar industry." On this issue he attempted to ingratiate himself with the conservatives by saying that he considered "the development of the beet-sugar industry . . . as the strongest evidence in favor of the protective policy that has ever been presented to the American people," and by giving figures that proved that statement.¹⁴

Additional remarks he made on the subject of the beet-sugar industry and the protective tariff were used to mollify his

"Republican friends and . . . Democratic friends as well." He explained that he believed the beet-sugar industry owed its development "more to the high duties that were placed on sugar than to any other cause."¹⁵ This was one of few instances where he admitted that a high duty actually had been beneficial and not a symbol of graft and greed.

Contending that the tariff had protected the beet-sugar industry, Bristow felt that the present duty could be reduced without harming the industry. However, for the benefit of the protectionists, he declared that he would "never vote to reduce a duty so as to hamper, impede, or injure the development of such an important developing enterprise as the beet-sugar industry in the United States."¹⁶ Knowing that the Democrats disagreed with him on the question of protection and that the Republicans resented his stand against graft, Bristow explained why he was following this particular course of action. He said, "It is always more pleasant to say the agreeable things than the disagreeable things. It is always easier to agree with your friends than to disagree with them. But it always pays to be frank and open in these discussions, and I am trying to be that way."¹⁷

Finally, he contended that the last result of the amendment would be to increase revenues by reducing the duty on refined sugar. Using statistics as support, he followed a step-by-step analysis to prove his assertion. He explained that although 80 per cent of the imported sugar tested 95° by the polariscope, it was below No. 16 in color and according to the Dutch standard

was assessed a duty of \$1.65 per hundred pounds. If the standard were taken out, then sugar would come in "testing 88 or 89, and instead of paying \$1.65 it would pay \$1.75." Bristow's reasoning might have pleased his progressive associates and constituents because he contended that sugar "would cost less to the people." However, his arguments did not please the conservatives because the reduction he proposed would come from the refiner's protective duty. Bristow's additional remarks on this issue revolved around the color standard. Restating his 1909 objections to the standard, he explained that 110 out of 117 nations had discarded it; that it kept light brown sugar out of the market; and that it was an obsolete system in valuing sugar.¹⁸ As was the case in 1909, the conservatives remained unmoved by his arguments.

After he presented each argument, the Kansas Senator wanted his colleagues to reach the conclusion that it would be expedient to amend the Canadian treaty. However, his arguments were not strong enough to overcome the animosity the Democrats and conservative Republicans felt toward him. He could have attempted to placate his colleagues with his final remarks, but he chose not to. Closing his speech, he denounced some Senators for defending high duties and other Senators for preserving a campaign issue. Not liking the publicity Bristow had given them, the men under attack joined together not only to defeat Bristow's amendment but also the amendments of Cummins and La Follette.

After the coalition of Democrats and Republicans had

disposed of the progressives' amendments, they proceeded to pass the reciprocity bill over the progressives' objections. However, Taft's sense of victory was short lived because the Laurier government in Canada, which had originally agreed to the treaty, was repudiated and the Canadian parliament refused its approval.¹⁹

Footnotes

¹ Edward N. Doan, The La Follettes and the Wisconsin Idea (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1947), p. 60.

² Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada and The Duty on Sugar," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 11.

³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 6.

⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 3.

⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 4.

⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 5.

⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," pp. 10-11.

⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 11.

⁹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1968), p. 86.

¹⁰ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," pp. 12-13.

¹¹ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," pp. 14-15.

¹² Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 15.

¹³ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 18.

¹⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," pp. 18-19.

¹⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 19.

¹⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 23.

¹⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," p. 24.

¹⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "Reciprocity with Canada," pp. 25-37.

¹⁹ Edward N. Doan, The La Follettes and the Wisconsin Idea, p. 61.

Analysis of Joseph Bristow's 1913 Speeches

In preparation for the 1912 campaign President Taft went on a 13,000 mile speaking trip from Massachusetts to the Pacific coast for the purpose of rallying Republicans to the slogans which had been effective in previous campaigns. However, because he had insisted on the Canadian reciprocity treaty and had declared the Payne-Aldrich bill to be the best tariff measure ever passed by a Congress, he was coldly received in the West and lost all support from the Midwest. The unrest which had been developing within the Republican party as a result of conservative legislation manifested itself in the 1912 campaign when Republicans split over Taft, their official candidate for President, and Theodore Roosevelt, self proclaimed progressive. Uniting behind their liberal candidate, the Democrats handily elected New Jersey Governor Woodrow Wilson as President.¹

Shortly after his election, Wilson called a special session of Congress to revise the Payne-Aldrich tariff, but Senator Bristow questioned whether Wilson could successfully carry through tariff reform. From the beginning of the new administration Bristow was critical of Wilson's domestic policies, particularly the tariff. The Senator's suspicion that Wilson was becoming an advocate of free trade was confirmed when the Underwood-Simmons tariff bill, which placed a number of important articles on the free list, reached the Senate

May 9, 1913.² On May 13 Bristow presented his remarks against the new bill.

Although the purpose of his speech was to offer an amendment lowering the duty on sugar, Bristow preferred not to discuss the tariff bill or amendment at length. Instead, he made a few general observations which indicated his position on the tariff issue.

Identifying himself as a protectionist who favored tariff revision, Bristow declared that he could not support the new measure because instead of revising important duties it eliminated them altogether. He claimed that the new bill, a free trade measure disguised as a tariff revision, was "more indefensible from the standpoint of principle than the Payne-Aldrich law" and had "all the inequities of the Canadian reciprocity act." In addition, he furnished examples as support for the idea that the measure contained gross and indefensible features.³ It was evident to a number of groups that Bristow had not appreciably changed his position since 1909. Democrats knew he would oppose free trade measures; conservative Republicans knew he would oppose exorbitant duties; his progressive associates and constituents knew he would fight for genuine tariff reform.

In his May speech, Bristow explained that he would not vote for the Underwood-Simmons bill as long as it placed sugar on the free list, but his remarks had no effect on the Finance Committee which was at that time holding hearings on the bill. The Committee's ten Democratic members caucused behind closed

doors and refused Republican committee members admittance to the hearings. Objecting to the secret procedure as vehemently in 1913 as they had in 1909, the progressives claimed that secret votes would be taken on the bill and would be considered binding upon all Democrats when the measure came before the Senate.⁴ Therefore, when the bill came out of committee in late July with the duties on sugar still removed, Bristow was prompted to deliver "The American Sugar Industry and the Tariff."

Bristow had a dual purpose in this speech. First he wanted to persuade Democrats that it was not expedient to place sugar on the duty free list. Developing that idea in the body of his speech, the Senator utilized the argument by example to explain how free sugar would destroy the American sugar beet industry. After establishing the inequities of the Underwood-Simmons provision, he attempted to persuade Democrats to vote according to their conscience, not according to the dictates handed down from the caucus.

Beginning his speech with a discussion of the beet sugar industry in Germany and France, the Kansas established by historical example the necessity of the protective tariff for the purpose of encouraging the development of the beet sugar industry. He cited historical facts analogous to the 1913 situation in an attempt to persuade Democrats that free trade was wrong. Bristow observed that "the statesmen of the greatest nations in the civilized world . . . thought it wise to encourage the development of sugar production by various systems of taxation." Included in that group was the United States, which had imposed

heavy protective duties on sugar "for the purpose of developing the industry of our own country." As proof that the tariff had been successful, he noted that since "the passage of the Dingly bill beet-sugar production in the United States has developed faster than it ever developed in any country in the history of the industry." As additional support, he cited statistics demonstrating that production had increased from 40,000 tons in 1897 to 698,952 tons in 1911 to an estimated 715,000 tons for 1913.⁵

Having established the importance of the tariff to the sugar beet industry, Bristow argued by example that the removal of protective duties would cause the industry to collapse. He arranged his comments in a logical order so that his argument could be easily understood. His example that "the real menace . . . of free sugar to the sugar producers of our country . . . is the cane sugar producer in the Tropics" was supported by statistics showing the difference in the cost of production at home and abroad. The figures revealed that the cost of tropical sugar refined in New York ranged from \$2.10 to \$2.80 per hundred pounds, while the cost of producing beet-sugar ranged from \$2.70 to \$5.14 per hundred pounds, the difference between 60 cents and \$2.34. His conclusion that sugar from the tropics would "practically destroy our domestic sugar industry"⁶ had some persuasive value because of the supporting statistics he utilized.

As a final example of the inequities of the Underwood-Simmons tariff, Bristow argued by probability, speculating

that free trade would "destroy our home production of sugar" and would then give the cane sugar refiners a monopoly of the American sugar market. In addition, he assumed that with the beet sugar industry eliminated the cane sugar refiners would "control the market . . . fix the price as high as the market will stand, regardless of the cost of production."⁷ The probability had persuasive value because the events which Bristow forecast for the future had previously occurred under similar circumstances, which he then discussed.

Illustrating his argument with an analogous example, Bristow explained that "whenever beet sugar is put on the market in large quantities, the price of cane sugar declines, but when the beet product is exhausted, the price of refined cane sugar rises." Citing figures which proved his assertion, the Senator found that when heavy quantities of beet sugar were being sold (March, 1913) the New York refiners took a toll of $58\frac{1}{2}$ to $68\frac{1}{2}$ cents per hundred pounds for refining and marketing sugar. Then when "the pressure of beet-sugar grew less . . . the refiner advanced his margin of profit (July, 1913) to 96.8 cents, an increase of about 40 cents."⁸ The remarks, intended to exemplify the inequities of the provision, also assured his constituents that he would oppose free trade in general.

Concluding his address, Bristow attempted to persuade Democrats that they should vote for measures which would benefit their constituents rather than those favored by the party caucus. He contended that the advocates of free sugar proposed a policy which would lead to a national disaster

because the effects of the bill on the sugar beet industry would carry over to other industries as well. Arguing by example, he noted that the "production of beet-sugar has stimulated many other lines of business. It has made a market for millions of dollars worth of machinery . . . manufactured in American factories and made by American workmen, who in turn have been fed by the American farmer and gardener." The persuasive effect of this example was probably negated when Bristow next claimed that the Senators favoring free trade were "blind to the interests of their country."⁹

His final remarks were intended to shame those Senators who believed that free sugar was wrong and not in the best interests of their country but who were determined to vote for it for the sake of party loyalty. To accomplish his intention, he attacked the party caucus calling it "one of the most corrupting influences in American politics." Furthermore, he contended that "while an indignant public was abolishing the caucus . . . the friends of this foul system have found a place of refuge for it here in Washington at the National Capitol."¹⁰ However, instead of shaming the Democrats, he undoubtedly provoked them, and therefore, when his amendment came for a vote before the Senate, it was soundly defeated by the Democratic majority.

Throughout the summer other progressives also tried to improve the bill by offering amendments to certain schedules which they thought were the unfortunate products of waste and the secret Democratic caucus method. However, the Democrats

defeated each attempted improvement and by September 9 had secured passage of the Underwood-Simmons proposal by a 44 to 37 margin. Because the Senate version of the proposal was slightly different from the House version, the bill then underwent consideration by the conference committee and was reported back to the Senate on October 2.¹¹ Before a vote was taken on the conference report, Bristow delivered his final tariff speech. No longer attempting to persuade Senators to accept his viewpoint, Bristow addressed himself to his constituents in Kansas.

Even though his private mail ran 25 to 1 against the bill, Bristow was aware that his opposition to the measure conflicted with the views held by the editors of the Kansas City Star and the Topeka Capital, along with other citizens of the state.¹² Therefore, feeling it important to justify his vote, he incorporated a dual purpose into his speech. He not only explained why he had voted against the measure, but he also analyzed the bill from the Kansas point of view.

Stating quite simply why he voted against the tariff bill, Bristow explained that he believed "it unjust and discriminatory. Its discrimination in favor of localities and certain special interests is worse than that of the Payne-Aldrich bill." To develop that premise, he cited particular instances illustrating "the discrimination against the agricultural classes."¹³ In addition, he supported each example with statistics, thereby attempting to evoke a feeling of indignation against the unjust provisions in the bill.

Methodically discussing the duties, Bristow noted that the northern and western farmers received no protection for their raw products while manufacturers were "treated with generosity by this bill." He found that potatoes were placed on the free list while potato starch and dextrine were protected with duties from \$1 to \$1.25 per hundred pounds. Another example of discrimination he discovered was that western wheat was on the free list, but southern rice was protected by a duty of 45 cents a bushel. He explained that the bill maintained a protective duty of from 59 to 169 per cent on tobacco and \$1.50 a gallon on whisky, but put cattle, sheep and meats on the free list. The bill placed wool on the free list while it imposed a duty on every article made from that wool.¹⁴ Finally, he utilized arguments, examples and statistics from his August speech showing that the greatest economic mistake from the broad national viewpoint, was the free sugar provision. Bristow hoped that by exemplifying the unjust and discriminatory nature of the bill, he could evoke from his constituents a feeling of indignation toward the Underwood-Simmons proposal.

After explaining the inequities of the proposal, he analyzed the bill as it related to Kansas. His analysis, which was a final attempt to evoke indignation against the bill, consisted of a comparison between "the amount of the products of our State that are dutiable with those of . . . states represented by Democratic members of the Finance Committee." Citing figures which illustrated the discriminating character

of the proposal, he found that only "30 per cent of the production of our State (Kansas) under this bill will be dutiable." The 30 per cent from Kansas compared to 40 per cent from Georgia, 46 per cent from Missouri, 49 per cent from Maine, 54 per cent from Indiana, 55 per cent from North Carolina and 58 per cent from Kentucky. The most striking and interesting comparison was with New Jersey, the home state of President Wilson. While 80 per cent of New Jersey's products were on the dutiable list, only 30 percent of the products of Kansas were so protected. Thus, Bristow reasoned that by using statistics he could easily prove to his constituents the inequities of the bill.

Bristow's final remarks summarized the position he had maintained since 1909. Speaking directly to his constituents, the Senator declared that he could not vote for any bill which discriminated against the concerns he represented. To do so, he claimed, would betray the people who elected him. Unfortunately, hard times and the failure of tariff reform to bring economic relief brought criticism from those same people Bristow had represented in the Senate. Feeling it was time to return to conservative leadership within the Republican party, Kansans elected Charles Curtis over Joseph L. Bristow in the 1914 Republican primaries.¹⁶

Footnotes

¹ Edward N. Doan, The La Follettes and the Wisconsin Idea (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1947), pp. 70-71.

² A Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas), p. 135.

³ Joseph L. Bristow, "The Underwood Tariff Bill," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, pp. 1-2.

⁴ Bela C. La Follette and Fola La Follette, Robert M. La Follette (New York: MacMillan Company, 1953), pp. 472-73.

⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry and the Tariff," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, pp. 1-5.

⁶ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry," p. 6.

⁷ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry," p. 7.

⁸ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry," pp. 9-10.

⁹ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry," pp. 12-13.

¹⁰ Joseph L. Bristow, "The American Sugar Industry," p. 14.

¹¹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, pp. 135-36.

¹² A. Bower Sageser, p. 136.

¹³ Joseph L. Bristow, "An Analysis of the Underwood-Simmons Tariff Bill from the Kansas Point of View," in bound volume of Bristow's speeches at Kansas State Historical Society, p. 3.

¹⁴ Joseph L. Bristow, "Kansas Point of View," pp. 4-5.

¹⁵ Joseph L. Bristow, "Kansas Point of View," pp. 12-14.

¹⁶ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow, pp. 140-41.

Results and Conclusion

Between 1909 and 1915 the Republican progressives in the Senate held in common a belief that democracy must be made to work and that the Republican party was the vehicle for expressing and shaping that democracy. As a progressive during that time, Joseph Bristow shared those views. Therefore, when the progressives as a group became involved with an issue, each individual member devoted time and effort to thoroughly researching the facts. One major question, that of the tariff, left lasting impressions on the Kansas Senator and aligned him on a liberal course that he held throughout his term in office.¹ Engaging in the lengthy tariff discussions, Bristow presented a number of deliberative addresses which shared common rhetorical devices.

Utilizing logos, the Senator reasoned that he could best achieve the purpose of his speeches if he supplied logical instances exemplifying the expediency of his proposed course of action. Taking the form of arguments by example, the instances he mentioned were the type of logical appeal that Aristotle observed was best suited to deliberative discourse.² In many cases Bristow would cite a historical example analogous to the situation under discussion. And, although the examples led to probabilities rather than absolute proof, the examples had persuasive value because similar occurrences had taken

place under corresponding conditions.

In an attempt to prove his arguments by example, the Senator employed different types of evidence. On occasion he used the testimony of impartial individuals, and his speeches contained numerous tables of statistics and illustrative material. In actuality, his discourses, literally scholarly treatises on the tariff, contained great masses of statistics and information that demolished the arguments of the opposition. However, a majority of Senators disregarded his arguments and reviled him because he dared to lay bare motives and facts embarrassing to them.³

Knowing that rational appeals were often not enough to move an audience to action, Bristow also utilized the appeal to emotion in his speeches. Becoming so involved in the tariff controversy, he frequently expressed his inner feelings that the tariff fostered monopolies. Genuinely angry that each proposed tariff bill protected the manufacturers at the farmers' expense, he attempted to arouse in the audience the same emotions he felt. The Senator knew that persuasion could be effected through his listeners, so he described persons and situations calculated at evoking anger and indignation. However, the emotional appeals he used met with little success, because the men he had verbally attacked were influential politicians who represented large manufacturing concerns. Angered by Bristow's remarks, the men under attack joined together not only to defeat his proposals but those of other progressives as well.

In order for his logical and emotional appeals to be successful, Bristow had to persuade the group in power that he shared their interests. Unfortunately, though, his arguments were ignored because his audience reacted unfavorably to him. The reason his ethical appeal was not persuasive throughout the speeches was that this identification with certain groups lost him the support of other groups. By identifying himself as a progressive Republican favoring modest tariff reductions, he won the support of some Democrats in 1909 and 1911, but he lost the backing of the powerful conservative Republicans. Although he maintained the same position in 1913, he found that the role of ally and opposition was reversed. Instead of modest reductions in duties, the Democratic majority advocated free trade while the Republicans vehemently opposed that proposition.

Thus, regarding the effect of Bristow's deliberative discourses in the Senate, it can be assumed that he alienated the group in power by exposing motives and facts embarrassing to them, by attempting to evoke anger and indignation against them, and by identifying himself in opposition to their proposed tariff bill. Therefore, the majority group, offended by Bristow's tactics, exercised control over its members to defeat any tariff legislation he proposed.

Footnotes

¹ A. Bower Sageser, Joseph L. Bristow: Kansas Progressive (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1963), p. 89.

² Aristotle, The Rhetoric, trans. Lane Cooper (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, 1932), p. 233.

³ Edward N. Doan, The La Follettes and the Wisconsin Idea (New York: Rinehart & Company, 1947), p. 54.

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A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF
JOSEPH L. BRISTOW'S TARIFF SPEECHES

by

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Joseph L. Bristow, junior Senator from Kansas 1909-1915, debated about the tariff issue three different times during his term in the United States Senate. The study was concerned with his major tariff addresses: "Tariff Rates on Sugar" and "Reasons for Voting Against the Tariff Bill" in 1909; "The Reciprocity with Canada" and "The Duty on Sugar" in 1911; and "The Underwood Tariff Bill," "The American Sugar Industry and the Tariff," and "Analysis of the Underwood-Simmons Tariff Bill from the Kansas Point of View" in 1913.

The purpose of this thesis was to examine these tariff speeches in order to determine the rhetorical devices in them. The method of analysis constructed relied on the works of Aristotle, Kenneth Burke, Hugh Duncan and Dorwin Cartwright.

The results of the study indicated that stock rhetorical devices were used in an attempt to persuade others to accept a certain point of view. These devices were: logical arguments which exemplified the expediency of a proposed course of action, descriptions of persons and situations calculated at evoking emotion in an audience, and the creation of speaker credibility by identification with certain groups. The results further indicated that Bristow was unsuccessful in his attempts at persuasion probably because he alienated himself from influential members of the Senate and lost the support of his constituents.