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December 7, 2019: Churchill Champions Free Trade and Castigates Republican Tariffs as Secular

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Title: Churchill Champions Free Trade and Castigates Republican Tariffs as Secular

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12/7/2019--In 1903, Winston Churchill delivered a speech rebuking the policy of his own Party, the Conservative Party, favoring tariffs. He argued that protectionism, "means a change, not only in the historic English Parties, but in the conditions of our public life. The old Conservative Party, with its religious convictions and constitutional principles will disappear and a new party will rise...perhaps like the Republican Party in the United States of America...rigid, materialist and secular, whose opinions will turn on tariffs and who will cause the lobbies to be crowded with the touts of protected industries." [William Manchester, *The Last Lion*, 353 (1983)] Churchill saw that free trade is not just an economic policy. It is a faith in the solidarity of humankind. It is peace. It is a generous spirit that we are all one. This is surprising, since Churchill was an imperialist. But he had a sufficiently great spirit that he could identify with all. He never would have proclaimed England First. He championed a prosperity for everyone. And he believed that free trade would get us there more reliably than any other policy. Furthermore, he believed that the grasping for national advantage must inevitably lead to war. Again, surprisingly to us, he saw capitalism as inherently moral and religious. We think it is not, because we don't have real capitalism. We have indeed special interests seeking narrow advantage, masquerading as capitalists. Adam Smith, after all, was a supremely religious man.