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S P E E C H E S  
OF  
HORATIO SEYMOUR,  
AT THE CONVENTIONS  
Albany January 31, 1861, and September 10, 1862.

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UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

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Held at Albany January 31, 1861, and September 10, 1862.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

# SPEECHES

OF

## HON. HORATIO SEYMOUR

At the Conventions held at Albany January 31, 1861, and September 10, 1862.

### GOV. SEYMOUR'S SPEECH,

At the Convention held at Albany,  
January 31, 1861.

HON. HORATIO SEYMOUR appeared upon the stand, and was received with loud and long continued applause. He said :

It has been truly said by the President of this Convention that we do not meet for partisan purposes, although we are assembled in pursuance of a call issued by a political organization. There was no other mode by which we could act as a representative body. The people of the State are divided into two great parties, one of which gave at the late Presidential contest more than three hundred and fifty thousand, and the other more than three hundred and ten thousand votes for their respective candidates. We have waited with patient expectation for some effort on the part of the responsible majority to avert the calamities which overhang our country. We have hailed with joy every indication of a desire on their part to meet the duties of their position. We have given a cordial approval to every patriotic expression coming from individuals of that party, whether uttered through his Journal by the able Republican leader of the State, by the distinguished Senator at Washington, or by a patriotic and intelligent Member of our Legislature. The hopes excited by those expressions have died away. Our country is on the verge of ruin, and now, in behalf of the great organization we represent and of those who, since the late election, have joined our ranks, we meet to confront the dangers which menace us. I believe in our resolutions we shall utter

the sentiments of a vast majority of the people of New York. We shall rise above political purposes. We shall indulge in no reproaches—patriotic purposes in the past must be shown by patriotic action now. The acts of this day will throw light upon our motives in what we have done, and will influence our conduct in the future.

As I have been placed upon the committee which is to frame resolutions for your consideration, I wish to state my views of the policy which should guide us and the sentiments we should put forth to the world.

Three score and ten years, the period allotted for the life of man, have rolled away since George Washington was inaugurated first President of the United States, in the city of New York. We were then among the feeblest people of the earth. The flag of Great Britain still waved over Oswego with insulting defiance of our national rights, and the treaty recognizing our independence. The powers of the world regarded us with indifference or treated us with contemptuous injustice. So swift has been our progress under the influence of our Union that but yesterday we could defy the world in arms, and none dared to insult our flag. When our Constitution was inaugurated the utmost enthusiasm pervaded our land. Stern warriors who had fought the battles of the Revolution wept for joy. Glad processions of men and women marched with triumphal pride along the streets of our cities—holy men of God prayed in his Temples that the spirit of fraternal love, which had shaped the compromises of the Constitution, might never fade away, and that sectional bigotry, hate and discord might never curse our land. Amid this wild enthusiasm there was no imagination so excited, nor piety with faith so strong that it foresaw



the full influence of the event then celebrated. Some yet live to see but numbers increased from four to thirty millions, our territories quadrupled and extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific, our power and progress the wonder of the world. Alas, sir, they also live to see the patriotism and fraternal love, which have wrought out these marvellous results, die out, and the mighty fabric of our government about to crumble and fall, because the virtues which reared and upheld it have departed from our councils.

What spectacle do we present to-day? Already six States have withdrawn from this Confederacy. Revolution has actually begun. The term "secession" divests it of none of its terrors, nor do arguments to prove secession inconsistent with our Constitution stay its progress, or mitigate its evils. All virtue, patriotism and intelligence seem to have fled from our national Capitol; it has been well likened to the confagration of an asylum for madmen—some look on with idiotic imbecility, some in sullen silence, and some scatter the firebrands which consume the fabric above them, and bring upon all a common destruction. Is there one revolting aspect in this scene which has not its parallel at the Capitol of your country? Do you not see there the senseless imbecility, the garrulous idiocy, the maddened rage displayed with regard to petty personal passions and party purposes, while the glory, the honor and the safety of the country are all forgotten. The same pervading fanaticism has brought evil upon all the institutions of our land. Our churches are torn asunder and desecrated to partisan purposes. The wrongs of our local legislation, the growing burdens of debt and taxation, the gradual destruction of the African in the free States, which is marked by each recurring census, are all due to the neglect of our own duties, caused by the complete absorption of the public mind by a senseless, unreasoning fanaticism. The agitation of the question of slavery has thus far brought greater social, moral and legislative evils upon the people of the free States than it has upon the institutions of those against whom it has been excited. The wisdom of Franklin stamped upon the first coin issued by our government, the wise motto, "mind your business!" The violation of the homely proverb which lies at the foundation of the doctrines of local rights has, thus far, proved more hurtful to the members of the affairs of others than to those against whom the pragmatic action is directed.

The particular subject of controversy at this moment is the territorial question. When our Constitution was formed, our government embraced an area of 820,687 square miles. Since that time it has been expanded by different acquisitions to the vast extent of 2,936,165 square miles. This expansion was not contemplated by the framers of our Constitution, and Mr. Jefferson declared, at the time of the Louisiana purchase, that it should be made the subject of a Constitutional amendment. This wise suggestion was unheeded, and we have attempted to govern our different acquisitions by

principles inferred, from a constitution which did not contemplate such exigencies. It is not surprising, therefore, that the opinions of men and the policy of government have been unsettled and conflicting.

Thus far, the North has had greatly the advantage in the division of these acquisitions, and the political power which emanates from the creation of States, made from their limits. Five free and five slave States have been erected from territories gained since the adoption of our Constitution. The free States have the whole of the Pacific coast and the largest of value and extent in the remaining territories, lie north of a line which bounds the region where slavery can be employed, and lie, too, upon the pathway of European and Northern immigration. Our acquisitions since 1773, have extended the Southern States and Territories to 832,215 square miles, while the North has expanded to 1,204,204 square miles. Assuming that the Northwestern territory belonged to Virginia, and deducting that from the area of the South, it will be found that the South has increased less than fifty per cent, and the north nearly 1100 per cent. in extent, since the Revolution. The South has relinquished to the North 251,671 square miles, constituting the present States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The North has never relinquished one foot of the original territory, and in the divisions of that which has been acquired, it has succeeded in gaining the largest proportion.

This controversy does not grow out of a claim by either party that the Constitution shall be changed, but with regard to the construction that should be given to that instrument. The South claim that they have a right to take their slaves into all the territories, by virtue of the Constitutional compact, as construed by the Supreme Court, and because slavery originally existed in them, with the exception of those gained from Mexico. They deny that slavery was abolished when they were added to our Union, and they deny the power of Congress to legislate against those rights of property which were recognized in our whole country at the time of the Revolution, and which were upheld by the laws of every State, save one, when the Constitution was formed.

The South does not ask to extend slavery. They say it exists in the Territories. The Republicans assert that slavery shall not be extended. They contend that it does not exist in the Territories, but not content with leaving this question to the decision of the appointed tribunals, they demand legislation in the form of provisos or declarations in the nature of that contained in the ordinance regarding the northwest, which assume the existence of slavery in the disputed regions, in the absence of positive prohibitions. They show a distrust in their own constitutional constructions and historical statements, by demanding Congressional interferences and restraints and under the cry of "No Extension!" they are in fact agitating for repeal and restrictions which are of no significance unless slavery has the legal existence

which they deny.

Our fathers disposed of the same or similar difficulties, by compromises. Adjustments have been made from time to time in the progress of our government. The condition of our affairs forces upon us the alternative of compromise or civil war. Let us contemplate the latter alternative. We are advised by the conservative States of Virginia and Kentucky that if force is to be used it must be exerted against the united South. It would be an act of folly and madness, in entering upon this contest, to underrate our opponents, and thus subject ourselves to the disgrace of defeat in an inglorious warfare. Let us also see if successful coercion by the North is less revolutionary than successful secession by the South. Shall we prevent revolution by being foremost in overthrowing the principles of our government, and all that makes it valuable to our people, and distinguishes it among the nations of the earth?—Upon whom are we to wage war? Our own countrymen, whose white population is threefold that of the whole country in the time of the Revolution. Their courage has never been questioned in any contest in which we have been engaged. They battled by our side with equal valor in the Revolutionary struggle, in the last war with Great Britain, and in the Mexican conflict. Virginia sent her sons, under the command of Washington, to the relief of beleaguered Boston. Alone, the South defeated the last and most desperate effort of British power to divide our country, at the battle of New Orleans. From the days of Washington till this time, they have furnished their full proportion of Soldiers for the field, of Statesmen for the cabinet, and of wise and patriotic Senators for our legislative halls.

It is only bigotted ignorance that denies the equality of their public men to those of the North. To assume that our brethren in fifteen States lack the capacity to understand, and the ability to protect their own interests, is to assume that our government is a failure, and ought to be overturned. It is to declare that nearly one-half of our people are incapable of self government. They have a vast extent of fertile land producing, not only the cotton, rice and sugar cultivated in the United States, but a great abundance of the cereals and of animal food. The census of 1850 shows that they produce more than one-half of the Indian Corn and of the live stock raised in the United States, and that they also manufactured one-sixth of the cotton cloth, one-quarter of the raw and one-sixth of the wrought iron made in our country. In addition they have a vast abundance of coal, iron, copper and lead, and every element of wealth and strength. They have availed themselves of these advantages to an extent far exceeding what is understood by the people of the North.

I beg those who have been misled by constant and designed misrepresentation to study the statistics of our country, and they will see how grossly they have been deceived. A war upon them would lead to still greater development of their industry in competition with our own, as

the late war with Great Britain made the United States her most formidable competitor in manufacturing and in the arts. When we compare our local legislation with theirs, we have reason to blush. The united debts of the Slave States, excepting Virginia and Missouri, are not equal to that of Pennsylvania, and their taxation less than that imposed upon the people of the State of New York; and yet they have an extended and effective system of internal improvement, while they have avoided the ruinous competition growing out of an undue number of railroads, &c.

In what way is this warfare to be conducted? None have been mad enough to propose to muster armies to occupy their territory. Great Britain tried that in the Revolution, when the population of the South was less than 2,000,000. She attempted invasion again in the late war, when their numbers were less than 3,500,000. Nay, more, while she armed Indian savages to carry murder and rapine into the homes of the North, she attempted to excite a servile insurrection in the South. For this we cursed her brutal inhumanity. Her own indignant statesmen expressed their abhorrence on the floor of Parliament; and yet, at this day, those who quote British journals to influence American opinions, have intimated that there might be a gratification of their hate in the burning homes of murdered families of their own countrymen, or by cutting the embankments of the Mississippi and submerging their land.

But some have suggested with complacent air that the South could be easily subjugated by blockading their ports with a few ships of war. Let these gentlemen study the geography of our country. While the Atlantic coast line of the Northern States is 851 miles, that of the South, including the Gulf of Mexico, is 3,076. We have 189 and they have 249 harbors. Great Britain, with her immense fleet, attempted blockade, and failed. But, assuming the success of this measure, who are to be the sufferers? Are we waging war upon the South or upon the North? Upon the Southern planter, or upon the Northern merchant, manufacturer and mechanic? This coasting trade is the chief support of Northern commerce—the prize which Great Britain struggled so long and persistently to gain. Not only do our ships carry the products of the South, but, at this time, our manufacturers annually consume of their cotton to the amount of more than \$40,000,000. In the hands of Northern carriers and artisans, this becomes worth more than \$150,000,000. The whole price for the cotton crop received from all the world about \$200,000,000 each year, is paid out to the labor and industry of the North. We can inflict great misery upon the South, but could human ingenuity devise a warfare more destructive to all the interests of the Northern States of this Confederacy? But, say our Republican friends, these evils may be averted by our internal channels. If we thus evade the blockade of the South, to what end is all it cost brought on us? Is it an object to disturb the course of



trade, in order to ruin Northern seamen and merchants and cities?

But let us leave these pecuniary considerations for others more weighty with every patriot. Upon what field shall this contest be waged? Upon what spot shall American shed American blood? Where, on this broad continent, shall we find the arena, where every association and memory of the past will not forbid this fratricidal contest? Or, when unnatural war shall have brought upon our people its ruin, and upon our nation its shame, to what ground shall we be brought at last? To that we should have accepted at the outset.

The question is simply this: Shall we have compromise after the war, or compromise without war? Shall we be aided in this settlement by the loss of national honor, the destruction of individual interest, the shedding of blood, and by carrying misery and mourning into the homes of our people? Mr. President, the honor of the North, the parties to the controversy, and the object in dispute, demand a compromise of this difficulty. I say the honor of the North demands a conciliatory policy. When our Constitution was formed there was but one free State. To-day there are 19 free and 15 slave States. Then there were but two Senators from the free States; now we have a majority of eight in the Senate, and this will soon be increased. Then there were but eight representatives from the free States; under the census of 1860 we will have the proportion of 151 members to 75. Then our population was about equally divided between the Northern and Southern States (the North 1,968,455, the South 1,961,372; to-day we number more than 18,000,000, they about 12,000,000.

These results are due not alone to natural causes, but to the policy that favored the commercial interest and immigration from other lands. This policy has ever been upheld loyally by the South, and history tells you by whom it was opposed. Would it not be base and cowardly to withhold at this day those courtesies and that consideration which we showed in the days of their comparative strength? Did not one of our distinguished Senators then declare that comity demanded that we should permit them to travel through our State with their slaves, and that, therefore, he was opposed to the repeal of the law which allowed them to remain here for a period of nine months; and did not his colleague, then a member of the House of Representatives, vote against allowing a petition for abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia to be read or referred? Were bills designed to embarrass the exercise of their rights to reclaim fugitives, then found upon the Statute books of the Northern States? By the increase of our population, under the adjustment of the Constitution, the power and control of the destinies of our country, are placed in the hand of the North. Does not every sentiment of patriotism and of honesty demand that we shall exercise this power in a spirit of conciliation and forbearance? And is it not a just cause for alarm to our Southern brethren to find men and journals who stood by

them in the past, now becoming their most bitter and unscrupulous assailants, when their political power is weakened?

It grows out of the acquisition of territories not contemplated by the Constitution—out of an expansion of our territory from 820,680 to 2,936,166 square miles. In the progress of our country this has given rise to conflicting views, and our leading statesmen have, at different times, held inconsistent opinions. Mr. Calhoun, at one time, decided, while a member of the Cabinet, that Congress had the power of legislating upon territorial questions. At a later day he took the opposite ground. John Quincy Adams, who opposed the admission of Missouri as a slave State in 1836, on the occasion of the admission of Arkansas, used the following language:

“MR. CHAIRMAN—I cannot consistently with my sense of my obligations as a citizen of the United States, and bound by oath to support their Constitution, *I cannot object to the admission of Arkansas into the Union as a slave State; I cannot propose or agree to make it a condition of her admission that a Convention of her people shall expunge this article from her Constitution.* She is entitled to admission as a slave State as Louisiana and Mississippi, and Alabama and Missouri, have been admitted, by virtue of that article in the treaty for the acquisition of Louisiana, which secures to the inhabitants of the ceded territories all the rights, privileges and immunities of the original citizens of the United States, and stipulates for their admission, conformably to that principle, into the Union. Louisiana was purchased as a country wherein slavery was the established law of the land. As Congress have not power in time of peace to abolish slavery in the original States of the Union, they are equally destitute of the power in those parts of the territory ceded by France to the United States, by the name of Louisiana, where slavery existed at the acquisition. Slavery is, in this Union, the subject of internal legislation in the States, and in peace is cognizable by Congress only, as it is tacitly tolerated and protected where it exists by the Constitution of the United States, and as it mingles in their intercourse with other nations. Arkansas, therefore, *comes, and has the right to come into the Union with her slaves and her slave laws.* It is written in the bond, and however I may lament that it ever was so written, I must faithfully perform its obligations.”

The region acquired by the Louisiana purchase, extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian line, and, on its Northern limit, reaching from the Mississippi to the Pacific, comprehends most that is valuable and important of the remaining territories. Citizens of the South hold as confidently and as sincerely that they are entitled to carry their slaves into this region, as does the Republican that they have no such right. We have had, heretofore, similar questions of jurisdiction between our own and foreign governments. When Great Britain seized, in the Northeast, a portion of our country, which we held by the sacred title



gained by the blood and sufferings of the Revolution, every American believed it was an unjust invasion; but we adjusted the difficulty by a new boundary. Again, when she made a claim on a part of the same Louisiana purchase on the northwest coast, we denied its justice, but yielded up to the jurisdiction of the crown 167 365 square miles of the most valuable part of the Pacific coast, including its finest harbors and greatest commercial facilities. We gave up an area greater than New England, New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey combined. Shall we yield to a foreign nation and to a system of government condemned by our Constitution, what we will not concede to our own countrymen? Shall we, for the sake of peace, subject vast regions to principles of government antagonistic to our own, and then destroy our Union by refusing a compromise which would give to the South the occupation of a less valuable territory in consideration of their giving up what they believe to be their constitutional right to occupy the whole? Is there any reason why we should be less conciliatory now than we have been heretofore and are there not obvious ones why we should be more so, in view of our relative power? Did the men who now raise the cry of no compromise and no concession, hold that language when we had a controversy with the crown of Great Britain?

Let us look at the objections which are urged to this policy. It is said this question was decided at the late election. Questions of constitutional law are not to be decided by elections; if they were, our Constitution would be worthless, and all its guarantees of the rights of States and of individuals, of rights of conscience and religious liberty, might be annihilated. Neither is it true that the late canvass shows that the popular will is opposed to compromise. Mr. Lincoln was made President by a constitutional vote, and is entitled to our loyal and cheerful support, and he shall have it; but this is not the only result of the late contest.

If two millions of voters declared themselves in favor of the principles put forth by his party, three millions declared themselves opposed to them; if the Republicans triumphed in the choice of the Executive, we triumphed in gaining Congress, which makes the laws he is bound to carry out, without regard to his own views. If all parties will yield to the results of the last election, and the President elect will declare that he will be governed by the will of the people and not by the will of a party, and that he will not exert the influence of his place to defeat measures of compromise peace will be restored to our land. I hold that those who point to the Chicago platform and not to the Constitution as the guide of his conduct, do him a base wrong. I know that there are some that treat him as a man with manacles upon his hands; who boast that they hold in the Chicago platform a chattel mortgage upon his conscience and his opinion. All honest men declare, if he allows the declarations put forth in the heat of a political contest, to control his actions against his own judgment, he will deserve impeachment and degradation from his

high office. I repel, for one, the imputations thus made against Mr. Lincoln, and the claims thus impudently put forth to personal and peculiar liens on his views as most injurious to his honor and his influence. Before the election, it was said by his friends he was the man best fitted to adjust the jarring conflicts of the day. Let him then continue to hold the national and dispassionate position which was then claimed for him. We invoke the Republicans not to charge that he will be a traitor to his country by making a partisan creed, and not the solemn oath of his office, the guide of his conduct.

It is also said that the honor and dignity of our government will not permit measures of compromise at this moment. When the present difficulty was only threatened, we were told, in answer to our appeals for an adjustment, that there was no cause for alarm; that the South could not be driven out of the Union; the time had not come for compromises; now, that six States have withdrawn, we are told it is too late, that the dignity of the government will not permit it to make concessions. The error consists in confounding the action of a few States with the position of the whole South. We admit that you cannot offer Constitutional compromises to States that declare themselves outside of the pale of the Constitution. But is the attitude of South Carolina to be urged against the appeals of patriotic men in Virginia? Are we to drive the Border States into concert of action with those who defy the power of your government? Are we to give an impulse to revolution by indifference to the appeals of patriotic men and by insulting threats of coercion, and by irritating displays of power? Which cause was helped at the South by the tender of arms by our own States—that of Union or that of Secession? All know that the future fate of our country depends upon the action of the Border States, and while the beam trembles, New York throws its sword into the scale and inclines it in favor of revolution. This called from the conservative Governor of Virginia, the declaration that "nothing that has occurred, in the progress of this controversy has been worse timed and less excusable. If New York desires to preserve the Union a tender of men and money, under the promptings of passion, prejudice and excitement, will not produce this result."

We do not ask concessions for men in open resistance to government, but to those who are struggling for the preservation of our Union. Shall we have no sympathy for those upon whom the whole weight of this contest falls? Can we listen, unmoved, to the entreaties of the Governor of Maryland, of the Senator of Kentucky, or refuse to second the patriotic efforts of Virginia? Can we so entirely forget the past history of our country, that we can stand upon the point of pride against States whose citizens battled with our fathers and poured out with them their blood upon the soil of our State, amid the Highlands of the Hudson, and on the fields of Saratoga? I ask the old men within the sound of my voice, to what



quarter did you look for sympathy during the last war with Great Britain, when New York was assailed upon the shores of Lake Ontario, and when the disciplined troops, who had successfully fought against Napoleon in the Peninsula, invaded us with co-operating fleets by the channel of Lake Champlain? Was it not to the States of the South? Is it well that States which then refused to allow their militia to pass their own borders to combat a common enemy, should be so prompt to tender them now to battle against our own countrymen?

But it is urged, as a further objection, that at the instance of the South, we once compromised this territorial question, and that it has been untrue to the adjustment, although it was made at its own request, and against the wishes of the North. This misstatement has been most injurious in its influence upon the public mind. The Governor of New York, in his late message, says, this State strenuously opposed the establishment of the compromise line of 1820. In this he is mistaken; it was voted for by every Northern Senator, and the only opposition to this line came from the South. The New York Senators voted against the admission of Missouri, even after the passage of the act establishing the line at 36 degrees 30 minutes. The establishment of this line was a Northern measure—every Northern man voting for it—the whole opposition to it is coming from the South. It is true that after the amendment was engrafted on the bill, many Northern men voted against the act, but that was opposition to the admission of Missouri, and not to the line. The South was compelled to accede to it to secure the admission of Missouri; but it always held it to be an infringement upon its rights. Even when this concession was made to the North, the Senators from this and other Northern States, whose votes engrafted in the bill what is called the compromise line, voted against the act. The South did not even gain by this concession the votes of Northern Senators, except two, one from New Hampshire and one from Rhode Island. Mr. Lincoln admits that this opposition to the admission of Missouri was unjustifiable, and that he was in favor of letting new States come into this Confederacy, with or without Slavery, as they might elect. In offering to take this line, which gives to the North the largest share of the most valuable portion of our territories, it feels that it is meeting us more than half way in its efforts for adjustment.

But it is said that a compromise of this controversy will be a sacrifice of principle to which honest men cannot assent. Then the Constitution itself cannot be supported by honest men, for it is based upon and made up of compromises. It is not proposed to make a new Constitution, or to alter the terms of the existing one, all parties at the North and South alike claim that they only demand their present rights under that instrument; but owing to causes to which I have referred, an antagonism springs up in regard to its construction, and this must be settled by force or by adjustment. Let

us take care that we do not mistake passion and prejudice and partizan purposes for principle. The cry of no compromise is false in morals, it is treason to the spirit of the Constitution; it is infidelity in religion, the cross itself is a compromise and is pleaded by many who refuse all charity to their fellow citizens. It is the vital principle of social existence, it unites the family circle; it sustains the church, and upholds nationalities.

But the Republicans complain that having won a victory, we ask them to surrender its fruits. We do not wish them to give up any political advantage. We urge measures which are demanded by the honor and the safety of our Union. Can it be that they are less concerned than we are? Will they admit that they have interests antagonistic to those of the whole commonwealth? Are they making sacrifices, when they do that which is required by the common welfare?

The objects of this Convention are, to assure the conservative men of the South that they have at least the sympathy of 312 000 electors of New York in the contest in which they are engaged, and to keep the Border States in the Union, and thus ultimately restore its integrity. But we have another purpose. This is not the time for the exhibition of party spirit. We propose to bury party differences; we seek to restore the moral power of New York, so that it may now, as in times past, be the theatre upon which the cause of our country shall triumph. To do this we must have unity of action—all must agree to submit to some tribunal. The present difficulties have sprung into existence since the last popular election; they have taken this whole community by surprise, and conflicting views are held with regard to the proper line of action. To secure this union of purpose, for one, I am in favor of making an appeal to the Republicans and to the Legislature of this State, to submit the proposition of Senator Crittenden to the vote of the people of New York; if it is approved, then we will exert ourselves to secure an adjustment upon that basis; if, upon the other hand, it is rejected, then we shall know that the people of this State are opposed to the policy of compromise and conciliation. I do not fear the result. But if it is, unhappily, true that the ultra Republicans represent the people of the State, then are the days of the Republic numbered.—Then the future is dark and uncertain.

We may have not only one but many Confederacies. Before we are involved in the evils and horrors of domestic war, let those upon whom it will bring bankruptcy and ruin, and into whose homes it may carry desolation and death, be allowed to speak in favor of the policy of peace. If the Legislature do not, it will be because they dare not let the popular sentiment be uttered. If the public voice is heard, all will yield to its decisions and we shall be united in action. In the downfall of our nation and amidst its crumbling ruins we will cling to the fortunes of New York. We will stand together and so shape the future that its glory, and greatness, and wonderful advantages shall



not be sacrificed to rival interests. We will loyally follow its flag through the gloom and perils of the future, and in the saddest hour there will remain a gleam of hope, and we can still hail with pride the motto emblazoned on its shield, *EXCELSIOR!*

## SPEECH OF Hon. Horatio Seymour,

BEFORE THE DEMOCRATIC STATE  
CONVENTION, AT ALBANY.

September 10, 1862,

ON RECEIVING THE NOMINATION  
FOR GOVERNOR.

Mr. President, having uniformly and decidedly expressed my unwillingness to hold any official position at this time, I did not expect my name would be brought before this Convention. The nomination you have made subjects me to great inconvenience, whatever may be the result of this election. I came to this Convention expecting to aid in placing at the head of the ticket the name of one whom I feel to be more fit than myself for that honorable position. But, sir, whatever may be the injury to myself, I cannot refuse a nomination made in a manner that touches my heart and fills me with a still stronger sense of my obligations to this great and patriotic party. In addition to my debt of gratitude to partial friends, I am impelled by the condition of our country, to sacrifice my personal wishes and interests to its good.

Two years have not passed away since a Convention, remarkable for its numbers, patriotism and intelligence, assembled at this place to avert if possible the calamities which all of our people. In respectful terms, it implored the leaders of the political party which had triumphed at a recent election to submit to the people of this country some measure of conciliation which would save them from civil war. It asked that before we should be involved in the evils and horrors of domestic bloodshed, those upon whom it would bring bankruptcy and ruin, and into whose homes it would carry desolation and death, should be allowed to speak. That prayer for the rights of our people was derided and denounced, and false assurances were given that there was no danger. The storm came upon us with all its fury—and the war so constantly and clearly foretold, desolated our land. It is said no compromises would have satisfied the South. If we had tried them it would not now be a matter of discordant opinion. If these offers had not satisfied the South, they would have gratified loyal men at the North, and would have united us more perfectly.

Animated by devotion to our Constitution and Union our people rallied to the support of Government, and one year since shewed an armed

strength that astonished the world. We again appealed to those who wielded this mighty material power, to use it for the restoration of the Union and to uphold the Constitution, and were told that he who clamored for his Constitutional rights was a traitor!

Congress assembled. Inexperienced in the conduct of public affairs, drunk with power, it began its course of agitation, outrage and wrong. The defeat of our arms at Manassas, for a time filled it with terror. Under this influence it adopted the resolution of Mr. Crittenden, declaring,

"That the present deplorable Civil War has been forced upon the country by the Disunionists of the Southern States, now in arms against the Constitutional Government, and in arms around the Capital; That in this National emergency Congress banishing all feelings of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to the whole Country; That this war is not waged, on their part, in any spirit of oppression or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union, with all the dignity, equality and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease.

Again the people rallied around the flag of the Union. But no sooner were their fears allayed than they began anew the factious intrigues—the violent discussions and the unconstitutional legislation which ever brings defeat and disgrace upon Nations. In vain were they warned of the consequences of their follies. In vain did the President implore forbearance and moderation. No act was omitted which would give energy to the Secessionists, or which would humiliate and mortify the loyal men of the South. Every topic calculated to divide and distract the North was dragged into embittered debates. Proclamations of emancipation were urged upon the President, which could only confiscate the property of loyal citizens at the South; for none others could be reached by the power of the government. The confiscation act had already forfeited the legal rights of all who were engaged in or who aided and upheld the rebellion. These were excited to desperate energy by laws which made their lives, their fortunes, the safety of their families and homes depend upon the success of their schemes.—From the Dragon's teeth, sown broadcast by Congress, have sprung the armies which have driven back our forces, and which now beleaguers the Capital of our Country. The acts of the National Legislature have given pleasure to the Abolitionists, victories to the Secessionists. But while treason rejoices and triumphs, defeat and disgrace have been brought upon the Flag of our Country and the defenders of our Constitution. Every man who visited Washington six months ago could see and feel we were upon the verge of disaster. Discord, jealousy, envy and strife pervaded its atmosphere.

I went to the camp of our soldiers. Amid the hardships of an exhausting campaign—amid sufferings from exposure and want—amid those languishing upon beds of sickness, or those struck down by the casualties of war, I heard and saw only devotion to our Constitution, and love for our Country's Flag. Each

eye brightened as it looked upon the National Standard with its glorious emblazonry of Stars and Strips. From this scene of patriotic devotion I went into our National Capitol. I traversed its Mosaic pavements; I gazed upon its walls of polished marble; I saw upon its ceilings all that wealth, lavishly poured out, could do to make them suggestive of our country's greatness and its wonderful wealth of varied productions. Art had exhausted itself in painting and sculpture to make every aspect suggestive of high and noble thought and purpose. Full of the associations which cluster about this vast Temple which should be dedicated to patriotism and truth; I entered its Legislative Halls; their gilded walls and gorgeous furniture did not contrast more strongly with the rude scenes of martial life than did the glistening putrescence and thin lacquer of Congressional virtue contrast with the sterling loyalty and noble self-sacrifice of our country's defenders. I listened to debates full of bitterness and strife.

I saw in the camp a heartfelt homage to our national flag—a stern defiance of those who dared to touch its sacred fold with hostile hands. I heard in the Capitol threats of mutilation of its emblazonry—by striking down the life of States. He who would rend our National standard by dividing our Union is a Traitor. He who would put out one glittering star from its azure field, is a Traitor too.

#### THE PRESENT CONDITION OF OUR COUNTRY.

Let us now confront the facts of our condition, and they shall be stated in the language of those who brought this administration into power, and who now are politically opposed to the members of this Convention. After the expenditure of nearly one thousand millions of dollars, and the sacrifice of more than one hundred thousand Northern lives in the language of the *Evening Post*:

What has been the result? Our armies of the West, the noble victors of Fort Donelson and Shiloh, are scattered so that no man knows their whereabouts, while the forces were sent to disperse in a hundred miles in their rear, threatening the cities of Tennessee and Kentucky, and even advancing toward one of the principal commercial cities of the Free States. There is no leadership, no unity of command, apparently no plan or concert of action in the entire region we have undertaken to hold and defend. At the same time, our army of the East, numbering 250,000 thousand troops, fully armed and equipped and admirably disciplined, after investing the Capital of the enemy, has been driven back to its original position on the Potomac, decimated in numbers and unprepared to make a single vigorous movement in advance.

And it adds:—

Now it is useless to shut our eyes to the fact that this is a failure, disgraceful, humiliating and awful.

The *Evening Journal*, the accredited organ of the Secretary of State, now admits the truths uttered in this Hall when we assembled here in February, 1861; truths then derided and denounced as absurd and treasonable. It says:

The War has been a stern schoolmaster to the People of the Loy States. We have learned the folly of underrating our enemies. We have learned that they are equally brave, equally hardy, equally quick witted, equally endued with martial qualities with ourselves. We have learned they are terribly in earnest in their efforts to achieve their ends.

#### The New York Tribune declares that

"The Country is in peril. Viewed from the standpoint of the public estimate of 'the situation,' it is in extreme peril. The Rebels seem to be pushing forward their forces all along the border line from the Atlantic to the Missouri. They are threatening the Potomac and the Ohio. They are striking at Washington, Cincinnati and Louisville. This simultaneous movement is both alarming and encouraging. It is alarming because, through the timidity, despondency, or folly of the Federal Government, it may become temporarily successful, giving to the foe a lodgment in some portion of the Free States which may require weeks to break up."

But it is admitted by those who were opposed to us, that debt and defeat are not the heaviest calamities which weigh us down. A virtuous people and a pure government can bear up against any amount of outward pressure or physical calamity, but when rottenness and corruption pervade the legislative hall or executive department the heart of the patriot faints and his arm withers. The organ of the Secretary of State admits:

"There have been mistakes. There have been speculation. Weak men have disgraced, and bad men have betrayed the Government. Contractors have fattened on fat jobs. Adventurers have found the war a source of private gain. Moral desperadoes have flocked about the National Capitol and lain in wait for prey. The scum of the land has gathered about the source of power and defiled them by its reek and offensive odor.—There has been mismanagement in the department; mismanagement wherever great labor has been performed, and great responsibilities devolving. Men—even Presidents and Cabinet officers and Commanding Generals—have erred because they could not grasp the full significance of the drama, and because they were compelled to strike out on untrodden paths."—*Eve. Journal*.

Hear the voice of a leading Republican orator:

"I declare it upon my responsibility as a Senator of the United States," said John P. Hale, "that the vices of this country are in greater danger to-day from the corruptions and from the profligacy practiced in the various departments of the Government than they are from the open enemy in the field."

The New York *World* exclaims in an agony of remorse:

It is with dismay and unspeakable shame that we, who have supported the administration from the beginning, observe its abuse of its power of arrest. "There is no such thing as either justifying or extenuating its conduct in this particular. Every principle of American liberty, every regard for the loyal cause, every sentiment of justice, every impulse of manhood, goes out against it. The man who thinks at all is absolutely staggered that these things can be. They seem like some hideous dream. One can almost fancy that Memphis opinions himself had got access into the councils of the government, and by some device, fresh from the pit, had diverted its energies from the repression of rebellion to the suppression of liberty."

The New York *Times* demands a change in the Administration, and in the conduct of affairs.

I have thus carefully set forth the declarations and named the witnesses to this awful indictment, against our rulers, for we mean to proceed with all the care and candor, and all the solemnity of a Judicial Tribunal.

It is with a sorrowful heart I point to these dark pictures, not drawn by journals of the Democratic party. God knows that as a member of that patriotic organization, as an American citizen, I would gladly efface them if I could. But, alas! they are grounded upon truths that cannot be gainsaid. Once more,



then, our Republican fellow-citizens, in this day of our common humiliation and disgrace, we implore you as respectfully as in the hour of your political triumph listen to our suggestions. We do not come with reproaches, but with entreaties. Follow the pathways marked out by the Constitution and we shall be extricated from our perilous position. On the other hand, if you will still be governed by those who brought us into our present condition, you will learn too late that there are yet deeper depths of degradation before us, and greater miseries to be borne than those which now oppress us. Nay more, the President of the United States appeals to us all, in his communication with the loyal men of the Border States, when he says he is pressed to violate his duty, his oath of office, and the Constitution of the land—pressed by cowardly and heartless men, living far away from the scenes of war, fattening upon the wealth coined from the blood and misery of the land, and living in those localities where official investigations show that this people and Government have been robbed by fraudulent contracts. Such men demand that those who have suffered most in this contest, who have shown the highest and purest patriotism under the terrible trials of divided families, of desolated homes, of ruined fortunes and of blood stained fields, should have a new and further evil inflicted upon them by the hands of a Government they are struggling to uphold. By the help of God and the people we will relieve the President from that pressure.

#### NECESSITY FOR PARTY ORGANIZATIONS.

An attempt is made to close the ears of our Republican friends to our appeals, because we act as a political organization. Can we do otherwise? Would not the dispersion of this ancient party, identified as it is with the growth, greatness and glory of our land, be looked upon as a calamity, even by our opponents? Did not a shadow fall upon our country when it was torn apart at Charleston; and do not men of all parties point to its disruption as one of the causes of this unnatural war? Is it not just we should have a representation in the State and National government proportioned to our contributions to our armies and the treasury? If we elect all of our ticket at this time, we shall have no more than our proportional share of political power. It may be said we should meet without regard to political organizations, and nominate officers. This destroys the object of such organizations. They would cease to be protections against abuses of power or the inroads of corruption. Let the two great parties be honest and honorable enough to meet in fair and open discussion with well defined principles and policies. Then each will serve our country as well out of power as in power. The vigilance kept alive by party contest guards against corruption or oppression. This watchfulness is most needed when unusual expenditures of money present unusual temptations to the corrupt and selfish.

For another reason we cannot disband our organization. The Union men of the Border and more Southern States, without distinction of party, implore us not to do so. They tell

us a triumph of our party now would be worth more than victories upon the battle field. It would reassure their friends, it would weaken their opponents. Every advantage gained over abolitionism puts down the rebellion. While they and we know there are many just and patriotic men in the Republican party, it is still true that its success gives power and influence to the violent and fanatical, and that their party action always goes beyond their party platform.

Every fair man admits there is no way of correcting abuses but by a change of political leaders. The Republican party demanded this when they charged abuses upon Democratic administration. They should concede the principle now.

Experience shows that frauds practiced by political friends are not punished by men in power. It is conceded that gross frauds have been committed in different departments of government; that they have brought distress upon our soldiers, defeat upon our arms and disgrace upon our people. But not one man has been punished, or made to feel the power of that prerogative which is claimed to be an incident of war. Corruption that has done more to destroy the National power than armed rebellion, has gone unscathed. The Sentinel who slept upon his post, has been sentenced to death—the official who closed his eyes to frauds, which destroyed armies, is quietly removed, by and with the advice of the Senate and represents the Nation's character at the Capital of a friendly power! Citizens in loyal States who became the objects of suspicion or of malignant assaults, have been seized at their homes, dragged to distant prisons without trial and without redress, while each convicted plunderer walks freely and boldly among the people he has robbed and wronged. Maladministration demands change of administration.

At this time issues should be fairly and boldly made. It is no dishonor to be mistaken, but is disgraceful not to be outspoken. Let this war at least settle questions of principle. A few months will decide who is right and who is wrong now, as the past two years have shown who were right and who were wrong heretofore. We are in favor of the rights of the State, as well as of the General Government; we are in favor of local self-government, as well as of the National jurisdiction within its proper sphere.

While we thus meet as a political organization it is not for partisan purposes. We can best serve our country in this relationship. The President of the United States will bear witness that he has not been pressed or embarrassed by us. We have loyally responded to every call made on us by constituted authority. We have obeyed all orders to reinforce our armies. When we were in power we denounced the higher law doctrine—the principle that men might set up their wills against the statutes of the land—as treasonable. We denounced it when uttered by Northern men; we are combatting it now when it is asserted by the rebellious South. We repudiate it by submitting to every demand of our Government made within

the limits of rightful jurisdiction. This obedience has not been constrained, but cheerfully rendered, even in support of a party and policy to which we are opposed. We have struggled to sustain not only the letter but the spirit of our laws. We feel that we have set an example of loyalty that will not be lost upon those opposed to us. Having done our duty, we now demand our rights, and we shall at this time set in calm and fearless judgment upon the conduct of our rulers. Ours shall not be the language of discord and violence. We deplore the passionate and vindictive assaults of leading Republican journals upon those holding civil or military stations. Above all we protest in behalf of our country's honor and dignity, against their insubordinate and disrespectful language towards the President of these United States. Such language wrecks the authority of Government and tends to anarchy and public disorder.

For another reason, we cannot disband our organization. No other party can save this country. It alone has clearly defined purposes and well settled principles. It has been well said in our Congressional Address, that under its guidance,

From five millions, the population increased to thirty millions. The Revolutionary debt was extinguished.—Two foreign wars were successfully prosecuted, with a moderate outlay and small army and navy, and without the suspension of the *habeas corpus*; without one infraction of the Constitution; without one usurpation of power; without suppressing a single newspaper; without imprisoning a single editor; without limit to the freedom of the press; or of speech in or out of Congress, but in the midst of the grossest abuse of both; and without the arrest of a single "traitor," though the Hartford Convention sat during one of the wars, and in the other Senators invited the enemy to "Greet our Volunteers with bloody hands and welcome them to Hospitable Graves!"

During all this time wealth increased, business of all kinds multiplied, prosperity smiled on every side, taxes were low, wages were high, the North and the South furnished a market for each other's products at good prices, public liberty was secure, private rights undisturbed; every man's house was his castle; the Courts were open to all; no passports for travel, no secret police, no spies, no informers, no bastilles; the right to assemble peaceably, the right to petition; freedom of religion, freedom of speech, a free ballot, and a free press; and all this time the Constitution maintained and the Union of the States preserved.

#### WHY THE REPUBLICAN PARTY CANNOT SAVE THE COUNTRY.

On the other hand, the very character of the Republican organizations, makes it incapable of conducting the affairs of the Government. For a series of years, it has practiced a system of coalitions, with men differing in principle, until it can have no distinctive policy. In such chaotic masses, the violent have most control. They have been educating their followers for years, through the press, not to obey laws which did not accord with their views. How can they demand submission from whole communities, while they contend that individuals may oppose laws opposed to their consciences? They are higher law men. They insist that the contest, in which we are engaged, is an irrepressible one and that therefore the South could not avoid it, unless they were willing at the outset to surrender all that abolitionists demanded. To declare that this contest is irrepressible, de-

clares that our Fathers formed a government, which could not stand. Are such men, the proper guardians of this government? Have not their speeches and acts given strength to the rebellion, and have they not also enabled its leaders to prove to their deluded followers, that the contest was an irrepressible one?

But their leaders have not only asserted that this contest was irrepressible, unless the South would give up what extreme Republican demand, (their local institutions,) but those in power have done much to justify this rebellion in the eyes of the world. The guilt of rebellion is determined by the character of the government against which it is arrayed. The right of revolution, in the language of President Lincoln, is a sacred right when exerted against a bad government.

We charge that this rebellion is most wicked because it is against the best Government that ever existed. It is the excellence of our Government that makes resistance a crime. Rebellion is not necessarily wrong. It may be an act of the highest virtue—it may be one of the deepest depravity. The rebellion of our Fathers is our proudest boast—the rebellion of our Erbers is the humiliation of our Nation is our National disgrace. To resist a bad Government is patriotism—to resist a good one is the greatest guilt. The first is patriotism, the last is treason. Legal tribunals can only regard resistance of laws, as a crime but in the forum of public sentiment the character of the Government will decide if the act is treason or patriotism.

Our Government and its administration are different things; but in the eyes of the civilized world, abuses, weakness or folly in the conduct of affairs go far to justify resistance.—I have read to you the testimony of Messrs. Greely, Weed, Bryant, Raymond and Marble, charging fraud, corruption, outrage and incompetency upon those in power. Those who stand up to testify to the incompetency of these representatives of a discordant party to conduct the affairs of our Government are politically opposed to us. Bear in mind that the embarrassments of President Lincoln grows out of the conflicting views of his political friends, and their habits and principles of insubordination. His hands would be strengthened by a Democratic victory, and if his private prayers are answered we will relieve him from the pressure of philanthropists who thirst for blood, and who call for the extermination of the men, women and children of the South. The brutal and bloody language of partisan editors and political preachers have lost us the sympathy of the civilized world in a contest where all mankind should be upon one side.

Turning to the Legislative Departments of our government, what do we see? In the history of the decline and fall of Nations, there are no more striking displays of madness and folly. The assemblage of Congress throws gloom over the Nation; its continuance in session is more disastrous than defeat upon the battle field. It excites alike alarm and disgust.

The public are disappointed in the results of



the war. This is owing to the differing objects of the people on the one hand, and of the fanatical agitators in and out of Congress on the other. In the army, the Union men of the North and South battle side by side, under one flag, to put down rebellion and uphold the Union and Constitution. In Congress a fanatical majority make war on the Union men of the South and strengthen the hands of Secessionists by words and acts which enable them to keep alive the flames of civil war. What is done on the battle field by the blood and treasure of the people, is undone by Senators. Half of the time is spent in factious measures designed to destroy all confidence in the government at the South, and the rest in annoying our army, in meddling with its operations, embarrassing our generals and in publishing undigested and unfounded scandal. One party is seeking to bring about peace, the other to keep alive hatred and bitterness by interferences. They prove the wisdom of Solomon, when he said: "It is an honor to a man to cease from strife, but every fool will be meddling."

This war cannot be brought to a successful conclusion or our country restored to an honorable peace under the Republican leaders for another reason. Our disasters are mainly due to the fact that they have not dared to tell the truth to the community. A system of misrepresentation had been practiced so long and so successfully that when the war burst upon us they feared to let the people know its full proportions, and they persisted in assuring their friends it was but a passing excitement. They still asserted that the South was unable to maintain and carry on a war. They denounced as a traitor every man who tried to tell the truth and to warn our people of the magnitude of the contest.

Now, my Republican friends, you know that the misapprehensions of the North with regard to the South has drenched the land with blood. Was this ignorance accidental? I appeal to you Republicans, if for years past, through the press and in publications which have been urged upon your attention by the leaders of your party, you have not been taught to despise the power and resources of the South? I appeal to you to say if this teaching has not been a part of the machinery by which power has been gained? I appeal to you to answer if those who tried to teach truths now admitted have not been denounced? I appeal to you if a book, beyond all others, false, bloody and treasonable, was not sent out with the endorsement of all your managers; and is it not true that now, when men blush to own they believed its statements, that its author is honored by an official station? It is now freely confessed by you all, that you have been deceived with respect to the South. Who deceived you? Who, by false teachings, instilled contempt and hate into the minds of our people? Who stained our land with blood? Who caused ruin and distress? All these things are within your own knowledge.—Are their authors the leaders to rescue us from our calamities? They shrink back appalled from

the mischief they have wrought, and tell you it is an irrepressible contest. That reason is as good for Jefferson Davis as for them. They attempt to drown reflections by new excitements and new appeals to our passions. Having already, in legislation, gone far beyond the limits at which, by their resolutions, they were pledged to stop, they now ask to adopt measures which they have heretofore denounced as unjust and unconstitutional. For this reason they cannot save our country.

As our national calamities thicken upon us an attempt is made by their authors to avoid their responsibilities by insisting that our failures are due to the fact that their measures are not carried out, although Government has already gone far beyond its pledges. The demands of these men will never cease, simply because they hope to save themselves from condemnation by having unsatisfied demands. At the last Session Congress not only abolished slavery in the District of Columbia, but, to quiet clamorous men, an act of Confiscation and Emancipation was passed, which, in the opinion of leading Republicans, was unconstitutional and unjust. By this act the rebels have no property—not even their own lives—and they own no slaves. But to the astonishment and disgust of those who believe in the policy of statutes and proclamations, these rebels still live and fight and hold their slaves. These measures seem to have reanimated them. They have a careless and reckless way of appropriating their lives and property, which by act of Congress belong to us, in support of their cause.

But these fanatical men have learned that it is necessary to win a victory before they divide the spoil—and what do they now propose? As they cannot take the property of rebels beyond their reach they will take the property of the loyal men of the Border States. The violent men of this party as you know from experience, my conservative Republican friend, in the end have their way. They now demand that the President shall issue a Proclamation of immediate and universal emancipation? Against whom is this to be directed? Not against those in rebellion for they came within the scope of the act of Congress. It can only be applied to those who have been true to our Union and our Flag. They are to be punished for their loyalty. When we consider their sufferings and their cruel wrongs at the hands of the secessionists, their reliance upon our faith, is not this proposal black with ingratitude?

The scheme for an immediate emancipation and general arming of the slaves throughout the South is a proposal for the butchery of women and children, for scenes of lust and rapine; of arson and murder unparalleled in the history of the world. The horrors of the French Revolution would become tame in comparison. Its effect would not be confined to the walls of cities, but there would be a wide spread scene of horror over the vast expanse of great States, involving alike the loyal and seditious. Such malignity and cowardice would

invoke the interference of civilized Europe. History tells of the fires kindled in the name of religion, of atrocities committed under pretences of order or liberty; but it is now urged that scenes bloodier than the world has yet seen shall be enacted in the name of philanthropy!

A proclamation of general and armed emancipation at this time, would be a cruel wrong to the African. It is now officially declared in Presidential addresses, which are fortified by Congressional action, that the negro cannot live in the enjoyment of the full privileges of life among the white race. It is now admitted, after our loss of infinite blood and treasure, that the great problem we have to settle is not the slavery, but the negro question. A terrible question, not springing from statutes or usages, but growing out of the unchangeable distinction of race. It is discovered at this late day, in Republican Illinois, that it is right to drive him from its soil. It is discovered by a Republican Congress, after convulsing our country with declarations in favor of his equal rights, and asserting that he was merely the victim of unjust laws, that he should be sent away from our land. The issue is now changed. The South holds that the African is fit to live here as a slave. Our Republican Government denies that he is fit to live here at all.

The Republican party cannot save the country, because through its powerful Press it teaches contempt for the Laws, Constitution and constituted authorities. They are not only destroying the Union, but they are shaking and weakening the whole structures of State as well as of the National Government, by denunciations of every law and of all authority that stand in the way of their passions or their purposes. They have not only carried discord into our churches and legislative halls, but into our armies. Every General who agrees with them upon the subject of Slavery is upheld in every act of insubordination and sustained against the clearest proofs of incompetence, if not of corruption. On the other hand, every Commander who differs from their views upon the single point of Slavery, is denounced, not only for incompetency, but constantly depreciated in every act. No man is allowed to be a Christian; no man is regarded as a Statesman; no man is suffered unmolested to do his duty as a Soldier unless he supports measures which no one dared to urge eighteen months since. They insist that martial law is superior to constitutional law, that the wills of Generals in the field are above all restraints; but they demand for themselves the right to direct and control these Generals. They claim an influence higher than they will allow to the laws of the land. Are these displays of insubordination and violence safe at this time?

The weight of annual taxation will test severely the loyalty of the people of the North. Repudiation of our financial obligations would cause disorder and endless moral evils. Pecuniary rights will never be held more sacred than personal rights. Repudiation of the Constitution involves repudiation of National debts, of its guaranties of rights of property, of person,

and of conscience. The moment we show the world that we do not hold the Constitution to be a sacred compact, we not only destroy all sense of security, but we turn away from our shores the vast tide of foreign immigration. It comes here now not because there are not other skies as bright and other lands as productive as ours. It seeks here security for freedom—for rights of conscience—for immunity from tyrannical interferences, and from meddling impertinence. The home and fireside rights heretofore enjoyed by the American people—enjoyed under protection of written Constitution, have made us great and prosperous. I entreat you again, touch them not with sacrilegious hands! We are threatened with the breaking up of our social system, with the overthrow of State and National Governments. If we begin a war upon the compromises of the Constitution we must go through with it. It contains many restraints upon our natural rights. It may be asked by what right do the six small New England States, with a population less than that of New York, have six times its power in the Senate, which has become the controlling branch of government? By what natural right do these States with their small united populations and limited territories balance the power of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan? The vast debt growing out of this war will give rise to new and angry discussions. It will be held almost exclusively in a few Atlantic States. Look upon the map of the Union and see how small is the territory in which it will be owned. We are to be divided into creditor and debtor States, and the last will have a vast preponderance of power and strength. Unfortunately there is no taxation upon this national debt and its share is thrown off upon other property. It is held where many of the government contracts have been executed, and where in some instances, gross frauds, have been practiced. It is held largely where the Constitution gives a disproportional share of political power. With all these elements of discord, is it wise to assail constitutional law, or bring authority into contempt. Is it safe to encourage the formation of irresponsible committees, made up of impertinent men, who thrust themselves into the conduct of public affairs and try to dictate to legal rulers? or will you tolerate the enrollment of armies which are not constituted or organized by proper authorities? Are such things just towards those who have placed their fortunes in the hands of the government at this crisis?

We implore you do not be deceived again with this Syren song of no danger. There is danger, great and imminent, of the destruction of all government, of safety for life and property, unless the duty of obedience to law and respect for authorities and the honest support of those in the public service both military and civil, are taught and enforced, by all means within our control.

With us there is no excuse for revolutionary action. Our system of government give peaceful remedies for all evils in legislation.



WHAT THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY PROPOSE TO DO.

Mr. President: It will be asked what do we propose to do. We mean, with all our powers of mind and person to support the Constitution and uphold the Union; to maintain the laws, to preserve the public faith. We insist upon obedience to laws and respect for Constitutional authority; we will defend the rights of citizens; we mean that rulers and subjects shall respect the laws; we will put down all revolutionary committees; we will resist all unauthorized organizations of armed men; we will spurn officious meddlers who are impudently pushing themselves into the councils of our Government. Politically opposed to those in authority, we demand they shall be treated with the respect due to their positions as the representatives of the dignity and honor of the American people. We do not try to save our country by abandoning its government. In these times of trial and danger we cling more closely to the great principles of civil and religious liberty and of personal right; we will man the defences and barriers which the Constitution throws around them; we will revive the courage and strengthen the arms of loyal men by showing them they have a living government about which to rally; we will proclaim amidst the confusion and uproar of civil war, with louder tones and firmer voices the great maxims and principles of civil liberty, order and obedience. What has perpetuated the greatness of that nation from which we derive so many of our maxims? Not its victories upon land nor its triumphs upon the seas, but its firm adherence to its traditional policy. The words of Coke, of Camden and Mansfield, have for long periods of time given strength and vitality and honor to its social system, while battles have lost their significance. When England was agitated by the throes of violence—when the person of the King was insulted; when Parliament was besieged by mobs maddened by bigotry; when the life of Lord Mansfield was sought by infuriated fanatics, and his house was burned by incendiary fires, then he uttered those words which checked at once unlawful power and lawless violence. He declared that every citizen was entitled to his rights according to the known procedures of the land. He showed to the world the calm and awful majesty of the law, unshaken amidst convulsions. Self reliant in its strength and purity, it was driven to no acts which destroy the spirit of law. Violence was rebuked, the heart of the nation was reassured, a sense of security grew up, and the storm was stilled. Listen to his word:

Miserable is the condition of individuals; dangerous is the condition of the State where there is no certain law, or what is the same thing, no certain administration of law by which individuals may be protected and the State made secure.

Thus, too, will we stand calmly up amidst present disasters. We have warned the public that every act of disobedience weakened their claims to protection. We have admonished our rulers that every violation of right destroyed sentiments of loyalty and duty. That obedience and protection were reciprocal obligations. He who withholds his earnest and cheerful support to any legal demand of his Government, invites oppression and usurpation on the part of those in authority. The public servant who oversteps his jurisdiction or tramples upon the rights, person, property or procedure of the governed, instigates resistance and revolt.

Under abuse and detraction we have faithfully acted upon these precepts. If our purposes were factious, the elements of disorder are everywhere within our reach. If we were as disobedient to this Government and as denunciatory of its officials as those who placed them in power, we could make them tremble in their seats of power. We have been obedient, loyal and patient. We shall continue to be so under all circumstances. But let no man mistake this devotion to our country and its Constitution for unworthy fear. We have no greater stake in good order than other men.—Our arms are as strong, our endurance as great, our fortitude as unwavering as that of our political opponents. But we seek the blessings of peace, of law, of order. We ask the public to mark our policy and our position. Opposed to the election of Mr. Lincoln, we have loyally sustained him. Differing from the Administration as to the course and the conduct of the war, we have cheerfully responded to every demand made upon us. To-day we are putting forth our utmost efforts to reinforce our armies in the field. Without conditions or threats we are exerting our energies to strengthen the hands of government and to replace it in the commanding position it held in the eyes of the world before recent disasters. We are pouring out our blood, our treasures, and our men, to rescue it from a position in which it can neither propose peace nor conduct successful war. And this support is freely and generously accorded. We wish to see our Union saved, our laws vindicated, and peace once more restored to our land. We do not claim more virtue or intelligence than we award to our opponents, but we now have the sad and bloody proof that we act upon sounder principles of government. Animated by the motto we have placed upon our banner—"The Union, the Constitution and the Laws"—we go into the political contest confident of the support of a People who cannot be deaf or blind to the teachings of the last two years.

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