

Transcription

Speedily call a convention

Whereas, The Constitution of the United States is a compact between coequal sovereign States, by which certain specific powers are granted to the general government, with an express reservation to the States respectively of the powers not thus granted, which Constitution was a compact entered into between neighboring and friendly States bound together by the ties of a common language, a common origin, and a common struggle for the great achievement of American independence, for the purpose, among other things, of forming a more perfect Union, establishing justice, securing domestic tranquility and promoting the general welfare; and, whereas, the territories are acquired under and by virtue of this compact are the common property to all, in which no section, or member of such compact has, or of right to have, any exclusive privileges or advantages, but all are entitled to equal protection to their property and like advantages to themselves; and, whereas, each State has a right, in its own sovereign capacity, to regulate its own internal polity and adopt its own institutions, without dictation or interference from any other State or quarter;— yet in contravention of these well established principles, the northern section of this confederacy has openly violated the federal compact and nullified the constitution of our fathers by the action of its State Legislatures, in the passage of laws call "Personal Liberty Bills," and by mobs and violence obstructed the execution of the fugitive slave law, passed in conformity with the constitution; have harassed, beaten, maltreated and shed the blood of peaceable citizens in their lawful efforts to recover their own property; have denied in the South the right of protection of their property in the common Territories of the Union; have used every means to render the same insecure; have openly stated their intention of putting the same in the road of ultimate extinction; have for years without the least show of right, and in open disregard of our earnest remonstrance, arrogated to themselves the dangerous privilege of interfering in every conceivable way with our domestic institutions by hired abolition agents, lecturers, sermons, papers, common schools, and the publication of inflammatory and seditious documents, circulated among our people for the purpose of stirring up sedition and inciting insurrection; and as the proximate cause and legitimate result of such a course, instigated a band of armed ruffians to invade our State and murder our peaceable citizens on our own soil;— in short the fanatical, sectional black republican party has attained to such dimensions that it has been enabled to elect a President on almost a strictly sectional vote, and



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upon the one principle of hostility to the institution of African slavery, the institution of nearly one half of the States of the Union; such has been the persistent, hostile and unwarrantable course of this sectional abolition party, that the ties which bound our fathers in amity and friendship have well nigh been severed, and alienation, distrust, enmity and a feeling of insecurity have taken place; therefore

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting a crisis has arrived in which it is neither safe nor honorable for our State and section to remain inactive spectators to the dangers by which they are surrounded; that our duty as freemen and our position as equals requires the Commonwealth of Virginia to take early action to secure more effectual guarantees for the protection of life, liberty and property, and to secure equality within the Union, or failing, to take her destiny under her own control, and provide, as best she may, for the security of the above objects out of the Union.

2d. That the course of the republican party now soon to be installed in power, if persisted in by that party, and tolerated by the South, must end in the degradation and ruin of the latter.

3d. That in the opinion of this meeting the Legislature ought, at an early stage of its session, to pass an act for the speedy call of a convention to take into consideration what is best to be done under existing circumstances, and that our Delegate and Senator consider themselves instructed to vote for such an act.

4th. That as the Northern States alone have it in their power to reinstate the once friendly relations that existed between the two sections, it is but just and reasonable that the initiative step for that purpose should be taken by the Northern States.

Citation: Resolutions adopted unanimously at a public meeting in Gilmer County on January 1, 1861, and published in the Philippi *Barbour Jeffersonian*, ca. January 4, 1861.