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Political.

SPEECH

COL. JOHN W. FORNEY,

Delivered on the 2d of September, at Tarrytown, N. Y., in the 9th Congressional District, represented by the Hon. JOHN B. HASKIN, who was re-nominated as the People's Candidate for Congress on that day.

After some remarks relative to Mr. Haskin, Mr. Forney said:

My fellow-citizens, I must be a little personal, because, appearing before you as I do, I am impelled, if not compelled, to refer to a portion of the political history in which I have borne a prominent part. My relations to the present Executive of the United States begun with early boyhood, from the time long before I became a voter, when I was his intimate confidant and friend. From early youth down to the present hour, or rather to a period one year ago, I sustained toward Mr. Buchanan a relations not only of intimacy, but of more than intimacy. Had he been my father, if his blood ran in my veins, I could not have been more devotedly attached to him. [Applause.] I believe that that sentiment and affection was reciprocated. We had tried in our good old State of Pennsylvania, for many years, to elect this gentleman to the Presidency. It fell to my lot—born in the country where he grew to manhood, in the country where he read law, in the country where he still has his residence, in that country where he says he expects to die—and knowing him thus well, it fell to my lot to do a good deal of the hard work incident to the fulfillment of the aspirations of himself and the wishes of his friends. In 1844 we went to the City of Baltimore instructed to vote for a distinguished citizen of your State, Mr. Van Buren; but owing to the publication of his celebrated Texas letter, the delegation from Pennsylvania, as is well known, concluded that Mr. Van Buren had forfeited the confidence of the Democratic Party, and that it became us to present our own favored citizen for that high place. We did so, and we failed. But still in 1848 we reappeared upon the scene with our fellow citizens, and there the friends of Mr. Van Buren in this State repaid us in kind for the good turn we had served them four years before. [Applause.] Undaunted, we continued to organize and in 1852 we reappeared in the same scene with our former friend, and we were again defeated. That seemed to be the last chance—the last shot in the locker—if I may use the expression. But he was appointed by President Pierce in 1853 to fill the high and important mission of Minister to England. While there he was removed from the scenes of domestic politics, and quietly and unobtrusively watched the movements at home pending and succeeding the repeal of the Missouri line. Mr. Buchanan had been known for his attachment to that line—though in 1819, while a student of law with Mr. Hopkiss, at Lancaster, Pa., he attended a meeting in which he denounced it; subsequently in 1847, he came out in his celebrated Berks County letter, and stated there that the only way to settle the Slavery question was to run the line to the Pacific so as to secure to the North and to the South their respective benefits on each side of it as proposed by its original friends. Therefore, it was, that while at a foreign court, absent from his own country, his name became peculiarly the name of the American people, as the one that would lead the Democratic party to victory again. His old friends in Pennsylvania moved forward, and again we organized. We saw the time had come when our champion could be presented to our people. We repaired to Cincinnati. Rivalries—home rivalries—had been extinguished; bitterness growing out of the Missouri line and the passage of the Kansas Nebraska bill had temporarily removed other candidates from the field (or so we thought); and Cass men, Dallas men, and Buchanan men in Pennsylvania made common cause, and repaired to Cincinnati for the purpose of putting this gentleman in nomination. When we reached there, the first indication that appeared was, that the extreme South had resolved upon Mr. Buchanan's annihilation. They saw in him the light of a moderate conservative sentiment. They saw in him, for the first time, a public man who having been absent from the country, therefore disconnected from the exciting rivalries of the day, would be compelled from his position, to do justice to Northern feelings, and extinguish sectionalism. They did not trust to him on the issue of the day. He was not a good enough Kansas and Nebraska man for them; and they fought us, as the history of that Convention will show, for five long days with a bitterness and animosity such as political conventions can scarcely rival. But he was the only man to rescue the Democratic party from defeat. He was the only man to prevent the election of a Republican, and the only man who could carry Pennsylvania; for upon the contest of that State did the entire tide of battle turn. From your own State a similar disposition was manifested in certain quarters. In this quarter, now, where this disease of Leocompton rages the most violently, and where the affection for the administration is indulged the most ardently, Mr. Buchanan received nothing

but coldness and contempt—but we nominated him and returned to Pennsylvania, for the first time joyous in having achieved our long cherished wish. And when we returned there, we came with the full and confident hope that there would be an end to the difficulty in electing a man whose nature was believed to be conservative, whose character was believed to be so prudent, and whose entire record had been national and constitutional. At that time I believe the Republicans themselves abandoned the campaign. They looked upon his nomination as their death-blow. They looked around in vain for a candidate; but events (and there is no necessity for spinning out this detail to a greater length) brought on a series of excitements such as we have never witnessed in our country, and by the middle of August 1856, the campaign was more than doubtful. Why did it become doubtful? Because the Public Opinion of the North had been stirred to its deepest depths by the excesses of the Pro-Slavery minority, backed by Federal power, in the Territory of Kansas. That was the only question. It was not the Ostend Conference, it was not the Pacific Railroad; it was nothing but the single issue—Shall the people of Kansas be permitted to dispose of their own affairs in their own way? Shall they vote upon their domestic institutions, not Slavery alone, but upon all their institutions, unmolested by the bayonets of the Administration on the one hand and the onslaughts of bands of foreign marauders on the other. No man felt more deeply in reference to Kansas than did Mr. Buchanan. No man talked more freely about it. In his letter of acceptance of the nomination and in the speech he delivered to the Committee upon it in his parlor at Lancaster, (at which I happened to be present,) he laid stress upon the great principle that the will of the majority should prevail. Why, he said to me a thousand times: "The South must vote for me, and the North must be secured; and the only way to secure the North is to convince those gentlemen that when I get in the Presidential chair I will do right with the people of Kansas. I am now 66 years of age. I have reached that time of life when I cannot have any ambition for a re-election, and if I have, the only way to secure it is to bring with me my own people at home. I watched this struggle from my retirement in London: 'I have seen what I conceive to be the mistakes of others. I am not responsible for the Administration of President Pierce; therefore, I will inaugurate a new system; I will show to those gentlemen that a Pennsylvania President will stand firm to the pledges of a Pennsylvania 'gentleman and a Pennsylvania Democrat.'" Now, fellow citizens, in that letter of acceptance, if you will refer to it—it is not necessary for me to produce it here—you will find that he stated distinctly that the Territory of Kansas should be protected in the sacred right of suffrage, unawed by any influence whatever, and that the will of the majority should prevail.

We went into the canvass. It fell to my lot to be at the head of the State Democratic Committee of Pennsylvania. All my affections were in that State; all the emotions of nature, physical and mental, were enlisted on the side of the candidate she had presented. His whole career, his character, my personal attachment and the sincere devotion I felt for him, his family, his cause, and all about him made me so anxious for him to succeed, that I indulged in no vain expression of speech when I say to you that I would have forfeited my life for him. My devotion for him knew no bounds. Day and night, night and day, I toiled in that campaign. And there are those here to-day from my own State who will bear witness to the fact when I say all my own resources, all my fortune, my every exertion, every aid that could be enlisted was enlisted to produce the final result. And above all others in that campaign was the great principle of popular sovereignty. [Applause.] That was the standard which marshaled the way. That was the shibboleth—that was the war cry. From Lake Erie to the Delaware River—from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia—in every village and town in the State—everywhere that I could induce a pen to write, or a tongue to speak, that was the theme upon which those pens wrote and those tongues spoke. Why, gentlemen, Mr. Buchanan had no confidence or reserve upon this subject. He was public, he was open, he was unreserved in his declarations to everybody. He sent to the traduced John Hickman, in an adjoining county. He told him, through his friends and agents: "You, Mr. Hickman, occupy a peculiar relation; you voted for the Topeka Constitution; you denounced the Kansas-Nebraska bill; you were opposed to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise line; the Democratic party of your district have nominated you; and the Republicans like you; they believe in you. Now I want you to take the stump and go before your people and pledge me, James Buchanan, that I intend standing by, and if necessary fighting by this principle of Popular Sovereignty." For myself, if I could descend to the baseness of republishing private letters, I might fill a volume with similar pledges from similar authority. Why, gentlemen, when the distinguished Secretary of State, Mr. Cobb, who from having been

a superfine Union man has been converted into a fire-eater, equal to Mr. Chaubert himself—when Mr. Cobb came into Pennsylvania, and traversed our State from end to end, and from county to county, talking to delighted audiences all the time, what was the burden of his theme? Why—Popular Sovereignty. I would take the Army and Navy, I would use every power of the Federal Government, I would surround the Territory but what the people of Kansas should vote, and by their vote the destinies of the future State should be decided. Whenever a Southern orator came into Pennsylvania and called upon me, I said to him: "Now, sir, I have but one thing to say to you; we have but a single thing before the people; every day is making the campaign more and more doubtful; every day is making the popular feeling more and more intense; Mr. Buchanan himself feels that everything depends upon the prudence, the sagacity, and the spirit of conciliation by which this campaign is conducted, and for God's sake take care what you say about Kansas; leave your violent Southern feelings at home; you must not come to threaten; you Governor Johnston, and you Mr. Scott, of Richmond, and you Mr. Extra Billy Smith and you Mr. Secretary Floyd, all of you, must remember that if you lose this battle here, you lose it altogether; it will be your loss, and therefore must allow us to manage it in our own way. And they did concede to that policy, without any protection, and gladly. There was no deception in that fight, at least so far as I was concerned. I sowed the state with private letters and private pledges upon this question. There is not a county in Pennsylvania in which my letters may not be found, almost by hundreds, pledging Mr. Buchanan, in his name, and by his authority to the full, complete and practical recognition of the rights of the people of Kansas to decide upon their own affairs. [Applause.]

Gentlemen, he was elected. He formed his Cabinet. He issued his Inaugural Address; and here, at this point, let me say, that the public confidence inspired by his nomination by the Democratic party, and the apprehensions of his election inspired in the Republican ranks, that public confidence in the man was renewed and revived by the publication of his Inaugural Address. The Republicans, many of them who had voted for John C. Fremont said: "We believe in Mr. Buchanan; if he stands by the doctrines of his Inaugural Address we will stand by him." Now, had he done so, the Republican and the American parties in my opinion would have been extinguished; would have been one great happy national family. After all, what the great mass of the people in this country desire is a good Government. Every man in this country is not an office-seeker. Nine out of ten are disinterested in their relations to this Government, and they are ready to vote for John B. Haskin or for John Smith, if they have confidence in the man; and Mr. Buchanan would have suited the country as well as any other man, if he had fulfilled his pledges; and therefore it was that when the inaugural address was published, they said one to the other—We believe in Mr. Buchanan—we are sorry that we have not voted for him; but we are willing to trust him and stand by him to the end. Mr. Buchanan had before him a future which Washington, if he had been living, might have envied—a future which, if he had walked resolutely in the path he had marked out—the path illuminated by his resolutions and pledges—would have allowed him to go down to the grave with the acclamation of the people. Posterity would have pointed to his administration as a model and example to all generations; Pennsylvania would have no cause to have been ashamed of her once favorite son. No, my fellow countrymen; but he did not stop here. As if for the purpose of accumulating pledge upon pledge, as if for the purpose of piling up a pyramid of promises upon the question, what did he do next? He looked around to see whom he should get to go to Kansas for the purpose of settling the vexed question which had rendered Kansas, what it has been graphically termed, "the graveyard of Governors." He sought no inferior man; he would not be tempted to take an ordinary man. He selected a gentleman, a statesman, who had been presented by a large portion of the leading and prominent men of the South for a seat in his Cabinet, who had for years represented his State in the councils of the Nation. He selected Robert J. Walker. And when he called upon Mr. Walker, and asked him to proceed to the Territory, Mr. Walker said to him, "Why, Mr. Buchanan, that would finish me forever; it has ruined every man who has gone there; it will ruin me. I have reached that time of life when I cannot afford to risk all my prospects and probably the peace and happiness of my family." And he said further, "I cannot run the risk of being most probably betrayed and deserted by the Administration that appoints me." Mr. Buchanan said to him, "Mr. Walker, if you will go there, you will settle this question in a few weeks. Everything is ready; here are your instructions. I pledge you my word that everything you desire you shall have." Mr. Walker, as if inspired by a sublime suspicion, said, "Mr. Buchanan, I will not go to Kansas until you

allow me to meet your Cabinet face to face, and ascertain from that Cabinet in person whether they will agree that I shall go there and carry out the pledges of the campaign of 1856." Accordingly, a meeting of the Cabinet of Mr. Buchanan was called. At the meeting every member of the Cabinet was present. Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Walker were present—Mr. Buchanan in the chair. Gov. Walker said: "I have desired this meeting because I have determined not to go to Kansas unless I have full instructions to carry out those pledges and those principles; if there is any opposing voice, I will not go; I do not want to go; it is by no means an enviable position; but if I have the permission and consent of you, gentlemen, for this I have asked, I will go." The Cabinet was polled; but one member of the Cabinet objected to the programme laid down by Gov. Walker. I need not mention his name. Gov. Walker said: "That settles the question, gentlemen; I do not wish to go; a single negative is sufficient, and I will retire from the field." But they took that member of the Cabinet into an adjoining room, and there they convinced him that Gov. Walker was right. They returned and gave Walker his instructions. He went to Kansas with his instructions in his pocket, and accompanied by a man well known to the country, Mr. Stanton, who went out with similar pledges. Now, after this plain statement of the facts, I will come down to my own part of this campaign. My ambition to assist and build up my good old State, to push forward her great interests, and assist in the development of her industry—to do that which we must all do, at least if we desire success—for the older you grow you should be stronger at your own home—to build yourselves up in your own counties and own States, and when you do that you will be respected and strong at the seat of the Federal power. Therefore it was that in the year 1857 I started the newspaper which now bears my name at its masthead. I did this for the purpose of advocating Mr. Buchanan's policy throughout. I had abundant pledges as to his course, but before publishing that paper I took care to write to Mr. Buchanan's Cabinet, and to himself, and told them on what ground I intended to stand on this question of Kansas. They were so good as to send me sufficient written testimony strengthening me in the position I had assumed. I went on with Walker and Stanton, until the Oxford and McGee frauds took place, when there was a burst of execration throughout the country. The whole Democratic press had argued constantly the policy of the Administration up to that time; but when Gov. Walker rejected these frauds, there was silence. A party fell over the columns of the Washington Union. Nothing was said upon the subject of the Oxford and McGee frauds. No voice was heard in Washington against it; but I supposed some malign influences for the moment had surrounded that journal—that it had had an attack of some peculiar insanity, which has lately become chronic with it—and I allowed it to pass by. But when the dark, damning deed of Leocompton was perpetrated, then I saw for the first time that those gallant men in the Territory, Walker and Stanton, and those who acted with them, had been deserted. I saw that Democratic principles had been carried out by them, and we were now called upon to turn our backs upon our pledges and betray our manhood. [Applause.] Gentlemen, there was something too much of this, and when the cup was presented to my lips I refused it. [Cheers.] Administrations may change, Presidents may change, but I had been too fully committed on this subject to go back to Pennsylvania and turn my back upon pledges which I had both spoken and written to thousands of men. I did not for a moment believe that the Administration had concluded to abandon the principles which had put them into power, that they were resolved to make their policy a test; so when I went to Washington and called upon my old friend, I said to him, "Mr. Buchanan, for the first time in our lives we are at variance; I find myself leaning by one principle, having followed your lead, and you have deserted it." "Well," said he, "can't you change too?" [Laughter.] "If I can afford to change, why can't you afford to change?" [Renewed laughter.] If you and Douglas and Walker will unite in support of my policy there will not be a whisper of this thing; it will pass by like a summer breeze." I told him that it was very well with an Administration surrounded by office holders and living all the time in the atmosphere of flattery; that was followed by thousands of gentlemen who expected places; that they could come to him and say, "You are right, Mr. Buchanan; we are down on our bellies; please to walk over us, please trample upon us, and we will be happy and content, and hope you will believe your policy is right." But I tell you, said I, "that there is a still smaller voice in the people that instinctively rejects frauds, and this is not only a fraud but a dishonor. I do not claim to be more honest than any other man. I have done, as all politicians have, some things which may not square exactly with the rules of religion and right, and which, if I have, I regret; but this thing will not do. [Loud cheers.] I have reached the stature and years of manhood, and I cannot go back to Pennsylvania to eat my own words and become the slave of power. [Renewed cheers.] I cannot. But then, Mr. Buchanan, you must tolerate this difference of opinion. Gen. Jackson tolerated differences of opinion in his friends. Col. Polk tolerated differences of opinion, and you differed with him in his views on the tariff, and yet you remained in his Cabinet. Mr. Pierce tolerated differences of opinion. But here you are. Men who put you where you are—who ask nothing of your hands—who have refused your favors—have trampled all the patronage that has been offered them under foot; here they are, asking to be tolerated in the indulgence of an honest opinion." The reply to that was, "Sir, I intend to make my Kansas policy a test." "Well, sir," said I, "I regret it; but if you make it a test with your officers, we will make it a test at the ballot box." [Loud cheers.] Repeated efforts were made to heal the differ-

ence. But it seems to me, gentlemen, that when the Presidency is conferred upon a poor mortal, it transfers him into a god, in his own estimation, or a lunatic. [Laughter.] Nobody is permitted to approach power to tell the truth. Power never hears the thunder voice of the people, sitting as it does in its cushioned chairs, between marble walls. The independent man, loud and bold, with a clear eye, who comes to tell the truth, is waved from the Presidential presence as a rude intruder. Then we went home. As I said, repeated efforts were made, and made in vain, to heal the differences. The conferring of this Presidential patronage of vast millions—more than the monarch of Great Britain enjoys, and nearly as much as the French despot wields—this patronage induced Mr. Buchanan to believe that he could make his test successful. How was it made? Gentlemen, when the chapter which shall detail the manner in which the Administration has used its patronage is written, it will be a black one. When our children and our children's children come to read it, they will not believe that an American citizen, elevated to the Presidential chair, in the face of such a people, covered with such an armor of pledges, would have gone into that chair to have used his army—yes, his army and the treasury—your money and mine—your officers and mine—for the purpose of putting down a gallant band of men for standing by the plain word of God's truth; and I would wish that when the historian comes to write that he would not be compelled to write that that President was born in Pennsylvania. [Applause.] Now, gentlemen, there has not been an element lacking to relieve this unredeemed infamy—not one. There has not been a single circumstance lacking. They have gone on step by step, with a tread of fate and destiny, trying to crush out the brave and gallant spirits who have stood forth asking for nothing but to be allowed to do right. Look at the South, in whose name this deed, Leocompton, has been perpetrated. After its representatives in the Senate and the House have assisted in bounding down Stephen A. Douglas and David C. Broderick, the South begins to complain in the House, the South begins to complain, as they see the Administration hell-hounds pursuing and attacking Douglas and his friends, "This is too much. We are willing to accept Leocompton as guided 'poison which has been extended to us, and which is to help us, though the only thing which has done has been to commit our Representatives to a gross wrong toward the 'North. But we cannot bear this persecution." Read the letter published the other day in the New York papers from Reverdy Johnson, of Maryland. Read the statement of Alex. H. Stephens and Henry A. Wise. They are clamorous against these attacks on Mr. Douglas. Public men in this country forget in their truckling to the South that Southern people are Americans as we are. They have their slavery; they have their peculiar institutions; but they reject a wrong, they reject an infamy, they reject unfairness just as readily as we do. They will not submit to this tyranny of the Administration upon Mr. Douglas and his friends. And so it will be when the Administration begins by concurring the South—by declaring that the only thing the President should do is to yield to the South—that Administration will end by the South turning upon it. What then? It will be Tylerised. [Laughter.] The Administration of James Buchanan Tylerised—supported by a set of office-holders and expectants only, with all the great parties, and the one that puts it in power inclusive, standing from it and shunning it like a contagion!

Imperial Caesar, deal and turn to clay, Must stop a hole to keep the wind away." [Laughter.] I am aware that I am talking to a mixed audience—there are present Americans, Republicans and Democrats. [A voice—No doubt of that.]

Mr. FORNEY (continuing)—Now, gentlemen, we who act with Mr. Haskin, we who follow the flag borne by those great heroes of the day—the immortal chiefs, Henry A. Wise and Stephen A. Douglas—are constantly twitted with combining with what are politely called Black Republicans. [Laughter.] But have you Americans who are present witnessed the efforts of the Administration to make a union with you? The Administration can combine with the Americans (I believe you are called Know-Nothings sometimes) and that is all right. Or if a Black Republican comes out for Leocompton, he is immediately washed clean and wiped. [Laughter.] Why gentlemen, the principle that we fought for in 1856 are now reduced to—Leocompton. We may be as true as the north upon principle, but if we don't go for Leocompton, we are d--d indeed. [Laughter.] But if the Republican or American becomes Leocomptonized, he is not only speedily forgiven, but he is elevated to the highest seat in the synogogue, and he is pointed at as a brand rescued from the burning. [Laughter.] The Administration is pledged, recollect, to a platform of hostility to secret political societies. He is pledged in its platform to those who speak with a rich Irish brogue or sweet German accent. But gentlemen—you Americans and you foreigners and adopted citizens are not to recollect when an American becomes Leocomptonized; only those are infamous who unite with a principle. [Applause.] Then you are out of the party and are excluded from decent society, and henceforth and forever you are never to be forgiven and unless at the last moment you come forward and say: "Praise unto thee John Calhoun and Leocompton." [Laughter.] I have been telling in the Democratic party since I was a boy, and I am not now quite 41 years of age. I never voted any but a straight out Democratic ticket. My excellent friend, Samuel J. Randall, who was a very good American, and who was elected to the Senate of our State—Sam said to me: "I am freshly in the party, and you are freshly out of it." Thus I find myself turned out of the Democratic party if I consent to it, and because I will not consent to have Democratic principles. [Laughter.] This is an age of newspapers and telegraphs on the land and through the sea. [Cheers.] And when these transcripts there would be no God in Heaven if the ballot-box did not damn such a party in October next. [Cheers.] And you in New York who think the Democratic party is sold body and brooches to this official

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