PITTSBURGH POST.

THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM

Adopted at the Cincinnati National Convention.

Resolved, That the American Democracy place their trust in the intelligence, the patriotism, and the discriminating justice of the American people.

Resolved, That we regard this as a distinctive feature of our political creed, which we are proud to maintain before the world, as the great moral element in a form of government springing from and held up by the popular will; and we contrast it with the creed and practice of Federalism, under whatever name or form, which seeks to palsy the will of the constituent, and which conceives no imposture too monstrous for the popular credulity.

Resolved, therefore, That entertaining those views, the Democratic party of this Union, through their delegates assembled in a general Convention, coming together in a spirit of concord, of devotion to the doctrines and faith of a free representative government, and appealing to their fellow citizens for the rectitude of their intentions, renew and reassert before the American people the declarations of principles avowed by them when on former occasions, in general Convention, they have presented their candidate for popular suffrages.

1. That the Federal Government is one of limited powers, derived solely from the Constitution; and the grants of power made therein ought to be strictly construed by all the departments and agents of the Government; and that it is inherent and indispensable to the general welfare, and the existence of the Union, that the States should be held to the most faithful observance of the constitutional compact, and that every encroachment upon the rights of the States, whether by the Federal Executive, or Congress, or the Judiciary, should be firmly resisted by the people of the several States.

2. That the Constitution does not confer upon the General Government the power to commence and carry on a general system of internal improvements; and that the assumption of such power by the Federal Legislature was one of the deadly heresies which led to the secession of the Democracy from the Federal Whig organization in 1834; and that the systematic revival of these obsolete doctrines of constructive power, by the same party, in connection with the unprecedented development of latent powers, and the lavish expenditure of money, which have characterized its course in the short space of one session of Congress, have wrought substantial changes in the character of the Government, and in the distribution of its powers and functions, which call loudly for the application of the remedy of the people in their sovereign capacity as the only power competent to effect it.

3. That the Federal Government ought to abstain from the exercise of doubtful constitutional powers, especially such as are calculated to lead to a claim of universal jurisdiction; and that the principle of action on the part of the General Government should be to leave to the States and the people all powers not plainly delegated to the United States by the Constitution, and to assume no doubtful powers or trifling objects; thus preserving the line of demarkation between the General and State authorities as it was originally established by the framers of the Constitution.

4. That justice and sound policy forbid the Federal Government to foster one branch of industry to the detriment of another, or one section to the detriment of another; and that the burdens of taxation, levied for the support of the Government, should be limited to the requirements of economy, and, in raising revenue, the duties should be so adjusted as to bear most heavily upon articles of luxury, and to leave the necessaries of life free, or nearly so; and that we are opposed to any system of taxation which proposes to add to the burdens of the people, in order to swell the profits of favored classes.

5. That it is the duty of every branch of the Government to enforce and practice the most rigid economy in conducting our public affairs, and that no more money ought to be raised than is required to defray the necessary expenses of the Government, and for the gradual, but certain extinction of the public debt.

6. That the proceeds of the public lands ought to be expeditiously applied to the payment of the national debt; and that we are opposed to any law for the distribution of such proceeds among the several States, which may look to the creation of a surplus in the Treasury for that purpose, other than the ordinary and constitutional one, unless the national debt should be paid, or the necessity for such surplus should cease to exist.

7. That the Constitution confers upon the General Government the power to acquire territory, either by discovery and occupation, or by treaty, and that in the exercise of this power it is bound to extend the benefits of the personal and civil rights secured by the Constitution to the people of any territory which may become a part of the Confederacy; and that the enactment of laws necessary for the protection of such rights appertains to the legislative department of the Government.

8. That the Constitution confers upon the Federal Government the power to admit new States into the Union, with such boundaries as Congress may deem expedient, and that it is inexpedient and unjust for Congress to exercise the power of prescribing as a condition upon which a State may be admitted into the Union, that she shall or shall not change her institutions in a particular manner, or that she shall or shall not permit the existence of any particular class of persons within her limits, or that she shall or shall not pass laws on any particular subject, when the power to do so exists in the people of the State, and is denied by the Federal Constitution.

9. That the Democratic party will faithfully abide by and uphold the principles laid down in the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 1798, and in the report of Mr. Madison to the Virginia Legislature in 1799; that it adopts those principles as constituting one of the main foundations of its political creed; and is resolved to resist, to the utmost, every attempt to depart from them.

10. And that we make these declarations upon the broad platform of a well-settled political usage, which entitles every political party, claiming to be national and constitutional, to be judged by the soundness of its principles, its capacity to administer the Government in peace and harmony, and its ability to maintain the Constitution against all enemies, and to preserve the Union from danger, and which, therefore, calls upon every such party, before it can be entitled to the confidence of the people, to answer frankly the interrogatories propounded to it by its fellow citizens.

11. That the Democratic party will not shrink from the most searching investigation into its conduct, and will cheerfully submit its principles and actions to the severest test which can be applied; and that we invite the coöperation of all who desire to preserve the Government in the hands of those who will administer it in accordance with the Constitution, and restore the action of the Government in its different departments to the true principles which existed at the time of the formation of the Constitution.

12. That the Democratic party will faithfully abide by and uphold the principles of the compromise measures settled by the Congress of 1850—"the series of acts for the settlement of the slavery question, arising out of the existing state of things between the people of the States and the people of the Territories," commonly known as the Compromise measures, and regard the same as a final settlement, in principle and substance, of the subjects to which they relate; and that we will maintain them inviolate, so long as they shall be sustained by the constitutional authority of the Government, until time and experience shall demonstrate the necessity of their modification or repeal.

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85. And that we make these declarations upon the broad platform of a well-settled political usage, which entitles every political party, claiming to be national and constitutional, to be judged by the soundness of its principles, its capacity to administer the Government in peace and harmony, and its ability to maintain the Constitution against all enemies, and to preserve the Union from danger, and which, therefore, calls upon every such party, before it can be entitled to the confidence of the people, to answer frankly the interrogatories propounded to it by its fellow citizens.

86. That the Democratic party will not shrink from the most searching investigation into its conduct, and will cheerfully submit its principles and actions to the severest test which can be applied; and that we invite the coöperation of all who desire to preserve the Government in the hands of those who will administer it in accordance with the Constitution, and restore the action of the Government in its different departments to the true principles which existed at the time of the formation of the Constitution.

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