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From the New York Tribune.

The Whigs and the War—Where do we stand?

From the first development of the plot of Tyler, Upshur, Gilmer, Walker & Co. to annex Texas to this Country, up to the consummation of that giant iniquity, it was denounced and resisted by the Whig Press and Whig Sentiment of the Country as flagitious, unjustifiable, and a wanton rupture of our existing relations and stipulations of Peace and Amity with Mexico. There were some exceptions at the South to the unanimity and heartiness of this expression—and a solitary one exception in the Free States—to wit, the *Courier and Enquirer*. At first, the Whigs were not at all peculiar in this view—all parties, at least throughout the Free States, shared it. The protest of the Massachusetts Legislature in 1843 against Annexation as iniquitous was concurred in by the *Loco Foco* Members; so with that of the Ohio Legislature in 1844. In this we all accepted and affirmed the doctrine laid down by our Government in 1837, when Texas was first applied to be annexed to this Union. Mr. Van Buren's Cabinet took the matter into consideration and unanimously rejected the proffer of Texas, on grounds thus set forth in the answer to the Minister to Texas by Hon. John Forsyth of Georgia, Mr. Van Buren's Secretary of State, who said:

"So long as Texas shall remain at war, while the United States are at peace with her adversary, the proposition of the Texan Minister Plenipotentiary necessarily involves the question of War with that adversary. . . . The United States might be justly suspected of a disregard of the friendly purposes of her compact [with Mexico] if the overture of Gen. Hunt were to be even reserved for future consideration, as this would imply a disposition on our part to espouse the quarrel of Texas with Mexico—a disposition wholly at variance with the spirit of the Treaty, and with the uniform policy and obvious welfare of the United States."

This decision, and the reasons assigned for it, were received by the American People with universal approbation. The positions of Mr. Forsyth were so manifestly sound that not even the most unscrupulous instruments of the Texas land-speculators and slave-jobbers dared publicly to controvert them.—Need we now argue that they emphatically condemned any Annexation of Texas to this Country until Peace should be established between her and Mexico?

[Bear in mind that this was after Mexico had committed, or permitted, most or all of the spoliation upon our citizens so justly complained of, and before she had adjusted them by treaty and commedged paying them by instalments—a process only interrupted by our Government's assent to Annexation.]

Mr. Van Buren in 1844 reaffirmed and enforced the doctrine thus laid down by Mr. Forsyth in 1837 as still pertinent and impregnable, notwithstanding the long cessation of actual hostilities against Texas by Mexico. In his letter to Mr. Hammett he said:

"If, as sensible men, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the immediate Annexation of Texas would draw after it a war with Mexico, can it be expedient to attempt it? Could we hope to stand justified in the eyes of mankind for entering into such a war? more especially if its commencement is to be preceded by the appropriation to our own uses of the territory, the sovereignty of which is in dispute between two nations, one of which we are to join in the struggle? This, Sir, is a matter of the very greatest importance—one in respect to which no American Statesman or citizen can possibly

afford to be indifferent. We have a character among the nations of the earth to maintain. . . . It has hitherto been our pride and boast that, while the lust of power, with fraud and violence in its train, has led other and differently constituted governments to aggression and conquest, our movements in these respects have always been regulated by reason and justice. . . . Should not every one, then, who sincerely loves his country, consider, and that deeply, whether we would not by the immediate Annexation of Texas, place a weapon in the hands of those who look upon us with distrustful and envious eyes, that would do us more real, lasting injury as a nation than the acquisition of such a territory, valuable as it is, could possibly repair it?"

Can the bearing of this on the right and wrong of the present War be misunderstood? About the same time (April 17, '44) Mr. Clay, in utter ignorance of Mr. Van Buren's letter wrote from Raleigh to the National Intelligencer a frank and brief exposition of his own reasons for opposing the Annexation scheme, from which the following is an extract:

"Mexico has not abandoned but perseveres in the assertion of her right [to Texas] by actual force of arms, which, if suspended, are intended to be renewed. Under these circumstances, if the Government of the U.S. were to acquire Texas, it would acquire along with it all the incumbrances which Texas is under, and among them the actual or suspended war between Mexico and Texas. Of that consequence there cannot be a doubt. Annexation and war with Mexico are identical. Now, for one, I certainly am not willing to involve this country in a foreign war for the sake of acquiring Texas," &c.

Between the writing and the publication of this letter, while we were all ignorant of its existence, a great meeting of the citizens of this Emorium was held at the Tabernacle to enter our solemn protest against this Annexation business, then pending. All parties united in it; the Whig party with entire unanimity, with all that pretended to keep a conscience among the *Loco-Focos*—Henry Nicoll, the Congressman elect from this District being one of the Vice Presidents. The chair was taken by the venerable ALBERT GALLATIN, the most eminent citizen of New-York and the highest authority on International Law among us. He is one of the patriarchs of Jeffersonian Democracy, and now a Whig, though he takes no active part in politics. That meeting, after full deliberation, on motion of David D. Field, chairman of a retiring committee, unanimously

"Resolved, that the Annexation of Texas to this Union, as now contemplated, would, according to the acknowledged Laws of Nations, be a positive Declaration of War against Mexico—a War of Conquest and an unjust War, in which this Nation would be supported by no sense of right, and be condemned by the unanimous voice of the civilized and Christian world."

Such was then the universal sentiment of the entire Whig party and a majority of their own throughout the Free States at least. The Whig State Convention which met at Syracuse on the 12th of September of that year, to nominate Clay Electors and Millard Fillmore for Governor, on the report of an able Whig Member of Congress, unanimously

"Resolved, That the iniquitous and dishonorable scheme for the Annexation of Texas, the device of Treachery and Fraud, for the worst personal and parizan purposes, designed for the benefit of speculators, plunderers and disunionists, is an outrage on the Rights of Man, the Laws of Nations, and the honor of the Country," &c. &c.

Such was the spirit in which the Whig party throughout the Free States regarded the scheme of annexing Texas; such were the results anticipated from it; such was the judgment passed beforehand by the Whig party on the authors and causes of the present War.—

And Mr. Clay, writing about the same time (Sept. 23) his last public letter before the Presidential Election, reiterated his inflexible hostility to Annexation while Texas should continue at war with her independence unrecognized by Mexico, saying

"I think it would be dishonorable, might involve us in War, and would be dangerous to the integrity and harmony of the nation."

In perfect accordance with this, Gen. Houston remarked in the U. S. Senate, when Congress was deliberating on Mr. Polk's War Message (May 13, 1845), that it was too late now to deliberate—that Texas and Mexico had long been at war, and that the United States became a party to that War in consenting to Annexation.

Need we add one word to show the impudent falsity, the utter absurdity, of the pretence that this War grew out of Mexican Spoliations, or was inaugurated by any act of Mexico whatever?

—Yet we will recall some testimony with regard to that wanton act of Executive usurpation, the march of our Army to the Rio Grande, and the audacious assumption that Texas rightfully extended to that River.

Saying nothing here of the conspiracies at Washington and in Tennessee which organized and gave success to the Texas Revolution, we will commence with 1836, when the battle of San Jacinto had secured the independence of that extempore Republic. In August of that year, Mr. H. M. Morfit, dispatched by President Jackson to Texas as agent of the United States, wrote home to our Government that

"The political limits of Texas proper, previous to the last revolution, were the Nueces River on the West; along the Red River on the North; the Sabine on the East; and the Gulf of Mexico on the South."

[The facts here stated can be proved by all the Maps, Histories, &c. that bear on the subject, but we choose to rely on the official testimony of our own Government's agent.] On the 27th of August he writes again that

"It was the intention of this Government, [of Texas,] immediately after the Battle of San Jacinto, to have claimed from the mouth of the Rio Grande along that river to the 30th degree of North latitude, and thence due West to the Pacific. It was found, however, that this would not strike a convenient point in California, that it would be difficult to control a wandering population so distant, and that the territory now determined upon would be sufficient for a young Republic." [See House Document No. 35, 24th Congress, 2d Session.]

Thus stood Texas when, 1843-4, she was invited by John Tyler to re-apply for Annexation, with settlements on the Nueces, but not a single hamlet or hut on any portion of the territory watered by the Rio Grande del Norte or any of its tributaries—not a shadow of actual rule or authority within the valley of that River.—Yet she claimed to be bounded by the Rio Grande, and the Tyler Treaty actually described her as bounded by that River! Mexico, on the other hand, had settlements on both banks of that River, more than a hundred years old; her custom-house at the mouth stood on the east side of the River, and had never been visited by Texan authority, either in peaceful or hostile guise; and in the upper portion of the valley her settlements, more than two centuries old, extended many miles eastward of the River, including cities or villages of 4,000, 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants, who had never seen a Texan flag or constable. The Treaty of Annexation was overwhelmingly rejected by the Senate, after a speech from Col. Benton in which he exposed the utter baselessness of the claim that Texas extended to the Rio Grande—declaring that the east bank of that River never was any part of Texas—that the claim set up by Texas, if maintained, would cut off from the parent country,

"the capital and forty towns and villages of New-Mexico, now and always as fully under the dominion of Mexico as Quebec and all the towns of Canada are under the dominion of Great Britain."

Mr. Benton closed his speech by offering the following resolution:

Resolved, That the incorporation of the left bank of the Rio del Norte into the American Union, by virtue of a treaty with Texas, comprehending, as the said incorporation would do, a portion of the Mexican departments of New-Mexico, Chihuahua, Coahuila and Tamaulipas, would be an act of direct aggression upon Mexico, for all the consequences of which the United States would stand responsible.

To the same effect Silas Wright, who listened to the whole debate on the Treaty of Annexation in silence, and finally gave his vote against ratifying it, explained himself to his constituents in his Speech at Watertown, Jefferson Co. in the August succeeding as follows:

"I felt it my duty to vote against the ratification of the treaty for the annexation. I believed that the treaty from the boundaries that must be implied from it—embraced a country to which Texas had no claim, over which she had never asserted jurisdiction, and which she had no right to cede." "It appeared to me then"—he continued—"if Mexico should tell us, 'We don't know you, we have no treaty to make with you,'—and we were left to take possession by force, we must take the country as Texas had ceded it to us, and in doing that, we

must do injustice to Mexico, and take a large portion of New Mexico, the people of which have never been under the jurisdiction of Texas:—This to me was an unassailable barrier—] could not place the country in that position."

With these views widely disseminated among the People, Mr. Polk was elected, and the success of Annexation in some form secured. But Congress took good care not to leave any chance for pretending that by Annexation we had agreed to maintain the pretensions of Texas to be extended to the Rio Grande. The Joint Resolutions consenting to Annexation expressly provided that

"Said State shall be formed, subject to the adjustment by this Government of all questions of boundary that may arise with other Governments," &c.

Yet in the face of this proviso, Mr. Polk gave the order for the advance of our Army from Corpus Christi on the Nueces, where it had remained unmolested for months, to the bank of the Rio Grande. The following is the order transmitted (Jan. 13, '46,) to Gen. Taylor through Mr. Secretary Marcy of the War Department—not a whisper of it being communicated to Congress, then in session:

"I am directed by the President to instruct you to advance and occupy, with the troops under your command, positions on or near the east bank of the Rio del Norte, as soon as it can conveniently be done, with reference to the season and routes by which your movements must be made. From the views heretofore presented to this department, it is presumed Point Isabel will be considered by you an eligible position; this point, or some one near it, and points opposite Matamoros and Mier, and in the vicinity of Laredo, are suggested to your consideration."

This order was obeyed; and the result is before us. Our Army was met at the Sal Colorado creek, between the two Rivers, by a Mexican force under Canales, and warned not to prosecute its march, which of course was disregarded. Arriving at the mouth of the Rio Grande, Gen. Taylor found that the Mexican authorities had just abandoned the post, (San Isabel) setting fire to the custom-house.—Thence he proceeded up the River and took post opposite Matamoros, the capital of the Province of Tamaulipas. He arrived there on the 28th of March, 1846, and on the 6th April following reported his obedience of orders to the War Department; in a letter which says:

"On our side a battery of four eighteen pounders will be completed, and the guns placed in battery to-day. These guns bear upon the public square of Matamoros, and within good range for demolishing the town. Their object cannot be mistaken by the enemy."

"The enemy, do you hear? Not a shot had been fired nor a man harmed by the Mexicans, but Gen. Taylor is neither a dissembler nor a fool. He saw he had been sent where fighting alone could maintain his position, and he made dispositions accordingly. On the 19th of that month a most intelligent officer of our Army, in perfect unconcealment that he was saying anything remarkable, wrote to the *N. Y. Spirit of the Times*, as follows:

Camp opposite Matamoros, April 19, 1846. "Our situation here is an extraordinary one. Right in the enemy's country, actually occupying their corn and cotton-fields, the people of the soil leaving their homes, and we, with a small handful of men, marching with colors flying and drums beating, right under the guns of one of their principal cities; displaying the star-spangled banner, as if in defiance, under their very nose, and they, with an army twice our size at least, sit quietly down, and make not the least resistance, not the first effort to drive the invaders off. There is no parallel to it."

Do you hear again? "The enemy's country," the people of the soil leaving their homes, and yet 'not the first effort to drive the invaders off.' And it was not till after the Mexicans had forcibly and repeatedly remonstrated against this shameful invasion and been virtually told to help themselves—not till after Gen. Taylor had blockaded the mouth of the River, so as to stop the subsistence of the Mexican army—not till our dragoons under Col. Thornton charged a superior Mexican force which had not molested it—that actual hostilities were commenced by the Mexicans. Such is the state of facts on which Mr. Polk announced that "American blood has been shed on American soil," and Congress gravely resolved that "War exists by the act of Mexico." Was there ever a more unblushing defiance of truth?"

—So much for the origin of the War: now

let us see in what light the Whigs regard it: The late very large State Convention of MASSACHUSETTS unanimously,

Resolved, That the war with Mexico, the predicted result, if not the legitimate offspring, of the Annexation of Texas—began in a palpable violation of the constitution, and in usurpation of the powers of Congress by the President, and carried on in reckless indifference and disregard of the blood and treasure of the Nation,—can have no object which can be effected but the acquisition of Mexican territory; and the acquisition of Mexican territory, under the circumstances of the country—unless with adequate securities for the protection of human liberty—can have no other probable result than the ultimate advancement of the sectional supremacy of the Slave Power.

Resolved, That the Whigs of Massachusetts are not prepared for this result: they see, therefore, no rational or justifiable object in the protracted prosecution of the war, and rejoice in every manifestation of the return of peace; for, although sanctioned by a portion of the Whigs in its earliest movements, as a measure for the preservation of the Army—then in peril by the unauthorized acts of the President—yet the war itself, while prosecuted to secure the sectional supremacy of the Slave Power, or the conquest and dismemberment of the Mexican Republic, has never had and never can have the sanction and approbation of the Whigs of Massachusetts.

Resolved, Therefore, that the great and permanent interests of the American Union as it is, and the highest and brightest hopes of the liberties and rights of our race on the American Continent, require of the great North American Republic to stay her hands, already too deeply stained in the blood shed in this unnatural war between the two great Republics of this Continent, and inscribe on her standard, now waving victoriously over the Halls of the Montezumas, and deeply on the hearts of her Rulers—as her well considered and unchangeable purpose—"Peace with Mexico without dismemberment."—No addition of Mexican Territory to the American Union."

Resolved, That, in the judgment of this Convention, this course of policy and action would form a basis on which the whole patriotism, and intelligence, and moral worth of the country might honestly rally and securely stand; while it would place our country eminently in the right, and show to the world that we are, as a nation, as invincible in moral principle as in military power, and that we can conquer a peace with Mexico by first conquering in ourselves the raging thirst of military glory and the mad ambition of foreign conquest.

To the same effect, the Whigs of VERMONT, at their late State Convention, to which nearly all the eminent Whigs in the State were Delegates, unanimously

1. Resolved, That it is a fundamental principle of Republicanism, that every People shall have a Government of their own choice, and therefore the ACQUISITION OF TERRITORY BY FORCE OF ARMS, or the attempt to propagate Republicanism by the sword, is a gross violation of this fundamental principle.

2. Resolved, That we cordially approve of the principle of the Wilmot Proviso, and demand that the same shall be invariably and effectually insisted on and applied to all future acquisitions of territory.

3. Resolved, That in the opinion of this Convention, the existing War with Mexico was unjust and unconstitutional in its inception and prosecution, with the design and for the purpose of the dismemberment of that Republic, and the conquest and acquisition of her territory, or to compel her to sell us the same, which is equally unjust.

4. Resolved, That it is the duty of Congress to make all necessary provisions to bring the present War to a speedy and honorable termination, and, if necessary to that end, to limit and qualify any appropriations made therefor.

So the Whig State Committee of OHIO issued before their Election an Address taking strong ground in opposition to the War; and, in their Circular announcing the result of the contest, they say,

"Our opponents during the whole canvass, urged the people to sustain a war of conquest in Mexico, and in their speeches and publications distinctly made that issue. They heaped upon our distinguished Whig Senator more than a usual share of vituperation and abuse, in consequence of the high, bold and commanding position he assumed in the Senate.

"The result is a severe rebuke to the advocates of the War, and the vindicators of such a man. We therefore again congratulate you upon the result of our Election. It is a triumph in favor of the blessings of Peace over the horrors and disgrace of an iniquitous and unjust War."

—But we cannot make room for half the commanding expressions of Whig sentiment in sweeping, consistent opposition to the War—As we write, the Boston papers of yesterday are laid before us, and we open to the Resolu-