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Platforms of Political Parties in Texas

Edited by

ERNEST WILLIAM WINKLER

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RESOLUTIONS¹

Resolved, [1] That we do not regard the action of the Baltimore convention, in nominating two Republicans, as binding on us as Democrats.

[2] That we are opposed to the election of General Grant as President, and disapprove of the wholesale corruption and disregard of the Constitution that have characterized his administration.

[3] That a committee of six members be appointed by the chairman of this meeting to prepare and publish an address to the Democracy of Texas, expressive of their views in regard to the objects of this Conference, and to confer with the present Democratic electors with the view of obtaining their votes for O'Connor and Adams, in the event it shall be found that their votes would not change the result of the presidential election.

Committee on Address: Chas. S. West, J. T. Harcourt, R. K. Cage, David Sheeks, W. B. Cross, and J. D. Elliott.

COLORED MEN'S CONVENTION, 1873

BREHAM, July 3 and 4

Officers: President, N. W. Cuney. Vice-Presidents, Mathew Gaines, Richard Allen, and John Reed. Secretaries, John N. Coss, and J. H. Washington.

Committee on Address: W. C. Richer, W. A. Price, Jacob Freeman, G. T. Ruby, J. J. Hamilton, John DeBruhl, B. F. Williams, P. J. Moore, Cooke Jenkins, L. A. Clope, J. J. Webb, Walter Riptoe, N. W. Cuney, W. H. Holland, J. H. Washington, and Richard Allen, chairman.

ADDRESS¹

We, the undersigned members of the committee on address, do most respectfully, by leave, report as follows:

That we consider one of the prime objects of our assemblage to be the promotion of good feelings between ourselves and our white fellow-citizens of the State, without whose earnest and sincere efforts in co-

¹The proceedings of this Conference are briefly reported in *The State Gazette*, October 21, 1872.

¹The proceedings of this convention are taken from the *Daily State Journal* (Austin), July 5 and 7, 1873.

operation with our own, to effect our elevation, our progress must be slow and constrained, as has been asserted by the ultra Democratic press, and others who desire to estrange us from the kindly feelings of the white inhabitants, that we are unalterably opposed to their interests, and always disposed to support such men and such measures, as result in subjecting them to additional taxation, and the increase of their pecuniary burdens.

Now, we beg leave here to respectfully point out, that if our conduct has in any measure justified these accusations, it is no fault of our own. It must be borne in mind that the mass of the colored people are in a lamentable state of ignorance, the result of that wicked system of bondage, which shut them out from the acquisition of all knowledge of letters and made it a penal offense to teach them to read the Word of God. They must also remember that they have from the day of the acquisition of our liberty set their faces in steadfast opposition to our political, educational, and social progress, with a blind spirit of malignant opposition not calculated to inspire us with either confidence or affection. It, therefore, should not excite surprise, still less should it expose us to animadversion, if we have given our confidence and support to men who may have abused it to promote selfish ends, or unworthy purposes—particularly when these men declared them adhesive to those great principles embodied in the recent amendments to the Constitution, and which are the strongest planks in the Republican platform.

Notwithstanding all that we, the colored people of the State, have suffered at the hands of our white fellow-citizens, we cherish towards them no animosities, and will hail with satisfaction any manifestation on their part of a disposition to abate their prejudices, and concede to us willingly all those rights and privileges that sweeten the enjoyment of civil life. It becomes our duty here to define clearly what is understood by us as civil rights in contradistinction to social privileges. There is no intelligent man in the State who should not discern, at a glance, that the enemies of the colored men wilfully abuse the public mind when they assert that we are aspirants for social privileges, and are desirous of promoting legislation of a character that will effect it. We certainly are not so foolish as to imagine that any law could be framed that could effect such an object. We know perfectly well that a man's social relations cannot be made by legislative enactments. We have no disposition to intrude ourselves upon them, and would *resent as an indignity any intrusion upon ourselves*. But we do demand our Civil Rights Bill of the Hon. Charles Sumner, and shall agitate the question of their concession with unabated ardor until we can celebrate their acquisition.

We would far prefer to have received these boons as a voluntary offering from our white fellow-citizens. We would be happy if the white men of this State would emulate the example of a portion of their Southern fellow-countrymen in Louisiana, and not wait to have Con-

gressional legislation wring from their reluctant hands what we now would gratefully receive as a generous concession, and which would most emphatically tend to create and strengthen bonds of fraternal feelings.

It is a misfortune for both races that the Southern white men seem determined to leave their colored fellow-citizens nothing to be grateful for, as every right we enjoy has been forced from their grasp, in face of stern opposition and openly expressed hatred. Had even a part we now enjoy been voluntarily conceded, the mass of the colored people would have patiently waited until time and education fitted them for the rest, and many of the evils of legislation, to which the South has been exposed, could have been avoided. With stolid obstinacy they have clung to their prejudices. Yet we do not despair and feel our duty to ourselves and them-render it imperative for us to hold out the olive branch, and express a willingness to cooperate with them in any measure for the advancement of the interests of our State and the welfare of its citizens. We appeal to them to meet us with the free concession of our civil rights in their hands, and will thus become a truly homogeneous people, animated by one common purpose, and that purpose the prosperity of the State.

At all times and under whatever circumstances, imbued with the most kindly feelings for our fellow-citizens, we deny the charge heretofore made that we have met in secret meetings, to war, or in any manner array ourselves against any class or classes of the community. That now, as ever, we are actuated by purely laudable motions in our political conduct, conducing as we believe, to the best interests of our State. In order, however, that all feelings or passion hitherto arrayed because of political gatherings, wherein we have participated, may be hereafter dispelled, we invite and request our fellow-citizens throughout the State, to hold and attend their meetings of a public character openly and before all, inasmuch, as to-day armed with the panoply of American citizenship, we need no longer fear malicious opponents in the exercise of our public rights.

"With charity for all, and malice toward none" of our fellow-citizens, we appeal to the law-abiding and honest people of Texas, of whatever political party, to join with us in deprecating the outrages and wrongs perpetrated upon the colored people in various sections of our State, because of our new relations as freemen and citizens, and we ask that all acts of violence towards us, from whatever source, shall be condemned by the public sentiment of the community in such unequivocal terms as that law and order shall be enforced.

We also recommend to our people the acquisition of land and homesteads, and that they do not support for office any man or set of men who are likely to place obstacles in the way of their success in this direction.

We also urgently recommend to them that they refuse to support for any office whatever any man who is not pledged against repudiation

definition of our relations to the political parties, and a union on one platform for which we intend to work at the next election." Between forty and fifty delegates attended.

Officers: President *pro tempore*, Aug. Buttlar, of Galveston; permanent, Dr. E. Goldman, of Galveston. Vice-Presidents, Dr. R. Wipprecht, of Comal, and Joseph Bruckmueller, of Harrison. Secretaries, *pro tempore*, A. Siemering, permanent, Hugo Lehmann, of Harris, and C. Erhard, of Bastrop.

Committee on Resolutions: Aug. Buttlar, of Galveston; A. Siemering, of Bexar; Dr. Koester, of Comal; A. Zadek, of Navarro; W. Brueggerhoff, of Travis.

Committee on Address: O. Gareisen, of Galveston, A. Siemering, J. Schuetze, of Travis, the president, and the secretary.

ADDRESS AND RESOLUTIONS¹

An die deutsch-amerikanischen Buerger von Texas:

In Folge des Allen bekannten Aufrufs zu einer Convention der deutsch-sprechenden Buerger haben wir als beauftragte Delegaten und Buerger des Landes uns zu einer freien Besprechung der besten Interessen des Staates versammelt, nicht weil wir Sonderinteressen erstreben oder eine Abtrennung von den uebrigen gleichberechtigten Elementen unsres Staatskoerpers, sondern lediglich aus dem Grunde, weil wir in unsrer Muttersprache uns leichter und sichrer ueber die Ziele verstaendigen koennen welche wir Alle erstreben und weil die ungenuegende Kenntniss des Englischen es einer grossen Zahl von uns unmoeglich macht, in den ueblichen Conventionen ihren Wuenschen, zu deren Kundgebung sie ein Recht hat, Ausdruck zu geben. Diese Gruende sollten allen billig Denkenden genuegen. Wir haben erklaert und wuenschen zu wiederholen, dass der Gedanke, eine besondere Partei zu bilden, uns Allen fern liegt. Im Gegentheil geht unser Wunsch dahin, durch eine offene Aussprache unsrer politischen Absichten ein harmonisches Zusammenwirken mit allen Nationalitaeten, welche das feste Band des amerikanischen Buergerthums in einen Koerper vereinnigt, zu befoerdern.

Wir fordern Nichts fuer uns, sondern beabsichtigen nur das allgemeine Wohl. Unsere Beschluesse beziehen sich auf die unbestreitbaren Rechte eines jeden Staatsbuergers: Schutz fuer Person und Erziehung der Jugend, verstaendige Besteuerung, Anstellung red-

¹The proceedings of this convention are taken from *Die Woehentliche Texas Post* (Galveston), August 10, 1873; a rough and incomplete translation of the Address and Resolutions appeared in the *Daily State Journal* (Austin), August 11, 1873.