

"Old Des Moines Awake!" Newspaper Article, July 23, 1840

OLD DES MOINES AWAKE!

Pursuant to previous notice the democratic whigs of Des Moines county, assembled at the Methodist Church in the city of Burlington, on the 18inst. and were called to order by Colonel ISAAC LEFFLER,

On motion, it was

Ordered That James W. Grimes, Esq. Judge Morgan, and Dr. Samuel Fullenwider, be a committee to report suitable officers, for the meeting; who reported the following

COL. ISAAC LEFFLER, President.

James Davidson, Esq.

Hon. Wm. Morgan,

David E. Blair, Esq.

Isaac Robinson, Esq.

Vice Presidents.

Jesse B. Webber,

Michael Ritner, Secretaries.

On motion of Hon. W. Morgan,

Captain William Delashmutt, one of the soldiers of Gen. Wayne, in his North Western campaign, was requested to take a seat with the president of the meeting, which motion was carried by acclamation.

On motion, of M.D. Browning, Esq. a committee of five was appointed to draft and report suitable resolutions expressive of the sense of this meeting, Whereupon M.D. Browning, W. Henry Starr, Col. Alexander Wright, Alfred Hebbard, Esqr. and Captain Solomon Perkins, were appointed said committee.

During the absence of the committee the meeting was addressed by Philip Viele, Esq. of Fort Madison.

After a short time the committee reported the following preamble and resolution, which were adopted by acclamation.

The occasion which has brought together so large an assemblage of patriotic citizens of Des Moines county, is no ordinary one: but a few months since we were one people in feeling, separated by our Territorial organization from a participation in the general elections of the United States - harmony pervaded our councils - and concert our action. - The time was rapidly hastening when we were to throw off the garb of our infancy and come forth in the apparel of manhood to join hands in confederacy with those who have fostered and nourished us, and to whom we owe our political existence. Nothing in our situation called for a division of the citizens of our territory into parties, for the introduction amongst us of partizan (sic) broils, proscriptions and discord; on the other hand every consideration of patriotism and the public good required concert and harmony in the all-important steps to the formation of a constitution and State government. The tocsin (sic) of discord has notwithstanding knelled in our ears and the preparatory steps have been taken to scatter, broadcast, through our land the seeds of those corrupt and demoralizing political principles, which have in a time of profound peace and abundant crops, dressed this nation in universal mourning. All those who refuse to bow before the great political juggernaut of the party in power are proscribed, and we are told that our principles disqualify us for the confidence and support of our fellow citizens. This party have called conventions - organized their party- nominated an office holder- and now rely upon concerted action to triumph over principles which they feel and know are just, and would triumph, if not combated, by party intrigue, by the force of truth alone.

Under these circumstances we should be recreant to the cause of freedom, to ourselves, to our children and our own consciousness of rectitude, if we did not take our stand at once, and with truth and candor for our weapons, counteract and defeat their unhallowed and selfish purposes. Therefore,

Resolved, That without undertaking to specify all the abuses and corruptions of the party in power, we deem it sufficient to advert to the following,

1st. The augmentation of the public expenditures to an extent disproportionate to the increased population and business of the country.

2d. The struggle of the President with the people to obtain perpetual control over their money, a 'pernicious project,' in name, sub-treasury or independent treasure, but in substance a treasury bank, independent of the people, a project which is obtruded on the people in defiance of public hatred to it, and in defiance of the proved loss of millions to the nation through the infidelity of sub-treasurers - a project enforced by precedents raked up under Presidential dictation, among despotic governments or starving communities.

The retention in office of proved defaulters, and in some cases confessedly on account of the political influence of themselves, their families, or friends. The dispensation of executive patronage, on the principle that public offices are the property of a party; that "to the victors belong the spoils of the enemy;" that every citizen is inimical to the country who is not a vassal of the president - and that the true object of the government is "to go for the greatest share of the spoils to the greatest number of the spoilers."

The exercise, by the President, in derogation and even in contempt of the coordinate authority of the Senate, of the appointing power, which was conferred by the Constitution on the President and Senate jointly. The abuse of that power and the removing power, which was conferred, not by the Constitution, but by Congress, on the President solely - "in rewarding his friends and punishing his enemies," - thus introducing a remorseless proscription, which the fathers of the Constitution declared in advance to be ground of impeachment; and in enforcing that proscription by an army of spies and informers.

The interference of federal officers in elections, a party service, the performance of which has been offered and accepted, as a valid excuse for neglecting official duty; and has been secured in the principal city of the Union, by tax on salaries of office-holders, collected under the penalty of dismissal and expended in electioneering for the President; the defense on principle, in the Senate of the United States, by partizans (sic) of the administration, of the interference of federal officers in elections after such practices, (before sturdily denied) had been proved by sworn witnesses; the now received doctrine that every public officer holds his place by the tenure, express or implied of electioneering for the President; and the sanction which the President has lent to that doctrine by the force of his own example, in abandoning the public business and on one occasion for four consecutive months to electioneer for himself. The tendency of the foregoing, and other principles and practices, making up the present administrative system, to concentrate in the person of the President all the powers which the Constitution has distributed among the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary departments, and thus in substance to revolutionize the government into an elective monarchy 'surrounded' in form only 'by republican institutions.'

The tendency of the foregoing, and other principles, by enlisting on the side of power the most sordid impulses -- by its substitution of factious interests for the general good, and by its hollow and fraudulent pretenses to sap the foundations of private virtue and public honor- a tendency exemplified in its gigantic progeny of peculations in the shameless apostasies of public men, in the sale, almost in open market, of political influence.

The disastrous effects of the present policy in [unreadable] the currency - palsying the enterprize - withering the industry, and wasting the resources of the country.

The thorough prostitution of the Post Office department to electioneering purposes - by the most daring and unprincipled abuses - by detaining packages under the frank of members of the Opposition party - by tearing off the franked envelopes from public documents addressed to whigs, and charging postage on the same- by using the envelopes so torn off to transmiss 'loco foco' papers and documents to whigs - by recklessly violating the seals of private letters addressed to members of Congress, and revealing the contents of those letters - all which have conclusively been proven, and the very men convicted of these outrages are still retained in office.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, the American People are called on by the highest and holiest considerations which can animate human action; by respect for the memory of their fathers, in whose blood their liberties were planted; by loyalty to the constitution of their country: by zeal for her honor and regard for her best interests; by gratitude to a kind Providence, whose favor has made them a great and happy nation, to unite in rescuing her now and forever from the hands of the spoilers; in annihilating that stupendous scheme of imposture called reform, but meaning public robbery, and in producing that real reform on which rests the hopes of this the last republic - reform which can be effected (sic) only by removing the false reformers from power, so long and so direfully abused.

Resolved, That in the nominations of Wm. Henry Harrison and John Tyler for the offices of President and Vice President of the United States; and in the enthusiastic response which the friends of liberty have made to those nominations - we see every guaranty (sic) of that concert of action among the opponents of the administration which will ensure their triumphant success.

Resolved, That in Gen. Wm. H. Harrison, we recognize a patriot whose services in the field have won the lasting gratitude of his country, and the applause of Legislatures, Presidents, and the most competent judges of the military are -- who, though his career in arms was long, perilous and eventful, never (we learn from a distinguished political opponent) sustained a defeat; whose civil services, administrative, legislative, and diplomatic, have proved his fitness for the highest office in the gift of the People - who has filled situations surrounded with opportunities, by which a man in the smallest degree less virtuous would have acquired wealth, and yet in honorable poverty left them all - and whose purity of heart and plainness of manners peculiarly adapt him to the Chief Magistracy of a republic.

Resolved, That we hail with equal gratification the nomination of John Tyler for the Vice Presidency, Virginia's favorite son- whom the ancient Commonwealth has delighted to honor, who eminent public services and sound principles need no eulogy.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting the former supporters of the administration, who have withdrawn their confidence from men whose measures their judgments had ceased to approve deserve the title which they have won, of Conservatives of the Constitution and Laws of the Republic; that it is the duty of the original opponents of the administration to extend to the Conservatives the right hand of fellowship, and that a reform in the public counsels can be effected (sic) only by the zealous and hearty operation of all who desire a result so vital to public liberty.

On motion of Mr S.A. Hudson.

Resolved, That we approve the proceedings of our friends in Muscatine, Louisa, and Johnson counties, and that we will meet them in General Convention at Bloomington on the 29th of this month, to take such measures as will secure the election of a Harrisonian Delegate to the Congress of the United States.

The meeting was then address by Captain Wm. Delashmutt, one of the fellow soldiers of Generals Wayne and Harrison, by Capt. James Davidson, one of the soldiers of Thames, James W Grimes, Milton D. Browning and Colonel Isaac Leffler.

Resolved, That Committees of Vigilance be appointed in the several precincts to carry out the objects of this meeting.

The following gentlemen were then appointed:

AUGUSTA PRECINCT.

Thos. R. Davis, Warren Dee,
Alfred Clark, Alfred Hebard.
Carlile Canterbury,

WASSON'S PRECINCT.

Israel Chamness, Isaac Fleenor.
John D. Wright,

YELLOW SPRINGS.

Thomas Blair, David Blair,
David Rankin, Alexander Wright,
Dr. Fullenwider, James Davidson

BURLINGTON PRECINCT

Wm. Morgan, Israel Robinson,
Wm. Stewart, Wm. B. Remey,
Wm. Johnson,

Resolved, That a Committee of Correspondence from among the citizens of Burlington be appointed. Whereupon, the following gentlemen were appointed:

J.W. Grimes, H.E. Dickenson,
J.B. Newhall, H.R. Thompson,
Geo. W. Kelley, M.D. Browning,
C.J. Starr, S.A. Hudson.

Resolved, That the editors of the Hawk-Eye and Patriot be requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting.

On motion of Mr. Thompson.

Resolved, That this meeting now adjourn, to meet our fellow citizens and brethren of the good cause at Bloomington, there to unite on a candidates, when shall beat the office-holders' and the office-holding candidate, "horse, foot and dragoons."