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SPEECH

OF

HON. JAMES R. DOOLITTLE,

Of Wisconsin,

AT

NATIONAL GUARD'S HALL,

Friday, September 28, 1866.

FELLOW CITIZENS: I am here, a thousand miles from my home, to address the men of Pennsylvania to-night. And why have I come here? Because I verily believe that upon the men of Pennsylvania there rests this day a greater responsibility than ever rested upon them before. From your position as a great State, in the midst of these United States, whose commerce and whose influence reach North and South, and East and West, you have been most appropriately denominated the Keystone State in the arch of our Federal Republic. From your vast population, your varied interests and productions, from your very position, you sympathize with, and I may say represent, all sections of our common country, and therefore it is that "as goes Pennsylvania, so goes the Union." (Applause.)

We look to you from the far distant States of the West with an intensity of interest which we have hardly ever felt before; and it is because we feel this deep interest that I have consented, as a citizen of a far distant State, to accept the invitation of your committee to be here to-night. (Applause.)

There is now presented for the consideration and action of the people of Pennsylvania, as well as of the people of the whole country, a question the most momentous which can be conceived, the most momentous which has ever been discussed or submitted to the American people—a question which rises above all other questions, which subordinates all others; which, like Aaron's rod, swallows up all other questions, and in which is involved the very existence of republican government and constitutional liberty, and upon that question I come to speak to-night. That question I will state to you in the briefest and simplest language which it is possible for me to conceive.—Stripped of all verbiage, of all its surroundings, and reduced to a single point, that question is this: Is Congress above the Constitution, ("No! no!") or is the Constitution above Congress? ("Yes!")

Fellow-citizens, that is the question involved in the present struggle. The Constitution of the United States says in express terms that every State in this Union shall be entitled to its proportionate number of Representatives, and it also says that no State shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate of the United States, where each State is entitled to have two Senators; but Congress says that ten States of this Union shall have no Representatives whatever, and no Senators whatever. Now, fellow-citizens, the simple question is, whether the Constitution or the will of Congress shall be supreme; and that question is submitted to the American people for their decision.

I know there are some who say, for the purpose of avoiding this direct issue, that these States at the South are not States in the Union, and, therefore, having ceased to be States in the Union, they have no right to representation; and in order to be logical there is no other ground which can possibly be assumed by those who oppose the restoration policy of Lincoln and Johnson.

Now, fellow-citizens, upon that direct point, first of all, I propose to condemn the ground on which Congress seeks to stand out of its own mouth. (Applause.) First, this constitutional amendment which Congress proposes to submit to the several States, and which it is assumed by many must be adopted as a condition precedent to the right of representation of the States in Congress, assumes that they are States, and proposes to submit to them the ratification of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States. How can an amendment to the Constitution be ratified? By the action of the Legislatures of the States. If three-fourths of the Legislatures of all the States concur in the ratification of an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, it is adopted; otherwise it is not adopted and ratified. A State in its action upon this question of changing the Constitution of the United States, is performing the highest possible legislative function. Why, fellow-citizens, when the Legislature of a State takes part in ratifying a constitutional amendment, it is legislating not only for the people of that particular State, but it is legislating for the people of all the other States. It is a higher act of legislative authority exercised by the Legislature than can possibly be exercised in an ordinary act of legislation. And yet these gentlemen tell us that the Legislatures of those States can join in changing the Constitution of the United States, and in the same breath they say that these Legislatures cannot elect a United States Senator! (Laughter.) Just think of that for one moment. How illogical, how absurd, how preposterous it is for these men to say that they are not States for the election of Senators, and then to say that they are States, and can adopt an amendment to the Constitution of the United States! Fellow-citizens, when any man undertakes, when you read the Constitution of the United States, which in express words says that no State shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate, to tell you, by way of avoiding the affect of the express language of the Constitution, that those are not States in the Union, just turn them to their constitutional amendment, which proposes to submit to them an amendment to change the Constitution of the United States. (Applause.)

But here is another thing which these gentlemen say, by way of excuse for not allowing the States of the South to be entitled to their representation under the Constitution. They say that before we allow them to come in with their Senators and members of the House of Representatives, we must have new guarantees; we must change the Constitution and put new provisions into the Constitution before we can admit them to come in. In other words, they propose to say that they will impose upon these States of the South, not that Constitution which our fathers made, and which we have sworn to support, but a new Constitution, an amended Constitution; that it shall be imposed upon them as a condition precedent to their having any rights of representation in the United States government at all.

They say, give us new guarantees. Guarantees for what? Why, first of all, that they will not rebel again, that they will not go into another rebellion. Fellow-citizens, is it possible that any man in his sober senses can believe that the people of the South can give by any paper proceeding, or by any provisions of an act of the Legislature, or by a constitutional amendment, any such guarantee as they have already given, that they will never rebel again? ("No!") What guarantee have they already given? They have gone into a war against the government of the United States, and in the course of that war they have expended blood and treasure beyond all calculation. I suppose that nearly one-fourth of the whole white male population of the South have perished in this conflict with the government. I suppose from the best authority which we have, that at least one-fourth of the whole colored population of the South below the Potomac have already disappeared and perished in this terrible upheaving of society, and in the struggles of this civil war, and all the diseases which prevail in consequence of war and commotion. They have lost in consequence of this war the whole of their property in slaves—a property which has been estimated variously at from three to four thousand millions of dollars. Their personal property has been lost in the war. Their country has been ravaged by invading armies. We, in Pennsylvania and in the northern States, know nothing scarcely of the sacrifices which have been felt and suffered at the South in consequence of this war. By all these sacrifices, by all the expenditure of this blood and treasure in a war against the government, in which they have been completely overcome, in which the rebellion has been crushed, until they have no power to rebel again, have they not given a guarantee that they will never undertake it again?—("That's so.") You know that every man is likely to borrow figures and similes from the profession in which he is engaged; and a physician of my acquaintance told me that in his opinion, as he was illustrating the subject, this disease of secession was a disease of the mind, which, taken in the natural way, would run its course, and that it was utterly impossible for those who had once experienced it and gone through the disease, ever to take it again. (Laughter.) He said that he would no more desire to take a guarantee from those States of the South that they would never rebel again against the government of the United States, than he would wish to take guarantees that a man who had once had the small-pox in the natural way, would never take the small-pox again. (Great laughter.)

But, fellow-citizens, what other guarantees do these men require? They say we must have a guarantee that the rebel debt shall not be assumed. Can any man in his sober senses think for one moment that any member of Congress from the northern States would vote in favor of assuming the rebel debt of the South, amounting perhaps to one, two or three thousand millions of dollars, and to add that enormous sum of indebtedness to the already overwhelming indebtedness which rests upon the Federal government? Do you believe that any man can be found in any one of the twenty-six States now represented in Congress, who would give his vote in Congress in favor of assuming the rebel debt? ("No, no.") Suppose it were possible that any representative from the city of Philadelphia should vote for that; suppose it were possible that Judge Kelley (laughter and hisses) should be induced in any way to give a vote in the House of Representatives for the assumption of the rebel debt, and then that he should return to the city of Philadelphia; as much confidence as I have in the law-abiding people of Philadelphia, in this city of brotherly love, this city which was founded by the Quakers of old, I should believe at all events I should greatly fear, that the atmosphere would not be very healthy in Philadelphia for Judge Kelley when he returned. (Laughter.) If he should assume to vote in Congress to put two thousand millions more of indebtedness on the top of the three or four thousand millions which now rests upon us, I think he would be in danger of the first lamp-post. (Laughter.)

I do not speak of Judge Kelley with any disrespect. I do not think he would ever vote for that, but I only take that as an illustration. I do not believe a single man could be found from any one of the free States who would dare to give such a vote. Now, fellow-citizens, let us count. How many representatives are there from these twenty-six States? I believe about one hundred and seventy-one. How many are there from the Southern States who could be supposed ever to assume the rebel debt?—About seventy. Now, how can that seventy vote down one hundred and seventy-one?—Can any man in his sober senses, by any kind of arithmetic that has been taught to us from childhood up, in any way cipher out this problem so that seventy can overcome one hundred and seventy-one? Besides, there is no danger of the seventy men coming from the southern States assuming or attempting to assume this rebel indebtedness. The great mass of that rebel indebtedness, you will remember, if you have ever seen one of these rebel notes or bonds, is payable six months after the United States shall have acknowledged their independence. (Great laughter.) I think they will not become due for some time yet. (Renewed laughter.) Besides all that, to come down to sober earnest, we have heard it said of some States of the South, that they often repudiate their honest debts, and how can we suppose that those States which have been slow in paying some of their indebtedness, which is acknowledged to be binding, would desire to assume upon themselves a debt which is null, which is utterly worthless, which is not worth one mill on the dollar? To suppose that they would attempt to assume it is to assume an utter impossibility.

Fellow-citizens, this is the kind of appeal which is made to the apprehensions of the moneyed men of the country, to lead them to suppose that there is some danger somewhere, if we allow these ten States to come in on a footing of equality, and have their representation in the Senate and in the House like the other States.

Why, fellow-citizens, this asking of new guarantees by the men of the North now reminds me of what occurred in 1860, when the secessionists declared that they must have new guarantees. I remember very well the last winter of Mr. Buchanan's administration. There was a committee appointed in the Senate of the United States, after the election of Mr. Lincoln, and before he was inaugurated. Jefferson Davis and Toombs, and Benjamin and Hunter were on that committee from the South, and there were Seward and Collamer, and Wade and myself among the number from the States of the North. In that committee we met these secessionists squarely, face to face, and what did they say? They said, "You have elected Mr. Lincoln President of the United States, and we will not live with you in the Union, under the Constitution, unless you will give us some new guarantees for slavery; give us new guarantees, or we will go out of the Union; we will not live with you under the Constitution as it stands; the Constitution must be changed, or we will not consent to live in the Union." We told them, "Gentlemen, we have no disposition to trample on your rights, or to interfere with the institution of slavery within your States; that belongs to yourselves; you are responsible for it; the United States government is not responsible for it at all; you may keep the institution of slavery if you determine to do so, but you must live under the Constitution as our fathers made it. (Great applause.) They said they would not, unless we would give them new guarantees. We said they must; and that was the precise issue—whether the Constitution as it is should be maintained as the supreme law of the land. The rebels insisted that it should not be, and they attempted to withdraw their States from the Union, and to set up a government of their own, and to overthrow the authority of the Constitution of the United States in all the States of the South. That reminds me very much of what I hear nowadays, and what I read in the newspapers, as coming from the men who represent the majority in Congress. They are crying out everywhere, on every platform, in every newspaper, all over the country, that we must have new guarantees; we cannot live in the Union with these southern States without new guarantees. (Laughter.)

Fellow-citizens, I can very well understand how a minority, living in a community on a footing of equality under the same Constitution, might have some excuse for asking securities against a majority; but it is beyond my comprehension to understand how it is that a majority must demand any guarantees against a minority, when they are on a footing of equality under the same Constitution. (Applause.) Cannot the majority take care of themselves? You know that great wars arise in Europe, and they settle those wars sometimes by a Congress of ambassadors from all the States of Europe.—Now, upon such a settlement of a great and devastating war through all the fields of Europe, I can understand why Belgium and Holland and the Netherlands, and the little States of Europe should desire, when a treaty of peace is made, to have some clauses inserted which should guarantee those small States from being trampled upon by the great States of Europe; but who would suppose that England, France, Russia, Prussia and Austria would wish to insist upon guarantees that they should not be invaded and trampled upon by Belgium and Holland and Switzerland, and the Netherlands? (Laughter.)

To bring this demanding guarantees a little nearer home, suppose this great State of Pennsylvania, with her three millions of people, and her hardy and brave sons, had been involved in a war, and we had no Constitution, in a treaty of peace, or in a confederation, or in a Constitution, the little State of Delaware, having some interest in the settlement of the question, might very properly, in dealing with this great State of Pennsylvania, insist upon some guarantee that Pennsylvania should not invade or trample upon her; but suppose the great State of Pennsylvania, represented by the brave General Geary (laughter and hisses), and by Thaddeus Stevens (hisses), and Judge Kelley (hisses), as the commissioners of Pennsylvania in the negotiations with Delaware, should desire to insist upon guarantees that the little State of Delaware should never invade or trample upon the great State of Pennsylvania, what would you think of that? (Great laughter.) I know not how this thing may appear to you down in these great States of the East, but I do assure you that in the great States of the West, we think that under a Constitution which gives equal rights to all the States, twenty-six great, growing, powerful free States are able to take care of themselves in the same government with ten States of the South, who have been enfeebled, crushed and subjugated in this civil war.

Now, fellow-citizens, it seems to me that we must dispose of this question of the necessity of guarantees, before we can agree to live in the Union with these States, with this remark: I suppose the majority can take care of themselves; and this majority of ours at the North and in these great States, in comparison with the amount of political power which will be held in the States of the South, will never be any less, in proportion, than it now is, until the people of the North shall emigrate into the States of the South, and make them more populous than they are now; and when the people of the North do emigrate to those States and make them more populous than they are now, and build them up to be great States like Pennsylvania, and Ohio, and Indiana, and Illinois, covering all their valleys with villages and with railroads, and developing their mines and their water-power, like the mines and water-power of Pennsylvania—when that time arrives, I maintain and insist that those States of the South are entitled to their proportionate amount of representation. (Great applause.)

But, my fellow-citizens, let me come back again to this main question: I maintain that the Constitution of the United States is the supreme law of the land in every State from Maine to Georgia, and from New York to San Francisco. (Applause.) We, in this great struggle to put down the rebellion, fought for the purpose of maintaining that idea. It was that idea which led us through this conflict like a pillar of fire by night and like a cloud by day. "The supremacy of the Constitution and the laws passed in pursuance of it" was the very ground on which we sent our sons to the battle-field, and for which we have poured out our treasure without stint, like water. (Applause.)—Fellow-citizens, we never did fight, nor pay our money, or send our sons to the battle-field, for the purpose of depriving any State of its equal right of representation. ("Never, never!")

There were peculiar circumstances under which the Congress of the United States declared, in the most solemn form, the purpose of this war, the manner in which it should be prosecuted, and the terms upon which it should cease. It was after the battle of Bull Run, when the country was humiliated, when Congress itself was humiliated; and some of the members of Congress had peculiar reasons for feeling humiliated. (Laughter.) The truth is that many of those who had been the most fierce and thoughtless in urging General Scott and Mr. Lincoln at once to march "on to Richmond," in the pride of their self-sufficiency—for every member of Congress at that time almost regarded himself as a great general, and believed that he knew full as much as General Scott (laughter)—went out to the field of battle at Bull Run to witness what they supposed would be a great victory, to witness the race of the fleeing rebels; but they came fleeing back themselves to Washington, covered with disaster and humiliation.—When Congress got together, under these circumstances, when the whole nation felt humbled, Congress, in both houses, by a resolution which was unanimously adopted, declared in the most solemn form, that they waged the war in no spirit of conquest, for no purpose of subjugation, but for the sole and only purpose of maintaining the Constitution, and the laws passed in pursuance of it, and maintaining the integrity of the Union, and the rights, the equality, and the dignity of all the States in the Union, and especially the southern States, for they were mentioned and referred to in the resolution—maintaining their rights and dignity and equality in the Union unimpaired; and they declared most solemnly that when that purpose was attained the war should cease.

Now, is it not true, just as I have stated, that Congress declared both the purposes of the war, the manner in which it should be prosecuted, and the terms upon which it should cease. That is the declaration which we made in the beginning of the conflict.—We made that declaration in the face of the civilized world. It was upon the faith of that declaration that we were enabled to insist, through our Secretary of State, that England and France, and all the powers of Europe, were required by the law of nations not to interfere in the struggle between us, because our struggle was a struggle to maintain simply the existence of our government and our Constitution. (Great applause.)—When Louis Napoleon, that hypocritical intermeddler, proposed to Mr. Seward to mediate between the States of the North and the States of the South, what reply did our government give him? They told him, "No, sir, we accept no mediation;" because, said Mr. Seward, "the seats of the members of the House and the Senate from the southern States still remain vacant, and whenever those States choose to send back their Senators and Representatives, they are at liberty to enter into the councils of the nation and take part once more in the government."—(Enthusiastic applause.) It was upon a pledge like this to the civilized world, that we were enabled to go through this long struggle; and by showing that the law of nations did not allow them to interfere in our struggle, so long as that struggle was for the maintenance of our government and its Constitution, and simply to put down a rebellion and resistance to its authority—by that alone was Mr. Seward enabled to save us from the intermeddling interference of England and France.

Now, fellow-citizens, when we have given that sacred pledge to the civilized world that that was our purpose, and that was the manner in which we would prosecute the war, and these were the terms upon which it should cease, can we, as a nation, violate that sacred pledge. ("No! no!") I say more, fellow-citizens, that that pledge at the time at which it was given, and the manner in which it was given, was a pledge to the whole people of the northern States that the war was prosecuted for that sole purpose, and for no other, and that it was because that pledge was given that the whole people of the northern States, Republicans and Democrats, like one man, rushed to the standard of the Union, and helped to maintain its authority. (Great applause.)

I know I aided in the passage of that resolution. I joined, as one of the members supporting the government and its policy, in making that solemn pledge, as almost every other member of Congress did at the time when the resolution was passed. I know not how these men can justify the violation of that pledge to their own consciences, or justify it to the civilized world; but I undertake to say for myself, that if I, with the lights before me, were willing to violate that pledge to the people, upon the faith of which they came to the rescue, I should feel that if justice were done me, she would wield a whip of scorpions, and lash me, naked, through the world. (Applause.)

But, fellow-citizens, I do not propose to stop there in the history of the prosecution of this war, and the solemn pledges which were made in the course of its prosecution, and by which alone we were enabled to sustain the government. I will come down to a later period, to 1863. You remember it was the darkest period in the whole history of this struggle. Our armies had failed before Richmond; they had failed at Fredericksburg; they had failed at Chancellorsville. Washington was threatened, and had been surrounded. The credit of the government had been run down to that low ebb that it required two hundred and seventy-five cents to buy one single dollar in gold. At that darkest period in the whole history of the rebellion, what pledges were then given to the people of the whole country by those of us who represented the administration and the party in power? I will tell you in brief words. The truth is, and if there is any Republican standing in the vast assembly, he will bear me witness of the truth of what I now say, that in the fall of 1863, when we assembled in our conventions in all the States of the North, we laid aside the name even of the "Republican party," and we organized a new party in the name of the "Union party." Into that Union party we invited all men to enter, no matter what their previous political antecedents had been, whether they had been abolitionists or Republicans, or Whigs or Democrats. We made no distinction whatever, provided only that they were willing to join with us to fight the war to its successful termination, to maintain the Union and the Constitution, and maintain its supremacy. That was the only point which was made in that struggle. Fellow-citizens, you know, and I know, and you especially, my Republican fellow-citizens, will bear in mind the truth of what I say, that upon the strength of this appeal for "Union for the sake of Union," for that was our watchword and our rallying cry, hundreds and thousands upon thousands of the Democratic party, who had never voted a Republican ticket in their lives, came into our ranks and helped us to elect the men who would sustain the administration of Mr. Lincoln; and in fact, in order to show our entire sincerity, we put in nomination in many of our great States, life-long Democrats who had never voted a Whig or Republican ticket in their whole lives. (Applause.) We did so in the great State of Ohio. In Wisconsin, my own State, we nominated General Fairchild for Secretary of State, although they had never voted a Republican ticket in their lives, but had always been members of the Democratic party.

Now, fellow-citizens, I maintain that we then gave our solemn pledge, a pledge upon the faith of which alone we were enabled to sustain the administration; by which alone we were enabled to raise the men to fill up the ranks of the army; by which alone we were enabled to raise the money which was to fill up our depleted treasury. On the faith of those, we succeeded; we sustained the administration; we filled up the ranks of the army; we filled up the treasury; we prosecuted the war through to a successful termination; we won the great victory; and now have we a right, either before Heaven, or before the civilized world, to ignore the pledges that we gave, and undertake to say now that we fought the war for other purposes, and that we intended to destroy the States of the South? ("No! No!") Let me suppose for one moment, that in 1861, when Congress passed that first resolution that its purpose was to maintain the Union and the rights of these Southern States, with all their dignity and equality unimpaired, instead of declaring that, we had declared what Judge Kelley and Thaddeus Stevens, and Charles Sumner and Benjamin F. Wade, and all the leaders of the Radical majority in Congress now declare, to wit, "our purpose is to destroy those States; our purpose is to reduce these States to be mere subjugated Territories; our purpose is to deprive these States of any representation in Congress; our purpose is not to compel these States to live under the Constitution as it is, but to compel them to live under a new Constitution." I ask you, fellow-citizens, and I ask you, my Republican fellow-citizens, do you believe it would have been possible for us to have raised an army, or to have maintained the credit of the government to fight the battle out on that issue? ("No! No!") So, too, in 1863, at that darkest period in our history, we never should have been able to recuperate the credit of the government, nor to fill up the ranks of our armies, if it had been avowed that the purpose of the war was not to sever, but to destroy; not to regenerate, but to overthrow the States of the South.

Now, my fellow-citizens, as I desire always to make every point which I state so clear that even a child, if present, could understand it, and especially my Republican fellow-citizens, I wish to call your attention most especially to these facts within your own recollection. Allow me to remind you that, throughout all the States, by all our orators, members of Congress, from a thousand platforms in a thousand assemblies, I myself joining in this very thing a hundred times over, we declared that our purpose was to fight out this great battle for the preservation of the Constitution and the Union, and that our purpose was not to put any States out of the Union. We fought on purpose to keep them in the Union. [Applause.] They undertook to go out. We declared that they should not. They swore by the living God they would, and we as solemnly swore that by Him who liveth and reigneth forever, not one State should go out of the Union. [Great applause.] Upon that issue, and that alone, we fought that battle through to the end, and upon that issue the rebels surrendered. [Renewed applause.]

My fellow-citizens, I shall not go over the whole history of this matter, although I can remind you that every proclamation of Mr. Lincoln, every proclamation of his leading generals, every act of Congress from the beginning to the end, during the prosecution of the war to the crushing of the rebellion, has been upon the single idea of sustaining the Union and the supremacy of the Constitution, and that our leading journals all over the United States, advocated, maintained, and urged the people to sustain the administration upon that ground, and that alone. I have in my hand in a memorandum which I have before me, the very language which was made use of by the New York *Tribune* in 1863, and you will indulge me while, for one single moment, I read a few words, because I wish to fasten this point upon the minds of all who are here, in such a way that it cannot be forgotten, and especially you, my Republican fellow-citizens, who with me helped to make these pledges and to say these things in 1863. Let us recall this to our recollection, and see what we thought and how we felt then. The *Tribune* said in 1863:

"The war is waged for the end that loyal Democrats approve. From first to last, the President made the preservation of the Union and the restoration of the rightful, constitutional authority of the government the polar star of his course. We believe that the President has always had power to accept the submission of any revolted State to the Union. We do insist, for we hold it imperatively necessary, that Democrats who may be doubting should understand and believe, that the President is not enslaved by the proclamation of freedom, but is to-day, ever has been, and ever will be at perfect liberty to accept the submission of revolted States on whatever terms shall be deemed by him consistent with the integrity, the perpetuity, and the honor of the United States."

Down as late as 1864, Mr. Greeley, in a letter to Mr. Lincoln, urges Mr. Lincoln to make proposals of peace to the men of the South upon the most liberal terms. He says:

"I venture to suggest the following plan of adjustment:

"First. The Union is restored and declared perpetual,"

That is good doctrine. That is one of the resolutions of the National Union Convention held on the 14th of August. (Applause.)

"Slavery is utterly and forever abolished throughout the same."

That is true. That is another clause contained in one of the resolutions of the National Union platform. (Applause.) He further proposes:

"A complete amnesty for all political offenses, with restoration of the inhabitants of each State to all the privileges of citizens of the United States."

He goes even further than has been proposed in any party; that is, he proposes universal amnesty for all political offenses. He proposes another thing; he proposes to give to the people of the South $400,000,000 to pay them for their slaves. (Laughter.) That was merely in 1864. But that declaration of Mr. Greeley to pay for their slaves, was never sanctioned by the Republican party or the Democratic party, or any other party.

Now, then, comes a very important proposition:

"The said States to be entitled henceforth to representation in the House, on the basis of their total, instead of their Federal population, the whole being now free."

He did not propose to reduce the number of their Representatives then. Ah, no! that was while the war was going on.—(Laughter.) Now that the war is over, now that they have submitted, now that they have accepted the terms which Mr. Lincoln proposed, and which Mr. Johnson proposed, Mr. Greeley is very brave. He can insist on new terms now. They must lose half their representation, or decrease their representation before they are entitled to have any representation at all. (Laughter.)

I refer to this language of the editor of the New York *Tribune*, not by way of disrespect to him, but only to show you what the leading Republican or Union journals all over the United States were saying from day to day in 1863, at that dark period when the very life of this government was trembling in the balance, and we did not know whether the balance would go up or down. In that dark period, the hour of adversity, we made the solemn pledge; and now I ask you, in the name of Heaven, in the name of all that is sacred to mankind, shall we, in the hour of our prosperity, deny the pledges we gave in the hour of our adversity? ("No! no!") I do not believe that the God of Heaven will smile upon that man, or that nation, or that people, which, in the hour of its distress and agony, makes a solemn vow, upon the faith of which they are relieved from that distress and agony, if, when the day of prosperity comes, they forget the vows which they have made to Heaven and to civilized man. (Great applause.)

But, fellow-citizens, it has often been said that Mr. Johnson, since he has become President, is abandoning the policy of reconstruction which was adopted by Mr. Lincoln. There can be no greater mistake in the world. The truth is, Mr. Lincoln began his policy of reconstruction almost two years before the assassination. He was assassinated in April, 1865, and he began the work of reconstruction in December, 1863. Now, as I desire to build upon the solid rock, and to make no statement which can be contradicted by any person, allow me to call your attention to Mr. Lincoln's message of December, 1863, and the proclamation which accompanied it. Mr. Lincoln says:

"I do further proclaim, declare, and make known that whenever, in any of the States of Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina, a number of persons, not less than one-tenth in number of votes cast in such State at the Presidential election of the year of our Lord, 1860, each having taken the oath aforesaid, and not having since violated it, and being a qualified voter by the Election Law of the State, existing immediately before the so-called act of secession, and excluding all others, shall re-establish a State government which shall be republican, and in no way contravening said oath, such act shall be recognized as the true government of the State, and the State shall receive thereunder, the benefits of the constitutional provision, which declares that 'the United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion, and, on application of the Legislature (or the Executive, when the Legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.'"

Now, fellow-citizens, you see Mr. Lincoln began in December, 1863. In the course of that winter, under the administration of Mr. Lincoln, the people of Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee reconstructed the State governments. Mr. Johnson had nothing to do with the reconstruction of those State governments, except that in the State of Tennessee he acted as the agent of Mr. Lincoln. Those three State governments were reconstructed under Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Johnson has never reconstructed them at all. They are under the same constitutions now, except that Mr. Johnson, as I said before, was the agent in Tennessee, following the instructions of Mr. Lincoln. Now, fellow-citizens, why will any man stand up in any community, or publish a newspaper denouncing Mr. Johnson for abandoning the policy of Mr. Lincoln, when those three States were reconstructed without Mr. Johnson having anything to do with them, except as agent in Tennessee? In the other States Mr. Johnson has had something to do with reconstruction, but in the course of that reconstruction he has followed out the policy of Mr. Lincoln substantially. He made some modifications, but the modifications which he made were modifications which made it still harder, and you may say, compelled the other States to go further than they did in the three States reconstructed under Mr. Lincoln. I have in my hand, but I cannot take the time to read, a statement of five or six more exceptions made by Mr. Johnson, as to the men who could take the amnesty oath under his proclamation, than were contained in the exceptions of Mr. Lincoln. I can read them to you if any gentleman doubts. There are five or six more classes of persons excepted. Besides, you know that through the influence of Mr. Johnson, dealing with these other States, they all came forward and adopted the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery throughout the whole United States. They also, in their constitutions, absolutely annulled all the rebel debt, and declared null and void all acts of secession from the very beginning. All these things were not required by Mr. Lincoln: so that if Mr. Johnson made any changes or modifications, those changes or modifications were to make the conditions harder upon the people of the South than those prescribed by Mr. Lincoln. Why, then, do these men stand up and denounce Mr. Johnson as abandoning the policy of Mr. Lincoln? It is not true in point of fact.

Fellow-citizens there are some two or three more points to which I wish to call your attention, and then I will relieve your patience. The first point is, that the President is clothed by the Constitution, and the laws of Congress, with the power to make peace. When our Constitution was made, somebody in that Convention proposed that Congress should have power, not only to declare war, but to make peace. When they came to consider that proposition, they struck it out and refused to give to Congress the power to make peace. They gave them the power to declare war, but did not give them power to make peace. That proposition was stricken out. Why did they strike it out? It was because they were wise men, the wisest, perhaps, that ever assembled in convention to lay the foundation of human government. They knew human nature. They knew what there was in statesmanship. They knew what powers were, of necessity, executive, and what powers were legislative. They knew that the making of peace, like the conducting of a war, is, of necessity, executive in its character. What is war made for? To conquer a peace—the use of the sword until peace comes. And what is peace? It is the submission to authority; it is laying down the armed resistance; it is obedience to the law. To illustrate it: What constitutes peace in a family? Suppose there is a quarrel among children; it is the submission to the law of the household, submission to parental government, and when they submit, peace comes, of course. How is it in a city or neighborhood? Suppose there is a riot, and contending parties, and a conflict, and your sheriff or your marshal, or your police, interfere to make peace; when is peace made? When they submit to the authority of the land, peace comes as a matter of course. So, too, when people rebel against an existing government, the sword is drawn by the Executive of the government to compel them to submit to the law, and there is no further resistance, peace comes as a matter of course. Yes, fellow-citizens, and you, my young fellow-citizens, will you remember it and treasure it in your minds never to be forgotten, if I state it in a single word. Obedience to law is peace.—I say, therefore, that the making of peace is an executive duty which follows as the consequence of the conducting of the war. Congress authorizes the President to draw the sword, to wield it to overcome resistance, to compel all resistance to yield, to compel it to obey the law; and the President, of necessity, when he has the sword in his hand, knows, and is the only party that can know, when that resistance ceases, because he is in the conflict which overcomes it, and he knows when it is overcome.

There is another point. When civil war arises among the States of the Union, or between the people and the United States, and war is over, we are not under the necessity of negotiating a treaty of peace. We are differently situated from the States of Europe. If they engage in war, when the conflict is over, and the terms of settlement are reduced to writing and signed, that becomes a treaty of peace, a treaty of pacification. It is not so among us. Why? Because the Constitution which our wise forefathers made, is of itself a treaty of peace, binding and irrevocable forever. (Great applause.) So that, among us, the only treaty of peace that can be proposed by anybody, is the Constitution of the United States. The President of the United States can propose no other terms. Congress has no power to propose any other terms, for all the powers which Congress possesses are powers which it holds under the Constitution, and not above it.

I say, therefore, that it is perfectly clear, and every man of ordinary comprehension ought to understand and know, that neither the President, nor Congress, nor the Supreme Court, nor all of them put together, have the power to propose any other treaty of peace. Therefore, it is that I maintain the plan which was adopted by Mr. Lincoln, which recognizes the States as being in the Union, and the people of the States as having the right to reconstruct their own State governments under the Constitution of the United States, and that it is the duty of the United States to recognize them when reconstructed, and give them their rights as States in the Union, and especially the sacred right of representation. Therefore, it is, that I maintain the policy of reconstruction begun by Mr. Lincoln, which has fallen to Mr. Johnson, as the government fell upon him through the assassination of his predecessor, which Mr. Johnson is carrying out in good faith with only such modifications as the logic of events has forced upon him, and which have not been by way of abandoning anything for which Mr. Lincoln contended. (Great applause.)

Now, my fellow-citizens, another reason why our forefathers struck out of the Constitution a proposition to give Congress the power to make peace was because they understood the nature of mankind, and the nature of these bodies which assemble for legislative purposes, that they are wise bodies, that they can frame laws and general rules for the conduct and government of communities, but when it comes to the performance of executive duties, such bodies are not fitted to their performance. They know that perhaps every member of Congress would have his own peculiar notions, which he would desire to engraft upon any treaty of peace that might be negotiated, in case we had a foreign war, or any other war. What did we see last winter. How many different propositions come into Congress on the subject of pacification. How many different propositions, if you were to count them one by one, do you suppose were presented in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, which each man who presented them insisted should be the basis of the settlement of this civil war. I have no doubt there were more than a hundred. These men were perfectly honest and patriotic, I doubt not, in the motives which induced them to make these propositions; but after Congress had been in session for eight long months, what was the final result? The famous Committee of Fifteen would occasionally make a report, bring forward a proposition, get sick of it themselves, and send it back to the committee. Finally they got a kind of proposition through the House of Representatives, and it came to the Senate. They became dissatisfied with it, and it was sent into a Senate caucus, where I suppose they got a majority to bind themselves to support what might be agreed upon; and it came back from a caucus of the Senate, and was put on its passage, without the dotting of an i or the crossing of a t, and comes out to us in the form of the proposed constitutional amendment.

Fellow-citizens, these various propositions which appear before Congress may be reduced to three general heads. There is a portion of this majority in Congress, who maintain that if the States of the South will adopt this constitutional amendment that is now submitted, then they shall be entitled to the right of representation; but there is a large portion of this majority who deny that right. You know that the other day a leading journal in the city of New York stated that every leading Republican in both houses of Congress was pledged never to permit those States to have representation, until they should adopt impartial suffrage, including negro suffrage as well as white suffrage, at the South. There is another party of whom perhaps I may say Mr. Sumner is the chief, who desire to base the reconstruction of the South upon the negroes; "for," said Mr. Sumner, in his speech at Worcester, in substance, "none of the white men who have been drawn into this rebellion at the South must be permitted to vote." A large portion, perhaps a majority, perhaps more than a majority of all the white people in these States would be excluded under his plan; while he insists that all the colored men twenty-one years of age shall be permitted to vote. Wade, of Ohio, insists upon colored suffrage as a condition to their right of representation. And to come nearer home, to come down to your own State, to take up the opinions and programme of Mr. Stevens, who was the acknowledged leader of the House of Representatives during the whole of the last session, and who by his master power did control the House of Representatives, if you take up his plan, what is that. I hold in my hand a copy of a bill that he introduced into the House last winter, by the terms of which he proposes that the suffrage shall be extended in the choice of delegates to the conventions, to all male persons over twenty-one years of age, excepting Indians not taxed; and he proposes further, that any one of those persons shall be eligible to a seat in the convention as a delegate, to form their constitution. I have that bill before me now. No one here, I presume, doubts it. I understand also that the candidate for Governor in this State of Pennsylvania, General Geary, when questioned as to his opinions, states distinctly that Thaddeus Stevens maintains the same views which he maintains on all these questions.

Now then, fellow-citizens, the question comes directly home to you in Pennsylvania, and it is a question which you cannot avoid; it is a question upon which there are but two sides. There is no middle ground; there is no neutrality. You must be for one or the other. Here are these two planks. President Lincoln, and in this he is followed by Mr. Johnson, proposes that society at the South, and political institutions and government at the South shall be reconstructed upon the basis of the white people of the South (great applause), while Mr. Stevens, the leader of this majority of the House of Representatives, and General Geary, who claims Mr. Stevens as his representative, and Mr. Sumner, and Wade, and these leading spirits that control the majority, insist upon reconstruction with the negro of the South, upon a footing of equality in all respects with the white people of the South. ("Never! never.")

Fellow-citizens, I wish to call your attention to two or three considerations in this connection, and in doing so, I wish to discuss it rather in the spirit of a historian or a philosopher, and not to make any appeal to prejudice or feeling whatever. Suppose that this thing is carried out, as proposed by those men in Congress, Stevens and others, a reconstruction of the southern States upon the basis of the negro; you know very well that in some of these States the negro population is greater than the white population. It will follow, of necessity, that in States where that population is the greatest, if they are permitted to vote, they will, of course, vote for men of their own race and their own color. To suppose that they will not do so is to suppose that they are not human beings, because we all have the sympathies of kith and kin. Let us see what the necessary effect of the establishment of a negro government would be in any of these States.—Would the white population consent to remain in those States, and live subjected to such a government as that? ("No! no!") Would it not, of necessity, cause the white people living in those States to emigrate to other States? Would they consent to live in those States? I do not think that any reasonable man would suppose that such a thing could occur. If you go to the Island of Hayti, where colored men have the control of the government, there has been a revolution going on there, and a rebellion against President Geffrard, and the party which sustained him were [illegible], and the blacks in Hayti rebelled against the government of the mulattoes [illegible].

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