

The Federal Government's Trojan Horse

What is sought to be inquired into? Whether or not the Federal Government is reinforcing our forts and arsenals, and whether it is taking possession of our munitions of war which have been placed within the Commonwealth for the purpose, as we are lead to believe, of State defence, to subjugate and overawe our people. I care not what the pretext of the General Government may have been in placing these munitions within our territory—whether of preserving the peace in the neighborhood where these munitions have been deposited, or for any other purpose. I think it will be ascertained, upon investigation, that these warlike movements have been made for the purpose of overawing Virginia and intimidating her action. If not, perhaps, it will be found to have been done for another purpose, and that is, if this Convention should determine during its deliberations here that it is right and proper to pass an Ordinance of Secession in order to secure the rights of Virginia and to maintain her interests, that then the Federal Government will be in a position to coerce her. Let me here say to this Convention, whose members are, no doubt, familiar with the Trojan war, that the Old Dominion may find herself in the attitude in which ancient Troy was placed by the wooden horse of the Greeks. May not these fortifications prove to Virginia, by and by, what the wooden horse proved to Troy? It is well that our people should take warning by these suspicious movements of the Federal Government. I will say for my people that they are utterly opposed to coercion; that they are opposed at this time to any reinforcement of the forts or arsenals by the Federal Government; and I believe it is the sentiment of Virginia, that if the Federal Government shall fill its wooden horses within her limits with arms and munitions of war for the ultimate destruction of her people, that the voice of this Convention should be heard issuing orders to seize the wooden monster and hurl it from the State.

Let me here say that the constituency of the little county of Page are in favor of a Union of equality, a Union of peace, and a Union of strict justice to all sections. These were the principles which first formed the basis of Union. The voice that people shall ever be heard in support of such a Union. They will always favor such a Union as our fathers gave us, and will go as far as any other people to prop the pillars of that Union and key the arch. But let me



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say this, that they are opposed to a Union that will not give equality. They will never support a Union that will not furnish protection to all. They will never defend a Union that has no spirit, no vitality. When this Union lapses into a mere carcass without a soul, they will unite only to execrate and condemn it.

Citation: Excerpt from speech of Peter Bock Borst in the Virginia Convention on February 23, 1861, printed in George H. Reese and William H. Gaines, Jr., eds., *Proceedings of the Virginia State Convention of 1861* (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1965), 1:150–151.