

Transcription

Prepare for a separation

Your readers cannot imagine the state of things here from the reports of the proceedings of the Convention in the newspapers. Every means is used to intimidate the members of this Convention. Meetings are held nightly. Bands are hired who parade the streets followed by a motley crew of free negroes, boys and mad caps, who go around to the different hotels calling upon the well known Secessionists for speeches, cheering South Carolina, &c., &c. Every allusion to the Union is hissed, and every Union man is denounced as an abolitionist! The members from the North-West are compelled to daily hear citizens of Richmond, who are allowed privileged seats, point them out with the remark that "there is where the abolitionists sit," "these are the abolitionists," &c. How long, oh, how long will the free people of the West submit to this thing? . . .

The feeling is still great here in favor of Disunion. The mob, led on by the negro traders and the ambitious gentlemen who expect positions from the Southern Confederacy, is still doing its work of trying to intimidate the members of this Convention. . . .

The Union men have no paper here to represent or defend them. The *Enquirer*, *Examiner*, and *Dispatch*, are violent Disunion papers, and the *Whig*, quasi Union. . . .

While all the bonds of society are torn asunder by the great revolution which is going on—while each and every section—as all have been thrown into chaos—is considering what is its interest, and pursuing that plan which shall best promote it, North-western Virginia *alone* remains stolid and indifferent. Though her interests are betrayed by her leading men, in attempting to hitch her to a Cotton Confederacy, her people submit, preferring submission to slavery to a bold and independent maintenance of their rights. How long shall this thing last? We ask the freemen of Western Virginia in the name of the spirits of their brave forefathers if they are the last people on the face of the globe to ask and demand their rights? Will they sit idly by and permit all their interests, all their hopes of the future to be precipitated into a Southern Confederacy? We ask them are they slaves or are they freemen? If the latter they will hold public meetings at every Court and demand their rights. We assure them that there is no probability of them getting their just demands on taxation or representation in the present Convention,—We assure them that they will be postponed till some future period only to be postponed again, "till hope deferred maketh the heart sick." We assure them that our brethren of the East will much



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prefer a separation to giving us our rights. We speak from observation and a personal knowledge of the sentiments of the Eastern people. It has been said "ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you," but the people of North-western Virginia will find that when they ask for bread they shall receive a stone, when they ask for a fish they shall receive a serpent from their Eastern brethren.— Just look at it: over 500,000 slaves in Virginia and only 60,000 of them West of the Blue Ridge. Will these people give you equality of taxation? Never, as long as man retains the fallen nature which he inherited from Adam and Eve. We, therefore, tell the people of Western Virginia to prepare themselves for a separation from their Eastern brethren. It is bound to come sooner or later, and that being the case, the sooner the better. We call upon our people to stand up for their rights—but still such advice is unnecessary, for they *know* their rights and *dare maintain them*.

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