

Platform of the Alabama Democratic Party

February 14 & 15, 1848

[The 1848 State Convention of the Alabama Democratic Party adopted numerous resolutions regarding the Wilmot Proviso. The Resolutions state views regarding the Proviso, regarding possible compromises on the issues of slavery and the extension of slavery, and regarding future relations of Alabama Democrats to the National Democratic Party and northern state parties should they support restrictions on slavery or its extension. The resolutions were introduced by William Lowndes Yancey, who would become a leader of Lower South "fire-eaters" in the 1850s (i.e., militant southern political leaders advocating for secession.).]

Whereas, opinions have been expressed by eminent members of the Democratic Party, and by a Convention of the party in New York assembled, for the purpose of selecting delegates to the Baltimore Convention, that the municipal laws of the Mexican territories, would not be changed in the ceded territories, by the cession to the United States, and that slavery could not be *re-established* except by the authority of the U.S. or of the legislature of the territorial government--that no doubts should be allowed to exist upon a subject so important and at the same time so excited.

Be it further

Resolved, That the treaty of cession should contain a clause securing an entry into those territories to all the citizens of the United States, together with their property of every description, and that the same should remain protected by the U.S. while the territories are under its authority.

Resolved, That if it should be found inconvenient to insert such a clause into the treaty of cession, that our Senators and Representatives in Congress should be vigilant to obtain before the ratification of such a treaty, ample securities that the rights of the Southern people should not be endangered during the period the territories shall remain under the control of the U.S. either from the continuance of the municipal laws of Mexico, or from the legislation of the U.S.

Resolved, That the opinion maintained and advanced by some, that the people of a territory, acquired by the common toil, suffering, blood, and treasure of the people of all the States, can, in other events than in the forming [of] a Constitution preparatory to admittance as a State into the Union, lawfully or constitutionally prevent any citizen of any such states from removing to, or settling in such territory with his property, be it slave property or otherwise, is a restriction as indefensible in principle and as dangerous in practice, as if such restriction were imposed by act of Congress.

Resolved, That the Democratic party is and should be co-extensive with the Union: and that while we disclaim all intention to interfere in the local division and controversies in any of our sister States, we deem it a solemn duty, which we owe to the constitution, to ourselves, and to that party,

to declare our unalterable determination neither to recognize as Democrats or to hold fellowship or communion with those who attempt to denationalize the South and its institutions by restrictions upon its citizens and those institutions, calculated to array one section, in feeling and sentiment, against the other, and that we hold the same to be alike treason to party faith, and to the perpetuity of the Union of these states.

Resolved, That this Convention pledges itself to the country, and its members pledge themselves to each other, *under no political necessity whatever*, to support for the offices of President and Vice President of the United States, any person who shall not openly and avowedly be opposed to either of the forms of excluding slavery from the territories of the U.S. mentioned in the resolutions, as being alike in violation of the constitution, and of the just and equal rights of the slaveholding States.

Resolved, That these resolutions be considered as instructions to our delegates to the Baltimore Convention, to guide them in their votes in that body; and that they vote for no men for President or Vice-President, who will not unequivocally avow themselves to be opposed to either of the forms of restricting slavery, which are described in these resolutions.

Resolved, That as democrats we are proud to find, that every statesman in the non-slaveholding States who has declared opinions favorable to the constitutional equality of southern Citizens in acquired territory, is of our own political brotherhood, and that every public meeting or other body political or legislative, which has taken sides for us, is, without exception, also democratic---and we commend this fact to the Whigs of the South as an important element to be considered by them, when they are choosing friends, allies, or candidates "without distinction of party."

[At this point the Platform shifted focus to a series of resolutions about the Mexican War]

Source: Journal of the Democratic Convention Held in the City of Montgomery on the 14th and 15th February, 1848 (Montgomery, AL: M'Cormick & Walshe, 1848), 10-15, as reprinted at <http://www.civilwarcauses.org/1848.htm>.