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From the Confederate.

The Ground he stands on—His Principles and Views.

Previous to the 16th day of December last, the Standard had indulged in a continued strain, with abuse, complaint and denunciation of the Government at Richmond, as well of its dealings with soldiers as of the people. It charged the Government with withholding the soldiers' pay, neglecting the soldiers' families and hard and cruel treatment of the soldier himself; going so far as to accuse that the Standard was prevented from reaching the camps by the violations of the mail and that furloughs were refused to soldiers if they were Mr. Holden's friends.

On the 16th of December last, the Legislature having adjourned, Mr. Holden published the following short but significant editorial: "Nearly five months will intervene between its adjournment and reassembling in May, and meanwhile the most important events are likely to occur. The people will have ample time in which to instruct their Representatives, and we trust that during this time their will may be publicly, and unmistakably pronounced." This paragraph apparently so insignificant and unostentatious, was the precursor of an advance move by the "peace party" of the State; was a sign from the chief of the signal corps, of a new position. On the 30th of December, in two short weeks after, the following, by way of appeal to a distinctive interest, he gave rather plain indication of the contemplated purpose. "The indications are that the only way to save slavery is through negotiations for an honorable peace. The only power that can close the war is the power that made it, that of the sovereign States, and the States can speak authoritatively only in Convention."

Here is a call upon a particular class—an acute appeal to an especial interest, an unqualified ignoring of the Confederate Government and explicit call for separate State action.

Between the 30th of December and the 6th of January, as can readily be proved, Dr. J. T. Leach, the member elect to Congress from the 3d District, who lives in Johnston county, was several times in Raleigh, and always visited at the office of Mr. Holden. On the 12th of January Mr. Holden published the proceedings of a meeting held in Coat's District, Johnston county, and announced the resolutions to be "admirable in tone and expression." He also announced that these resolutions were prepared by Dr. Leach, who he said took an active part in the meeting. The proceedings of that meeting recited a preamble as follows:

"Whereas, The alarming and fearful tendency of the Confederate Government towards a military despotism—by the enactment of unjust and oppressive laws, to citizens is just cause of complaint: Resolved, That North Carolina as a sovereign and independent State has a right to consult the present good, and future happiness of her citizens, and when she is forced to choose between a military despotism and her State sovereignty, for the good of her people she will choose the latter by a convention of her citizens."

In Mr. Holden's paper of the same last-mentioned date, was published a communication from the same Dr. Leach—whom Mr. Holden had applauded—which communication was entitled "Whom the Gods would destroy they first made mad." This communication was intended to go out as an explanation of the meaning of the resolutions and preamble, in order to afford a cue to the initiated in the further progress of the agitation. In that communication there is this startling announcement:

"There is a point beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue, and North Carolina, as regards her obligations under the

Confederate compact, and her duty to her citizens, has reached that point, and it now behooves her freeborn people to stand up in the defence of their inalienable rights. It is a fearful struggle for life and property on the one hand, and for civil and religious liberty on the other. The reckless legislation of Congress, endorsed by the President, and the mighty strides now making towards a military despotism, admit of no delay. Nations, like families, are held together by duty and interest; if one fails to discharge their duty, the others are released from the discharge of theirs. She (North Carolina) made a virtue of necessity, and coalesced against her interests with those who are now fastening the chains of military despotism upon her. She now claims the fulfillment of the terms of that compact, or the right to depart in peace."

Thus Mr. Holden published to the world this treasonable denunciation—in which, after stigmatizing our Government as a violator of its obligations, a military despotism—which had failed in the discharge of its duty, and with which we confessed from necessity—but against our interest—the author proceeds to advise a cessation of forbearance, and an immediate standing upon the defensive in a fearful struggle about to be commenced for life and property, for civil and religious liberty—all against our own government—the claim to secede being deliberately set up. And Mr. Holden gives his endorsement to this wicked and traitorous communication—by withholding reprobation—by complimenting its author—by establishing political affiliation with him—and in the same paper by recommending other counties to "follow the example of our Johnston friends"—basing this recommendation on his assertion that the "constitutional rights of the people are in danger, and unless the people should come to the rescue, they may be entirely swept away. Now is the time for action."

Mr. Holden thus combined with the leading malcontents in an open, avowed hostility to our Government. It closed its columns upon the acts of the enemy. It kept them open for attacks on our own Government in all its departments—and it thus advised, instigated and inaugurated the agitation in North Carolina, whose end would be, if unchecked, to give the State over into the hands of the enemy. We shall follow up the acts of Mr. Holden to their legitimate consequences as far as they have gone, and we hope to be able, if his eyes are not blinded—to unfold even to his view, the enormity of the danger he is invoking upon his country if he succeed—on himself and his coadjutors—if there is strength enough to ensure his failure.

Having set up his proteges and committed to the public the Johnston fire-brand, Mr. Holden sets himself to work to pile on and stir the fuel. On the 19th of January, he announced the right of North Carolina to hold a Convention, "without being responsible for so doing to any power on earth." He had previously asserted, that in a certain contingency, "the people of North Carolina will take their affairs into their own hands, and will proceed, in convention assembled, to vindicate their liberties and privileges."—And again, in the same article:

"The people of North Carolina will rise in their majesty and assert their sovereignty. There is no power to prevent them from doing this, and we to the official character who shall attempt to turn the arms of Confederate soldiers against the people of this State! North Carolina will not be the slave of either the Congress at Richmond or Washington. She is this day, as she has been from the first, the key-stone of the Confederate arch. If that stone should fall, the arch will tumble. Let Congress be warned in time."

Thus having insinuated into the popular mind the nature of those important events to which he had alluded—having spread the venom of the Johnston meeting and the attendant circular; on the 19th he signifies that "what she will do in that Convention will be for her own people to determine," and then he proceeds to intimate what she ought to do. This intimation is based upon the belief which he expresses in the following terms:

"We believe that if the war should be continued some months longer, negro slavery will be utterly and finally destroyed in these States, and that it will be impossible to re-establish the institution. Its sudden destruction would involve the whole social structure in

rain. We believe that by the end of the period mentioned, the rights of the States, and the liberties of the people, by the very force of circumstances, to say nothing of the aggressive disposition and purposes of the government at Richmond, will have been blotted out, or will be at the mercy of that government. We believe that peace can never be obtained as long as we contend for Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri and West Virginia; and that, in all probability, it can be obtained only by the sovereign States co-operating with the common government. We are, therefore, for a Convention, and for a co-operation with our sister States of the South in obtaining an armistice, so that negotiations may be commenced. It is not for us to say what such a Convention should do; but we may be sure it would omit no proper steps to secure peace, and meanwhile to protect the State against the encroachments of arbitrary power. It would see to it that the proud head of the State was bowed to no despot. It would insist that the civil law should prevail in all cases; and being in existence, if not constantly in session, it would have the right to speak and act for the State as a sovereign, and to demand that the Congress and the military power should respect that civil law and the inalienable rights of our people."

To prevent the abolition of slavery; to secure peace, and prevent the extinction of the State sovereignties, "a Convention is to be held." This Convention is to "appoint commissioners to treat for peace." The terms are partly set forth in this article, and more particularly in another.

They are to surrender that portion of the Confederacy known as Kentucky and Missouri, to acquiesce in the division of the State of Virginia and the conquest of a portion of her territory—and indeed to get peace on the best terms we can get, for, said he on 2nd of February: "I want separation and independence. We could have got better terms twelve months ago than we can now."

But this is not all that the Convention was to do. It was to "check the innovations and usurpations of the common Government;" for, said Mr. Holden on the 19th of January: North Carolina "would not be bound by a Government which had lost its original character and been perverted to despotic purposes against her own rights, and the rights and liberties of her citizens."—How was it to check the usurpations referred to, and what are some of the usurpations it was to check? Why, if the *habeas corpus* were suspended, this Convention was to say, "we could not submit to that." If the conscription were extended, "we cannot submit to that." If the Government choose to employ its military force to arrest deserters, this Convention was to say "we don't want Confederate troops in our midst for that purpose." And finally, this Convention, in some unforeseen emergency, was to interpose some power to "preserve the very existence of the State."

This is a faithful drawing of the plans, purposes, motives and means of Mr. Holden and his associate agitators. They were to secure a Convention in an illegitimate way. It was to sit in permanent session—to watch, spy, object to, check, forbid the actions of the legitimate Confederate Government, and unbind our people from their allegiance to a Government that this Convention might say "had lost its original character." And towards the enemy it was to look with a lenient eye—to get out of it the best terms it could—to send commissioners to it—to treat, and in treaty to agree to surrender Kentucky and Missouri, and consent to the cutting off of Virginia. In other words, to make an agreement to disrupt the Confederacy.

These startling propositions have been made by Mr. Holden in a public print, have been scattered by him among our soldiers and among our people; have gone with or without his sanction into the enemy's lines, and he in apparent innocence of any harm, fondly thinking no one hurt, complacently asks is there any treason in these propositions?

We answer him in all candor—FULL OF IT—full to the throat—bursting—running over with flagrant sedition and treasonable incitement—that in England, where the trial by jury and the exposition of the law is the freest and soundest in the world, would hang him a thousand times over. Why, suppose his commissioners appointed and they endeavor to communicate with the enemy to treat, as her purposes. The overt acts of treason would be at once committed, and they and those who instructed would all be guilty.—The Constitution forbids to a State to make a treaty or enter into an agreement with a

foreign power, and an attempt to do so with the enemy, in time of war, would unquestionably be treason.

If Mr. Holden's Convention were in session, now that the *habeas corpus* is suspended, and were to say to the Government, in the language of Mr. Holden—"You have silenced our Judges, you have silenced the press, you have deprived the people of the freedom of speech and destroyed personal liberty.—We cannot submit to it"—and his Convention were to pass an ordinance of resistance—it would be unquestionable treason, in all concerned in it; because the Government has the constitutional right to suspend the privilege of the *habeas corpus*, and resistance, whether by the State authority or by bodies of people, would be a levying war against the Government, which is treason.

So that no single step could be taken to enforce the suggestions of Mr. Holden, except by the commission of a capital felony, which Mr. Holden has unquestionably been inciting for some time past.

We seek not to inflame any prejudice or animosity against Mr. Holden. We would rather conjure him to survey the ground on which he stands. If the people will calmly look at these things, they will wonder that any man encumbered with such a weight of folly, carrying this load of bad judgment, bad sense, imprudence and mischief, not to use the phrases most appropriate—they will wonder that such a person could have the hardihood to present himself a candidate before them—most of all, a candidate to be their Governor. Why, suppose Mr. Holden were the Governor now, with all these foolish, silly views and principles, and his associates installed with him—what a spectacle should we present? Contemplate it fellow-citizens! We shall pursue Mr. Holden's plans to their result already produced.

We have now brought Mr. Holden down, to his explanation of his proposition for Convention, as made in his paper of January 19th, in which the numerous acts in contemplation to be performed by the Convention, are specified with a calmness and deliberation as though they were entirely lawful, and in no wise contravening the duties of a loyal citizen.

Now, we desire to show to Mr. Holden himself—for our object is first to reach him—and at the same time to show to the people, the deleterious influence of this long course of teaching—and the fatal consequences in many instances to the individuals who fall under it.

First, we wish to show the impression made by Mr. Holden on the public sentiment of the Confederacy. We assert that Mr. Holden has fixed in the mind of a large portion of the people of our sister States, a conviction that an extensive disloyal feeling exists in North Carolina, to our shame and evil repute. We cite in support of this assertion, the authority of the newspaper press generally—more especially the Richmond Sentinel, Whig and Examiner, the Lynchburg Virginian, Atlanta Intelligencer, Mississippian, Chattanooga Rebel, and many others. We submit the following from the Richmond Whig, and afterwards adopted by the Chronicle and Sentinel of Augusta, as expressing the general opinion of the press of the country on Mr. Holden and his associates:

"THE PEACE MOVEMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA AND GEORGIA.—We have given some attention to the indications of policy and principle as developed by the peace movement in North Carolina and Georgia. There is evidently a party in North Carolina willing to accept Black Republican rule, but this party is very small in numbers and influence. There are some in favor of Reconstruction, and this forms, in fact, the foundation of the peace party. There seems to be no antecedent principle-seeking vindication—no great triumph of policy to result at all worthy of the expenditure of life and property now made by the country. These reconstructionists are ready to re-enact the same suicidal folly that has produced this war, and would, of necessity, produce another.—They are willing to re-instate the most odious form of despotism, that is a consolidated democracy supported by the sword."

The Richmond Whig is a paper of very high position and very marked ability—in politics rather inclined to sympathize with Mr. Holden in many things—of the Rives and Hill of Georgia conservative school—certainly not a paper to form its conclusions on accusations against Mr. Holden by others—

The result to which this paper has come, is evidently from a close observation of Mr. Holden himself. The same may be said of the Chronicle and Sentinel.

Now what answer has Mr. Holden to make to all this? Can he point to one single paper out of North Carolina, in the whole Confederacy, which sustains him? When a paper suspends, it is a habitual courtesy of the press to pay the retiring editor some compliment at his withdrawal. This is a common manifestation of the "esprit du corps." But Mr. Holden has suspended—suspended in mysterious terms, under extraordinary circumstances; and as far as we have been able to see, no word of sympathy, no expression of regret has followed him into retirement; a cold, studied and meaning silence, as though one had left of whom good cannot be spoken, towards whom forbearance indicates silence. Has Mr. Holden seen this? Does it make no impression upon him?

While such has been the effect on public sentiment outside the State, how has it been here? All the papers of North Carolina are not "destructive," though Mr. Holden chooses so to class them when they differ with him. But the Fayetteville Observer, the Greensboro Patriot and the Salisbury Watchman, might give Mr. Holden a ticket of admittance to, or dismissal from the party with which he has been acting for the last two years, without arrogance. But for him to assume to dismiss them; it is Mr. Holden's unmitigated. Let Mr. Holden ponder the settlements of these presses, and while pondering ask himself, who stand by him in North Carolina? The People's Press at Salem, the Newbern Times, Yankee, and one half-and-half neutral and equivocal, and one positively with emphasis neutral. We say nothing of papers which Mr. Holden calls "Destructive."

Now, what effect has Mr. Holden produced on our soldiers? He has made them believe the cause unworthy, the country whipped, the Government despotic, themselves wronged and ill-treated—and thus induced many to desert. And it is well known among our officers, that in their last moments those dying men have attributed their guilt and their punishment to Mr. Holden.

The confession of James King, which we append, was one of many who are gone to their long account, with the conviction that they owed their ignominy, sorrow and death to the malign influence of Mr. Holden's "principles and views."

PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE,
Rodes' Division, Feb. 9, 1864.

Col. Bryan Grimes, Com'g 4th N. C. Regiment. Colonel: I deem it my duty to make known to you the last words of private James King, company E, of your regiment, who was executed for desertion on the 30th of January, ult. After bandaging his eyes, I told him that he had but two more minutes to live, and asked if he had any message he desired to send to his relatives or friends. He replied, I have no message. I only wish to say to you, Lieutenant, though others persuaded me to do what I did, the reading of Holden's paper has brought me to this, but thank God, I shall soon be at peace."

As it may be the wish of his friends or relatives to know in what spirit he died, I make this statement, and if you think proper, you may convey it to them.

Very respectfully, Colonel,

Your ob't serv't,

J. M. Goss, 1st. Lieut.

Co. I, 5th Alabama Regiment, and Provost Marshal, Rodes' Division.

We received an account of this confession at the time it was made, and forbore to publish it, until pressed by the duty of a public journalist. This man lived in Randolph county, has relatives, a wife and children there. What will they think, if poor King is borne to death by "views and principles" which elevate Mr. Holden, the teacher, to honor and distinction!

But worst of all, what effect has Mr. Holden produced on our enemies? What did Edward Everett think of Mr. Holden, when to the assembled multitude, on the fatal field of Gettysburg, he announced for the encouragement of our foes, that "at Raleigh an independent press is unlimbering its artillery."

Is Mr. Holden ignorant that the New York Tribune, New York Times, Boston Traveller, &c., team with his articles—these same articles which compel our Government to shoot our own men, and caught up by our enemies, stimulate their men to continue shooting us? Why now, again, we have before