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Address of Congress to the People of the Confederate States.

FELLOW-CITIZENS:—The result of the "Peace Commission" is known to the country. The hopes of those who have hitherto believed that an honorable termination might be put to the war by negotiation have been rudely disappointed. The enemy, after drawing us into a conference, abruptly terminated it by insisting upon terms which they well knew we could never accept. Our absolute surrender and submission to the will of the conqueror are the only conditions vouchsafed by our arrogant foe. We are told that if we will lay down our arms, and place our lives, liberty, property and domestic institutions at the feet of President Lincoln, that he will be merciful to us! Upon his clemency we must rely to save us from universal confiscation and extermination! Yes! these are the conditions upon which the people of the sovereign States composing the Confederacy may be allowed to do—what? To return into "the Union" from which they solemnly and deliberately withdrew themselves because their interest and their honor required it, and their repugnance to which four years of remorseless and cruel war have served but to intensify! Thanks be to God, who controls and overrules the counsels of men, the haughty insolence of our enemies, which they hoped would intimidate and break the spirit of our people, is producing the very contrary effect! From every part of the country there comes up in response a shout of mingled indignation and defiance!

A noble enthusiasm re-animates our gallant army, who have been battling so long for freedom and independence! Let us all be united now. Let there be no parties or factions among us. Let us rise to the height of the great occasion. Let us all be willing to spend and be spent in the cause of our country. Let us contribute freely all that we have, if need be, to carry on the war until our triumph is secured. Let us take fraternal counsel together, and calmly consider our condition and prospects. Such a survey, we believe, must tend to re-assure and encourage even the least sanguine. We have, it is true, recently met with serious disasters. Our fortitude is being severely tried. We have suffered much, and must be prepared to suffer more, in the cause for which we are struggling. Is the cause worth the sacrifice? To answer correctly we must constantly keep in mind the end for which we are contending. What is our object in this war? The establishment of our independence, through which alone are to be secured the sovereignty of the States and the right of self-government. What is the alternative? Our subjugation as a people! Is it possible to over-estimate the horrors of this terrible alternative? Can the imagination over-color the picture which would be presented in the event of our failure? If we fail, not only political degradation, but social humiliation must be our wretched lot. We would not only be political vassals, but social serfs. An enemy that has shown himself destitute of the ordinary sensibilities of human nature, and whose worst passions are embittered and enflamed against us, would assume the absolute control of our political and social destinies. In vain would a proud, though vanquished, people look even for that mercy which the conquered receive from a generous foe. Those "State Rights" which we have been taught to prize so dearly as the greatest bulwarks of constitutional liberty, and which, from the earliest period of our history, we have so jealously guarded, would be annihilated. The Confederate States would be held as conquered provinces by the despotic government at Washington. They would be kept in subjugation by the stern hand of military power, as Venetia and Lombardy have been held by Austria—as Poland is held by the Russian Czar. Not only would we be deprived of every political franchise dear to freemen, but socially we would be degraded to the level of slaves; if, indeed, the refinement of malice in our enemies did not induce them to elevate the negro above

his former master. Not only would the property and estates of vanquished "rebels" be confiscated, but they would be divided and distributed among our African bondsmen. But why pursue the hideous picture further? Southern manhood revolts at the bare idea of the spectacle presented. Can you think of it unmoved? Can property—can life itself—be so dear to you as to allow you to weigh them for one moment against degradation so object—gainst misery so profound? We do not; and cannot, believe it. If the proud memories and traditions of our first great revolution do not nerve you to eternal resistance to such a consummation—nor the example of our forefathers, who wrestled for the independence they bequeathed to us during seven long years of suffering greater than we have endured—let not the precious blood that has been already shed by our bravest and best in the present struggle cry out to us from our yet reeking soil in vain! Fruitlessly, indeed, have those sons and brothers—martyrs of liberty—bled and died; if we falter now in the path which they have illumined before us!

In the Revolution of '76 our armies and our people suffered far more than we have done. Our cities then were almost all in the hands of the British, and we were entirely cut off from all supplies from abroad, while our facilities for producing them were infinitely less than they now are. Greene tells us that the battle of Etow was won by men who had scarcely shoes to their feet or shirts to their backs. They protected their shoulders from being galled by the bands of their cross-belts, by bunches of moss or tufts of grass. A detachment marching to Greene's assistance passed through a region so swept by both armies that they were compelled to subsist on green peaches as their only diet. There was scarcely any salt for fifteen months, and when obtained, it had to be used sparingly, mixed with hickory ashes. We need but allude to the terrible winter which Washington passed at Valley Forge, with an army unpaid, half-starved and half-naked, and shoeless, to convince us that such as our brave soldiers are now enduring, their fathers, for a like cause, endured far more. Washington did not then despair. Lee does not now despair of the final triumph of a righteous cause. Why should we be doubtful—much less despondent—of our ultimate success?

The extent of our territory—the food-producing capacity of our soil—the amount and character of our population—are elements of strength which, carefully husbanded and wisely employed, are amply sufficient to insure our final triumph. The passage of hostile armies through our country, though productive of cruel suffering to our people and great pecuniary loss, gives the enemy no permanent advantage or foothold.

To subjugate a country, its civil government must be suppressed by a continuing military force, or supplanted by another, to which the inhabitants yield a voluntary or enforced obedience. The passage of hostile armies through our territory cannot produce this result. Permanent garrisons would have to be stationed at a sufficient number of points to strangle all civil government before it could be pretended, even by the United States government itself, that its authority was extended over these States. How many garrisons would it require? How many hundred thousand soldiers would suffice to suppress the civil governments of all the States of this Confederacy, and to establish over them, even in name and form, the authority of the United States? In a geographical point of view, therefore, it may be asserted that the conquest of these Confederate States is impracticable.

If we consider the food-producing capacity of our soil we need feel no apprehensions as to our ability to feed the people and any army we may put into the field. It is needless to go into detail or adduce statistics in proof of this. It is obvious to every well-informed mind. Although the occupation by the enemy, and his ruthless policy of destroying the har-

vests, granaries and agricultural implements of our people, wherever he moves, has undoubtedly diminished the amount of our cereals; still, in view of the fact that in every State, without exception, its agricultural labor has been devoted almost exclusively to the raising of breadstuffs, while before the war it was mainly devoted to the production of cotton, tobacco and other exports, it is impossible to doubt that there is an ample supply of food in the country. It is true that the deportation of our slaves by the enemy, and the barbarous policy of arming them against us—a policy reprobated by all authorities on ethics or international law—has considerably diminished our agricultural labor. But when we reflect that, in 1860, our exports—almost entirely the products of slave labor—amounted to (\$250,000,000) two hundred and fifty millions of dollars, it may be safely assumed that our slaves, though reduced in numbers, are fully equal to the task of feeding both the population at home and the army in the field. Our transportation, it is true, is defective and inadequate, but this may be infinitely improved by more energetic efforts and more thorough and systematic organization. We cannot believe, therefore, that on our bountiful soil, so richly blessed by nature, there is any danger of our failing in this great contest for want of food—of our being starved into submission to the hateful yoke of the conqueror!

But if we look to the amount and character of our population, we see especial reason why we should be encouraged to hope for—pay, to be assured of—our ultimate success. No people of our number can be subjugated, unless, false and recreant to themselves, their courage, faith and fortitude fail them.

We have upon our rolls a very large army of veteran soldiers. It is true—and it is a sad truth to confess—that the number present for duty is terribly disproportioned to the entire aggregate. This is too notorious for concealment—and we have no desire to conceal anything. We wish to speak frankly and truthfully to you of the actual condition of things. The number of absentees from your armies has been a fruitful cause of disaster. On many a hard fought field the tide of success would have turned overwhelmingly in our favor had all been present whom duty required to participate in the strife. We will not stop to inquire into the causes of an evil which we have so much reason to deplore. The remedy is partly in the hands of Congress, and it is our province to apply it. But it is partly, also, in yours; and we appeal to you to use it. Let every good citizen frown down upon and indignantly discountenance, all evasion of military duty—whether temporary or permanent—no matter how plausible the pretext or palliating the reason.

No duty, in this crisis of our affairs, can be more imperative than to fight for one's country, family and home. Let no skulker, deserter or absentee without leave, from the army, be tolerated in any community. Let the reproachful glance of our women, between whose honor and the brutal foe our noble army stands as a flaming sword, drive him back to the field. With proper officers, strict discipline, and an elevated tone of public opinion throughout the country, desertion and absenteeism in the army can be arrested, and all men liable to military duty put into, and kept in, the ranks of our armies. If this be affected, we can maintain in the field a force sufficient to defy subjugation.

But it is in the character of our population, especially, that we find those elements of strength which impress us with the conviction that we never can be conquered. Our people are peculiarly military in their characteristics. Better soldiers than those in our army history has never shown. They have endured extreme hardships and suffering with a fortitude, and fought against constant odds with a gallantry, that has earned the gratitude of their country and extorted the admiration of the world. But, in addition to their military attributes, our people are pre-eminently of

a proud and haughty spirit, and deeply imbued with the love of constitutional freedom. It belongs to their race and lineage; and, as Burke long ago remarked, their relation to the servile race in contact with them has intensified the feeling and invested this love of liberty with a sentiment of personal privilege. To suppose that a people with such military, political and social characteristics will ever voluntarily submit to be ruled by any other government than one of their own choice, is too insulting to their pride to be entertained for a moment. And to doubt their capacity to achieve independence and maintain themselves as a separate Power among the nations of the earth, is to close our eyes to all the teachings of history—to ignore the proof which our own forefathers have stamped upon its pages—to believe that human nature has changed, or that we are a degenerate race, unworthy descendants of our revolutionary sires!

The appointment by the President of Gen. Lee as "General-in-Chief" has done much to restore confidence to the country and to re-inspire the army. All feel that we may safely repose this weighty trust and responsibility in that great soldier and devoted patriot. All feel that we may lean upon him as our tower of strength. All feel that his courage and steadfast purpose, his military skill and wise judgment, will enable him to wield our armies with the maximum efficiency and strength. May God strengthen him for the great task to which a confiding people have called him!

To provide means for carrying on the war, Congress has been compelled to impose upon the country a heavy burthen of taxation. But, heavy as it is, it is not too heavy for the country to bear, and not heavier than our wants imperatively demand. It is impossible to maintain the mighty contest in which we are engaged without vast expenditures of money. Money can only be raised by loans or taxation. Our condition does not enable us to do the former. We must of necessity, therefore, resort to the latter. We appeal to you with confidence to submit cheerfully to the burthens which the defence of your country, your homes and your liberties renders necessary. To contribute according to his means to that defence is as much an obligation upon the citizen as it is to peril his life upon the battle-field.

Let us, then, fellow-countrymen, tread the plain path of duty. No nation that has trod it faithfully and fearlessly ever, in the world's history, has stumbled and fallen. "Nations," says Burke, "never are murdered—they commit suicide." Let us not be guilty of the folly and the crime of self-destruction. Let us show the fortitude, endurance and courage that belong to our race, and neither the brute force of our enemy's arms, nor the subtle poison of his lips, can extinguish the life of this Confederacy, breathed into it by the sovereign States which created it.

The people of the United States are becoming weary of this war. The foreign material for their armies is beginning to fail them. The mutterings of discontent at the prospect of a further draft upon their home population are beginning to be heard in their great cities. The prospect of war, indefinitely prolonged, is alarming their capitalists. Public credit must, sooner or later, collapse under the burthen of expenditures, the magnitude of which the most skillful financier cannot venture to predict. The debt of the United States is equal to the national debt of England, which has been accumulating since the revolution of 1688. The interest on this debt is six per cent., while the interest on the English debt is only three per cent. It has been computed that the interest on the debt of the United States, together with the amount necessary to carry on its Government (even were the war at an end,) would not fall much short of five hundred millions per annum!—a sum affirmed to be greater than the entire annual wealth of the Northern States. While a people, in self-defence, may submit cheerfully to any privations and sufferings—to any sacrifices of treasure and of blood—there is a limit beyond which