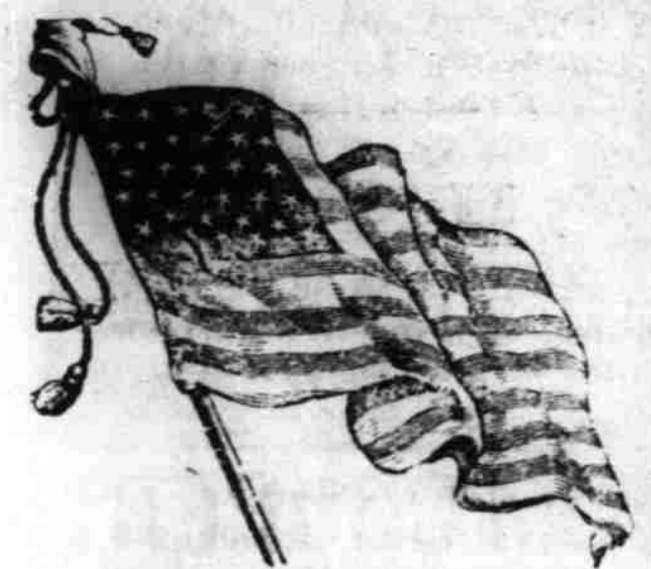


The Tri-Weekly Constitution.



Wake County Republican Convention.

A Convention of the Republicans of Wake county will be held at the Court-house, in Raleigh, on

Tuesday the 27th day of June next, at 12 o'clock, noon, for the purpose of appointing delegates to the Fourth Congressional District Convention, to be held in Raleigh, on the 11th day of July, to nominate a candidate for Congress and a candidate for Presidential Elector; also, to appoint delegates to the State Republican Convention, to be held in said city, on the 12th of July, to nominate candidates for State officers, and two electors for the State at large on the Presidential ticket. The County Convention will consider no other business.

The members of the County Executive Committee, who are *ex officio* chairmen of the various township and ward committees, are hereby requested to call meetings in their respective townships and wards, on Saturday, the 24th day of June, in order to appoint delegates to the County Convention.

By order of the Co. Ex. Com.
W. W. WHITE, Ch'n.
A. MAGNIN, Sec'y.

Fourth Congressional District Convention.

A Republican Convention for the Fourth Congressional District of North Carolina, will be held in Raleigh, on Tuesday, the 11th day of July, 1876, and be convened at 12 o'clock m., of that day, for the purpose of placing in nomination a Republican candidate to represent the District in the Forty-fifth Congress of the United States, a candidate for Presidential elector, and for the transaction of such other business as may be deemed proper. Delegates entitled to a seat and vote in the Convention, must be regularly delegated by a County Convention called by a County Committee through their regular Chairman.

The county of Wake is entitled to four votes in the Convention; the counties of Chatham, Granville, Johnson and Orange are entitled to two votes, each; and the counties of Franklin and Nash to one vote, each.

The County Committees of the counties composing the District, that have not already done so, are requested to call their County Conventions early, so as to ensure their counties representation in the District Convention.

By order of the District Ex. Com.:
B. F. BULLOCK, Jr., Ch'n.
JNO. C. GORMAN, Sec'y.

Republican State Convention, 1876.

The next Union Republican State Convention for the nomination of Governor and other State officers will be held in the city of Raleigh, N. C., on

Wednesday, July 12th, 1876, at 12 o'clock, noon; and will consist of delegates from each county equal to twice the number of its representatives in the lower house of the General Assembly.

We cordially invite all Republican Electors, and other voters, without regard to past party affiliations or differences, who favor the humane provisions of our Homestead and other exemption laws, who favor the establishment of a system of free schools that will meet the wants of the masses of our people; and also all those who are opposed to the revolutionary schemes of the late fraudulent Convention, which proposed amendments to our State Constitution, to co-operate with us in our efforts to put good men in office and retain for North Carolina an honest and efficient State administration.

Let us all in this centennial year of the anniversary of the birth of this Great Republic renew our pledges of devotion and fealty to the Union.

THOS. B. KEOGH,
Chairman.
F. M. SORRELL, Secretary,
State Rep. Ex. Committee.
Republican papers please copy.

State Executive Committee.
HEADQUARTERS REP. EX. COM.,
RALEIGH, April 20th, 1876

The officers of District and County Conventions will please send to this Committee a report of proceedings, and also the names and post-office address of nominees.

THOS. B. KEOGH,
Chairman.
FRANCIS M. SORRELL, Secretary.
Republican papers please copy.

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Protest

AN ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

By the Republican members of the late Constitutional Convention.

We, the undersigned, under a sense of the responsibility due from us as representatives of the will of the people of North Carolina, feel called upon to war the yet free citizens of our beloved State, of the danger which imminently threatens them from the despotic and aristocratic tendencies of the Democratic party, so glaringly displayed in the amendments passed by that body in the Convention which was lately held in Raleigh.

A Convention called to establish the principles which shall govern and give vitality to the business relations of men and define the limits of the privilege to be exercised by the people, offers an unerring test of the opinions and feelings of those engaged in the responsible work. No less is it an absolute standard by which to judge of the tendencies of a party, when that party controls the body. Then, if even, will men show their true political opinions and struggle to embody in permanent form, their fixed convictions. Governments are classified into free and despotic, at a glance, by an examination of their constitutions, whether written or moulded by the practices and tradition of their history. When representatives respect and consult the will of the people, whilst dealing with their interests and privileges, free government prevails, whatever its advantages and inconveniences. When that will, expressed by majorities, fairly ascertained, is disregarded by the framers of laws, and rights are taken away against the solemn protest of the citizen, whatever the other attributes may be, the government ceases to be one of popular consent.

The application of this simple rule, fixes forever, in alarming reality, the character of North Carolina's last and worst Convention.

A large majority of the votes of the State, was given against its call, and the will of the people thus expressed should have controlled the delegates elected; a due regard to that will demanded that the present Constitution should be returned to them unaltered in a single principle, by which the rights of the people were defined and guaranteed, and their duties described and enjoined. Not respecting the voice of the people, contemptuous of their twice expressed opinion, but only upon party rule and the substitution of the sway of a faction for the will of the majority, the Legislature of 1874-'5, by a party vote, violated the primary idea of the polity they had sworn to maintain, and called this body without consultation with the people, and in breach of the declaration made all over the State in the canvass of 1874. No denial can be hazarded by any one, of this plain fact, that a deliberate disregard of the will of a majority continued willfully, makes popular government impossible. This Convention is a bold declaration against the popular will and is, in itself, by the very fact of its existence, a revolution.

It is an anomaly in our history, and stands a solitary example of a body, called for the good of the people, usurping their rights, and seizing their powers, against their expressed will. But four years since, the people were called upon to express their wish upon a change of the Constitution; they answered that they wished no change. Two years ago many amendments of that instrument were submitted again to the people: very few were adopted and those were matters of detail going only to the judgment as matters of expediency, and not touching a single right or privilege. In the House of Representatives, in the session of 1874-'75, the dominant party had a majority of two-thirds. This Convention, composed of the same number, elected by the same voters, under the same laws, with no intervening change of circumstances, returns a majority of delegates against the party in power, thus giving a rebuke to its revolutionary spirit, and declaring again in favor of the Constitution they have tried so hard to preserve. By a course unparalleled in the history of political bodies, that true majority is perverted, and the power of party is enthroned upon the trampled rights of a State.

Step by step the dreary drama of tyranny is enacted. The Supreme Court, the bulwark of the people, their fearless champion in many contests with an enraged and usurping Legislature, beneath whose august decree the poor of the land rest secure in enjoyment of homes for themselves and their loved ones, when baffled avarice casts its thirty gaze upon the pittance wrenched from its insatiate greed—this tribunal, so fearless and so just, is attacked, and falls before the will of those whose action forebodes evil to every institution and principle dear to freemen.

The election of the Superior Court Judges, now with the people, was coveted, and the purpose contemplated to wrest this privilege from them, and give it where faction can supply ready-made partisans inclined to direct the forms of law, and the principles of justice to the purposes of party. This change was only averted by the adoption of a provision which enables a partisan Legislature to rob the Superior Courts of their jurisdiction, and confer it upon tribunals erected in their place, whose officers shall not be responsible to the people.

Justices of the Peace, the familiar counsel of the people, whose functions have always been to assist them in their common, ordinary disputes; who have since with the people, and of the people since tradition has spoken—these necessary, and almost family functionaries, torn from the people, lest they should continue Democratic in nature, as in office, and an aristocratic complexion is to be forced upon their homely features by rendering them no longer responsible to their neighbors, and by divorcing their sympathies from the humble and

rude poor, whose causes they are to determine.

Not only officers, but institutions, popular and elevated in their nature, are ravished from the masses. The popular county and township governments, established by our present supreme law, carries the idea of responsibility to the people down to every neighborhood. They give the control of every dollar of the money needed for the myriad uses of civilized and progressive communities, into the keeping of those who are under the direct eye of the people; they familiarize every one with the forms of business, and educate the primary divisions of society in the ways of self-reliant and independent life.

The tribunals carry the idea of the will of a majority to its ultimate end, and they are the rude, it may be, but healthful nurseries in which the infant steps of freemen are trained to tread in the ways of independent manhood.

But this nurture does not accord with the spirit of democracy revolutionized. That bad genius broods with evil menace over the precious heritage of our fathers, and the shadow of his dark approach, even now mingles ominously with the broad light of our liberty. A strong government is demanded. The divinity of privileged power must hereafter claim our devotions, and the vulgar independence of poor men and ignorant people must be trained to forego its somewhat turbulent conduct, and learn politer manners, and more cultured forms from the example of our very virtuous and model rulers, who are to be supplied to us by that excessively pure medium a modern partisan Legislature!

There is one by one the rude forms of hatched privilege are destroyed, and the dainty proportions of an elegant aristocracy are erected, beneath whose iron-hand, though cased in a glove of velvet, no popular right can flourish; and in whose eye, a free people is an eternal fear. All earth is drenched with gore poured out to glut the selfishness, revenge and licentious lusts of Kings and privileged classes. The poor are the universal sacrifice.

The slaughtered millions, whose blood cries to God from the thousand battle-fields, which cover our country like the foul blotches upon the leper's skin, are the human offering which alone can appease the cruelty of an insatiate aristocracy. Even under the mild forms of privilege, which formerly prevailed here, the eternal hate which power always cherishes for freedom, allied itself to the dread demon of rebellion, and its insatiate greed unappressed by the holocaust of blood and impoverishment through which we have passed, will never cease whilst man is free.

Under our previous history, the laws regulating elections, were plain and simple, no one ever dreaming that the time would come when the people's will would be disregarded by any legislative body that could be assembled. But the desperation of party exigency, in this Convention, has shown how frail a hold the people have on their own government in North Carolina.

The people of Robeson county, elected to this Convention two delegates, Neil McNeil and R. M. Norment. The judges of election, against whom no fault has been alleged, made their returns as usual, and these returns showed a majority of votes in favor of the gentlemen named. The only duty of the county commissioners was to add those returns, and declare the result. But, usurping powers never granted them, they declare the returns untrue, and in the face of the written record before them, they pronounce that there was no election in four precincts of the county. No law is shown authorizing them to review the judgement of the inspectors of election; none can be shown which entitled them to judge of the qualification of electors. This power is vested by law in the judges of election, and in them alone. If they abuse it and admit unlawful votes, or refuse lawful ones, it is a case for the candidates alone, and the determination of the fact in each case, belongs solely to the body of which the parties are seeking to become members.

This Convention is, or is not, the judge of the election and qualification of its own members. A certificate of election from the proper officers, gives the possessor a *prima facie* right to his seat, until the truthfulness of the certificate is questioned. When this is done, the first thing to do, and the only thing, is to examine the records of the election. If they are in lawful form, the certificate must be given accordingly. If voters are questioned, the duty of approving or disqualifying them, rests with the candidate making the issue, and the facts must be determined upon the evidence adduced. No legislative body, of its own motion, has ever made a contest between members without their own active interposition. All legislative bodies determine the lawfulness of the certificate. When this is done, the burden is thrown upon the contestants. These are rules of law prescribed for the proceedings of contestants, public and of common application. The action of this body is directly contrary to this method. The commissioners of Robeson, have erected themselves into a judicial tribunal; they have, without evidence, and against the record, determined the fact of legal and illegal votes have taken from the judges of election the discretion conferred upon them by law, to be exercised under the obligation of an oath, and against their own written statement to the contrary, have declared that no election at all was held in four precincts of the county. If they have power to disregard the returns from four precincts, they may equally disregard the returns from every precinct, and at their mere will and pleasure, declare no election held in any county. By a combination easy of perfection amongst the county commissioners, an election over the whole State may be nugatory, and the people discarded entirely in the management of public affairs. How is this body to judge of the election of its members, if the county commissioners are empowered to act in a judicial character, and determine who are the members elect? Yet this has been declared the law of the land by the majority of the committee on Privileges and Elections, and that

decision has been sustained. By this judges of election are stricken from our system, there is no one to record the votes of the people; the commissioners though not present, determine the rights of voters without evidence; this body is robbed of the right to determine the election of its members, maintaining only an inferential right of appeal, if that, and a complete revolution is accomplished.

The past Convention sat in the Capitol by virtue of this revolution, and has overthrown the government of the people thereby.

By means of two votes, secured in the manner above recited, the constitution is blotted out against the will of the people, and against the laws of the State.

In ordinary cases, where majorities are decided, one way or another, and where the votes of the con-jug members can make but little difference in results, a case like this may be passed over and excite but little attention. But this case, upon the determination of which depends the sovereignty of the people, must be made a test case, and the circumstances around it, make it a prominent landmark in the history of government.

The first duty of the Convention was to determine who were the rightful delegates from Robeson, had there been a desire to follow, and obey the voice of the people. The action of this body has postponed the question until revolution is accomplished.

The action of this Convention in its legislative character has corresponded fully with its revolutionary constitution. Measures of vital concern seemingly prepared in party caucus, have been introduced as a matter of form, simply to obtain the scrawl which stands for a common seal, and under the spur of the previous question, without an opportunity of debate, were impatiently hurried through, as prepared at party dictation. There are grievances of an alarming character, and not the idle clamor of disappointed hopes. We wished for nothing, we hoped for nothing, but to preserve the constitution dear to the people, who have struggled for years to retain the benefits of its admirable provisions. The discipline of party tactics has at last triumphed over the wishes of the people, and has left us no course but to advise the people of the spoliation of rights so fearfully imperilled by this Convention.

We have had an embarrassing choice to make in conducting the people's defense. We hoped that the free discussion of principles amongst gentlemen of intelligence, assembled from all parts of the State, might cause some concession from the rigor of party demands. But the invariable course of procedure in this body has been to prepare in midnight caucus the succeeding day's work; the measure agreed upon is taken up at once; rarely has time or postponement been granted, still more rarely has discussion been allowed, especially in matters on which opinions have been most opposite; and when discussion has been impatiently conceded, we felt the utter hopelessness of speaking to a question which judgment had gone before hand.

The only expedient left us was a resort to ordinary parliamentary rules, to delay for a few moments the pain we endure in seeing the rights and privileges of the people smothered in this Convention. It was the only way we had of protesting against the hasty and unsparing decrees of this body and how ever unsatisfactory, we were driven to it as to the last ditch in resisting the invasion of the assailants of our rights. Never has any legislative body shown less of concession than this; never has the caucus system been more rigidly and persistently enforced; never has party discipline been more perfect, and never has a minority been less regarded.

The closing scene of the Convention was a fit finale to a body which assembled in opposition to the will of the people, acted and worked by means of a majority purchased by the disfranchisement of a county and the total disregard of law; which has seized all the rights of the people and given them to the Legislature, and ended its revolutionary career by denying to members a right of protest. Never has any one before known, in the history of North Carolina, that a protest, offered in a respectful manner and in substance not offending against propriety should be refused a hearing and a place upon the journals. But this Convention has crowned its life of usurpation by a closing act of tyranny which forbids complaint of grievance and denies the right of petition. So monstrous was the act, that a leading member of the majority rose in his place and rebuked this upon outrage. Not even this could bring a blush of shame to the faces of that majority which began life in lawlessness and in their own minds, fastening chains upon the limbs of the people, aptly ended its course by bidding them cease all complaint at the tyranny of this usurping assembly. We say to the people that the irritation and aim of the Convention was to enslave you and you are enslaved if you ratify its act.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| J. W. Albertson, | Jonas Hoffman, |
| W. H. Wheeler, | J. M. Justice, |
| R. C. Badger, | J. R. Page, |
| J. M. Esteman, | J. H. Smyth, |
| G. B. Bliven, | W. W. McCanness, |
| B. F. Jones, | A. McCabe, |
| J. C. Blocker, | A. L. Davis, |
| W. M. Black, | N. B. Hampton, |
| William Carey, | W. J. Munton, |
| Allen Jordan, | Ralph P. Buxton, |
| O. H. Dockery, | R. W. King, |
| A. McDonald, | I. J. Young, |
| W. P. Mabson, | A. W. Tourgee, |
| J. W. Thorne, | W. T. Faircloth, |
| J. Orrin Wilcox, | J. A. Bullock, |
| G. H. Grantham, | W. M. Kerr, |
| R. F. Lehman, | William Barrow, |
| M. C. Hodge, | Edward W. Taylor, |
| A. M. Lowe, | T. J. Dula, |
| J. Q. A. Bryan, | G. Z. French, |
| Jas. E. Boyd, | S. H. Manning, |
| Rufus Barringer, | J. J. Goodwyn, |
| J. E. O'Hara, | P. T. Massey, |
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