

## The Right of Peaceable Secession

"It is only a right which South Carolina and every other state possesses, and lies in the very first **principles** upon which our independence was first **founded**, and which existed in the **sovereign** states, to enable them to adopt a constitution, and which they did not **forfeit** by the act. The general government never had a right to **forbid** a peaceable secession... If a war must come from the assertion of these rights, the entire South will enter into its issues with all her power and **zeal**. If this be demanded, it only shows that the government is already a **despotism** and not a **republicanism**, and the sooner it ends, the better."

- The Weekly Telegraph (Houston, Tex.) Tuesday, January 8, 1861. The Portal to Texas History

**Principles:** beliefs

**Founded:** Established

**Sovereign:** Independent, self-governing

**Forfeit:** Give up

**Forbid:** Not allow

**Zeal:** excitement or enthusiasm

**Despotism:** A bad government with too much power

**Republicanism:** A government in which people vote for representatives

A

## The Impossibility of Peaceable Secession

"There can be no such thing as a peaceable secession. Peaceable secession is an **utter** impossibility. Is the great **Constitution** under which we live, covering the whole country, is it to be melted away by secession,... No sir! I will not state what might produce the disruption of the **Union**; but sir, I see as plainly as I see the sun in heaven, what that disruption itself must produce; I see that it must produce war."

- A speech by the Northern politician, Daniel Webster. Printed in The Colorado Citizen (Columbus, Tex.) Saturday, September 22, 1860. The Portal to Texas History.

**Utter:** Absolute, total

**Constitution:** The document that sets up a government and tells how it will run

**Union:** The United States of America

B

## To Keep or Abandon the Union

"Georgia and the Union - Political discussion runs high in the good State of **Georgia** at present - the question at issue being no less than the **maintenance** or **dissolution** of the **Union**. The cry of **secession** is openly raised, and the **advocates** of violent measures are numerous; but, on the other hand, the friends of the Union and of peace are neither few nor **feeble**."

- The Texas Advocate newspaper, Victoria Texas. Thursday, October 24, 1850. The Portal to Texas History.

**Georgia:** A Southern agricultural slave state.

**Maintenance:** preserving or keeping

**Dissolution:** Ending, breaking apart

**Union:** The United States of America

**Secession:** The act of separating from a country

**Advocates:** Supporters

**Feeble:** Weak

C

## Submission or Secession

"But as [the South] failed to do so when there was an opportunity of securing their rights in the contest, we cannot see in the future any other alternative for the South than that which we believe will be presented before a great while - the **submission** to the **domination** of the northern states and the **abolition** of slavery, or **secession**. To this **complexion** it must come at last."

- The Texas State Gazette. (Austin, Tex.), Vol. 2, No. 13, Ed. 1, Saturday, November 16, 1850. The Portal to Texas History.

**Submission:** Accepting or giving in to someone else's power

**Domination:** Having power or control

**Abolition:** To officially end

**Secession:** To officially separate from a country

**Complexion:** Difficult issue

D

## Union or Disunion

"Dir sir, I am told that in your section of the district, I have been represented...as a **disunion** candidate. While I have been and still am in favor of uniting the South in **sentiment** for the purpose of **repelling free soil** aggression, I am **unequivocally** opposed to any measure or measures which have for their **object** the **dissolution** of the Union."  
"- O. M. Roberts"

- A letter written by Texas political leader Oran M. Roberts in 1851. The Northern Standard. (Clarksville, Tex.), Vol. 8, No. 39, Ed. 1, Saturday, May 31, 1851. The Portal to Texas History.

**Disunion:** Someone who did not want the South to stay in the U.S.

**Sentiment:** Thoughts, beliefs, or feelings toward a topic.

**Repelling:** Stopping

**Free Soil:** People who wanted new states to be free, with no slavery.

**Unequivocally:** Without any doubt

**Object:** Goal

**Dissolution:** Ending, breaking apart

E

## Secession & Popular Sovereignty

"To-night we shall **endeavor** to complete the organization of the convention. To-morrow the convention will meet at two o'clock p.m., when the all important main **object** of the convention, the question of **Secession**, will come up. The **ordinance** of secession will be **unanimously** passed, I believe, but with a **proviso**, that it be submitted to a direct vote of the people for **ratification**. There are many who do not wish to submit the question to the people, but the majority wish to have every man in Texas vote upon the matter, being satisfied that the **verdict** of the people will be in favor of the ordinance of secession."

- The San Antonio Ledger and Texan. (San Antonio, Tex.), Vol. 10, No. 31, Ed. 1 Saturday, February 2, 1861. The Portal to Texas History

**Endeavor:** Try

**Object:** Goal

**Secession:** Official separation from the United States

**Ordinance:** Law

**Unanimously:** With the agreement of everyone

**Proviso:** A condition

**Ratification:** Official acceptance

**Verdict:** The final decision

F

### Patriotism & the 4<sup>th</sup> of July

"On Wednesday evening ... the citizens of Victoria met at the Court House ... to make arrangements for an appropriate celebration of ... the 4<sup>th</sup> of July ... The Declaration of Independence... the "stars and stripes," and the booming of cannon will certainly have a tendency to **rouse** into action...our **slumbering patriotism**... The glorious results of the Union and the more than **treason** of him, who would endanger it, constitute the theme of the **orator**, and by being kept constantly before the people, they furnish an **impregnable** safeguard against the dangers of **secession** and **dissolution**."

- The Texian Advocate. (Victoria, Tex.), Vol. 8, No. 7, Ed. 1 Saturday, June 18, 1853. The Portal to Texas History

**Rouse:** To excite

**Slumbering:** Sleeping

**Patriotism:** Love for and pride in your country

**Treason:** A crime against your country

**Orator:** Public speaker

**Impregnable:** Unable to broken or defeated

**Secession:** Official separation from your country

**Dissolution:** Ending, breaking apart

G

### Peace or Revolution

"Establish the fact that a state can **nullify** a law of the **General Government**; that she can peaceably **secede** whenever she thinks it proper or **expedient**, and how long would the **Union** exist? There is no right of **secession** from the Union **save** by **revolution**."

- The Texas State Times (Austin, Tex.), Saturday, January 19, 1856. The Portal to Texas History

**Nullify:** To cancel

**General Government:** The government of the whole country

**Secede:** To officially separate from a country

**Expedient:** Convenient

**Union:** The United States of America

**Secession:** The act of officially separating from your country

**Save:** Except for

**Revolution:** A war against your government

H

## Secession, Slavery, & Abolitionism

"We must **bear in mind** that we have in this state... a miserable, ambitious and **unscrupulous clique** or **faction** who are ... abolitionists ... They have to be met and put down by those who are united in the secession movement ... Therefore, it should be **borne in mind** by all who wish to put down this clique ... that secession is not and can never **hereafter** become a question of any other form than that of slavery or Abolitionism."

- The Navarro Express (Corsicana, Tex.) Wednesday, April 3, 1861. The Portal to Texas History

**Bear in mind:** think about something

**Unscrupulous:** not honest or fair

**Clique / Faction:** A small group of people with similar interests

**Borne in mind:** thought about

**Hereafter:** After this time, going forward

I

## Sam Houston & the Union

"The present **agitation** throughout the country, and particularly in the South, arising from the election of the **President** and Vice President, upon a sectional issue calls, in my opinion, for the calm **deliberation** of statesmen in a **consultative** character, and within the **scope** of their constitutional powers - 'to preserve the equal rights of such States in the Union,' may result in the adoption of such measures as will restore harmony between the two sections of the Union."

- Sam Houston's letter to other Southern state governors, published in The Weekly Telegraph (Houston, Tex.) Tuesday, December 18, 1860. The Portal to Texas History

**Agitation:** Anxiety

**President:** The recently elected Northerner, Abraham Lincoln.

**Deliberation:** thinking carefully about something

**Consultative:** Considering the opinions of others

**Scope:** range, or boundaries

J