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A STUDY OF THE SECESSION MOVEMENT IN ALABAMA, 1819-1861

A Dissertation

by

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Racial fear and Political factionalism:
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By 1800 slavery and cotton had become the chief means of socio-economic mobility in Alabama. However, from territorial days white Alabamians expressed apprehension about an ever-increasing slave population and slave insurrections. Attacks by bondsmen on owners, overseers, and drivers exacerbated white fears. In the 1820's and 1840's colonization of former slaves and checks against the domestic slave trade were encouraged, and the Alabama slave-code was continuously revised in attempts to control bondspeople.

Alabama's cottom kingdom was centered in the ten counties running through middle Alabama--the Black Belt. In some of these counties slaves were more than 66 percent of the population. However the great planter made huge profits from the slave-cotton nexus and did not consider abolishing the plantation system. But the rise of immediate abolitionism and "free-soilism" in the north aggravated racial fears, and many Black Belt whites felt slavery had to spread into the territories.

Because of its geography, Alabama was divided over resistance to northern attempts to restrict slavery from the territories. North Alabamians lived in regions where soil was not conducive to cotton and slavery. Consequently, they were not as threatened as south Alabamians.

Moreover, upstate yeomanry were national Democratic Party loyalists

and many were unionists. Furthermore, north and south Alabama Democrats fought over control of high offices in the State. Each section demanded equal representation for their region.

Downstate the Democrats and Whigs were fragmented. Both parties had extreme southern-rights cliques--political outsiders--who agitated the slavery in the territories issue. Some of these men owned few slaves and aspired to become great planters.

Many of these firebrands were from east-central Alabama where they found their socio-economic mobility blocked by the monopolizing tendencies of the planters. By the 1850's the large plantation owners controlled the best cotton lands, and the ultras turned to politics as the best means of enhancing their careers. These opportunistic lawyer-politicians demanded a territorial slave code and the re-opening of the African slave trade. They used the slavery issue in attacking the moderates and conservatives who controlled both political parties. In their pursuit of high office many of these radicals shifted from party to party and from secessionism to unionism depending on public sentiment.

Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick ran the state's most powerful political faction--the "Montgomery Regency." He and his followers were loyal to the national Democratic Party and dispensed patronage. William L. Yancey yearned to replace Fitzpatrick as leader of the Alabama Democracy. Yancey and other southern chauvinists accused Fitzpatrick of being "soft on southernism."

The only significant unionist bloc in south Alabama was the Whig Party, controlled by conservative planters. However, by the late 1850's because of Democratic gerrymandering and the death of the national Whig

Party there was no union structure left in south Alabama. Alabama was a one party State. But the Democrats were still fragmented between up-state unionists and moderate southernists and lowland moderate and ultra southern nationalists.

John Brown's raid gave the firebrands the issue they needed to challenge Alabama's moderate-conservative leadership. The ultras politicized racial fears by equating a Republican victory in 1860 with slave rebellions and racial amalgamation. The State's Democratic Party was split. The party-regulars supported Stephan A. Douglas. The firebrands backed John Breckenridge. They hoped to throw the presidential election into Congress where they could bargain their votes for a federal territorial slave code and recognition of their power in Alabama. After Lincoln's triumph, Alabama's ultras struck for separate state secession, hoping for political advancement in a southern Confederacy. Thus, chronic racial anxieties were exploited by politicians who provoked Alabama into sucession.

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INTRODUCTION

Many Civil War historians, in trying to determine the War's causes, have emphasized the growing alienation between two different cultures. According to their analysis, an industrialized, aggressive, and politically and socially mobile north confronted a stratified slave society in which planters exerted unchallenged political control.[1] The presence of slavery based on race supposedly created a "Herrenvolk democracy." Class conflict among whites was largely absent, and all whites were equal regardless of their relative wealth.[2] Although these beliefs were held by the entire South, they were evidenced more in slave dense central-south Alabama than in the hilly northern counties where slaves were relatively few.

Much of Alabama's political ferment was based largely upon differences in slaveholding and geography. Consequently, like other regions of Jacksonian America the state's ante-bellum politics defies reductionism. The fertile far northern counties of the Tennessee Valley were characterized by small plantations and small farms, and by 1860 was largely white.[3] The mountain and hill counties just south of the Valley were not fit for large-scale cotton plantations. Here, in an area overwhelmingly white, the yeoman farmers held sway. By 1860 blacks were less than 20 percent of the population, and in some counties no more than 10 percent. Largely because of the small farm economy, the upcountry was isolated from the rest of Alabama, and its parochialism, heightened by an ineffective transportation system, made for a special regional consciousness and pride.[4] Its farmers deeply resented the statewide political control

exerted by the political chieftains downstate in Montgomery. Furthermore, Jacksonian nationalism shaped upcountry yeomanry into national Democratic party loyalists.

A piedmont area separated northern Alabama from the Black Belt. The upper piedmont was much like the mountainous hilly counties in geography, economic and population.[5] The lower piedmont by 1860, with its considerable flat cotton lands, was merging into the Black Belt.[6]

The State's "cotton kingdom" was in the ten counties of central Alabama, with their rich black silt soil. Slaves comprised two-thirds of the population of these counties and even three-fourths in some of them. It was in this fertile Black Belt, at the state capital in Montgomery, that Alabama's political leadership centered.[7] Farther south, in the pine woods and wiregrass districts--there was little farming, especially in south-western Alabama. In many of these counties the population was almost evenly divided between blacks and whites.[8]

These regional differences had the effect of making the State almost a political microcosm of the whole nation. In central and south Alabama, where more than half of Alabama's slaves toiled, southern chauvinism generally prevailed, while, as indicated above, pro-unionism characterized the highlands. Thus, it is erroneous to describe ante-bellum Alabama as politically quiescent, managed without challenge by great slaveholders. Party politics embodied inherent intrastate conflict and searing factional struggles.

Factions, particularly southern-rights Democrats and Whigs, clashed over elective and appointive offices. Outsiders sought by any means to wrest control from Alabama's political establishment. Their opportunism

included capricious party loyalty as well as erratic political commitments, and expediency often masqueraded as principle. By the late 1850's, with the expiration of the Whig Party and with the plantation system increasingly dominated by the big operator, politics became one of the few means of upward mobility left to the "man on the make."

The protection of slavery in the South and in the territories became important political issues in Alabama. Southern rights, which embodied these issues, became a rallying cry for those ambitious lawyer-politicians frustrated by Montgomery's Democratic Party loyalists who ran the State machine. William L. Yancey typified these status-seeking politicians insofar as he used the Southern-rights issue as a level by which to gain power. To men like Yancey, the "soft on southernism" accusation proved politically advantageous against conservative Democrats.

One issue bound together most white Alabamians, particularly those residing in the heavily slave populated south-central counties, namely that the State must remain a white man's country. Racism had always been common among white Alabamians. However, with the growth of the black population Alabamians developed a cohesive doctrine of white supremacy. Throughout the history of Alabama any hint of black resistance was especially traumatic in slave dense south-central Alabama.

These racial anxieties were intensified by the rise of immediate abolitionism and territorial restrictionism in the north. Such developments inspired Alabama's office seekers to politicize negrophobia for their own ambitions. Henceforth, any Alabama politician who consorted with the "abolitionized" north could not be trusted. The national Democratic Party, it followed, had to be "southernized." What the political

climbers needed in order to vault themselves into power was a "northern outrage" against southern institutions. They had this outrage in 1859 with the great slave-uprising scare engendered by John Brown's raid, and they capitalized on it, attempting to take over the State Democratic organization and to turn the national Party into a vehicle for their own and slavery's interests. After living with periodic slave-insurrection scares for generations, lowland Alabamians of all political persuasions were convinced that racial mastery had to be maintained at all costs. After Lincoln's election, the majority of Alabamians chose a southern Confederacy. This study will describe the convoluted history of Alabama's political battles and the chronic racial fears that eventually shaped the decision for disunion.

CHAPTER I

THE ALABAMA SLAVE: A SPECTER HAUNTING THE LAND

Alabama's defense of slavery was based not only on political and economic arguments but also on racial fear. White Alabamians were terrified by the specter of the rebellious savage. Fear of the African--particularly dread of the imminent consequences of emancipation--animated tensions throughout the state's slave history. Moreover, numerous slaves resisted bondage--individually and collectively--and by defying slavery bondspeople exacerbated the deep fright that provoked so many whites. Of course many uprising scares were imaginary, but they were nonetheless vexing. The overwhelming majority of slaves resided in central Alabama --the Black Belt--Alabama's "cotton kingdom," where consternation over slave conduct was chronic.

This perpetual fear often led to attempts to restrict slave importations. Such apprehensions, often came into conflict with the desire of large slave-owners to maintain or increase their social and economic hegemony. At different times, as we shall see in this chapter, this conflict was resolved in different ways. Nevertheless, the general trend was to resort to ever stricter control of the activities of blacks --both slave and free. Since neither the restriction of domestic slave importations nor the colonization in Africa of the slave population was a feasible solution for those who held political and economic power, stricter codes came to be used to provide protection from insurrectionary activity. Thus, slavery was not only a labor system which brought huge profits to a few but also a means of racial control, a way of keeping

in subordination a population viewed by white southerners as hostile, alien, and a threat to the very fabric of their civilization. By 1861 many white Alabamians were ready to die to maintain Alabama's peculiar institution.[1]

In 1785, before Alabama entered the Union, alarm was expressed by whites over the growing number of slaves and their insubordinate behavior. For example, one shocked slaveholder learning that his bondsmen were implicated in an insurrectionary plot, declared: "Judge my surprise, of what avail is kindness and good usage when rewarded by such ingratitude; tis true indeed that they are kept in due subordination and obliged to do their duty...but two of the three [slaves] had behaved so well that they had never once received the whip." An investigation revealed that one rebel committed suicide rather than be executed by his captors. The other conspirators were tried and three of them were hanged less than ten days after the discovery of the planned slave uprising scheme.[2]

Five years before statehood Mobile, in 1814, was the first city to establish a slave curfew law. It required slaves to retire to their dwellings before eight p.m. Huntsville, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa, Selma, and smaller towns followed suit.[3] In 1818, David Holmes, the territorial Governor, never questioned the demands of white settlers for slaves, yet he felt that the influx of Africans would increase danger, particularly in regions where blacks outnumbered whites. In a letter to James Wilkinson, the Governor General of the territorial militia, Holmes insisted on the need for more armed security for the territory:

> Of the slaves who compose so large a portion of our population, I entertain much stronger apprehension. Scarcely a day passes without my receiving some information relative to the designs of those people to insurrect. It is true that no clear or positive evidence of their intensions has been communicated; but certain facts, and expressions of their views have justly excited considerable alarm amongst the citizens. For my own part I am impressed with the belief that real danger exists, and that it is my duty to lose no time in procuring arms for the defense of the country.[4]

Holmes and other Alabama whites were manifesting the chronic fears that Western Hemispheric slavemasters had of servile insurrections. In point of fact, in 1793, the French slavocracy on the island of Santo Domingo had been overthrown by a slave revolt. Many Alabamians were keenly aware of the Caribbean uprising as well as of periodic slave rebellion scares both real and imagined in the upper South.

As a result of these apprehensions as well as of a desire to fix the legal status of the slave, codes were established to control the behavior of bondspeople. From 1798 to 1817, while Alabama was part of the Mississippi Territory, legislation was enacted to govern slaves and free blacks within the territory. After Alabama became a state, the General Assembly passed slave provisions which were incorporated in the Constitution of 1819. According to the first state slave code, bondspeople might be freed by their owners with the consent of the legislature, or the lawmakers might take the initiative in liberating blacks provided the consent of their owners had been obtained, or compensation made. Slaves were not to be deprived of trial in capital cases, though not, of course, juries of their peers. Acts were passed forbidding slaves to sell any articles except "simple things made with their own hands."

Passes were required of bondsmen who wished to visit other plantations in order to prevent them from wandering around the countryside or holding unauthorized meetings "where dangerous doctrines might be inculcated." A slave patrol system was inaugurated and military districts were established; all able-bodied men were required to serve in the militia, and the Captain of each company was required to detail patrols whose duty it was to enforce the slave law.[5]

From the beginning of statehood, slave-masters insisted that they treated their bondsmen with kindness and humanity. James B. Sellers, author of Slavery in Alabama, emphasizes that planters went to great lengths to care for the needs of their slaves. "As we look at the early beginnings of Alabama," Sellers affirms, "master and slave stand out as necessary co-partners in the great task of winning a new region from the wilderness...." In one section descriptive of plantation life, entitled "Bonds of Affection," Sellers stresses the love between master and slave. Although admitting that some overseers could be brutal, he nonetheless declares that overseers in general followed the humanitarian advice of the owners. Another historian of Alabama slavery has indicated that where sentiment was lacking, business prudence inclined the master to a policy of good treatment.[6] Without question there were owners who treated slaves with solicitude. Thus, most of the early written record of slavery in Alabama expresses dismay at the belligerent reaction of so many bondspeople to servitude. Sellers and likeminded southernists attributed slave recalcitrance to their "infantile" nature, a reflection of the white attitude that all blacks were inherently inferior.

Despite the "bonds of affection" approach to slavery, the reality

of the situation was somewhat different. In fact, slavery in early Alabama had a brutally distinctive side. The plantation routine was well set by the early twenties. Work began at dawn and lasted until sunset. The overseer usually blew a horn to summon the hands from the shacks. In order to prevent any loitering, James Tait, a plantation owner of the 1820's stated, "I make them get off quickly after the horn is blown, I always whip the last one out." As they prepared for a day's toil, bondspeople on some Alabama plantations were often fed a sparse diet. For breakfast a piece of cornbread and for dinner boiled vegetables such as peas and beans and occasionally some meat. Small wonder then that 7 percent of a sample of more than 8500 slaves above the age of fifteen were either physically impaired or chronically ill. In addition to being undernourished, slaves were also poorly housed. The earliest slave cabins, small and filthy, were germ infested. A newly arrived planter noted in 1822 that a disease known as ship's fever had repeatedly occurred among his bondsmen, and he was convinced it was caused by conditions in the slave quarters.[7]

There were some planters in the 1820's who candidly admitted that bondage was a harsh experience. However, they were concerned with the brutality of their overseers rather than with the brutality of slavery itself. In 1825 a plantation owner discovered that he had found no solution even when employing a relative as overseer. "I want you to distinctly understand me without your rushing and whipping and lashing for I will not stand it any longer." Alabama social critic D. R. Hudley, remembering the early days of slavery in Alabama, maintained that slaves were badly treated on some estates. Masters were sometimes unconcerned about

it: "He must be a very bold man who will deny that the overseers on many plantations are cruel and unmercifully severe." Hudley also recalled that he was repulsed as a young man the first time he saw a slave sale: "In order to force them to bring as much money as possible the cold blooded villain deliberately sold man and wife, parents and child in separate lots. In view of such outrages, I do not wonder at those who are anti-slavery."[8] After visiting Alabama in the late 1820's, Harriet Martineau, a British essayist, confided that "slavery is nowhere more hopeless and helpless than in Alabama. The richness of the soil and the paucity of inhabitants make the slave labourer a most valuable possession; while his distance from any free state...makes the attempt to escape desperate."[9]

But no matter how hazardous Alabama slaves fought bondage and contributed to the constant trepidation that whites harbored for the enslaved African. In the twenties slave owners expressed continual anxiety about their bondspeople. In the twenties slave owners in Tuscombia, central Alabama, complained, "We observe for some time past slaves of the neighboring plantations roam about in large parties with impunity on the Sabbath day; the result of which must be, the pilfering of our village....If not speedily prevented by a well regulated and steady patrol."[10] Tuscaloosa newspapers around time time carried advertisements about runaway slaves or reported that blacks were unmanageable and dangerous. A Tuscaloosa slave was stopped and accused of stealing merchandise. He was about to be whipped when he drew a knife and killed his accusor. "The sable culprit was captured," reported the Tuscaloosa Observer, "and was led to a tree, tied to it...and burned to ashes."[11]

In south Alabama in 1827 a group of runaways was attacked and several were captured after a bloody encounter. Three were shot and the others escaped. "Some of these negroes have been runaways several years and have committed many depredations on the local plantations... a great number of negroes in secret were to join them, and it is thought that in that event they could not be taken without bringing cannon to bear upon them."[12] Escaping slaves often camped in groups and lived by stealing food and provisions. One band of fugitives outside Montgomery was typical. Well organized and daring, it even attacked some plantations at noontime.[13] Alabama's first decade as a slave state, therefore, saw some bondspeople--individually and collectively--manifesting resistance to bondage which would aid in causing whites to re-examine their commitment to slavery.

A depressive cotton market resulting from the panic of 1825 also inspired doubt respecting bondage, and in 1826 a measure was enacted that prohibited the importation of slaves. The measure was passed both because of fear of a massively growing black population and because many planters felt that the increasing number of slaves would result in overproduction. However, before the end of the decade the act was abrogated.[14] Other Alabama whites expressed their uncertainty by aligning themselves with newly formed anti-slavery colonization societies. In 1824, for example, the Tuscaloosa Mirror advertised that subscriptions to Benjamin Lundy's Genius of Universal Emancipation would be received at the office of the paper.[15] Reacting mildly to a memorial from the Ohio legislature which advocated general emancipation, the governor of Alabama in 1825 said that an offer of government remuneration might some day be opportune.[16]

The Southern Advocate in the same year published an editorial critical of the slave trade.[17]

In 1826 James Birney began his activities as a colonization advocate. Birney, a Princeton graduate and member of the Kentucky planter aristocracy, practiced law and operated a cotton plantation with slave labor in Huntsville. He later entered politics and was elected mayor of the city. In 1826 Birney became attorney for the Cherokee Nation which at that time occupied the northeastern part of Alabama and he joined the American Colonization Society for the Southwestern district about the same time. Writing to a collaborator in 1827, Birney confided skepticism as to the future success of the Society in the State: "The society in this place [Huntsville] considered by me one of the most important in this whole region, has been recently in rather languid condition...." By 1832 Birney had returned to Kentucky. He freed his slaves in 1834 and, a year later, was condemned by a Montgomery public meeting for being a threat to the stability of Alabama.[18] An even earlier sign of growing rigidity about slavery came in 1827 when the Alabama Assembly tried to pass an act forbidding the teaching of slaves by free persons. This measure received its heaviest support from the emerging Black Belt region and south Alabama.[19]

Another incident that alerted Alabama officials to the necessity of a slave anti-sedition measure was the case of Jacob Cowan. Governor John Gayle received a communication from David Crawford, solicitor of the first Judicial Circuit Court of Mobile, in which he was informed that one Jacob Cowan, a slave formerly of Wilmington, North Carolina, had served a jail sentence there for distributing, it was rumored and reported, two-hundred copies

of David Walker's Appeal to bondsmen. (In 1829 David Walker, a black tailor from Boston, Massachusetts, had written and paid for the printing of a tract calling for a slave uprising in the south. Some copies had found their way into Dixie and caused great apprehension.) At the time of Cowan's arrest in 1830 no law existed which covered the dispensing of seditious literature in North Carolina. After Cowan left North Carolina the North Carolina legislature passed an anti sedition law and seven Wilmington slaves were arrested for conspiracy originally instigated by Cowan's activities. Crawford called Gayle's attention to the fact that Alabama still had no law covering distribution of insurrectionary pamphlets. Jacob Cowan, he asserted, "can be identified without any difficulty and he should be at once removed from this state, if this can be done without injuring the rights of the owner." But Crawford feared it could not be done without a slave sedition ordinance. Then he reminded Governor Gayle of the slaves recently convicted in Monroe County of conspiring against the white inhabitants of that county. Littleton, one of the three convicted, had declared that a letter had been received from Mobile stating that there would be war soon between whites and blacks. "Tis possible that this fellow Jacob Cowan communicated this intelligence and that he had secretly excited and encouraged the Monroe County conspiracy...." Crawford concluding, called for speedier trials and "more immediate punishments of slaves guilty of treasonable conspiracy" in order to "increase the security of society and to the interest of the slave holder."[20]

Slavemasters throughout the 1820's indicated dismay about acts of slave resistance, but Nat Turner's Virginia rebellion in 1831 alarmed

and frightened them to the extreme. As a result of Turner's insurrection, the Alabama legislature passed a revised slave ordinance which made it a crime for any black, free or slave, to receive instruction in reading or writing. White Alabamians were well aware that the leader of the Virginia uprising was literate and used his knowledge to incite rebelliousness among other bondsmen. Another law was passed making any meeting of more than five male slaves with or without passes, not on the owner's plantation, unlawful. It became the duty of the slave patrol to disperse all congregated slaves, and the patrol might give each slave ten lashes without the permission of the slaveowner. A slave caught strolling without a pass was subject to fifteen stripes; the death penalty was proscribed for anyone who should distribute, circulate, or publish any seditious papers, pamphlets, or writing tending to produce conspiracy or insurrection among the blacks, slaves or free. The same act made it unlawful for free blacks to associate with slaves in the kitchen, outhouse, or slave cabin without the written permission of the master. Those violating this act were to receive fifteen lashes for the first offense and thirty for every one thereafter. Finally, the General Assembly made an unsuccessful attempt to control the number of slaves brought into the state for sale.[21]

Mounting apprehension over slave obstinacy was intensified in October 1831 by an Indian-assisted slave revolt in eastern Alabama. "The infection is pretty general with the negroes," it was reported, "and many of them were arrested."[22] On November 5, 1831, the Southern Advocate editorially attacked existing patrol laws. It called them "very lame" in spite of the revised code passed as a result of the Nat

Turner tremor. The Advocate noted that many citizens had been critical of the policing system. "If the patrollers are not clothed with powers to severely correct negroes who have insulted them," it advised, "they had as well remain at home...."[23]

By the end of 1831 Alabama achieved consensus on slavery and the doubts of the mid 1820's had vanished. Moreover, the gnawing uneasiness about a potentially menacing slave population combined in the early thirties with a resentment toward the emergence of immediate abolitionism in the north. In 1831, for example, at the request of the legislature, Governor Gayle sought the cooperation of other southern governors in an effort to halt the publication of abolitionist literature in the north. Gayle felt that southern states should extradite northern abolitionists for publishing and distributing pronouncements encouraging rebellion among southern bondsmen.[24]

Acting on Governor Gayle's recommendation, the Tuscaloosa Grand Jury on October 14, 1835, returned an indictment against Robert G. Williams, New York editor of the Emancipator for circulating "within our State, pamphlets and papers of a seditious and incendiary character," and making "illicit appeals to the passions, to excite to insurrection and murder our slave population." An editorial in The Huntsville Democrat called upon the Governor of New York to extradite Williams to Alabama to stand trial. Governor Gayle in a letter to Governor William Marcy of New York demanded that Williams be sent to Alabama "for attempting to produce insurrection and rebellion among our slave population." Later, in his annual message to the Legislature, Gayle declared that incendiary publications are "the readiest way to introduce the bloody scenes...

deliberately plotted for our ruin." He concluded by denouncing the "licentious...publications of Williams and the infuriated demons associated with him."[25]

That same month a group of Wilcox County planters resolved that "Our right of property in slaves is fixed and guaranteed by the Federal Constitution and we regard the acts of the anti-slavery societies at the North as treason against the Union." Another public meeting in Montgomery offered a $5000 reward for the capture and delivery of William Lloyd Carrison to state authorities. The Grand Jury of Montgomery presented "to the condemnation of the world Arthur Tappen, William Lloyd Garrison, James Birney, George Thompson, the Reverend British emissary, and all their associates as offenders against the peace and dignity of the state of Alabama."[26]

Dread of Garrisonian Abolitionism continued to engender anxieties. Would not the Emancipator help light the fuse for an Alabama "Southampton" insurrection? Regardless of stricter slave codes, slave resistance persisted. In Wilcox County, in 1833, one bondsman was charged with killing his mistress and the court sentenced him to death. The following year, in the same County, five slaves conspired in the murder of their master. They were tried before the County Court and three of them were found guilty by the Jury, which sentenced them to death.[27] Again some white Alabamians traced the cause of these outbreaks to northern anti-slavery publications which were flooding the deep South. The Southern Advocate was now among the foremost critics of abolitionist activities. "If the North continues to disregard the voice of reason, patriotism and humanity," it editorialized, "we must obey the law of self-preservation--throw ourselves

upon our committees of vigilance and hang up all slaves suspected of being infected with the abolitionist virus."[28] Henry Watson, a transplanted Connecticut Yankee living in the Black Belt, wrote his brother that copies of the Emancipator were found in nearby Greensboro, "causing passionate mobs to arise searching the countryside for abolitionist emissaries." But Watson was not alarmed: "I would as freely sleep with my door wide open now as ever, and here as in Connecticut." He observed, however, that Greene County residents were extremely prone to uprising scares which were "frightening distant communities as well."[29]

The events of the thirites led Alabamians to conclude that unrestrained manumission would produce massive numbers of potential black abolitionist revolutionaries. These fears were acted on by the Legislature. The lawmakers prohibited any free person of color from settling within the limits of Alabama and if any free black migrated to the State he had to leave within thirty days or face thirty lashes. Police powers were given to any white person to arrest any freedman suspected of conspiracy. Moreover, it was illegal for free-blacks to trade with slaves, aid runaways, visit plantations without the owner's permission, preach without a license, forge a plantation pass, or retail liquor to slaves.[30] Before 1834 manumission was possible only by a general or special act of the legislature. Now a new law stated that a slave who was freed by his master must move outside the state within twelve months; complete freedom would not take place until such removal. If the freedman should return he could be sold back into bondage.[31] In 1860, during a period of severe rebellion panics, a law was passed halting the emancipation of all slaves.[32]

By the end of the 1830's the total number of slaves in Alabama

had risen to 253,532. Major planters, with 56,736 slaves, possessed 22.38 percent of this total, though they were only one-fifth of one percent of the white population. The individual large planter held an average of 79.6 slaves by the end of the decade.[33] The massive increase in the slave population would naturally affect the slaveowner's sense of security.

Notwithstanding new slave codes and heightened concern, individual bondsmen continued to resist as the 1840's unfolded. In March 1840, one Charles was charged with murdering his master in Limestone County; he was convicted and hanged.[34] Protracted black resistance inspired further conspiratorial fears, some groundless and others real. A slave assembly around the Huntsville market place was producing tensions, and a local statute prohibited slaves from coming "to that place unless they had a written pass from their owner."[35] Eighteen forty also witnessed a severe rebellion panic in the Black Belt where more than 2/3 of the slave population resided.

The tremendous excitement of the 1840 presidential campaign with each party accusing the other of being "abolitionists," roused "dangerous" hopes among the slaves of Perry County in central Alabama. Many believed they were to be freed. One bondsman, for example, claimed that Martin Van Buren was in the area of Montgomery with a 2000-man army of liberation.[36] Peter Still, ex-slave and abolitionist, recalled that in the summer of 1840, when the political "hoopla" of "Tippecanoe and Tyler too" spread throughout one Black Belt County, it fashioned an unexpected response. Speeches were made by local Democrats and Whigs using slogans such as "liberty" and "freedom." The slaves, Still said, did not remain

indifferent listeners; some interpreted such talk literally and imagined the dawn of liberty had arrived. The whites, they observed, were already free, and if liberty was to become universal--and both political parties insisted it would become so--"then the black folks too would soon enjoy its blessings." Talk of liberty, Still reported, spread from the town to the plantation slaves; the news was at first whispered about but, he observed, "as they became more certain that their hopes were well grounded, they gradually grew bolder, soon they were discussing the subject in their religious meetings." The slaveholders learning of these discussions and seeking the identity of the plotters created an espionage system. Black preachers were silenced, slave meetings forbidden, patrols strengthened. "Every Negro, free and bond, who were met by the patrol was searched; the plantation pass was meaningless." Panic pervaded the white community, and it was whispered, "the Negroes intended to rise!" Old stories of black rebellions were revived, and even the most faithful servants were now suspect. The fear soon abated, but Still nonetheless contended that this incident showed the slaves that slaveholders' confidence could easily be shaken.[37]

Slave plots, increased abolitionist activity in the north, the introduction of anti-slavery petitions in Congress and Congressional debates over the "gag rule" were a deeply troubling combination of events. They prompted Governor Bagby in 1840 to speculate whether Alabamians could live much longer with Abolitionists in the same Union. "Fervent attachment to the Union of the states," he told the General Assembly, was being weakened by criticism of slavery. "There is a point in public, as well as private affairs, beyond which forbearance ceases to be a virtue," he

asserted. Moreover, "it was time to waken from the state of fancied security in which we have hitherto reposed...for the rude tide of innovation and fanaticism is constantly lashing us." Bagby ended with a call upon southerners to act immediately "or their weight and importance in the scale of national existence will be lost, and their safety endangered forever."[38]

Symbolic of slaveholder fear of these years was a special local patrol law passed in Baldwin County in 1841. White southerners in each precinct were divided into four patrol groups, each under the control of a deputy marshal. Each person liable to military duty would serve one year out of every three and violators were to be fined fifty dollars.[39] The Black Belt town of Wetumpka, in 1842, organized a municipal patrol under the command of the town marshal. All slaveholders residing within the limits of the town were required to serve.[40] Demands were made in north Alabama, a region of low slave density, to strengthen the patrol system there: "We must have a patrol, a regular efficient patrol at all hazards and upon any terms," demanded the Huntsville Democrat. "It is madness to remain longer without it."[41]

But augmented slave patrols could not prevent further slave retaliation. In Limestone County two slaves, belonging to William Parham were jointly charged with murder of their overseer and executed.[42] In December 1844 near Huntsville, a slavemaster was slain by a bondsman and he was hanged until, the press emphasized, "he was dead, dead, dead."[43] Two transplanted Alabamians living in Mississippi recalled the consternation of white southerners: "Where I used to live [Alabama] I remember they built pens in the woods where they could hide, and Christmas time

they went and got into them 'fraid the niggers was rising."[44]

Into the mid forties Alabamians continued to attack the "abolitionist menace." The Jacksonville Republican had been moderate on the subject of abolitionism in the 1830's, minimizing it as a threat to "Southern customs." But by 1844 two years before the Wilmot Proviso, it demanded Texas annexation and an end to northern criticism of slavery. "The course pursued by the Abolitionists," it declared, "seems likely ere long to present distinctly to the country the alternative of abolition of slavery and all its horrible evils or the dissolution of the Union. When the choice is forced upon us we are fully prepared for a separation."[45] By the mid forties then the strains created by slave reprisals, insurrectionary panics, and abolitionist criticism provoked a major debate in Alabama regarding the future importation of slaves.

In 1845 some important planter-politicians called for an end to slave importation. Dr. P. W. Kittrell, a Whig legislator from the Black Belt, introduced a restriction bill. It was presented too late in the session and nothing was done about it. Colonel A. J. Pickett, a prominent literary figure and a Democrat, urged Kittrell to reintroduce the bill at the next legislative session. Public opinion, he said, was turning against the slave trade. Pickett cited a statement made by the Perry County grand jury: "Perry is a great mart for slaves. Perry County has suffered much from the introduction of that species of property among us." Pickett cited statistics to the effect that during the decade Alabama's slave increase was greater than that of any other slave state. In thirteen counties of southern Alabama, he claimed, the slave population already exceeded the white population by 23,500. This total

was deduced from the 1840 census and, he was sure, "conditions were much worse now."[46]

At the next General Assembly meeting Kittrell chaired a special committee appointed to investigate slave restriction. The slave population, reported the committee, was becoming too large for the interest and security of Alabamians. Kittrell's committee observed that nonresident planters exported their slaves into Alabama but took out the proceeds of slave labor. Many of these slaves of absentee owners, it was charged, were of poor character--from the jails of other slave states. "The introduction of such criminals to Alabama could only create a spirit of unrest and insubordination among the slaves already here." Marengo County's slave population was double that of the white in 1846. At that rate, the legislators warned, in another decade the state would have a black population more than double the white. The Committee report concluded with what was by then a familiar observation--the mounting possibility of a servile revolt. Such a possibility would certainly increase if the black population continued to grow. It had already necessitated many of the petitions to the legislature urging prompt measures that would halt the domestic slave trade. Finally the Committee recommended passage of a restriction ordinance.[47]

Publication of the Kittrell proposals provoked dispute. J. J. Hooper, eidtor of the Wetumpka Whig, agreed that "such a law would in a great measure prevent the contact of our slave population with portions of the slave populations of states fast preparing for emancipation, which contact is dangerous and every day becoming more so....Half the negro villainy of Alabama...is perpetrated by slaves of recent importation.

They have ideas and a degree of intelligence [that]...should [not] be communicated to the black population of the South West." Hooper insisted that Alabama had "to close one of the easiest roads by which fanaticism can reach us, we must shut our doors against infected importations."[48] One of the most vociferous protests against the Kittrell suggestion came from a newspaper in north Alabama, an area with a modest slave population. The Huntsville Democrat, owned and operated by the Clays, a planter-politician family, asserted that far from being too numerous, the slave population was the foundation of all the wealth in Alabama. "Individuals," the editor J. Withers Clay contended, "were the best judges of their own investments. When the people of Alabama found investment in negroes unprofitable, they would stop buying them." If a restriction law were passed, Clay warned, whites would evade it.[49] He need not have been so anxious. Kittrell's bill failed to pass. In 1846 and 1847, however, in an attempt to limit and discourage the slave trade the General Assembly passed new levies on slave traders: they had to pay license fees amounting to ten dollars on each slave offered for sale.[50]

The passage of the slave trade tax did not, however, end the debate over slave importations. One of the most controversial statements made in opposition was issued by Soloman A. Heydenfeldt. Born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1816 of German-Jewish extraction, his family had been identified with the Jewish community there for generations. Upon becoming a lawyer, he went to Alabama in 1837, had a successful practice, was a judge in Tallapossa county, and settled in Russell county on the eastern end of the Black Belt.[51] On January 31, 1849, he aroused a storm with an open letter in the Huntsville Democrat, addressed to Governor Reuben

Chapman. The address called upon the Governor to utilize his constitutional powers and recommend a slave-import curb to the legislature. Heydenfeldt advocated a far reaching measure. It would block all future immigration for any purpose. Many of the border states, he observed, were looking to unload their slave population; and this practice could cause the Gulf states to become the "Santo Domingo of the north American continent and rush the South into a war of extermination with its black population."

There was another equally ominous reason for action against slavery in Alabama. Many Alabamians wanted more populous white communities not just because of their fear of slavery insurrection; some regarded slave labor as their rival labor force.[52] This fear of competing black labor had substance. Many Alabama bondsmen were skilled bricklayers, blacksmiths, clerks in stores, carpenters, gardeners, and cooks. Sawmills employed them as laborers and sawyers. A notice in a Huntsville paper asked for blacks for work in a flour mill. Moreover, large groups of slaves were used by railroads on construction jobs.[53] A well known architect in the southern part of the state was a slave. His most notable achievement for 1845 was a bridge in Columbus, Mississippi, for which he served as the chief architect.[54]

In addition to pointing out the slave's competition in the labor market, Heydenfeldt also challenged the planters' obsession with cotton. In 1845 cotton was selling at 5.63 cents a pound--a new low for the 1840's. Thus, at the current price, cotton was scarcely paying expenses of cultivation. Money was being made only in the western Black Belt. Slave immigration into these areas was increasing so rapidly that production

and consumption could not keep pace with it. Heydenfeldt stressed that cotton investment had retarded Alabama's economic growth. If the slave trade were halted, he concluded, a healthy white population would soon begin to migrate into counties now mainly black.[55]

Heydenfeldt was almost immediately the target of criticism. One Black Belt editor deplored the fact that the issue had been raised. The question would solve itself. No one would suffer if slave markets were opened in every town in Alabama. Men of moderate means could then become slave-owners. If Heydenfeldt's proposals should become law, "the prospects of the poor man would be forever marred; exclude the slaves for sale and a Negroid owning Aristocracy would be created."[56] The fear that a planter elite would control a major portion of the slave population was already a reality. The 1850 census revealed that since 1840 the slave population had enlarged to 342,844, an increase of 89,312 from the 1840 figure. Moreover, the major planter, by the end of the forties, owned 96,106 bondspeople or 28.03 percent of the 1850 total. The wealthy planter had increased his average holdings to 83.13 slaves.[57]

Another critic of Heydenfeldt's recommendations, a rabid pro-slavery newspaper located in Barbour county (which would become the leading "fire-eating" county in the state), questioned Heydenfeldt's loyalty to the south. The goals sought by slave restrictionists were essentially those of the abolitionists, the editorial declared, and it accused the restrictionists of wanting Alabama to do what the abolitionists urged on Congress. If the blacks were confined to their present limits, the editor predicted, the time would soon come when there would be an inevitable conflict between the "Southern white man and the black and not for one moment would hardy,

enterprising Americans surrender their glorious South to lazy, idle and careless Africans." If curtailment was ever successful then it would mean "the extermination of the negro race in the United States. The people of the South, as the only true friends of the slave, owed it to him and to themselves to silence the wild fanatics of both north and south."[58] The Huntsville Democrat likewise raised doubts about Heydenfeldt's loyalty and insisted that the subject should never have been raised: Restriction will "not be called for in our day and generation."[59]

While Alabamians disputed the issue of domestic slave importations, bondsmen were providing additional support for the restrictionist position. A slave in Jefferson County insulted and threatened the slave patrol. The patrollers went after him and one was wounded by the knife-wielding fugitive. Another white prusuer attempted to subdue him and was "so miserably lacerated" that he died before help could reach him. Then the slave returned to his owner's home and took his own life.[60] Another slave residing in Coosa County was charged with the murder of his master, tried, and sentenced to the gallows.[61] In a third incident in Chambers County, on the fringe of the Black Belt, Dr. F. McCantz, a highly respected physician, was shot in his home. One of his "trusted" servants was accused after it had been learned he had previously made an unsuccessful attempt on his owner's life.[62]

Such incidents of resistance angered Alabamians. In 1849, the town council of Eufaula, Barbour County, enacted legislation in regard to the slaves of their community. This legislation restricted the movement of slaves and free blacks. Furthermore, the town marshal had the responsibility of whipping slaves if they were disorderly or profane.

At the same time, the town council revised the patrol ordinances for the town by calling for five man patrols with one of the five acting as captain. Failure to patrol was punishable by a fine of three dollars. The patrol had to inspect all streets and alleys for slaves and free blacks who had to be off the streets by nine p.m. Strengthening and enforcing the patrols was not only inspired by the acts of violence occurring in neighboring communities but by the assumption that many of the "recent fires in and around the town" were caused by slaves who were in the community after hours. To combat this, the town council authorized the marshal to appoint four men to act as night watchmen; they were to patrol in pairs on alternate nights. During this same period, there was an attempt to restrict the practice of slaves hiring their own time or otherwise going at large within the community.[63]

Whites residing in other regions of the state deemed slave insubordination the result of abolitionists' teachings. For example, the citizens of New Market in Madison County were outraged by the activities of an alleged "abolitionist emissary" who had attempted to distribute anti-slavery pamphlets. The local post-office refused to circulate them and the "agitator" was removed from the village. "No one can for a moment doubt," said the Huntsville Democrat, "that the incendiary's principle object was to produce agitations and discontent among our black population, as it is known that many of them read, and as these documents have been circulated so profusely through the County, there could be no difficulty in their obtaining them."[64] Auburn in Russell County similarly experienced an abolitionist scare and also forced a suspected "abolitionist who had been acting the Missionary" to leave town.[65]

Abolitionist literature even found its way to Governor Henry Collier. He was sent an impassioned unsigned anti-slavery appeal. "You exclude our persons from you," it declared, "and deny the right to speak against the sin at your own doors...know that by the same principles by which you enslave others you may be enslaved...I beseech you do not procastinate but...seek some way of setting yourself free from sin and your bondsmen free from oppression."[66]

As a result of these incidents the General Assembly in 1849 strengthened the slave codes. A bill was passed to "more effectively suppress the practice of trading with slaves." This measure was intended to prevent communication between bondspeople and anyone attempting to "instruct them in abolitionist doctrines."[67] The legislature also considered an act to compel black seamen coming into the port of Mobile to be removed and confined to jail while their ships were anchored. It was feared that "alien blacks" could spread emancipationist plots among Mobile slaves. But some thirty-five Mobile merchants sent a petition to Governor Henry Collier protesting the proposed ordinance for they feared that commercial ships would be reluctant to use Mobile if the law were passed.[68]

Forebodings about slave conduct and about whites who seemed "soft on Southernism" continued to create tensions in some heavily black populated counties. Slaveowners in Autauga County were convinced that bondspeople were in "a disorganized state, and that danger may be apprehended." At a meeting of slave-holding families a series of resolutions were passed. They called for tighter security on the part of the patrols, and leaders were "to enquire what white men are in the habit of visiting certain

negro quarters": they also urged an investigation of those "mysterious individuals who had been shooting guns on Sundays near the plantations."[69] Forced confessions, after severe whippings by a vigilance committee of Triana (Madison County), elicited testimony from slaves of a "hellish insurrectionary plot." The patrol executed several blacks, including a preacher, notwithstanding his owner's plea that his life be spared; and two white men suspected of "tampering with the slaves" were imprisoned to await further action. One white man who had been "too friendly" toward bondsmen was given until Christmas to settle his affairs and leave the County.[70] The citizens of Eufaula were active again when they organized vigilante committees to ensure that all whites shared the same sentiments. The local committee drove an elderly man, Captain Elisha Betts, out of town because he subscribed to "abolition papers," circulated anti-slavery opinions in the community, and corresponded to "abolition" journals. Petitioning to return to Eufaula, the Captain signed a written agreement that he would not offend the community again. When three of his neighbors guaranteed him, he was allowed because of his advanced age to resume his residence in the town.[71]

Fear of servile rebellion and emancipation was grist for Alabama politicians who, from 1846 to 1851, agitated the pro-slavery defense. Future Supreme Court Justice John A. Campbell, a Mobile lawyer, and Democrat, wrote his mentor John C. Calhoun that the south must demand termination of the slavery debate for the "slaves' temper had been excited." "They begin to understand," Campbell warned, "that society is being moved on their account."[72] Similar forebodings came from H. W. Conner who also wrote to Calhoun and observed that people were despondent, believing

slavery to be doomed. Most important, the slaves, recognizing these fears, grew "arrogant and troublesome."[73]

In January 1849 the Southern Congressional caucus composed an "Address to the Southern People," with four of Alabama's seven Congressmen signing the statement. Both Alabama Senators endorsed the appeal. Interestingly, two of the Alabama representatives who did not sign the address came from north Alabama--a region of low slave density. The third was a Whig who refused to sign for partisan reasons. Like many southern Whigs he strongly opposed exacerbating sectional tensions. The address was authored by John C. Calhoun. Appearing in a host of Alabama newspapers, Calhoun's appeal was virulently negrophobic. It asserted that if abolition succeeded then "the horrors of black domination would befall the South." The two races could not live together in peace and harmony. "Emancipation would be but prelude to a host of black evils." It also predicted a new political coalition of newly freed blacks and northern voters for the purpose of suppressing the white south. Then these blacks and "profligate whites" would gain federal patronage, and vault themselves into a higher socio-economic position than white southerners. "We would in a word, change conditions with them--a degradation greater than has ever yet fallen to the lot of a free and enlightened people...should emancipation take place."[74] These predictions portended evil for every white Alabamian, slaveholder and nonslaveholder alike. Consequently, the people of Alabama of every rank had an interest in preserving slavery and foiling the antislavery menace.

Also raising the specter of racial conflict was state representative Percy Walker, a Whig from Mobile. He urged passage of a series of

resolutions confirming slavery's rights in the territories and predicted that confining slavery to its present limits would "result in completely breaking up the relations of master and slave....Because a growing black population would either force the whites to emigrate or provoke fierce and bloody conflicts over the lands." Unless Alabama forcefully combatted northern attacks, he cautioned, southern civilization would collapse.[75] Governor Reuben Chapman concurred. He warned that if southerners yielded to northern assaults, then "no eye can penetrate the dark future that is before us, no tongue can describe the degraded condition to which we shall be reduced--serfs where we were equals, and equals only with our serfs."[76]

William L. Yancey utilized the same racial appeal in numerous stump speeches. Time and again he warned his listeners of the prospect of black equality imposed by the north. For example, he opposed Senator Lewis Cass's view that slavery in the New Mexico territory was moot since most of the territorial population was colored and would not consent to slavery. "The only comment," Yancey exclaimed, "which I will present on this to you, a slaveholding population, is that...we the people of the South have been accustomed to think that in legislating for the States or territories, the whites should not ask the consent or permit of the colored race to regulate our internal concerns." Yancey viewed black political equality as calamitous and declared: "If General Cass is elected how will the South have opportunities to move into territories where this colored race whom General Cass holds are our beloved fellow citizens."[77]

As a result of these heightened racial concerns, a movement got under way in late 1851 to resurrect the Colonization Society. It was

reorganized for the purpose of colonizing free blacks to Liberia. Initial support came from the Weekly Alabama Journal, a Whig organ which maintained that freedmen were "instruments of insubordination and disorder." "Many of them live by vicious means," it continued, and are "medians between the slave and dishonest traders"; together they "plunder the masters." But most decisive, the editorial concluded, the presence of manumitted blacks served as a "constant source of discontent and insubordination to the slaves." Their removal would "tend materially to the good order and security of the slave population."[78] Another newspaper published an announcement asking for support of the Society. The appeal was signed by several prominent planters and lawyers both Whigs and Democrats.[79]

Some free blacks also championed colonization. Among them S. Wesley Jones, a free black merchant from Tuscaloosa, who worked actively for emigration. From 1848 to 1851 Jones corresponded with William McClain of the American Colonization Society, He wrote, in June 1848, that many Alabama freedmen desired to remove to Liberia. Furthermore, if he had the financial backing, he could "raise a company of a hundred or more." He would soon canvass the north Alabama free black community, he declared, claiming that there were some twenty-five freedmen in the vicinity "that manifest such anxiety to leave here." He lamented, in 1849, "there are too many [free blacks] who listen to the well invented tales of the enemies of colonization." Most freedmen would not consider immigrating without first hand knowledge of Liberia. Nevertheless, several blacks in north Alabama looked forward to departure in the spring of 1850; and others from the eastern part of the state also desired to colonize.

McClain's letters expressed uneasiness about the possibility that his correspondence with Jones would be opened and censored with resultant trouble for free blacks. Jones reassured him: "you need not entertain any fears as to what you write me doing harm, write freely upon any subject for your letters come safely and none see them but myself." In late 1850 Jones reported that many whites now urged the removal of freedmen: "All classes speak of it in the highest terms and seem to be very anxious that it be carried out." According to him funds were the only obstacle for a mass migration of Alabama free-blacks.[80]

By December 1851 Jones had noted the formation of the Alabama Colonization Society and predicted that "there will be an uprising of the free people of color--not only in Alabama--not only in the much persecuted South, where it is said by the fanatics that we are sorely oppressed and inhumanly treated...." The national society offered Jones free passage to Liberia, but he asked for a few months delay until some business matters were cleaned up. He recommended that Alabama's 2000 freedmen donate twenty-five cents apiece so two delegates could be sent to Liberia. "Let national pride be kindled," he eloquently concluded, "and go to and make us a great nation of our own, build our own cities and towns, make our own laws, collect our revenues, elect our own governors and law makers, have our own schools and colleges, lawyers, doctors, in a word, cease to be hewers of wood and drawers of water and be men."[81] No evidence exists as to whether Jones ever went to Liberia.

Meanwhile the plight of Alabama free blacks worsened during the 1850's. At various times the General Assembly considered resolutions to re-enslave all manumitted blacks. Statutes were passed that almost

completely curtailed the few liberties possessed by the freedmen. Furthermore, the early optimism expressed by the newly formed colonization society in Alabama proved to be a chimera. Nothing was done to put colonization into operation.

By 1852 nonimportation and colonization, therefore, were rejected as a means of quieting fears. Some politicians suggested secession as the only security. But having repudiated disunion in 1851, Alabamians turned instead to the slave code; and the 1852 legislature both codified and augmented it. The patrol system was a prime concern. All white male slave holders under sixty as well as whites between eighteen and forty-five were now subject to duty--which meant a minimum of one night a week and more often when the Justice of the Peace deemed it necessary, e.g., when evidence of "insubordination, threatened outbreak, or any contemplated unlawful assembly of slaves or free-negroes came to light." Patrols were authorized to investigate any plantation and check all passes of visiting bondspeople. Any slave caught without a pass would receive thirty stripes. Any white who refused to perform patrol obligations would be subject to fine unless good cause could be given.[82]

Under the new code slave movement was circumscribed as never before, reflecting the deep uneasiness of slave holders. Henceforth no bondsman could hire himself out. Not more than five slaves could visit any plantation at the time except for church services or funerals. Possession of a weapon by a slave, always meriting a penalty, was now punished by thirty-nine stripes "on the bare back," rather than by the twenty of the earlier penalty. Any slave found hunting at night "must be given thirty-nine lashes" and the owner fined fifty dollars if the bondsman had his

permission. No casual assembly could exceed five slaves with ten lashes for all if that maximum was violated.[83]

Almost all communication between freedman and slaves was halted. Free blacks entering the state were given thirty days to leave and were subject to two years imprisonment if they did not. Any free black found at an unlawful gathering would be fined twenty-five dollars or jailed for sixty days. If any freedman wrote a pass for a slave or aided slaves to escape, he would be liable to seven years imprisonment. Once out of jail, a free black was given a month to leave Alabama or face a five-year jail sentence. Freedmen also had to get an owner's permission in order to visit slaves.[84]

The revised code called upon masters to treat bondspeople with humanity, giving them proper food, clothing, and care. However, no penalty awaited those who disregarded these provisions. Masters were still given the option of manumission with the approval of a probate judge. But the freedman then had to leave Alabama within six months or face re-enslavement for life.[85] There was, of course, a wide gap between literal enforcement and actual practice. Nevertheless, these regulations reflected Alabamian concern and fear of living among a growing slave population.

Equally illustrative of the consternation that Alabamians revealed toward bondspeople was the evolution of their pro-slavery argument. Some historians maintain that the pro-slavery defense was elaborated specifically for southerners who knew slavery was immoral and had to rationalize their culpability.[86] But there is little evidence in Alabama of guilt-ridden slaveowners. There is, however, evidence of a fabric

of fear which many whites manifested toward blacks--slave and free--and which motivated them to justify slavery and to insist upon its necessity for economic and social stability.

Slaveholders and nonslaveholders alike joined in constructing Alabama's slavery defense. Frederick Law Olmsted while traveling through the state in 1853 recounted a conversation with a nonslaveholding yeoman. Olmsted inquired how Alabamians would react to emancipation:

> Well I'll tell you what I think on it, I'd like it if we could get rid on 'em to youst I wouldn't like to hev 'em freed if they was gwine to 'hang 'round. They ought to get some country and put 'em war they could be by themselves. It wouldn't do no good to free 'em and let 'em hand 'round, because they is so monsterous lazy; if they hadn't got nobody to take keer on 'em, you see they wouldn't do nothin' but laze round, and steal, and pilfer, and no man couldn't live, you see, war they was--free no couldn't live. And then, I've two objections; thats one on 'em--no man couldn't live and this ere's the other: now suppose they was free. Now just suppose you had a family of children, now would you like to hev a nigger feeling just as good as a white man? How'd you like to hev a nigger steppin up to your darter.[87]

Blacks, the farmer told Olmsted, must be kept in bondage because they are lazy and larcenous. Moreover, once freed they would compete with whites for status. Thus, Africans as slaves are lazy and as freedmen aggressive! Law and order would be severely tested by emancipation. However, the sexual threat posed by abolition was foremost among this yeoman's concerns. He was obsessed about "a nigger steppin up to his darter."

Nonslaveholder misgivings about potential black economic competition were apparent in a letter by Robert C. Tharin, who tried to establish a newspaper, The Non-Slaveholder, in the late 1850's. Before

Tharin could begin publication he was expelled from the state. The paper purported to support the economic interests of the "poor white" and attack the planter class for existing difficulties. Tharin said in a letter that he had seen the rich man's slave "come in contact with the poor white blacksmith, bricklayer, wheelwright and farmer." Preference traditionally "has gone to the planter's negroes in all such trades. Poor whites of the south fear the coming of negro equality" which Tharin blamed on the "rich planters." White mechanics in Mobile, Montgomery, and Wetumpka had told him of their fear of black emancipation. "Have not the planter for years condemned every mechanic in the South to negro equality" one asked. "My dislike of them [planters] arose from...their daily usurpations of power and privileges at variance with my rights and the rights of my class." Meanwhile plantation Negroes accustomed to observing and identifying themselves with their masters "harbored a deep contempt for white people of small property and no social distinction."[88]

Tharin's observation that numerous Alabama slaves had acquired mechanical talents has been noted earlier. Because of their increasing skills, it is easy to see why white artisans felt threatened especially in the regions of dense-slave concentration--the Black Belt. Through the 1850's bondsmen were extensively employed in the state's infant industry in central Alabama. Scores of expert slave machinists worked in Danial Pratt's cotton gin factory in Prattville, Autauga County. An associate of Danial Pratt stated that "white hands had to be trained.... These [whites] were brought up from the piney woods [south Alabama] many of them with no sort of training to any kind of labor; in fact they had

to learn everything, and in learning many made mistakes and blunders which were fatal to success." One Mobile bakery had sixteen black bakers. A cotton mill, according to a New York Tribune reporter who visited Alabama in 1858, included "black operatives who were quite skilled at their business." A black foreman was in charge. "Branch was a fine intelligent fellow....He made all the machinery belts, covered the rollers, weighed out all the yards, thread and waste on the floor, kept a journal, and rendered an account to his employer." Robert Jemison, the Tuscaloosa planter-industrialist, computed that slaves were 26 percent cheaper to employ than white laborers and by 1859 46 percent less expensive than whites. Some slaves developed creative talents beyond the functional. For example, the west Alabama Agricultural Society awarded a silver cup to Page, a Mobile slave, for his portrait of Francis F. Lyon, a former Alabama Congressman. Portrait painting was a natural gift with Page, concluded the account.[89]

A slave mechanic keeping a kiln in the town of Marion prompted this statement in the Marion Commonwealth: "Common safety required the end of all slave shops...for if it is not done consequences may result which will prove disastarous to the peace and quietude of the town." In 1858 the state legislature was urged to pass a law preventing bondsmen from being trained as mechanics. Black men should only "do rough and ready work which is unsuited to the white man." The new statute must "fix the slave to the plantation and then all industrious white mechanics" would be able to take jobs occupied by black craftsmen. With the passage of such an act, slaves "would not be half so hard to manage." The new law would also diminish "a large amount of thieving carried on

by negro mechanics...."[90] The fears expressed by the Marion Commonwealth again mirror the conflicting image that white Alabamians had of blacks. Belief in inherent black inferiority, as previously noted, implied permanent inability to compete with whites. But paradoxically if bondsmen were allowed to develop any skills they would become a challenge to white labor. As common field hands they were doing work befitting their supposed talents. But the cotton toiler was also considered a potential insurrectionist and must always be watched. The slave artisan, then, was a double threat: an economic menace and a potential rebel.

Although white farmers and mechanics in south Alabama were clearly at a socio-economic disadvantage, they never made any attempt to disrupt the Alabama social structure and did not pose the threat that blacks did. Many of these white farmers aspired to be planters. However, in north Alabama the independent yeomen were hostile to the economic control of the large planter. Their interests were represented by W. R. W. Cobb. Cobb from north Alabama's sixth district, an area of slight slave density, successfully campaigned for Congress with a class appeal of yeoman versus planter. He held office from 1847 to 1861 and was the most convinced Unionist in Alabama.

Upper-class planters were never at a loss to remind nonslaveholders what they had to lose by abolition. A host of well-placed Alabamians wrote tracts, delivered sermons, and made speeches claiming that slavery elevated the white man, making him proud of his race and liberty. Alabama's pro-slavery polemic reflected what one recent historian has called "Herrenvolk" democracy, a society based on the "natural distinctions of race." Educated, upper-class Alabamians expended much effort persuading

deprived whites that they were as priviledged as anybody, if not more so. If slaves were freed, then poor-whites would forfeit their status and identity.[91] Poverty, it was asserted, was not only less prevalent under slavery than in the north, it also constituted less of a stigma, since race, not money, conferred honor. The bitter struggle between capital and labor in northern industrial society was unfavorably compared with the spirit of humanity and co-operation between planter and slave in the south.[92]

Newspapers consistently played on the poor-man's-stake-in-slavery theme. If freedom came to blacks, editor J. Withers Clay affirmed, then poor whites would become "degraded to the condition of blacks who would become their equals in society. Indolent free negroes would thrust themselves into their society and make proposals of marriage with their sons and daughters"; and all distinctions of color would disappear. One Black Belt paper editorially asserted, "As it is now in the South, the white man, whether rich or poor, occupies an elevated position. He is independent and has the proud satisfaction of feeling himself to be equal in all respects to his wealthy neighbor."[93] Another argument used by slave defenders was that of Mobile physician Josiah Clark Nott, who attained a national reputation with a series of articles and lectures on the "natural inferiority of the African race." Blacks and whites, Nott tried to prove, did not belong to the same species. Nott listed the benefits he derived from writing on slavery and race. They were, in order, "popularity, money, and professional reputation."[94] These benefits would also induce other ambitious Alabamians to enter into the slavery debate and defense.

In the midst of this mounting defense of slaveholding in the 1850's came recurrent slave unrest and violent slave reprisals. At Mount Meigs in Montgomery County in the fall of 1854 Dr. James McDonald punished a bondsman for disobedience and was himself clubbed to death. The slave charged with the murder was captured and jailed; a group of McDonald's friends gathered, and with the Sheriff's co-operation took the prisoner and burned him to death. The Huntsville Democrat advised, "in matters involving the control of that class of the population, we hold that the law of self protection, which abrogates all other law, must necessarily find its exponent in the action of the majority of those immediately interested.[95] The following week in Montgomery County a slave master, trying to punish a slave, was assaulted by him. The slave was tried, convicted, and executed.[96] The following month Henry T. Gates, a Black Belt overseer, was killed. One or more slaves were involved according to a newspaper account.[97] Another overseer was severely wounded in Butler County, when a reputatedly vicious slave suddenly struck him. The slave, the account reported, professed indifference to death and only regretted that he had not killed his victim.[98]

The testimony of former slaves, as recorded by the W. P. A. slave narrative project of the 1930's, also confirms the mounting rebelliousness of Black Belt Alabama bondspeople. Mingo White, born in Montgomery County around 1848, recalled that in the 1850's bondsmen would run away and "lots of times when de pattrollers would get after de slaves dey would have de worse fight and sometimes de pattrollers would get killed."[99] Martha Bradley, who labored in the mid fifties on a Montgomery plantation, remembered: "On day I wuz workin in de field and de overseer he come

'round and say sumpin' to me he had no bizness sayin. I took my hoe and knocked him plum down." Amy Chapman, born in 1843 on a Wilcox County estate, related a gruesome incident. The overseer whipped another bondswoman "near 'bout to death. She got so mad at him dat she tuk his baby chile what was playin 'round de yard...an th'owed it in a pot of lye dat she was usen' to wash wid."[100] Thus while blacks were oppressed and exploited, they fought back in a constant struggle using all available means.

However, such deeds of defiance brought retaliation. Butler County slaveowners were furious when a slave charged with stealing a piece of chewing tobacco worth twenty-five cents was found guilty and hanged. Slaveholders confronted a dilemma: they could not wantonly hang and chastise every slave suspected of being rebellious. After all, bondsmen were a major financial investment that had to be protected. Beyond tightening slave codes, patrol systems, and punishing actual acts of insubordination, whites for the most part could only deplore suspected misdeeds of their retainers. Alabamians living with massive numbers of blacks had to constantly restrain themselves from indiscriminately destroying their valuable property as the Butler county citizens had done when they hung a bondsman for allegedly stealing a piece of tobacco. However, sometimes they could not curb their frustration and immediate punishment was forthcoming.

This was the case in July 1855 when Sumter County experienced a devastating response of white terror. A slave was charged with allegedly raping and killing a planter's daughter. Over a thousand persons assembled at the supposed site of the trial only to learn that the judicial proceedings

would be held in another part of the County. They then passed a series of resolutions sustaining each other in their actions, proceeded to the jail, tied the slave to a pole and burned him. A local editor observed that slavemasters brought their "negroes with them for the example made of this wretch [would have] a salutory effect upon the two thousand slaves who witnessed the execution.[101] Again, about ten days later in the same County and despite "object lessons," two bondsmen were executed for killing their owners.[102] One Black Belt slaveowner, by the end of 1855, was so distressed over potential slave rebelliousness that he wrote Governor John A. Winston informing him that "there are a very great number of slaves in our midsts and but few white people to keep them in subjugation." The planter complained about a "liquor shop, at which it is believed our negroes can buy whiskey...by which they are greatly demoralized and made fearfully insubordinate." He called upon the Governor to use his influence to urge the legislature to pass a law that would prohibit the sale of alcoholic "spirits entirely, in any quantity by any person of any calling whatsoever."[103] This plea is especially interesting because of its implication that slave rebelliousness could only be attributed to alien forces--abolitionist propaganda or whiskey. A commonly held assumption among slaveowners was that the slave left alone loved his master and was compliant. But this belief was shattered by many examples of servile resistance not caused by outside elements and Alabamians were prepared to take new action.

By the mid 1850's persistent slave violence coupled with traditional white apprehension created a garrison psychology in Alabama. W. J. Cash and John Hope Franklin have cogently described one of the

"side effects" of slavery, namely, a defensiveness that displayed itself in a love of military posturing.[104] Alabama was proud to be leading the deep south, in the fifties, in military academies. While not establishing a state military institute, Alabama co-operated with private military schools. In many instances the legislature exempted such schools from taxation and occasionally authorized governors to supply "as many arms as shall be sufficient for its purposes." Significantly, two military academies which received full state support were located in two counties whose black population far exceeded the white--the Eufaula Military Institute in Barbour County and the Tuskeegee Military Institute in Macon County.[105] Even in the early fifties the martial spirit was aglow in Alabama. Volunteer military groups were springing up in the heavily slave concentrated Black Belt. In 1852, the General Assembly authorized the organization of such bands as the "Pike County Rangers" and the "Montgomery County Rough and Ready Invincibles." The president of the University of Alabama in the same year suggested that his board of trustees might explore the question of instituting military training and discipline at the University. Also in 1852 the legislature authorized the governor to secure arms for four schools in the Black Belt that were interested in providing military training. In 1860 the Assembly authorized the establishment of a Black Belt military academy at Wetumpka.[106]

Notwithstanding this state-sponsored and state-encouraged military umbrella, fear of bondspeople continued to be a daily reality for many communities. In the north-east town of Jacksonville in Calhoun County, with a slave density under 25 percent, the town council met and passed a series of revised slave ordinances which provided that a bell would

sound at 9:00 p.m., and all slaves and freedmen found wandering were liable to arrest. Bondsmen were not allowed to visit free-blacks and the latter were not to have dealings with slaves. Violation of this regulation would bring twenty-five lashes and imprisonment. Nobody, white or black, was permitted to sell or trade liquor with slaves, subject again to fine and imprisonment.[107] Reflecting a similar concern, the General Assembly passed a law stating that not more than six blacks could reside on any plantation unless the owner, overseer, or white agent remained in the same place with them or within a distance of one mile. Any violation of this law subjected the owner to a fine of $100. According to a legislative source, "this statute performed the double function of keeping the negroes in order and preventing undesirable persons from loitering around."[108]

At the same time that more laws were being passed to promote firmer mastery over bondspeople, an "abolitionist" panic broke out in Mobile. One of the cities oldest booksellers, Strickland and Company, was accused of "vending incendiary books causing for the past few days the citizens ...great vexation." A town meeting set up a committee to investigate this matter. The Committee decided that the owners would be given five days to leave Mobile.[109]

The reactions of Mobilians to suspected "subversives" typified the increasing sensitivity of Black Belt and south Alabamians to rumored slave and abolitionist conspiracies in mid and late 1856. For example, in Coosa County, on the edge of the Black Belt, the citizens were numbed by "a conspiracy among the negroes." At a meeting of planters and concerned farmers, it was disclosed that several slaves, interrogated by

patrollers, confessed that bondsmen in the vicinity were planning an insurrection. A committee was elected and passed a series of resolutions. Enough evidence was available, it was determined, to confirm that some slaves had been holding "incendiary meetings...involving the safety of whites." All whites--slaveholders and nonslaveholders--had the same goal, the resolutions continued, namely, the preservation of order, and slaveowners should not arbitrarily suspect nonslaveholders of tampering with slaves. However, "the blacks have been encouraged, if not instigated by abolitionists in our midst." Thus, all those not known by the community, the resolution maintained, should be suspected and questioned by the sheriff. Furthermore, all patrol laws were to be strictly enforced and gatherings of blacks for social purposes no longer permitted. Finally, reflecting the heightened agitation of the community, one resolution called for the registration of all male slaves in the county with local magistrates and stipulated that their names be turned over to county patrol leaders.[110] After these resolutions had passed, an act was approved by the Wetumpka town council which made it unlawful for black preachers to sermonize among their people unless five slaveholders were present.[111] In September, closely following these events, in neighboring Montgomery County, two bondsmen were hanged for killing their owners.[112] Several weeks later a Montgomery newspaper alerted its readers to guard against children's books entitled, Twilight Stories, for they were "stuffed with rank abolition...for the purpose of poisoning the minds of Alabama children.[113]

The slave unrest continued. In Henry County, in December 1856, a slave was accused of raping his master's wife and then killing the

master himself. He successfully avoided capture. "We are as a general thing opposed to lynch law," an editorial commented, "but in this instance, if the darkey is caught, we should think burning would be too good for him."[114] Alabama newspapers reported insurrectionary plots all over the south. Harvey Wish argues that the rebellion fright of December 1856 can be attributed to a number of factors: the heated sectional debates over Kansas, the Republican presidential campaign of that year, the Sumner-Brooks affair, and the impending Dred Scott decision.[115] All these factors, no doubt, tended to irritate the south's sense of security. Wish does not, however, cite the age old and often unfounded fear that slaveholders held for their bondspeople--at least in Alabama. Whites living in south-central Alabama feared being overwhelmed by an ever-increasing black population.

Black Belt newspapers warned their readers to keep a watchful eye for signs of discontent.[116] The Dallas Gazette warned the male population of Dallas county to perform patrol duty through all holidays. Young men, the editorial advised, ought to consider forming a "detective police" to ascertain if any "vile emissaries have been tampering with our slaves. Patrols should be out all the time--at every hour day and night." Officials were told to enforce strictly all patrol statutes.[117] These injunctions, similar to the one noted earlier prohibiting slaves from buying whiskey, reflected that recurrent and general southern view that attributed all slave dissension, whether real or imagined, to outsiders, to abolitionist incendiaries tampering with bondsmen. Slavemasters, it seems, could not admit that slaves might possess the intelligence and determination to struggle against their condition. To admit as much

openly would be confirmation of the Garrisonian attack upon the "southern way of life." Therefore, the ideology of the slave south--the positive good of slavery for whites and blacks--was based on a necessary self-deception.

Throughout December 1856, conspiracy panics continued to rock central Alabama. A planter in Autauga County declared that one local plot involved "many hundreds of negroes," and that "the instigators of the insurrection were found to be "northern incendiaries." The Montgomery Advertiser of December 13 claimed, "We have found out a deep laid plan among the negroes, it is general all over the County." J. J. Hooper, editor of the Montgomery Mail, believed the numerous reports of rebellion schemes extending over such a wide area which "indicated that these plots had been instigated by an organized band of Abolitionist emissaries."[118] The Tuskeegee Republican, in the eastern Black Belt, called upon the General Assembly to implement the following recommendations: a complete abolition of "negro preaching; prohibition upon blacks slave or free from engaging in any and all business transactions; prohibition on blacks living alone without supervision."[119] Slavemasters, one could say, probably felt that they had a "tiger by the tail" which they dared not let go of.

Sumter County suffered a severe rebellion fright at this time. In the central county the patrol interrogated a female slave who described a massive plot against whites during Christmas 1856. After a series of investigations, about thirty bondsmen were arrested and upon questioning --so it was alleged--confirmed that a general outbreak involving five to six hundred slaves was planned for Christmas day. Every white in the

area was to be executed. Bugle blasts would signal the start; guns would be provided, and slaves in other parts of the county were also implicated. Slave patrols were then alerted throughout the county, and suspected slave ringleaders were jailed. A search of their cabins revealed "eight or ten pistols." Moreover, a loaded pistol was found on the "person of one of them who denied to the last bitter end" that he was involved. The patrollers were praised for their diligency by the county newspaper which editorialized, "there is now a large patrol force in active service throughout the county and every man is on his guard."[120]

Because of these threats, some newspaper editors again called for prudence concerning slave importations. A resolution to reopen the African slave trade, it was noted, had been rejected in Congress with southerners supporting the rejection. Recent events proved, the Tuskeegee Republican declared, "that it is not considered safe to increase our slaves faster than they will increase by natural means."[121] However, because of the Kansas agitation and the continual rise in the popularity of restrictionism in the north, as well as the persistent concentration of the ownership of slaves in a few hands, some Black Belt editors, by 1858, came out for the reopening of the African slave trade.

After the December 1856 scares the Black Belt and adjoining counties demanded that slave patrols examine all strangers in the community. In Clarke County the patrollers caught a bondsman without a pass. They were about to kill him when the fugitive produced a knife, stabbed two members of the patrol, and then made his escape.[122] The consternation of some militiamen was demonstrated in another part of the Black Belt when they came upon a runaway who also bolted. But one of the patrollers, without

a warning, "gave him a mortal wound with his rifle."[123] Another Black Belt escapee, allegedly enticed into absconding by a "northern man," was seized and confined. Before his owner arrived, the bondsman hung himself. Blame was placed upon "the northern man who well deserves the fate of the negro." Then, the account cautioned, "Southern masters cannot be too much on the alert when these slippery gentry are in the vicinity. ...Too much vigilance cannot be exercised to prevent the recurrence of such crimes."[124]

In Washington County, in the summer of 1857 a slave patrol pursued two runaways into the swamps of adjoining Clarke County. A fierce fight took place--"Guns, pistols, knives, and clubs were freely used on both sides," before the rebels were overpowered. The Clarke county Democrat acidly concluded "Considering the high audacity of these runaways we almost wish they had all been killed in the battle."[125]

While such acts of defiance were occurring, Coosa County's press campaigned against "negro preaching" in the region. The Wetumpka Spectator wanted all black ministers outlawed because they excited "the nature of the congregation, the whole mass soon moved by the devil rather than the prince of peace." The specter of Nat Turner was summoned up as a contemptible example of black sermonizing. Potentially dangerous, as well, was the habit of "those negro crowds assembling around the meeting house doors sabbath evening, they should be dispersed by the Marshal."[126] Conversely, the Wetumpka Dispatch declared it was through Christianity that blacks learned submissiveness. Black preachers should be encouraged to "bring in the vicious class of negroes." W. H. Henson, editor of the Dispatch, asked slaveowners to "give our negroes gospel light and

strengthen the influence of the good and they will thwart the purposes of the bad."[127] The Spectator replied that in the Black Belt "negro preachers were the principles in insurrectionary movements among the slaves." Editor E. L. Mason called "negro preaching in our community an evil," and citizens in the County agreed with him: "Let white masters administer to slaves and halt all negro preaching." At one meeting of the County's planters and farmers, a resolution was passed that instructed their state representative to introduce a bill prohibiting all black ministering in Alabama.[128]

These fears of Black Belt whites concerning "Negro preaching" are confirmed by Alabama ex-slaves who recounted their impressions of bondage for the W. P. A. Slave Narratives. For example, Sidney Bonner, a former slave who toiled on a Dallas County plantation, recalled "Some of de niggers want to have dere own meetings...dem niggers get happy and get to shoutin 'all over de meadow...Massa John quick put a stop to dat fearful we was risen." Cato Carter, who lived on a Montgomery County estate in the 1850's, told how the slaves' religion was often prohibited and practiced secretly. This, in turn, increased the apprehension of slavemasters who usually grew more fearful when bondspeople exhibited cohesion. Slave-owner anxiety as to what transpired at private black religious meetings was well founded. The prayers of slaves were focused upon freedom. Alice Sewell, born on a Black Belt plantation in 1850, remembered that "we used to slip off in de woods...on Sunday evening way down in de swamps ....We prayed for dis day of freedom. We prayed together to God dat if we don't live to see it, please let our chillen live to see a better day and be free." Mary Ella Grandsberry, born in 1846, told how irritated

her owner would get when bondspeople came together. "Iffen we was caught prayin to go to de free states...you got one of the worst whippins of your life." Late at night in the cabins the slaves would pray "for de Lord to free dem like he did de chillen of Israel," recalled Mingo White who spent his youth on a Wilcox County plantation. If 'de marse or de driver heard 'em de would come and start the whippin."[129] Thus, testimony of former bondspeople verifies the suspicions of the Wetumpka Spectator: religious practices of slaves did serve as yet another form of black resistance.

Pike County in October 1857 was shocked by a mass poisoning on a plantation. Thirty-seven people--family and friends--had been poisoned, six fatally, by the Negro cook who was estranged from her master. The cook and a collaborator were taken from jail in collusion with the local constable and burned alive. Bruceville, where the incident took place, was in turmoil for days, with town authorities examining all blacks about the availability of poison in the slave community.[130]

At about the same time Richard E. Stewart, a Sumter County planter, was slain by five of his slaves.[131] A few weeks later, while tensions were still high in the same County, two alleged agents of the underground railroad were captured "in the very act of persuading some negroes to leave for a free state."[132] In early 1858 the Sumter County town of Livingston found that a representative of De Bows Register and the New Orleans Picayune held anti-slavery opinions. "Grant his right to his views," J. J. Hooper, editor of the Montgomery Mail asserted, "however we deny the right of such sentiments here." Hooper demanded that the New Orleans papers recall "this agent and in the future, employ trusted

southern men to collect from slaveholders." In reporting the affair, Hooper reminded his readers to be constantly on the "lookout for abolitionists in disguise."[133] Similarly the town of Selma in Dallas County uncovered an "abolitionist" home economics teacher who "on one or more occasions...held conversations with slaves well calculated to create a spirit of insubordination and rebellion." She was forced to leave the county and other communities were forewarned about her.[134] These libertarian infringements like the ones recounted earlier in Barbour, Montgomery, and Mobile counties are another indication that by the 1850's Alabama had become a closed society. Even before John Brown's raid, white Alabamians responded to slave rebellion scares by tightening their grip on bondsmen and reinforcing their faith in the institution of slavery.

The Assembly, bestirring itself, saw a remedy in closing all exits to manumission. A bill was introduced making it unlawful to liberate slaves by last will and testament, and declared all clauses or parts of a will freeing slaves null and void; and it also voided any provision providing for the removal of the slave of the deceased to a state or country where slavery did not exist. The proposition was tabled[135] but was later enacted on the eve of the Civil War.

* * *

Before 1858 the response of many Alabamians to slave importation was that they might be overwhelmed by massive numbers of blacks. In the 1850's as observed earlier, important groups favored some kind of slave trade restriction. By the late 1850's, however, violent and heated arguments in favor of resurrecting the African slave trade were heard.

These arguments were most frequently aired at the annual meetings of the Southern Commercial Convention. In 1857, for example, Alabama's delegates at the Knoxville gathering voted with six other southern state delegations to ask their Congressional representatives to abrogate the 1808 prohibition of the African trade. In May 1858 the Convention met in Montgomery, Alabama. The debates there revealed the growing impatience of the fire-eaters, those who favored secessionist views, with the non-secessionist attitudes in Alabama, and in the south generally, on the issue of southern rights.

In 1857 Judge Z. L. Nabers introduced a resolution in the Alabama legislature emphasizing the need and advantages of reopening the slave trade, not the least of which was building a consensus for secession.[136] William L. Yancey, Alabama's best known agitator, had been silent on the issue prior to the Montgomery convention. But in 1858 Yancey led the campaign that favored resumption of the international slave trade and captained the Alabama delegation to the 1858 Southern Commercial Convention.

The Montgomery Confederation, a unionist paper, observed as the convention got under way: "Every form and shape of political malcontent was there present, ready to assent in any project having for its end a dissolution of the union, immediate, unconditional, final."[137] This assessment is not entirely accurate. It is true a band of disunionists was present. They were determined to agitate all issues to embarrass southern unionists and moderates in the Democratic party. But to say that the entire conclave was a disunionist scheme misses the mark. From Alabama only Yancey, Percey Walker, and F. B. Shepart (the latter two of Mobile) talked of secession. Walker, like other opportunistic lawyer-

politicians in the state, was a small slaveowner and changed his party affiliation often. He was a Whig, then a Know-Nothing, and, by 1859, a Democrat. F. B. Shepard's party loyalty was equally capricious.[138]

L. W. Spratt of South Carolina was the chief advocate of a revival of the African trade at the Montgomery Convention and presented a resolution in its favor. Yancey rose in support and indicated that the importation of hundreds of thousands of Africans would offset the flow of labor from Europe to the North. Such an increase would make slavery more secure in the southern states and augment their voting strength in Congress. A large increase in the number of slaves, Yancy said, would mean a decline in price and more people could enjoy the "blessings" derived from bondage. "If you increase the number of slave owners you increase the basis of the institution." Why should he pay Virginia slavetraders $1500 for a slave, Yancey asked, when he could get them in Cuba for $600 or from West Africa for one-sixth that sum. Finally, he emphasized, before passage of a law in 1808 the Constitution guaranteed slavery by forbidding Congress to interfere with it. The 1808 law was unconstitutional because it discriminated against the south.[139]

Yancey was countered by Roger A. Pryor, editor of the Richmond Enquirer, and by two Alabama delegates. Robert G. Scott, a national Democrat from Madison County, an Alabama area of moderate slave density, held that the ordinance prohibiting the slave trade was constitutional. It derived from the power of Congress to regulate commerce with foreign nations: "Such had been the opinion of the framers of the constitution ...and also of John C. Calhoun who was a member of Monroe's cabinet when the act of 1820 was passed declaring the slave trade to be piracy."[140]

Former Whig party leader Henry W. Hilliard, from Montgomery county, took the same position. From the beginning of the controversy over slavery, Hilliard had been Yancey's most ardent antagonist. Since 1846 they had engaged in numerous and bitter encounters at times almost bordering on violence. Now, at the Commercial Convention, Hilliard asserted that Congress had the power to halt the African slave trade through the commerce clause. Gazing at Yancey, he predicted that if Spratt's pro-trade recommendation were adopted, it would be an invitation to every fanatic, to everyone opposed to the institutions of the south, to agitate with a view to overthrowing those institutions. Furthermore, Hilliard, an ordained Methodist minister, still had a great respect for the opinions of the Christian world and rejected a measure that would "outrage the moral sentiment of christendom upon an impracticability." The Spratt resolve itself was finally tabled.[141]

A month after the convention Yancey began to vacillate on the slave-trade issue. A reading of his remarks, he explained in one letter to a supporter, would show that he did not call for a reopening: "What I did recommend was simply the repeal of the laws of Congress making the foreign trade in slaves piracy." He confirmed his real intention which was "to strip the Southern ship of state for battle."[142] Yancey had taken the most controversial issue and used it to force Alabamians, indeed all southerners, to choose sides. His purpose was not to assail the north but to harass those in his section who were "soft on slavery." Moreover, as in the late forties and early fifties, he was again making a "grab" at controlling the state's Democratic party.

It is difficult to discern how much support there was statewide

for the reopening issue. In Lawrence County in the highlands, with a moderate slave population, the Moulton Democrat came out in favor of resumption, insisting that abolitionists were forcing the issue. The Mobile Mercury, was a lowland circulation, also desired renewal. J. J. Hooper's Montgomery Mail, in the heart of the slave dense Black Belt, agreed. The Dallas Gazette called upon slaveholders to disregard all federal laws prohibiting the slave trade and to commence importing slaves from Africa. This approach, said editor C. E. Haynes, would unite all the southern states. But the Montgomery Confederation condemned the whole project, calling it a fantasy devised by demagogues. The Clarke county Democrat also criticized the Southern Commercial Convention as "a political debating club." The trade would be resumed only at the expense of the union, it declared, and "the convention was not called to dissolve the union, and we regard it as irrelevant, impolitic and even unfortunate to discuss questions which can result in no good to the South in the union."[143] The Tuskeegee Republican by 1859 had reversed its position on the slave trade. Seeing the issue in class terms, this Black Belt paper complained that slave ownership was getting to be a monopoly of the large planters. Wealthy planters, an editorial complained, opposed reopening because it would "reduce the value of their negroes." If this situation continued, it warned, then the future of the south would be in doubt, because there "will no longer by any hope of a laboring man ever possessing a slave....The very existence of the South depends upon the reopening of the slave trade."[144]

The Republican's assessment of the concentration of slave ownership was correct. Alabama, according to the 1860 census, had 435,080 slaves;

126,833 or 29 percent were owned by big planters who by 1859 averaged 84 slaves apiece. Nor more than 25 percent of Alabama's white population in 1860 held slaves. Moreover, throughout the 1850's the price of slaves rose. In northwest Alabama male slaves ranged from $1035 to $1450; women from $1250 to $1550. In the Black Belt field hands brought from $1600 to $1800. This caused one editor to remark that "negroes will sell beyond any other property." In Clarke County the "average" slave under 45 was selling for more than $1100.[145]

Not only did the planter class have a greater percentage of the slaves but also much of the best land. In the Black Belt counties two-thirds of all acreage was held by 17 percent of the cultivators and was incorporated into plantations of 500 acres or more. The planter possessed not merely more valuable land. A study of some of the most productive counties shows that the land of those owning 50 acres or less was worth $7.20 an acre, while that of planters who owned more than 2000 acres was worth $29.50 per acre. Furthermore, in a more recent study of the Black Belt, it was found that the land of plantation owners was considerably more valuable because, by virtue of slave labor, it was better cultivated. By the end of the 1850's however, there was a shift in the wealth distribution of the Black Belt in favor of the "upper-middle deciles at the expense [relatively] of both the richest and poorest groups." Accordingly, the shift "seems to have had more to do with slaves and slave value than with ownership of land....The slave cotton regime in Alabama was a highly unequal distribution of wealth."[146] Interestingly, it would be the "middle class" planter who owned 20 to 50 slaves who avidly supported secession. They deemed a Southern Confederacy as the

only means of acquiring more land and slaves.

According to the 1860 census, the total wealth of Alabama was $792,274,199 and the total wealth of large planters was $222,600,997. By the end of the fifties, the great planters--those owning more than 50 slaves--possessed 28.19 percent of the declared wealth of the state --$140,371.51 per large planter. Per capita wealth of major planter families was $26,927, while the per capita wealth of the average white Alabamian in 1859 was $1,497. Thus, the big planters held 30 percent of the state's slaves and owned more than 30 percent of the real estate. They commanded 28.1 percent of the total wealth of Alabama, while comprising less than one-third of one percent of the state's total white population.[147] The graph below indicates the growth of slaveholding, especially of large planters from 1850-1860. The white population of Alabama in 1860 was 964,041.[148]

	Number of Slaves			
	100-200	200-300	400-500	Total Slaveholders
Owners 1850	216	16	2	29,295
Owners 1860	312	24	10	33,730

According to the 1860 census, Alabama ranked third in slave population in the cotton south. By then 44 percent of the state's population was black. Slaves were concentrated in a few counties of the northwest and the Tennessee Valley and the vast majority were in the Black Belt --75 percent lived in ten Black Belt counties. The number of slaves in several Black Belt counties far exceeded the white population. Eleven of these counties in 1860 produced 590,544 bales or six-tenths of the

state's cotton crop.[149] Some of these counties were hotbeds of southern nationalism during the crisis of 1860.

By mid 1859 some Alabamians began to engage in the African slave trade. A correspondent saw "twenty-five or thirty Africans pass through Montgomery on their way down river." The reporter defiantly added that the bondsmen had been introduced into this country "in spite of the cruisers of both Uncle Sam and John Bull." He had no doubt "that more will follow suit....This is a practical reopening of the slave trade in spite of Greeley and Co."[150] Several months later the Mobile Mercury cheerfully passed on a bit of gossip: "We heard a gentleman who is up to snuff say that another cargo of Africans had been landed upon our Gulf Coast."[151] Those who favored restriction of slave importations were now silent, but this did not signify that the chronic fears Alabamians had of bondspeople had abated.

Many whites, especially those living in the east-central regions of Alabama, felt that slavery had to expand. Slaveowners should be able to move their "property" westward and southward. Few slavemasters, moreover, wanted a growing black population confined to the narrow central slave belt in Alabama. Slavery had to have room to spread if racial control was to be maintained.

Thus, with a slave population approaching a half-million and the Republican party demanding that slavery be confined to "its present limits," Alabama moved again to prevent the erosion of racial domination. Between 1857 and 1859 the General Assembly acted to strengthen old slave codes and approve new ones. A statute was passed to prevent "unauthorized individuals" from associating and illegally trafficking with slaves.

A new law prohibited the slae of liquor to slaves by river boatmen. Hoping to prevent the congregation of bondspeople during leisure hours, another new measure made gambling illegal.[152] Anxious to manage their slaves, finding black unrest frightening and inexplicable, whites once more focused upon the perennial "trouble maker," the free-black.

It was inconsistent for the south to oppose abolition and at the same time to permit free-blacks--there were only 2690 freedmen in Alabama in 1859--to remain in the state. Thus a new viewpoint emerged. The Independent Monitor of Tuscaloosa stated that freed men should be forced to leave Alabama or become re-enslaved. "It was true that some of them behaved well," admitted an editorial, "but even the best of them were in a constant danger; because they could read and write they were in a position to poison the ears of slaves with the teachings of abolitionists."[153] Sumter County's Gainsville Independent insisted that free blacks were an easy prey for "abolitionist emissaries": to permit them to remain in a slave state was nothing more "than sickly sentimentality."[154] The Southern Advocate called free blacks "not only a nuisance but a loathsome pest." An editorial asked the legislature to take severe measures to check the "morbid growth of free niggerdom." All freedmen were to be forced to leave Alabama. If all the slave states did this, then the north would be overrun with blacks, much to their disgust. "We suggest that the Alabama legislature at its next session pass a law forbidding the residence of free negroes in the state...all other cotton states will soon follow....By this course the South will add negro paupers to the whites of the north, and thus inflict an everlasting curse upon all intermeddlers with Southern slavery."[155]

At its 1859 meeting the General Assembly did not go as far as The Southern Advocate desired. It passed two measures: One declared void all wills which emancipated slaves either directly or indirectly and it also prohibited the removal of slaves from Alabama for the purpose of freeing them. It further provided that any freedman might voluntarily select a master and return to the status of slave.[156]

On the eve of John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, an event that would deepen southern fear of blacks as never before, Alabama was still wrestling with the chronic problem of slave control. From Brown's "trauma" through Lincoln's election the question of slave conduct and white domination would become inextricably joined with the politics of southern rights.

CHAPTER II

PARTY POLITICS IN ALABAMA, 1819-1845: AN OVERVIEW

Fear of black rebellion was not the only factor determining secession sentiment. Political factionalism and opportunism also contributed to disunionism. Politics was another avenue of mobility for the aspiring lawyer-planter who came to direct the state's destiny. Those who ran for office would either wait for issues to arise or manufacture them --even at the expense of party unity. In this respect there was a vast turnover in office on the local level. For example, many who were elected to the legislature from 1850 to 1860 served only one term.[1] This rotation in office reflects a developing society of restless status-seeking opportunists. Of course, there were those who claimed to stand on the high ground of principle, i.e., southern rights, never wavering regardless of shifting political winds. However, many Alabama politicians habitually readjusted their southernism to changing public sentiment. When the slogan of southern rights was in ascendency, they would be among the most volatile southern nationalists, until unionist feeling predominated. Moreover, many of these aspiring lawyer-politicians changed their political affiliations with regularity. Comprehension of the history of party politics in Alabama will, it follows, illustrate an important aspect of the secession movement.

Alabama achieved statehood in 1819. Her constitution gave political control of both state and county government to white males of Alabama. All adult white males who met a residence requirement of one year in the state could vote or hold office; all property, tax-paying,

and militia requirements were abolished. With the exception of the judiciary, state and county offices were made elective, and until 1842 the federal three-fifths ratio was used for representation in the state legislature. Elections and sessions of the legislature were to be held annually. Members of the House of Representatives served one-year terms, and members of the Senate served for three years. By 1830 elections and sessions were made biennial; Congressmen served two-year terms and Senators by 1845 served a four-year tenure. No property or tax qualifications for holding office existed. Both Senators and Representatives were required to be white males, citizens of the United States, and residents of the state for two years and of the county or district for one year. Representatives had to be at least twenty-one years old and Senators twenty-seven. The Constitution required periodic reapportionment of the legislature.[2]

The powers of the governor were limited. Although he was given the authority to grant pardons and reprieves, to issue proclamations, to make interim appointments, and to command the militia, many of the powers normally associated with the executive were in the hands of the legislature. Appointment of the Secretary of State, State Treasurer, Comptroller of Public Accounts, and high-ranking militia officers was reserved for the Assembly. The governor was given the power to hold up unfavorable legislation, but his veto was merely suspensive; the legislature could override him by a simple majority of both Houses. All of Alabama's governors, except Joshua Martin (1845-1847) and Reuben Chapman (1847-1849), served second terms.[3]

The majority of local officials were popularly elected. Alabama's

constitution provided that the commissioners of revenue and roads, sheriffs, county clerks, justices of the peace, and constables be chosen by the electorate rather than by elected officials. County judges were elected by the legislature until 1850. Because of the diffusion of political power, some chroniclers of ante-bellum Alabama contended that the masses of yeomanry had sufficient strength to prevent passage of legislation hostile to their interests.[4]

Although these nonslaveholders had such power, they did little to improve their socio-economic position. In point of fact, most of the nonslaveholding farmers in the Black Belt owned the less fertile, less valuable plots. The reason they never used their numbers politically to ease their lot was two-fold. Nonslaveholding whites were persuaded that although they were of low status they still shared with their betters the high rank of color--beneath them were black bondspeople. Any movement which attacked economic arrangements could possibly destroy slavery, thereby making poor whites and blacks socio-economic equals. White Alabamians had a stake in maintaining the slave color line. South Alabama yeomen themselves dreamed of becoming slaveowners, the symbol of upward mobility. Nevertheless, it was always politically shrewd to express anti-aristocratic sentiments and to show an acceptably egalitarian spirit no matter what one's economic and social inclinations.

Willis Brewer cites the 1845 congressional contest between E. S. Dargen and William D. Dunn as an outstanding example of the political application of the "egalitarian spirit." The two candidates had reached Washington county in their stumping tour. When the public addresses were over, a Colonel Prince, the wealthiest man in the vicinity, spoke

to Dunn. "You are going to be beaten," he remarked. "How's that?" asked Dunn; "didn't you write me that I was the strongest man in the district and haven't we a majority in it?" "I know that," replied Prince, looking furtively around, "but here you are walking off to dinner with me, the richest man in the county, and there sits Dargen in that crowd of one-gallows fellows, picking the ticks off his legs." As predicted, Dargen was elected.[5]

The history of party politics in Alabama begins with two organizations confronting each other in 1819. There was "the Georgia Machine," made up of a number of transplanted Georgia planters and farmers who, according to the Huntsville Democrat, "evinced a determination to monopolize all power and to fill every office with their own creatures." They were challenged by the "North Carolina Machine." Israel Pickens of North Carolina, formerly of the Georgia faction, led migrated North Carolinians and others seeking power at the expense of the Georgians. Both cliques fought over patronage, bank charters, and elective offices. By 1825 the Pickens group controlled the state.[6]

Most Alabamians supported Andrew Jackson in 1824. Only three counties voted against him. During the Jackson period political leadership fell to planter-lawyer types like William R. King of Dallas County. Becoming one of Alabama's first federal Senators, King held office from 1819 until 1844, when he was appointed minister to France. Returning in 1849, he was again selected for a four-year term. He was the vice-presidential nominee on the Pierce ticket in 1852 but died before officially taking office. King always strove for a balance between southern-rights and unionist opinion. Considered Mr. Establishment by local and

national party men, he owned two plantations, covering over 1100 acres of land, and 167 slaves at the time of his death.[7]

King's chief rival within the Democratic party was Dixon Hall Lewis. In 1826 Lewis was elected to represent Montgomery city in the state legislature. He served three years and in 1829 ran successfully for Congress from the Black-Belt third district. Remaining a Congressman for fourteen years, until 1844, he was then appointed by Governor Benjamin Fitzpatrick, his brother-in-law, to fill out the unexpired term of William R. King.[8]

Another important Democratic leader was Hugh McVay a Party manager from North Alabama. He sat in the Alabama territorial legislature from 1811 to 1818 and was then elected in 1820-1825 to the lower House of the Assembly from Madison county, serving for five years. After 1825 he served nineteen years in the state senate. McVay controlled much of the state patronage funneled into the hill counties of the Tennessee Valley,[9] and belonged to that inner-circle of party regulars who controlled the federal senate seats.

James Abercrombie, a planter-lawyer from central Alabama, wielded influence in his region. He took up residence in Montgomery County in 1819, he represented his district in the Assembly from 1820 to 1822, and was elected to the state Senate in 1825, 1828, and 1831. In 1834 he removed to Russell County where he won election to the state House of Representatives. He broke with the Democratic party two years later over the candidacy of Martin Van Buren and allied himself with the Whigs. Russell County had a heavy Whig plurality by 1836, which no doubt helped determine Abercrombie's decision. At times he dominated the Black Belt's

Whigs. Between 1851 and 1855 he won terms to the federal Congress.[10]

Established planter-lawyer politicians--men familiar to state voters from territorial days--did not exert complete control over the state. Throughout Alabama's formative period, "new men" came and settled. Having little economic substance, many arrived as youthful attorneys and ran for political office after establishing residence. Some attained both financial and political success and challenged the authority of the party leaders, or they co-operated and became part of the stewardship. Clement Comer Clay exemplified this group. After achieving some success as a planter and publisher, he became a significant figure in the Democratic party in north Alabama. He was selected by party bosses in the legislature to the federal Senate in 1837 after having served two terms in Congress. Another, Reuben Chapman, moved to north Alabama, became a lawyer and then a politician. He was elected to Congress from the upcountry sixth district and in the mid-forties became governor. Before his forced political retirement, he had become a prominent real estate investor. Then there were those who never attained much welath but won some important political positions. Gabriel Moore was one. He became governor in the mid-thirties. John McKinley, a federal Senator, was also prominent in this category.[11] Before the early thirties, then, those who entered politics were not initially divided along ideological or party lines. Most were opportunists who saw politics as a means of enhancing their status or else, like King's group, sought and were used to preserve the status quo.

In the late 1820's Alabama's first major sectional dispute occurred. It involved slavery and it fragmented the state. North Alabama, an area

of slight slave concentration (only a few counties had soil conducive to cotton cultivation), voted in favor of an 1826 referendum to prohibit the importation of slaves. Most of the cotton counties of the Black Belt and southern Alabama balloted in favor of retaining the trade.[12] Henceforth, state sectionalism became a central feature of Alabama politics. This division was based on differences in geography, topography, and modes of agriculture: the highland counties were more inclined to small subsistence farming, while central Alabama was an area of "black silt" plantation agriculture. The upper valley after 1824 could also be counted on to give massive pluralities for the Democratic party. Several upcountry regions became known as the "avalanche counties" because of their monolithic majorities for the Jacksonians. Central and southern Alabama, however, after the formation of the Whig party, was almost evenly divided between Democrats and Whigs.

Stirrings of discontent with Jackson's party appeared in 1828. An electoral ticket favorable to John Quincy Adams made its appearance. Most of those on the ballot came from the Black Belt and the cotton counties in the Valley. Planter-lawyer James Dellet of Monroe County headed the slate. He would be a leader of Alabama Whiggery during its early years and would serve two terms in Congress. Other prominent men on the list were Anderson Crenshaw, a planter from Butler County in south Alabama who became a Whig manager in the south-central cotton areas, and future anti-slavery advocate James G. Birney of Madison County. Birney was elected mayor of Huntsville in the early 1820's but had to leave the state because of his colonizing activities before the Whig party organized.[13]

National issues began to intrude upon local questions after Jackson's initial victory. Many in the state opposed the doctrine of nullification advocated by John C. Calhoun and the state of South Carolina. Gabriel Moore, who supported the 1828 tariff, was elected governor in 1829 without a contest. A resolution which passed 46-16 in the lower House denounced the nullification ordinance. Jackson then was supported in his contest with South Carolina nullifiers by Alabama Democrats; but the state party nevertheless had fragmented on the issue. Planter Democrats, and there was a considerable planter element in the Jackson party in the Black Belt, were apprehensive about the President's nationalism. Indeed, there was a general uneasiness with the "central Government's federalizing tendencies across middle Alabama."[14]

A faction of Calhoun Democrats emerged, initially led by James A. Calhoun of Dallas County, a nephew of the South Carolina nullifier. Born in Abbeville district of South Caroline, James Calhoun graduated from South Carolina College in 1826, came to Alabama in the following year, and had a long career in the state legislature. Like his uncle, he would appear as a nemesis to party regulars.[15] Bolling Hall, a planter from Autauga County in the heart of the Black Belt, was also considered an influential member of the states-rights splinter group;[16] so too was Dixon Hall Lewis who came to dominate this faction.

Lewis, from Montgomery County, was aware that important opinion in his Black Belt district was hostile to Jackson and to party managers like William R. King and conversely, that nullification feeling was strong. Throughout Lewis' bailiwick, claimed the Mobile Register, there was scarcely a village that had not been visited by some "emigrant from

South Carolina inculcating the heresy of nullification with the zeal of a fanatic and the perseverance of a missionary." A nullification meeting in Montgomery city proposed the organization of a "States Rights and Free Trade Association." Lewis himself attended an anti-Jackson gathering there and insisted that South Carolina's cause" is "the cause of the whole South. Her defeat would prove a death blow to Southern liberty." In 1829 he announced his candidacy for Congress not as a Jacksonian Democrat but as a nullification states-rights Democrat. He carried his County by almost eighty percent, defeating an opponent supported by the party regulars.[17]

Significantly the most vocal protest against the tariff came from Black Belt areas of high slave density. William Freehling found a similar development in South Carolina. Behind the nullification movement, he discovered, was the fear that federal power, if unchecked, could one day be employed to end slavery. South Carolinian slave masters feared that freed bondsmen would then turn the Palmetto state into another Haiti.[18] Alabamians living in similar surroundings may have been expressing the same anxieties in their anti-tariff struggle.

During the nullification dispute, Alabama's Congressional delegation was apprehensive over other forms of possible federal interference with slavery. When Kentucky's Henry Clay introduced his 1832 Land Distribution Bill, the public land committee, chaired by William R. King, attacked the feature of Clay's measure providing that funds derived from the sale of public lands be used to underwrite colonization. King maintained that colonization was a "delicate question connected indissolubly with the slave question." He added that it was sure to rekindle the

"fires of the extinguished conflagration which lately blazed in the Missouri question." When the bill came before the House, Clement Clay, King's Alabama colleague, predicted that those who accepted colonization would eventually accept abolition and all its "evils as necessary, nay indispensable, to the general welfare."[19]

While Alabama Democrats were colliding over nullification, an opposition party, the Whigs, emerged to compound their difficulties. As Charles S. Sydnor has observed about the pre-Civil War south, "ambitious politicians were calculating their chances of advancement and were throwing their influence to the party that held out the better prospects."[20] Consequently, some of these Alabama Whigs--especially those in east-central Alabama--were not as interested in the Whig principles embodied by Henry Clay's American system as they were in winning office and suppressing anti-slavery agitation in the national Whig party. Interestingly, many of these eastern Black Belt Whigs were natives of South Carolina and had been raised on the nullification doctrines so popular in the Palmetto state.

Similarly, Democrats who lived in regions of Whig concentration, such as west-central Alabama, where loyalty to the national Whig party predominated, also trimmed their sails at the expense of national Democratic party principle. Throughout slave dense east-central Alabama there was little ideological distinction between the two parties. Both were anti-Jackson. Witness, for example, the political ascent of Dixon Hall Lewis. He was keenly aware of the hostility to federal power among his slave-holding east-central constituents and these Black Belt Whigs and Democrats united to elect him to Congress for four successive terms,

beginning in 1829. William L. Yancey, a rising young lawyer-publisher and Democrat from Lewis' district, considered Lewis as much a Whig as a Democrat.[21] Governor John Gayle, a Democrat campaigning for re-election in 1833, made a states-rights appeal to east-central Black Belt Whigs and Democrats (while privately supporting Jackson in his struggle against South Carolina) and won a resounding victory. A resident of Greene County, a Black Belt constituency, he was soon disputing the federal government over the Creek Indian issue in east-central Alabama. He insisted on their absolute removal and found that much of his support came from states-rights Whigs of east-central Alabama. Gayle later defected to the Whigs.[22]

The Whigs were a minority party during the 1830's. Consequently, coalition with disaffected Democrats became a standard tactic. In 1835 a union of estranged Democrats and Whigs from south-east Alabama brought election-day success to former Democrat Francis S. Lyon of Mobile in his congressional campaign against the regular Democratic nominee.[23] A year later Senator Gabriel Moore, who sought a second term, did the unforgivable and challenged William R. King for his seat. Upheld by the states-rights clique, he barely lost to King. Smarting from the rejection, he then joined the Whigs. Regular Democrats were now under intense pressure. They held a slight majority in the General Assembly, but found it difficult to enact their legislative program. Indeed, the states-rights Whig-Democratic combination of state lawmakers was strong enough to force through a resolution endorsing Hugh Lawson White for president over Martin Van Buren.[24]

After 1837 the Democratic leadership, fearful of losing its

leverage, began efforts to win apostates back to the fold. King, a friend of Van Buren, used this relationship effectively. He persuaded the President to placate Dixon Hall Lewis and James A. Calhoun, and both agreed to cooperate with party regulars. But there was still a residue of eastern Black Belt Democrats who remained loyal to neighboring Whigs. To appease them the party leaders came out for strict states rights.[25] By the end of the 1830's, then, the Democratic party had consummated an uneasy alliance and confronted a formidable Whig antagonist.

* * *

Who were the Alabama Whigs? Between 1836 and 1852, there was a common saying there that where one found rich black soil, there one could find a slave; where one found a slave, there one would find a bale of cotton; and where one found a bale of cotton, there one would find a Whig.[26] Like many generalizations there was some truth to the observation. However, recent scholarship has qualified the traditional notions of Alabama Whiggery.

To be sure, Whigs were powerful in the Black Belt; yet they had "muscle" in other areas, indeed in every county. Some of the largest majorities given Whigs were polled in counties where there were few slaves, and conversely some of the heaviest pluralities gained by Democrats were in regions of high slave density. Therefore, previous scholarship notwithstanding, Whig support was not based solely on large-scale planters. Covington and Madison counties illustrate this unexpected mix. Covington, with a slave population well under 50 percent, registered Whig majorities in every presidential election except one. Madison, in the highlands,

had a slave density over 50 percent and gave Democrats huge victories in every election. Central Alabama occasionally divided between the two parties. However, counties with a slave population over fifty percent of the total elected more Whigs than Democrats to the legislature, while more Democrats were elected from counties whose slave populations were less than 50 percent of the total.[27]

Current research has also applied economic growth theories to voting behavior and party allegiance in ante-bellum Alabama. Thomas B. Alexander has concluded that in the economically more developed counties, those with the greater cash crop and the more eastern commercial contacts with the outside world, in short those counties more nearly in the main streams of the national and world economy, Whig party appeals were more attractive to all types of voters regardless of their personal economic status. It is not that a planter with many slaves or an affluent merchant was more likely to be a Whig than was a carpenter, or small farmer or blacksmith; it is simply, Alexander asserts, that all these men were more likely to be Whigs if they lived in well developed economic communities rather than in frontier, or isolated, or more nearly self-sufficient communities.[28]

Alexander's economic determinist argument for Whig partiality is too simplistic. He gives the impression that Alabama's ante-bellum economy was dynamic, but a recent study by Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman offers a more realistic appraisal of the political economy of the plantation south. Although not specifically dealing with voting motivation, both Fogel and Engerman conclude that the slave south de-

veloped a highly capitalistic form of agriculture, and its economic behavior was as strongly motivated by the profit motive as that of the north. But cotton counties which had economic intercourse with the outside world were not similar to the progressive diversified western economies of the first half of the nineteenth century. All profits were plowed back into slaves and cotton, and there was little, if any, economic variation.[29] By 1860 in Alabama there were 7,889 workers in 1,459 manufacturing plants (most of them no more than shops) which together had a capital investment of nine million dollars. The average "factory" had no more than five employees.[30, 31]

A key factor for Whig support, unmentioned by Alexander, was opportunism. Many Alabamians became Whigs because they felt their political or economic ambitions were hindered by a Democratic Party top heavy with chiefs and aspiring, restless subordinates. The Whigs welcomed frustrated Democrats and political neophytes into their ranks. Significantly, the Black Belt, a newly settled area, showed greater Whig influence. North Alabama, which was colonized first, had long been controlled by the Democratic party. Its leaders were not about the share party leadership with late comers from the south. The mere longevity of the Democratic party invited the suspicion that its members had become corrupted by one-party rule. Whigs effectively used this issue in their campaigns. Moreover to many who voted for the Whigs in the eastern Black Belt the Democrats were not sufficiently dogmatic on slavery. It was thought that most upstate Democratic counties having small black populations would not stand firm on all questions involving slavery. Understandably, then, there were more southern-rights Whigs in east-central Alabama. However,

by the early 1840's many west-central Alabamians came to support the nationalist principles of the Whig party. They formed a significant Unionist faction when the slavery-territorial debate peaked in 1846.

A modern statistical analysis of the status of Whigs and Democrats in the 1840's has also modified the orthodox view of Alabama Whiggery. Occupationally, the same percentage of identified Whigs and Democrats were artisans and farmers or planters. Indeed, there was a slightly higher percentage of lawyers among the Democrats, and a higher percentage of farmers and planters among the Whigs. More Whigs than Democrats were merchants in those Black Belt counties that were studied; while Democrats held a small edge among the professional and "white-collar" classes. In terms of real estate, through the 1840's both parties shared equally. In the highest category, $20,000 and above, 21 percent of the Whigs and 27 percent of the Democrats were found. But in the $10,000 to $20,000 level, Whigs made up 20 percent and Democrats 16 percent. Slave ownership, based on the census of 1840, also reflects these figures:

Whigs and Democrats Slaveholding: For Autauga, Greene, Jefferson, Lowndes, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa Counties[32]

	Percentage of Party Group	
Number of Slaves Owned	Whigs (268)	Democrats (407)
100	3	7
50-99	12	11
20-49	27	22
10-19	21	16
1-9	28	23
None	9	21

Whig leadership came from every geographic region. Two important bellweather leaders, Arthur F. Hopkins and Nicholas Davis, were from

north Alabama. Hopkins, a Madison County attorney, served two terms in the legislature and in 1837 was elected by the Assembly to the United States Senate, reflecting the state's anti-Van Buren feeling in both parties. Hopkins' colleague, Nicholas Davis, a planter-lawyer from Limestone County, was elected consistently in the 1840's and fifties to the state senate and served as president of the senate five times.[33] In central and south Alabama, Whig management was in the hands of James Dellet of Monroe County. Born in Pennsylvania, he moved to Alabama in 1819, was elected to the legislature four times and represented the first Congressional district in Washington in 1839 and 1843.[34] C. C. Langdon of Mobile, editor of the Mobile Advertiser, was also a power among Whigs in the southern part of Alabama, having migrated there from Connecticut in 1825. He was elected mayor of Mobile in 1849 and, except for one term, succeeded himself until 1855.[35] Another important Whig manager was lawyer and Methodist minister Henry Hilliard. In 1845 he became the first Whig to be elected to Congress from the Montgomery district, and in the late 1840's and early fifties he became spokesman for planter Whig conservatism in the central Black Belt.

The Congressional elections of 1839 saw the Whigs dispute the Democrats in most districts. Both parties in the late 1830's fought over state banks and money problems. These were prime issues in the 1839 state elections. A focal point of the debate was the specie issue. Whigs condemned Democratic financial policies which required collection of all public monies in coin.[36] The Democrats did not stump against Reuben Chapman from the "avalanche" sixth district. Dixon Hall Lewis

also received a "free ride." Lewis was still popular with Black Belt Whigs in the eastern part of his "fief," and also had sufficient strength in the central Democratic counties.[37] Nevertheless, Alabama experienced its first major clash of parties in this year. The Whigs won Tuscaloosa-Greensboro and Mobile districts, the fourth and first, respectively, as George W. Crabb and James Dellet defeated their Democratic opponents by close margins. Crabb's victory in no small measure was due to Whig pluralities in the Black Belt counties of his section. Dellet's success confirmed most opinion that the "first" would go Whig.[38] The Democrats won in the two northern districts and the Whigs in the two south-central regions. Thus, on the eve of the 1840 presidential campaign, Whig strength was established in the Mobile and Tuscaloosa districts and steadily increasing in the Montgomery precincts of Dixon Hall Lewis.

After 1839 Montgomery district Whigs were piqued at Lewis for his open support of Van Buren and were planning to run a candidate against him in 1841. In 1840, however, in state and local elections, a more immediate test of political power was forthcoming. The composition of the General Assembly was at stake, and it was the key to future Whig success. If Whigs could capture a majority in the state legislature, then Whiggery would control spoils and patronage for at least two years. And if they could carry Alabama for William H. Harrison, then they would have a mandate to take the "sacred" senate seat of William R. King.[39] Virginian John Tyler, Harrison's running mate, was especially popular because of his reputation as a states-rights advocate and his long public defense of slavery.[40]

Each party charged the other with being "soft on slavery" during the presidential canvass. A Democratic paper claimed that Harrison had favored "the whole of the surplus revenue appropriated for emancipation" and that he could see "no constitutional objection to its being thus applied." Harrison was also accused of "playing a double game to catch the votes of the abolitionists of the north and the slaveholders of the south."[41] Harrison's alleged association with abolitionists cost him ballots in some Black Belt precincts.[42]

East-central Whig newspapers insisted that Van Buren opposed the extension of slavery into new states or territories, and that he stood with the "Missouri restrictionists in 1819." Van Buren, one editorial asserted, believed Congress had the constitutional authority to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. Both parties proclaimed themselves to be Alabama's only bulwark against the "abolitionist reptile."[43]

By the spring of 1840 the press campaign had almost become a shooting war. Whig editor Charles C. Langdon of the Mobile Advertiser was so disturbed over the mysterious death of a fellow Whig that he and a large number of his followers charged into the office of the Democratic Mobile Register and threatened to destroy the building. The acting editor of the Register, H. Ballantyne, pulled out a pistol and forced Langdon and his crowd to leave the office.[44]

The Assembly election results in early August raised Whig expectations. Democrats retained a majority of only eight seats in the House and seven in the Senate.[45] These figures encouraged the Whigs because they had reduced the opposition's combined majority from forty-seven in the previous legislature to fifteen. "The Whigs of Alabama have done

nobly in this election," wrote the Alabama Journal and "will give a good account of themselves at the great battle in November."[46] The post-election meeting of Democrats in Tuscaloosa resolved to appoint a vigilance committee to watch the ballot boxes of every precinct in November.[47] Although the Democrats held a plurality in the Assembly, some party members felt that the Whigs had used fraud to manipulate the returns. Mobile district Democrats were especially agitated. After the Whigs had carried the "first" by a small majority, the Mobile Register declared that the "Democrats have done all that men could do against packed judges, false tickets, powerful exertions and a free flow of money."[48]

In the November election Van Buren garnered over sixty percent of the vote in nineteen counties carrying the entire area above central Alabama. He compiled a majority of 5,711 out of 62,279 votes cast. Most counties of southern Alabama were strongly against Van Buren, except Henry County which gave him a plurality of sixty-six; Washington County gave Van Buren a miniscule majority of thirteen and Clarke County only a 366 margin.[49] It was the "avalanch" counties of the north, particularly those of the north east, which gave him the state. The northern hill precincts were recognized by Democrats in the south as having determined the outcome. "All hail we say to north Alabama!" exclaimed the Democratic Alabama Beacon. "She has again spoken from her vallies [sic] and mountains, to the friends of Democracy in the South...we say--well done thou good and faithful servant."[50]

Fradulent voting practices were also discovered in this election. Six counties had a total vote surpassing the number of eligible voters, and the voter turnout percentage, ranging from 88 to 99 percent, was

high enough to arouse suspicion in twelve counties. Of the six counties with obvious irregularities, five were carried by Whigs, and in the case of the twelve suspect counties, eight had a Democratic majority. The clearly fraudulent counties were Lawrence, Barbour, Greene, Marengo, Shelby, and Tuscaloosa; and except Lawrence they were carried by Harrison.[51]

The Democratic leadership was well aware that its state-wide majority had been reduced to less than 55 percent.[52] After 1840 the Whigs prevailed in the first and fourth districts. Democrats feared that Montgomery--the third district--would also become a Whig bastion. Harrison, after all, took 65 percent of the third district vote. Consequently, a Dixon Hall Lewis defeat in 1841 would tip Alabama's Congressional balance to the Whigs (three Whigs to two Democrats). Lewis, however, seemed rather reflective and calculating about his future. In a letter to Benjamin Fitzpatrick, he poked fun at his colleague Senator Clement Clay whose term was also up in 1841: "The Judge [Clay] appears to be in a feeling of intense anxiety in relation to the political prospects of the Democratic Party in Alabama. I imagine his apprehension of Legislative instructions flit before him in dreams by night and thus unsettle his nerves by day...." Clay, he further stated, looked forward to Fitzpatrick's gubernatorial election because it would give "a strong spoke to the Democratic wheel in the southern part of the state, which could roll him through a long period of Senatorial service...." Realistically assessing his prospects, Lewis believed his Whig-Democratic coalition might be in jeopardy, and that he might "prefer to back out and quit a life of continued turmoil and agitation." He would "suffer as much as Clay <u>appears</u> now to suffer

until August only for the Presidency" and he cautiously added, "I shall without committing myself keep the game in my own hands." Returning to Clement Clay, his favorite foil, Lewis exposed cynical disregard for national party principle by ridiculing Clay as the "only rabid Democrat we have here and that not because he has been bitten but because he fears he may. He thinks the Whig maddog is snapping close to his heels in Alabama land...." Concluding, he advised Fitzpatrick on the art of political survival: "an opposition party ought to be [an] uncommitted party, and thus to draw in the strength of every disaffected faction."[53] These judgments guided him not only in 1840-41, but all during his singular quest for high political office.

Alabama Democrats began to make "arrangements" to forestall the dreaded Whig Congressional victories. In the closing days of the 1840 legislative session the Democratic majority devised a plan of electing representatives to Congress on a general ticket: Congressional contests would take place on a general state-wide ballot instead of by districts. This scheme was the creation of William L. Yancey, among others. Writing in the Wetumka Argus, he urged action that would enable Alabama to present a united front, one which would uphold "the rights of the southern states and of southern institutions against the fury of fanatics and the federalizing tendencies of the times." Yancey's home was in Coosa County on the edge of the Black Belt, and he recognized what impact such a general ticket would have on his neighborhood: "In three districts out of five [all Black Belt and southern counties] the Whigs have the power of electing a majority of Congressional representatives while actually a minority in the State. Thus, the State is misrepresented." He meant, of course,

that offices controlled by the Whigs in south-central Alabama would become Democratic after the general ticket passed.[54] Another rationalization for this obvious violation of the Federal constitution was that it could be used as a device to expose those who were not inclined to defending slavery.

Democratic editors insisted that the times were ominous for the south, since the nationalist and abolitionist strength of the next Congress was of "great magnitude." They urged southerners to elect only candidates who would be firm in defense of southern institutions. Governor Bagby invoked similar arguments in recommending passage of the general ticket in his annual message to the legislature in the fall 1840.[55]

The state senate passed the bill by a party vote of nineteen to twelve. Only one Democrat--from Wilcox County, which was a Black Belt Whig constituency--voted against the act.[56] House debate was intense, with the Whigs using every parliamentary tactic that was available. They even left the chamber when the question was called, and the Democratic whip then ordered two Whigs who were officially ill-at-home brought to the hall, thus obtaining a quorum and forcing a ballot. Whig representatives rushed back to their desks at this point, but the measure was passed.[57] "Outrage," cried the Whigs! George W. Crabb, the Whig congressional representative from the Tuscaloosa district whose seat was now doomed, characterized the general ticket as a "specie [sic] of modern ostracism concocted and recommended more with a view to serve the selfish ends of a clique of would be party leaders...than to promote the welfare of the state....[58] John C. Calhoun, on a visit to Montgomery, also condemned the ordinance.[59]

Three southern congressional districts were carried by the Whigs in 1841, but Alabama sent not two but five Democrats to Congress. Dixon Hall Lewis decided, after the passage of the general ticket, to "chance a canvass." His opponent Henry W. Hilliard outpolled him by a wide margin, but Lewis was returned to Washington. On December 17, 1841, however, six months before the federal apportionment act of June 25, 1842 (which provided that every state populous enough to be entitled to more than one representative must be divided by state legislatures into districts), the Alabama general ticket scheme was abandoned. Inspiration for nullifying the general ticket was motivated by a fear of federal intervention.[60]

The Democrats then turned to another stratagem on the advice of Benjamin Fitzpatrick, Democratic chief from Autauga County. The Democratic majority in the legislature proposed to reconstruct the Congressional districts following the 1840 census on the basis of the white population only.[61] Characteristically, William L. Yancey, while making his maiden effort to obtain a legislative seat, favored the "white basis." He insisted that he represented the "great mass of the people versus the aristocracy" and that the federal ratio had committed to "the hands of a slaveholding minority [the Whigs in the Black Belt] the whole power of the state."[62] Yancey was thus launching his political career by attacking the "slaveocracy," the same class whose interests a few years later he would defend with unparalleled vigor.

North Alabama would dominate the south-central sections under this new scheme. To prevent it, the Whigs hoped for support from Black Belt Democrats, who would no longer be allowed to count three-fifths of their slaves when representation was apportioned. Despite what they

would lose if the "white basis" went into effect, the Democrats of southern Alabama remained loyal to their upcountry partisans. They preferred a weakened Whiggery to equality of representation with the highland Democracy. According to one unsubstantiated source, an arrangement was made between Black Belt Democrats and party leaders in north Alabama. The former would furnish the guidance and the north would provide the numbers, thereby giving the Democrats control of the state.[63] The "white basis" bill divided Alabama into seven congressional districts according to the white population, with each district having one representative. To make the arrangement even more effective, many Whig counties were gerrymandered into two Congressional districts. The remaining Whig counties were merged into the other five districts to give additional advantage to the Democrats.[64]

In seeking popular support for the "white basis," Democrats used what had become their most persistent argument, namely, that the Whigs were aristocrats and far too moderate on the slavery question. Democratic editors implied and avowed that the "Democracy is the only reliable defender of southern institutions." Whigs were reduced to a defense of their "southernism," a defensive position that hurt them until their expiration in 1853.[65]

The "white basis" won House approval by a vote of forty-six to thirty-eight. Almost every northern county representative voted for it; the opposition included all the Whigs and six Black Belt Democrats who had significant Whig constituencies. Voting was along sectional-party lines in the upper house when it balloted fifteen to thirteen in favor of the measure.[66]

A Whig committee in the House formally protested: The "white basis" was in violation of the provisions of the federal constitution. Moreover, though not intending it, they charged that the ordinance aided and abetted abolitionism by reducing the political leverage of the slave holding regions. Now, the petition exclaimed, south Alabama would be forever under the control of the northern districts.[67] Their protest made no impression. In 1853, after several Whig victories in the Black Belt in 1851, the Democrats again moved against the Whigs. Under a new gerrymander law, Montgomery, always a stronghold of Whiggery despite the "white basis," was shifted along with two other Whig citadels, the town of Wetumpka in Coosa County and Talladega County--from the second into the third Congressional district. This shift absolutely neutralized the Montgomery Whigs. The effects of this law upon state Whiggery, together with the fragmentation of the national Whig party, encouraged many Alabama Whigs to join other political movements, primarily the Know-Nothings, in an effort to challenge the almost singular power of the Democrats. The slave issue crippled Alabama Whigs since it discouraged them from seeking a reversal in the federal courts: Bringing the "white basis" to judicial attention might have reopened another national slavery debate, a prospect that neither section of the Union desired.[68]

From 1843 to 1860, with the Whigs functionally impaired in Alabama, the most notable political struggles occurred within the Democratic party. Factionalism had existed since the 1820's. Dixon Hall Lewis, had until 1841, been a fusion congressman in the Montgomery district. It was common knowledge that he also coveted William R. King's senatorial seat. Meanwhile, William L. Yancey, who fancied Lewis's congressional chair,

habitually accused him of being a Whig. In addition, in the late thirites and early forties, some Democrats residing in Whig precincts saw that political survival required a change of party or catering to local Whig sentiment.

While wrangling over the "white basis" continued, another controversy further splintered the Democrats. The State Bank had come under attack during the late 1830's. It was charged with favoritism and graft. Bank funds had been loaned to Whigs and Democrats alike without adequate security. In addition to favoritism, assembly investigations also revealed sloppy business methods. One of the Bank's leading critics was the eager William L. Yancey still editor of the Wetumpka Argus.[69]

Yancey was joined by three other ambitious politicians: John Erwin, a lawyer-planter from Greene County; attorney John A. Campbell of Mobile; and youthful firebrand John Cochrane of Benton County. These Bank reformers supported Benjamin Fitzpatrick for Governor in 1841, and Fitzpatrick identified himself with the anti-Bank forces. Conversely, a representative group of Democrats felt that the anti-Bank charges were exaggerated. They collaborated with the Whig party in 1841, supporting Fitzpatrick's opponent, former Democrat James W. McLung. Interestingly, these pro-Bank Democrats were led by Dixon Hall Lewis and Nathaniel Terry of Limestone County. Lewis, seeking to resurrect his former Whig-Democrat coalition, joined Terry in calling upon Democrats to bolt and to support McLung, the "independent Whig candidate."[70]

Fitzpatrick defeated McLung decisvely and Yancey, Campbell, Erwin, and Cochrane won election to the lower House. The Bank reformers gained control of the House. They made Erwin speaker and appointed Campbell

chairman of the committee on Banks. Bank debates dominated the General Assembly for the next three years. It was, as well, a contest between John Cochrane and William Yancey as to who would lead the radical forces among the Bank redeemers. Cochrane went so far as to condemn all banks as "commercial volcanoes, constantly casting out their damning contents --sweeping prosperity from our land and desolating it of virtue itself."[71]

Whigs and pro-Bank Democrats opposed liquidation of the State Bank on the grounds that it would destroy business in Alabama. More to the point, however, Terry and many of his friends had made several loans from the Bank over the years. Likewise, some of the Bank's enemies incurred Bank debts. Yancey, for example, owed the Bank $599.00, and he was known to be distressed financially.[72] As Democrats fought among themselves, Fitzpatrick and some of the more moderate reformers became acutely aware that continual friction could create an unbridgeable gap in the party. Nevertheless, before Fitzpatrick left office, the branch banks were put in liquidation; and the parent Bank's charter, which expired on January 1, 1845, was not renewed. But pro-Bank men succeeded in passing a resolution in favor of nonliquidation before Fitzpatrick's term ended.[73]

Democrats in 1845 met in Tuscaloosa to choose a gubernatorial nominee. While anti-Bank delegates from the western counties were temporarily delayed in Mobile because of flooding there, pro-Bank representatives controlled the convention and nominated Nathaniel Terry. After the convention, anti-Bank Democrats refused to accept Terry and supported former Congressman Joshua L. Martin who had announced himself as a Bank reform candidate.

Elated by this further victory against the Democrats, the Whigs

did not nominate an opponent. Terry, author of the infamous general ticket, was considered anathema to some. But most Whigs "held their noses" and voted for Terry and the Bank. Martin triumphed, however, compiling a 5000 plurality. He won in the upcountry counties; while most precincts south of the Valley stood by Terry. Pro-Bank Democrats never forgave Martin for his opposition and he served only one term.[74]

Meanwhile, Dixon Hall Lewis realized a cherished goal when he was appointed to William R. King's Senate seat. The post became vacant when John Tyler appointed King minister to France. Governor Fitzpatrick did not let the inner party machinations of his brother-in-law--Dixon Hall Lewis--disturb him when he designated Lewis to King's post. This appointment caused John Quincy Adams to record in his diary: "twenty score of flesh have been transferred from slumber in the House to sleep in the Senate. He takes the place of William R. King, a gentle slavemonger, called by [Andrew] Jackson 'Miss Nancy'..."[75] Selected by the third district Democratic Convention, Yancey campaigned and was elected to replace Lewis. According to a charge made years later, Yancey was selected by securing the admission of unauthorized convention delegates committed to him.[76]

* * *

Alabama politics were in disarray on the eve of the Mexican War. The Whigs had been eliminated as a serious threat to Democratic hegemony; yet discord governed the Democrats. Highland and south-central Democrats, seeking representation for their respective regions, pugnaciously contested for high state and federal offices. Furthermore, southern-rights

sentiment predominated in the south-central Democracy. Its most strident spokesmen were in the Black Belt. Lewis deftly led the ultras--the Montgomery Chivalry--but even before his death in 1848 his leadership was being challenged by Yancey, the political outsider qua outsider.

Extreme southern rights became the raison d'être of Yancey and the other estranged "pols" who lived outside the perimeters of compromise. To Yancey, party regulars were "mere puppets in the show, made to wheel and dance as the party organists choose to grind the music, while others of ample ability and individuality are absorbed in their personal advancement, which invariably requires a compromise of Southern issues."[77] Yancey's condemnation of party loyalty was the judgment of a chronic political outsider who dreamed of becoming Alabama's chief party boss. He and other "hotspurs" accused the party faithfuls of being "soft on southernism" as they opportunistically sought high office.

The Democratic yeomanry of the upper valley were more loyal to the national party; their fidelity, in part, was anchored in an agricultural economy that was not dependent on slavery. They were, it follows, somewhat hesitant to stretch their "southernism" to the point of secession. There also were Democratic clusters of moderation in south-central Alabama led by King, Fitzpatrick, and John Forsyth, the former minister to Mexico and editor of the Mobile Register.

Mr. Wilmot's resolution triggered a state-wide struggle. Democratic regulars would spend the next fourteen years on the defensive, as disruptionists sought to wreck an already brittle polity.

CHAPTER III

OF MR. WILLIAM L. YANCEY AND THE WILMOT PROVISO: HUNKER VS. CHIVALRY

The Mexican War produced the Wilmot Proviso, which in turn escalated the national slavery debate to proportions that threatened the cohesion of the major parties. This proviso, which declared that slavery was to be prohibited in the whole territory to be acquired from Mexico, passed the House of Representatives. Thus the lower House indicated its readiness to approve a program which the south deemed intolerable; and it was only prevented from becoming law by the failure of the senate to act.

Already tested by state sectionalism, the bank controversy, and the sheer opportunism of its politicians, Alabama's Democratic party was in disarray when it confronted the restriction issue. Moreover, the territorial question vaulted into national prominence a gadfly--William L. Yancey--whose career would be devoted to using the slavery issue as a means of gaining power for himself. According to his contemporaries William L. Yancey's role in the southern-rights movement was pivotal. For example, the South Carolina Unionist Benjamin F. Perry observed that "Yancey was the arch fiend in breaking up the...union."[1]

For generations, William L. Yancey has been portrayed as the personification of secessionism in Alabama, although, as we shall see, there were Alabamians more consistent in their disunionism. Narratives about "the young Demosthenes" generally note how he towers above most fire-eaters. Woodrow Wilson declared in 1902 that Yancey "split the ranks of the Democratic Party at Charleston, made the election of Douglas

impossible, and brought Lincoln in." Calhoun has been called the logician of secession; Yancey, "the voice of emotion." Or, as Joseph Hergesheimer remarked, Yancey was "the pillar of words."[2]

It is difficult to explain Yancey's behavior or to assess his motivation. Was it only principle--the rights of slavery in the territories? Fredrick Jackson Turner attributed his responses to the frontier, to the climate of the deep South, and to "the hot blood of its sons." Ulrich B. Phillips asserted that Yancey's South Carolina origins determined his behavior. W. J. Cash saw him as an archtype Southerner: "the whole story of Southern politics from Andrew Jackson down--through the Yanceys..." to the "Klan...has been one of consistent demogoguerery... of the South in full gallop against the Yankee, and even more, the Negro." To other southern writers, however, Yancey reacted to an overbearing north; he was defending an oppressive and exploited south.[3] It may be rewarding to probe Yancey's early years in order to glean what prompted so many seemingly diverse evaluations.

William Lowndes Yancey was born in his grandfather's home "The Aviary," in Warren County, Georgia. His mother, a Pennsylvanian had moved to Georgia with his father in 1796. His father, Benjamin Yancey, an attorney from Abbeville, South Carolina, was a contemporary and confidant of John C. Calhoun. He died in August 1817, leaving his widow with the three-year old William and a baby, Benjamin Cudworth. Mrs. Caroline Yancey was not only known for her good looks but, like her husband and her own mother for a bad temper as well.[4] Mrs. Yancey left "The Aviary" and settled in Hancock County, Georgia. Young William was enrolled in nearby Mount Zion Academy and came under the tutelege of

Nathen Sidney Beman, a teacher who had migrated from the north in 1812. He is reported to have been a strict disciplinarian who did not hesitate to inflict corporal punishment. Part of the second great awakening, Beman was known for his arrogantly pious religious harangues as well as for intellectual eloquence.[5]

Enchanted with Caroline Yancey's beauty, Beman commenced a courtship of the widow which in 1821 culminated in marriage. By a complex set of circumstances, Beman gained control of the Yancey inheritance and years later was accused of spending all the money on himself and his children of an earlier marriage. In 1822 after selling three slaves for $700--it can not be determined whether the bondsmen were owned by him or by Mrs. Yancey--he made preparations to move his family north. Years later, the Yanceys would accuse Beman of being an abolitionist who had once sold slaves. After accepting a Ministry at the First Presbyterian Church in Troy, New York, Beman was converted to anti-slavery by Charles Grandison Finney and became a friend of Theodore Dwight Weld, Lewis Tappan, and Joshua Leavitt.[6]

What effect these changes had on nine-year old William Yancey is unknown. A different climate from Georgia, a stepfather of stern manner, life in a growing industrial city, rather than rural, slave-dominated south--these events and forces must have affected him. Unfortunately, however, most of Yancey's personal correspondence disappeared at the turn of the century so one may only surmise about the effect of this move northward.

Caroline Yancey Beman, we do know, carried her volatile temperament with her. The hired girls at her Troy home were particularly upsetting.

Her anger at them would prompt Beman's intervention, producing husband-wife encounters. Her two children by Beman also became objects of her wrath in moments of distress. These outbreaks invariably led to more hostility between husband and wife. Beman, during these "bad times," would become "cold, arrogant, and sarcastic," and proclaim that Caroline was mad or lacked virtue. Sometimes he would threaten divorce.[7] Thus, William Yancey's formative years were spent in an unsettled and strained household. That household also throbbed with revivalist religious doctrines, and Yancey later admitted the influence of his stepfather's missionary zeal.[8]

Yancey was a devoted son and was not in the least ambivalent about his love for his mother.[9] Beman provided him with a good education. He attended some of the best academies, and entered Williams College at sixteen. While at college, Yancey co-edited a literary magazine, became a member of the school's oratorical club, and studied with the renowned rhetorician Mark Hopkins before entering his senior year.[10] For a variety of reasons, including Beman's financial difficulties, Yancey left Williams in 1833. Hostility between Yancey's mother and stepfather continued to grow, and it almost brought about a separation in 1833.[11]

Rather than return to Troy, Yancey settled with his father's relatives in South Carolina. At about this time Nathan Beman was emerging as a major anti-slavery advocate in western New York. He held biracial services in his church and started a primary school for blacks in the church basement. In point of fact, he played a pivotal role in driving a wedge in the Presbyterian church nationally over slavery.[12] His increasing abolitionist sentiments only fueled the fires of resentment

between husband and wife.

Both parties agreed that a brief separation might be beneficial. Yancey's mother left for a visit to South Carolina and while there wrote a bitter indictment of abolitionism to her husband.[13] Caroline also sent William all of Beman's letters while she sojourned in the South. She even admitted that Beman beat her, but later denied it.[14] After his mother returned to Troy, William Yancey entered the fray and, according to her, he wrote to Beman "so dreadful a letter that I had to burn it and not let [Beman] see it."

William Yancey and his brother Ben, infuriated at Beman's treatment of their mother mailed him a provocative pro-slavery broadside. They were also incensed that the abolitionist Beman had formerly sold three slaves. Preparing to publish the evidence in a Troy, New York, newspaper, they even obtained a copy of the bill of sale.[15]

The intrusion of the slavery issue into the Beman marriage probably hardened William Yancey against his stepfather. His attacks on abolitionists, especially after 1846, became more vicious than those of most fellow southerners; and his hatred of them was in part a manifestation of his deep resentment for Nathan Beman.

In 1834 in South Carolina Yancey became a law apprentice to Benjamin F. Perry, one of his father's old cronies. Perry had become a staunch Unionist during the nullification debate. His student, no doubt influenced by him, entered the struggle on the Union side. Yancey, becoming editor of the Greenville Mountaineer, editorially attacked the nullification movement and John C. Calhoun. The controversy aroused passions on both sides--and these were transmitted to Yancey. On one occasion he and a

fellow law apprentice ended a heated disagreement over the tariff by drawing their pistols. Only Perry's intervention blocked a duel.[16] Perhaps it is no coincidence that Yancey's Unionism began to wane about the same time his relationship with his abolitionist stepfather grew bitter.

On August 13, 1835, Yancey married Sarah Caroline Earle, the daughter of a wealthy Greenville planter. He moved to Dallas County, Alabama, to take up cotton planting there in 1836. Two years later, while visiting Greenville, he killed his wife's uncle R. M. Earle during a scuffle. Sentenced to a one year jail term, and fined $1500, he served only three months when Governor Patrick Noble commuted his sentence and two-thirds of his fine.[17]

Back in Alabama, Yancey rented a plantation near Cahaba, and, with his brother, bought the Wetumpka Argus in 1839. Yancey also bought a farm near Wetumpka but had to suspend planting when most of his slaves were mysteriously poisoned.[18] (A neighboring plantation manager who had had an altercation with Yancey's overseer was suspected of committing the deed.) He then left planting, opened up a law office, and began to make public speeches on both local and national issues. Almost immediately he won recognition as a "spellbinder." Yancey's frontier listeners were enthralled with his eloquent rhetoric. His oratorical ability and camp-meeting methods now gave him a chance to be something more than an ordinary lawyer-politician. It is difficult to determine to what extent this skill stemmed from having been brought up in a household dominated by evangelical Christianity.

During the "Hard Cider" canvass of 1840, Yancey spoke at barbecues and public gatherings for Martin Van Buren. Elected to Alabama's lower House in 1841 and to the upper House in 1843, he gained public notoriety by supporting liberal reforms. He came out for free public education, fair legal rights for married women, representation apportioned on the basis of the white population only, and bank and prison reform.[19]

In 1844 he was elected to Congress to fill the unexpired term of Dixon Hall Lewis, the leading Calhounite in Alabama. Reelected in 1845, Yancey served until September 1846 when he resigned. His first debate in Congress over Texas annexation was with Thomas Clingman, a Whig representative from North Carolina. Yancey's vicious personal attack on Clingman led to a bloodless duel.[20] This was the first of numerous instances of Yancey's ungovernable temper and emotional harangues triggering a passionate clash. Alexander H. Stephens, the distinguished Whig representative from Georgia, fell victim to one of Yancey's forays. In May 1846, Stephens criticized the Administration's war policy. In an editorial appearing in the Congressional Globe, Yancey, the self-appointed advocate of Polk, placed Stephens among the "horde of abolitionists who infest this Hall, condemning the cause of his own country." Yancey had earlier opposed war over Oregon; now, however, anyone who opposed war with Mexico was a traitor. After Stephens read Yancey's polemic, the two southern Congressmen had a heated exchange in Congress, and only the intervention of two other Congressmen prevented a duel.[21]

Yancey did nothing in Congress to inspire a positive assessment. He helped to widen the gulf between southern Congressmen and those in the north and west. He was a continual source of annoyance. He had

scant knowledge of parliamentary procedure and he was forever making errors in form. Nor were his proposals ever enacted. James Polk never included him among those Congressmen with whom he discussed party policy. In sum Yancey's stature derived from his insistance upon southern rights, though according to Alabama Whig Henry Hilliard, the Calhounites were foolish and shortsighted to put so much trust in him.[22]

When Yancey resigned his Congressional post, he explained his reasons in a letter to his constituents: financial distress and pressing family responsibilities determined his decision. These factors unquestionably did play a role, but so did great disenchantment with the political process, especially as it affected southern delegates. For in his explanation Yancey insisted that northern Democrats got the spoils, and southern Democrats were duped into paying for them. He deplored the compromises that Congressmen were always forced to make. Thus, he lamented that few southern Congressmen would adhere to principles--"the only criteria of an honest politician." Yancey's address was seen by John A. Winston, an upcountry Democrat and perennial Yancy antagonist, as a call for destroying the Democratic party and creating in its stead, a purely southern-rights party. Yancey admitted that there were some northern Democrats who did "hold the right views." David Wilmot was one; and Yancey told how he fought the entire Pennsylvania delegation with that one "brilliant exception."[23] This judgment preceded Wilmot's proviso.

Before giving up his Congressional seat, Yancey had begun collaborating with Dixon Hall Lewis. Moreover, after championing southern rights while in Congress, Yancey had won the esteem of John C. Calhoun.

The South Carolina nullifier recommended to the Lewis-led bloc of southern extremists in Montgomery--"the Chivalry"--that they procure for Yancey the editorship of the Mobile Register, an anti-Calhoun paper. It was edited and owned by Thaddeus Sanford, a Democratic party regular and antagonist of Dixon Hall Lewis and his Montgomery faction. This faction agreed with Lewis' estimate: "it is a most corrupt and unsound sheet, deeply inimical to every sound man in the party."[24]

But the Alabama Calhounites were unsuccessful and Yancey returned to the law. He moved his family to Montgomery and went into partnership with John A. Elmore, whose family, together with Robert Barnwell Rhett, led an extremist states-rights clique in South Carolina.[25] Thus, by 1846 Yancey had become thoroughly identified with Alabama's southern-rights ultras. And there was no better place to begin his anti-party campaign than Montgomery, home of the "Chivalry." The country wagons that always filled Montgomery's main square brought the two products that embodied the forthcoming fire-eaters' crusade: the cotton bale and the slave sitting on top of it.

David Donald has attempted to define fire-eating motives. According to him, Yancey was typical of rabid proslavery ideologues. They were unhappy men with severe emotional problems catalyzed by their estrangement from the established southern social structure. Though ambitious and hardworking, all failed in the careers normally open to enterprising southerners: namely, planting, the law, and politics. Few of them, Donald asserts, had any large personal stake in the system they defended. Most looked back with longing to an earlier day when their ancestors, men like themselves, had been leaders in the south.[26] Yancey,

then, was alienated because he could not find a niche in southern life commensurate with the elite status of his ancestors. Clearly, Yancey's life reflects some of the tensions that Donald describes. His grandfathers had fought in the Revolutionary War. His mother's father had helped establish the first ironworks in Georgia. Yancey's own father was a law-partner of John C. Calhoun and wielded some political influence in western South Carolina.[27] Yancey tried planting, newspaper publishing, politics, and the law. But Yancey's "status anxiety" was not unique in a frontier society in which men relentlessly sought fame and fortune. Yancey's experiences of adolescence also were of great consequence in establishing his later conduct. His formative years, spent in the volatile household of a short-tempered mother and a stern stepfather, surely had an effect on him not recognized by Donald.

* * *

When William L. Yancey returned to Montgomery, he found state Democrats bitterly divided over state and National issues. As the preceding chapter indicated, the Alabama Democracy was split into two warring factions. The Hunker segment--national party loyalists--followed the lead of Senator William R. King and other Democratic regulars residing in south and north Alabama. The upcountry yeomen provided the numbers, and loyalists like King contributed the leadership. Jacksonian nationalism was the hallmark of this faction and they looked to the national Democratic party for guidance. The upstate Democratic farmers lived in regions where slavery and the plantation system were relatively weak. Thus extreme southern rights never flourished in the hill country. These

party regulars held the power in the state party and controlled federal patronage and spoils. When the territorial question appeared, their policy, not always successful, was to avoid fragmentation.

The other clique--"the Chivalry"--was led by Congressman Dixon Hall Lewis. The center of their activity was Montgomery, located in the eastern Black Belt, and Mobile. Most members of the "Chivalry" were devotees of John C. Calhoun, and many of them were natives of South Carolina. Like the South Carolina nullifier, they defined southern rights as the preservation of racial domination at home and slavery's expansion westward. By the late 1830's, for Calhoun and his followers, states rights had come to mean southern rights exclusively. Moreover, similar to Calhoun, many Chivalry men desired to turn the national Democratic party into a vehicle only for the interests of slavery. In this respect they supported Calhoun's attempts to convert planter Whigs to the southern-rights Democratic standard and thus elevate the South Carolinian to the Presidency. Most of the Chivalry were men of second-rank in Alabama politics. Some, like Calhoun, had yeoman origins and became spokesmen for aristocratic landowners. The vast majority were young lawyers, minimal slaveholders, and persistent office-seekers who capitalized on southern rights in their assault on the Hunker leadership in the state. Many of these ultras were men of flexible principle who would shift from extreme to moderate "southernism" depending upon the public mood.

Not long after his return came Yancey's first act of disloyalty to the Democratic party. With his resignation as representative in Washington, the Congressional district was without representation. A

special run-off election was called for, and both the Whigs and Democrats nominated candidates. The Democrats under Hunker control selected attorney James L. Cottrell, a state senator, from 1838 to 1841; the Whigs chose Samuel Beman, half brother of William Yancey. Samuel Beman had left Troy for Alabama because of an unhappy relationship with his father. He considered himself a pro-slavery Whig and joined the east-central Whig nullifiers, an extreme southern-rights faction in the Alabama Whig Party. Opportunistic Montgomery Whig managers hoped some of Yancey's popularity with eastern Black Belt voters would rub off on his half brother. Yancey campaigned vigorously for Beman, but Cottrell won by a scant thirty-eight votes.[28]

The Democrats took no reprisals against Yancey for his brief apostacy because they were too preoccupied with other issues, especially the nominee for Governor in 1847. Party papers from both northern and southern Alabama expressed a desire to dump the incumbent, Governor Joshua Martin, because of his success as an independent running against Nathaniel Terry, the party convention's nominee in 1845. "We go in for a Democratic State Convention sometime in the spring of 1847," announced the Huntsville Democrat organ of the influential Clay family, "But when the candidate is fairly chosen, we will support him. We care not whether he be from north or south Alabama, we care not whether he may be considered one of 'the Chivalry' or an 'old Hunker.'" Editor J. Withers Clay insisted upon an open convention controlled by the "People (not a few selfish demogugues)," and he referred to Martin as one of those "disappointed politicians who would sacrifice their party to elevate themselves...."[29] From central Alabama came a call for party unity by "extinguishing finally

and forever, this Martin and Terry feud by selecting a candidate, one not closely identified with it."[30] Black Belt Democrats expressed dismay at the control exerted by upstate "hunkers" over the party. Crawford Jackson, a planter-lawyer from Autauga County (which he represented in the state legislature), queried, "Who must beat Martin? We [south Alabama] have yielded to north Alabama once...are we now under any obligation to give them the candidate again, when we have so many worthys ...in the South?"[31] "It is an extraordinary fact," grumbled Thaddeus Sanford, "that with a majority...and a triumphant accomplishment of all our great measures, we are torn into gragments and seriously threatened to be fragmented by a want of confidence and trust in each other or in the powers that be...."[32] Alabama's majority party then was still trying to mend its wounds from the 1845 campaign debacle at the time that the dispute over territorial expansion increased in bitterness.

It was the Texas question that led to the impending territorial imbroglio. Opposition to annexation appeared at once, especially in the north. It was based on an objection to the extension of slavery westward. Many northerners complained that the economically backward, feudalistic south dominated the national government. Southern votes had hindered the nation's economic growth, and an increasing number of northerners wanted to keep the territories of the south-west and far-west free for white labor. Thus, the growing popularity of restrictionism had intensified northern criticism of slavery. Consequently, many slaveholders were outraged at the growing opinion in the north that southern "property" be excluded from the national territory. Ironically, certain southern Democrats and Whigs also opposed Texas inclusion because they

knew what the slavery issue would do to national party unity. Likewise, some Whig planters believed that excessive southern agitation of the territorial question could ultimately cause the creation of a monolithic northern party dedicated to the destruction of slavery in the south. In view of this feeling, immediate annexation was not attempted, and Presidents Van Buren and Harrison avoided the explosive issue. However, a complete reversal of policy came about when Abel P. Upshur replaced Daniel Webster as Secretary of State in the Tyler Administration. Pro-slavery expansionism became the driving force of the State Department and John Tyler's replacement, Tennessian James K. Polk, was a determined expansionist.

Even before 1846 Alabama favored slavery expansion. To many in both parties, Texas seemed indispensable for maintaining the balance of political power between the free and slave states. For example, the Southern Advocate, a strong Whig paper, asked: "Would there be more danger to the Union by remaining as we are, the South to become at no distant day a prey to the iron and steady encroachments of Northern bigotry and fanaticism, or by adding to our territory to secure ourselves such a balance of power as will teach moderation to our persecutors and disarm a false philanthropy of its incendiary effects?" The Democratic Jacksonville Republican claimed that "if Texas were annexed to the Union, the wealth, the power, the respectability and the glory of our country and her free institutions would be greatly increased....The South would acquire the strength to put their domestic institutions beyond the reach of all assailments."[33] Secessionist talk was expressed during the Texas debates. Ultras demanded annexation as a sine qua non of the south's

remaining in the Union. Lawrence County residents resolved in a meeting that "the possession of Texas is infinitely more important to us of this section of the Union than a longer connection and friendship with the Northern states...." But in neighboring Franklin County a gathering of the Henry Clay Association, while favoring annexation concluded "that the sentiment 'Texas or Disunion' is revolutionary in its tendency, and destructive of the principles of our government"; and it decried such sentiment.[34]

David Wilmot introduced his proviso in August 1846. The resolution passed the House but was rejected by the Senate. The Wilmot Proviso served notice on the south that northerners intended to halt the spread of slavery; southerners regarded it as an attack on slavery itself. The Proviso's doctrine was reintroduced in Congress whenever the territorial question emerged. In 1849, for example, the House voted to organize the territories of New Mexico and California on the Wilmot basis; and again the Senate prevented slavery restriction from becoming law.

Alabama newspapers were so filled with news of the Mexican War that they gave the Wilmot Proviso scant notice. When the press finally turned its attention to the Proviso, it responded in moderate tones. "The Wilmot Proviso is an amendment struck by the Northern democracy at the South," asserted a Whig paper, "a blow from the hands of those who were said to be her 'natural allies' upon whom she could rely for assistance and protection." The editorial predicted eventual defeat of the measure.[35] North Alabama's weighty Huntsville Democrat recommended a return to the "spirit of compromise between north and south." Editor J. W. Clay requested that both sections recognize "a fundamental difference

between their social organizations, which is acknowledged by the federal constitution, so neither of these societies ought to claim wholly to exclude the other by Federal legislation...from a common acquisition gained by common sacrifice and burden."[36]

But feelings hardened by the end of September. A group of ultras in Russelville, Franklin County, denounced the Proviso. Their meeting was of consequence in that one of its key resolves became part of the 1848 "Alabama Platform." (Although the Alabama Platform has been attributed to William L. Yancey, neither he nor his collaborators ever acknowledged their debt to the Russelville ultras.) This resolution made candidacy for high office such as the presidency, contingent on a pledge to uphold southern rights. Failing to take the pledge would deprive the candidate of southern support and votes.[37] Of further significance was the composition of the Russelville resolution committee: The chairman, George W. Lane, later became conspicuous as an uncompromising Unionist, while two members of the group, David Hubbard and Leroy Pope Walker, led the north Alabama southern-rights radicals in the late 1850's.[38] The Russelville meeting had political as well as historical import. It took place in the fifth congressional district and was directed against the anti-Calhounite representative of that district, George S. Houston. Sectional agitation, then, became a device to question Houston's "southernism." To be sure, Houston had voted against the Proviso while in Congress, but he consistently rejected the leadership of Calhoun and his followers. Hubbard and L. P. Walker were notorious Calhounites, and the former also had a reputation as a "sly political opportunist." Beaten by Houston in 1845, Hubbard raised the Proviso issue in preparation for another

try at Houston's seat in 1847.[39] Almost from its inception, therefore, the territorial question became another scheme for ambitious politicians. Houston, meanwhile, seriously considered elevating his sights by running for the governorship or for the United States Senate.

In the early spring of 1847 both parties prepared for the forthcoming local elections. At stake were local legislative and federal congressional seats, the governorship, and both senatorial posts. Because the electoral power of Alabama Whigs was in the densely populated slave counties of central Alabama, they were crippled by the "white basis" which had destroyed the foundation of their control. Consequently, the Whigs were divided over running a gubernatorial candidate. "The election of a Whig Governor is clearly impossible at present," claimed the Eutaw Whig. But other Whig papers, calling for a convention, maintained that Democratic factionalism could mean a Whig victory. An east-central Alabama journal recommended that Whigs reject a convention "and let the Democrats have the field to themselves. They claim to be 'Harmonious' and we long for the Music to while away the dullness of summer."[40] The Whigs did not hold a convention but in the late spring announced (district by district) support for Nicholas Davis, a planter-lawyer from north Alabama, for Governor.[41]

As Whigs made preparations for the summer canvass, the Democrats planned to meet in Montgomery in May to select their gubenatorial nominee. A party majority had decided not to endorse Governor Joshua Martin. In 1845, he ran on a Bank reform platform against the convention's choice Nathaniel Terry, a pro-Bank candidate. Most delegates expected a titanic struggle between the two major cliques: the "Chivalry"--the Calhounites led by Dixon Hall Lewis--and the "Hunkers"--national Democratic Party

loyalists led by William R. King. The "Chivalry" by the mid-1840's had broadened its base. These ultra "southernists," operating out of Montgomery, now included John A. Campbell, Joseph Lesesne, and Percy Walker, all "new Men" from Mobile.[42] Many of these Calhounites were interested in furthering their careers. They were young lawyers, and becoming part of a factional movement could provide a means of political advancement. Moreover, knowing John C. Calhoun and Dixon Hall Lewis was politically useful.

On May 3, 1847, these two factions came together in Montgomery to choose a gubernatorial candidate and respond to the slavery restrictionists. The "Chivalry" wanted to take an unequivocal position against Wilmot, but they knew that in order to get their way some fence-mending was required. Moreover, Senator Lewis's sights were fixed on the December 1847 General Assembly nomination for United States Senator and any trading in May could improve his chances later.

"Chivalry" tactics became apparent at the opening session when James Belser of Montgomery introduced a resolution calling for the nomination of William R. King as the presiding officer of the convention. King was elected by acclamation. The "Chivalry" had purposed selected King, hoping to placate the "Hunkers," but a majority of the latter felt obligated to their 1845 gubernatorial choice of Nathaniel Terry. Then William L. Yancey, acting for the "Chivalry," proposed Reuben Chapman of Marshall county as the gubernatorial candidate.[43] Despite the Hunkers' attempts, Chapman won after nineteen ballots.[44] The convention turned next to the territorial issue. Yancey helped write the resolutions which demanded that all Democrats withhold their vote from any presidential

candidate "who shall not, previous to the election [1848] distinctly, unequivocally, and publicly avow his opposition to federal interference with the question of slavery in the territories." Opposition to measures like the Wilmot Proviso, the resolve further declared, was the duty of every slaveholding state. The delegates also approved the "advanced position" set forth in the Russelville meeting of the previous September. All these items received unanimous endorsement.[45] After adjournment and even before the Democrats returned home, opposition to the party's gubernatorial selection developed.

Governor Joshua Martin, who did not attend the convention, declared that "in order to secure my defeat a convention is attempted to be resorted to, although uncalled for...by the people." Martin said two-thirds of the county representatives were not there and threatened to run again --"once more against the 'King Caucus' nominee."[46] But, by 1847 Martin had become a victim of the "new harmony" between the party factions, and so he lost most if not all the renegade, south-Alabama support he had commanded in 1845.

Party harmony, however, faded within a month. It fractured on the issue of whether the Democratic 1848 presidential aspirant would be acceptable to the "Chivalry." Martin Van Buren, frequently mentioned as the Democratic candidate, was still supported by Alabama Senator A. P. Bagby. Among most of the contenders for the 1848 Democratic presidential nomination there was a desire to give the Wilmot Proviso the "go by." All the Democratic hopefuls, except Van Buren and Calhoun, wanted to neutralize the slavery issue. However, hostility to the extension of slavery into the territories was widespread among northern

Democrats in 1847. New Yorker Van Buren, for example, was disqualified from running because Democrats from his state took a rigid pro-Wilmot Proviso stand. To Alabamians most of the Democratic party hopefuls--James Buchanan, Lewis Cass, and Levi Woodbury--seemed too uncertain on slavery.

Congressman Franklin Bowden from the Fourth District assessed the chances of some of the Democrats mentioned and also examined the perennial Whig challenger Henry Clay. The Whig party in 1847 was splintered into an anti-slavery conscience wing and a southern cotton faction. The leaders of the Party sought a man with no political record or political views on the territorial question. Democrat Bowden claimed that Henry Clay "is against Polk, against the War, against territory, against further extension of slavery and for anything and everything that by any manner of means may lift him into the Presidential seat. But I think he will...stagger and fall as he did in 1844. Mr. Van Buren...on the slavery question is rather too mum. His political days are numbered." Bowden predicted the forthcoming storm by noting "the young democracy (the fermentors of the masses) [the Chivalry] will want a younger and more racey leader--either Woodbury, Dallas or Buchanan." He did not object to any of them if they were "right on the slavery question."[47]

By June some Alabama Calhounites began flirting with the idea of endorsing Zachary Taylor. A nonpartisan meeting for him was held in Mobile. Resolutions applauding Taylor as the people's candidate for the presidency were passed unanimously amid "thunders of approval." John A. Campbell of the "Chivalry" addressed the delegates and denounced party loyalty. He called on the people to take the matter of electing

their rulers into their own hands. "No man can view the present condition of relations between the northern and southern states without apprehension for the safety of our government." Admitting that he knew nothing of Taylor's opinions on expansion, Campbell, nonetheless, summoned Alabamians to support him for the Presidency as a means of suppressing the sectional conflict. Taylor, Campbell emphasized, was a southerner, a planter, and a war hero, three positive qualities.[48]

Like Campbell, Yancey showed party disloyalty by speaking at a pro-Taylor gathering outside Montgomery in the following month. He condemned "this foul spell of party which...binds and divides and distracts the South." He asked, "Who could lead the South out of Party loyalism? If he shall be, as I fondly hope, Zachary Taylor, honored be his name!"[49] In the spring of 1847, Dixon Hall Lewis parted with Calhoun on the Mexican War and soon toyed with the possibility of supporting Taylor. Writing to Balie Peyton, former Tennessee Congressman and friend of Taylor, "in regard to certain questions in which the States-Rights party [has] a deep interest," he expressed a hope that Taylor would take a public stand against the Wilmot Proviso. Peyton replied evasively. Lewis was dismayed, and when news of his Taylorism leaked out, he publicly criticized Taylor.[50]

Taylor and slavery in the territories obviously played a significant role in the gubernatorial campaign. Whig managers tried to use Taylor and the Proviso to exploit the hostilities of the "Chivalry" toward the "Hunkers." They believed that the Democratic ultras could be lured into Taylor's camp. Whig gubernatorial candidate Nicholas Davis came out for Taylor, and accused Reuben Chapman, his Democratic opponent, of being anti-Taylor. In fact, during his Congressional tenure, Chapman

had voted to uphold Polk in his clash with Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott.[51] Davis equated support of Taylor with southern loyalty, stressing Taylor's Louisiana background and his ownership of slaves. But Taylor was publicly silent, not even declaring party preference, which caused one upstate Democratic party regular to proclaim "I am not one of the number willing to vote for old Taylor without knowing anything of his principles." He praised Taylor's generalship, "but I am not disposed ...to make him President without at least knowledge of the principles which would control his administration...."[52]

During the campaign, a new extreme southern-rights clique made its appearance in the eastern Black Belt. It held an initial, nonpartisan, meeting on June 19, 1847. Thus was born the "Eufaula Regency" of Barbour County. Those who attended later became some of Alabama's most consistent southern-rights agitators. They passed a series of resolves urging presidential candidates of both parties to uphold slaveholders' rights in the territories.[53]

Meanwhile, two bitter congressional battles were taking place in the upcountry as election day August 2 approached. Calhoun Democrats and southern rights in the territories were involved in each. In the highland fifth district, ultra David Hubbard contested Hunker incumbant George Houston. Because Houston's district was an area of few slaves and subsistance forming, Union sentiment tended to predominate. Hubbard demanded an explanation for Houston's vote to exclude slavery from Oregon. At the time of the 1845 Oregon vote all of Alabama's Congressmen, including William L. Yancey, voted to restrict slavery in Oregon along lines specified by the Missouri Compromise. In point of fact, in 1845,

before the territorial dispute became central, Robert Barnwell Rhett, Yancey, and Houston had voted for a bill which would have organized Oregon without slavery and without the 36-30 principle.[54] Unlike other southerners, Houston--representing the views of his yeomen constituency --voted for a more flexible public land policy. His support of cheap land and his nationalist policies won substantial acclaim in his district. Thus Hubbard was not able to gain enough votes with allegations of Houston's deficient "southernism."[55]

In the other Congressional race in the upcountry seventh district, "Hunker" Williamson R. W. Cobb defeated a Calhounite. One of the few Alabama politicians who forthrightly used class appeals in his campaigns, Cobb would open his speeches with a song, "Uncle Sam is rich enough to give us all a farm." He attacked the "Planter Aristocracy" and promised to introduce a bill which would secure indigent whites from foreclosures for debt. Understandably, given his district's yeomen and low slave concentration composition, his adversary's attempts to raise the slavery--southern-rights issue did not carry comparable appeal.[56]

The Democrats took the five Congressional districts in north and west-central Alabama, and the Whigs took the Montgomery and Mobile districts of east-central and south Alabama. Two of those who were among the Democrats elected--Sampson W. Harris from the slave dense Black Belt third district and Samual W. Inge of the plantation fourth district which overlapped the Black Belt--stumped as radical southern nationalists.

Reuben Chapman defeated Whig Nicholas Davis by a wide margin for the governorship. Moreover, the Democrats carried the state senate and the lower House by a plurality of thirty seats.[57] During the fall and

winter session of the legislature preparations were made for the senatorial elections. But the questions as to who would be the Democratic 1848 presidential nominee still caused factional disputes.

Governor-elect Chapman privately confessed his willingness to support Taylor if "his principles were sound."[58] In so declaring, Chapman voiced the feeling of many Democrats in Alabama and across the south. They would vote for a Whig if he was sound on slavery. Chivalry members, for example, lamented party loyalty and talked of fracturing the national parties for thwarting southern unity.[59] "The South has no hope in any party...," one ultra pronounced. "The sooner our people learn this, the sooner they will find themselves standing on firm ground."[60] In November a nonpartisan gathering convened in Montgomery for the purpose of constructing a Taylor electoral ticket. Both William L. Yancey and Whig Congressman Henry Hilliard sat on the platform. Taylor, Hilliard declared, "is the only southern man who could be elected" and, he predicted Taylor would run as a Whig.[61]

By mid-November all attention focused on the upcoming Senate election. One Democratic party paper alleged "a conspiracy between Whigs and a portion of the democracy, for the immediate benefit of one of the present candidates, and for the ultimate purpose of securing a Whig Senator in 1849"; and Dixon Hall Lewis was singled out as the "wire puller." The plot, claimed the editor, was concocted by the Whigs only to sow "distrust, dissatisfaction, dissension, division among democrats.... This is the sum total of Whig tactics in this state, here is the maxim--"We cannot beat the democrats in solid phalanx, let us undermine their confidence in their best leaders, and we beat them in detail."[62] More

charges appeared as the legislative caucus approached. Yancey was accused, by a Whig editor, of hypocrisy for denouncing party conventions when he resigned his Congressional seat but "we still see him drawing kindly in the administration harness. Nay, he and other gentlemen of the Lewis clique were prominant in saddling us with Governor Chapman." The editor predicted that Lewis would be re-elected for six years. He stated that Lewis had gained favors by his alliance with the Polk administration: "observe the number of offices [federal jobs] held now by the Lewis connexion [sic] in this State...can anyone give the exact amount of public money that has gone into their pockets recently? Hadn't we better give them titles and pensions at once?"[63]

Stories persisted that Lewis and his bloc had "arranged things" with the Whigs. A Hunker correspondent said, "I was told that the friends of Mr. Lewis had, intimated that they would not object to seeing the Hon. Arthur F. Hopkins [a Whig candidate for Senator] the colleague of Mr. Lewis..." in 1849 when the other Senate seat would be vacant. The highlander concluded by saying "For myself I have not for a moment since doubted the intended treachery of the Whigs, or the Chivalry Democrats."[64]

Many of the party regulars were hostile to Lewis because of his "confounded disloyalty"; that is, his suspected "Taylorism" and machinations with the Whigs. They turned to their leader, former Senator William R. King to oppose Lewis. Lewis had originally been appointed to King's Senate seat when King accepted a ministerial position to France. In 1847 King returned and wanted his "old job" back. William Bibb Figures, an "old school Whig" and editor of the Southern Advocate, shrewdly assessed the operations of the fragmented Democrats on election eve. Within the

State, he observed, were cliques composed of "prominent, ambitious, and office-loving men, who have banded themselves together for mutual aid and assistance. They divide offices among themselves and then strive for the common cause--assist each other and oppose all intruders or poachers upon what they conceive to be their private and exclusive right ....Look for instance at the list of the clique of the Lewis 'family' who have been quartered upon the State by means of a combination to secure office."[65]

Dixon Hall Lewis confronted an enormous task in his quest for re-election. King had the backing of upstate Hunker Democrats and, one source contended, he "is the choice of three fourths of the democracy of the State."[66] Both candidates also faced a third contender, Whig strategist Arthur F. Hopkins. Some weeks before the election, Lewis, in a new maneuver, asked his supporters to follow national Democratic party policy. One upcountry Hunker, seeing deceit in this latest tactic, observed:

> I have fears of the result of the Senatorial election now pending between Mr. Lewis and Col. King. Many of the Calhoun men (Mr. John A. Campbell for instance) who...repudiated all party ties are now trying to cousin our plain members (at the request of Mr. Lewis) into the support of Lewis--they say now <u>our</u> party--<u>our</u> cause--<u>our</u> administration--when they care nothing for us and our cause and are as much sold to John C. Calhoun as ever a sorcerer was to the devil....The most strenuous efforts are now being made by the Chivalry to break down our democratic standard....I am afraid we are too late to save Col. King.[67]

"The election for United States Senator is creating a vast deal of excitement. Col. King, Mr. Lewis...are here [Montgomery] making desperate

efforts," reported one onlooker. "What the result will be time can only tell." A Montgomery eyewitness observed "unless there be concessions of some kind, a wider breach will be created...the knowing ones seem to think King will be elected with ease."[68] Lewis led after one day of balloting but could not achieve a majority. T. B. Cooper, a Whig legislator, describes the factional manipulations:

> The King men stand at twenty five to twenty seven in number and will not yield, the Whigs vote for Hopkins and while this state of things goes on an election will never be made; both [cliques] want the Whig votes, the King men bid high for it, one proposition was to elect Hopkins if the Whigs would help elect Bagby [Senator whose term expired in 1849] and let King withdraw--that trade could not be effected some of the Whigs would not vote for Hopkins. McClung [a Whig] is figuring to be made Senator in Bagby's place and holds to the Lewis faction, the feeling is getting pretty high, every other election is lost sight of, and somebody is going to be sacrificed in this race, it may be me, God only knows, the friends of King bid high for help--but the Chivalry is the strongest clique here, Lewis and King are both here, the wires are continually moving....If the Whigs and Hunkers unite I do not know what will be the result.[69]

While reported deals were whispered about, Hunker Thaddeus Sanford spread rumors that Polk himself favored King.[70] And party regulars prepared a questionnaire asking if all Democrats endorsed the Administration's war program, favored Calhoun for the Presidency, and pledged themselves in advance to support the nominees of the Democratic national convention to be held in the spring of 1848.[71]

Now under pressure, Lewis came to an agreement with the Hunkers. He publicly rejected his mentor John C. Calhoun for the Presidency, pledging to back the Democratic party nominee for President in 1848. He even promised to endorse a northern Democrat. Actually Lewis' agreement to

support a northerner was not spontaneous, since he had already considered backing Federal Supreme Court Justice Levi Woodbury of New Hampshire. Woodbury, a northerner with "southern principles," had privately made known his opposition to the Wilmot Proviso. Lewis also promised to uphold Polk's war policies regardless of Calhoun's position.[72] Such measures brought nomination to Lewis, as he defeated King for the Senate post.

Hunkers were elated with the bargain. "We have a precious document on file from the pen of our friend Dick," [Dixon Hall Lewis] exclaimed James E. Saunders.[73] Another humorously confided that "a certain distinguished Senator of enormous propostions has agreed to a position perhaps a little thorny to himself."[74] Displeasure in the ranks of the Chivalry soon became evident. "Mr. Lewis...has made pledges which will greatly embarrass him and estrange his friends in this section," John A. Campbell wrote to Calhoun: "He pledged himself, I learn, to abide a National convention for the selection of a candidate preferring a northern man."[75] Campbell later complained of highland Alabama's political power which forced south Alabama to "perpetual surrender."[76] Yancey also adopted Lewis' compromising stratagem, and also like Lewis, Yancey appeared to be over his "Taylor fever." He claimed to be disillusioned by Whig guile --using Taylor as a standard bearer to attract Democratic support for the Whig party. Yancey's anti-Whig stand hardened when he discovered that Whig Congressmen Henry Hilliard and John Gayle, who ran on a "no-party" platform in 1847, helped elect Robert C. Winthrop, a Massachusetts Whig of "abolitionist sympathies," as speaker of the House of Representatives.[77]

In December 1847, while speculation persisted as to who would be the Democratic presidential candidate, the Alabama General Assembly debated a series of resolutions introduced by Calhounite Percy Walker of Mobile. These resolutions maintained Alabama's slavery rights in the territories and her unwillingness to vote for any candidate from any party who would not uphold those rights. During the debates Tuscaloosa Whig Robert Jemison offered an amendment that Alabama not act with delegates in any caucus or convention to elevate any President or Vice-President, unless the delegates took an oath to uphold noninterference with slavery in the territories and to use their influence to get compliance on this principle from their respective state legislatures as well as from Congress. This amendment passed both Houses in February 1848.[78]

Meanwhile, Democratic leaders met in Montgomery on January 3. Yancey introduced several propositions which sought to heal the wounds opened by the senatorial clash of December and to lay the groundwork for the February 14 state Democratic nominating convention. This convention would choose delegates to the national Democratic Convention meeting in Baltimore to select a presidential ticket.

The list of Democratic hopefuls being considered at the Convention was long, and included both a vice-President and former President. Van Buren, who had served as President from 1836-1840, was in disfavor with party regulars from his own state because of their adherence to the Wilmot Proviso. George Dallas, from Pennsylvania and vice-President under Polk, was vying with James Buchanan, also from Pennsylvania and Secretary of State in Polk's cabinet. Lewis Cass, Senator from Michigan

who had been extreme in demanding the Oregon territory, also sought the Presidency. The favorite of the Lewis-Yancey "Chivalry" faction in Alabama was Levi Woodbury. Woodbury had been a Senator from New Hampshire before Polk appointed him to the Supreme Court in 1848.

Yancey's main address at the Convention praised Polk's Administration, "our democratic allies of the north," George Dallas, and James Buchanan. "There is no reason why Democrats should abandon their party organization, but on the contrary as strong a reason as ever they should abide by the time honored usages of party," Yancey declared. He denounced the Wilmot Proviso and urged "all Southerners to oppose it at all hazards and the last extremity." The delegates, in the same spirit, agreed not to support any candidate who would not, "previous to the election distinctly, unequivocally, and publicly avow his opposition" to the Wilmot Proviso.[79]

Yancey's role as peacemaker had an ulterior purpose. He was trying, with Lewis' approval, to build southern support for Levi Woodbury. He and Lewis corresponded with Woodbury, in an effort to get him to publicly oppose the Wilmot Proviso. Woodbury, of course, confronted a northern constituency who deemed slavery restriction fundamental to their interests. Thus, Justice Woodbury was extremely circumspect in making public pronouncements on the territorial issue.

Referring to the Alabama Chivalry Calhoun could only lament what seemed to be the "defection of the southern rights faction in and about Montgomery." His depression deepened when he noted a favorite student, Dixon Hall Lewis, led the betrayal which "has been the cause of much grief to me. I had hoped...our friends at Mobile and Montgomery would

ultimately place our principles and policy in the ascendancy in the State." Calhoun believed that Lewis "appears ashamed of his course, as he ought to be; but I do not see how he can ever disentangle himself from his new association or how he can ever recover the confidence of those he has forsaken."[80] The old "nullifier" had no knowledge of the new scheme --the Woodbury move--or of the resourceful Lewis-Yancey combination. Although Calhoun had been their ideological mentor, both Alabamians were bypassing him in their attempt to play "kingmaker" within the Democratic party.

The brief lull between the factional storms would end on the eve of February 14 with news of the free soil position taken by many northern Democrats. Buchanan and Cass, John Campbell claimed, had gone over to restriction of slavery in the territories. Percy Walker informed Alabamians that New York's Hunkers adopted a resolution declaring slaves would be prevented from going into the territories both by local law and by geographical conditions which were not conducive to slavery.[81] However, Alabama Hunkers still favored Buchanan owing to his public statement against the Wilmot Proviso and his long friendship with William R. King whom party men wanted to make Vice President.[82] The position of Lewis, Yancey, and Campbell by now had matured. They were determined to get an Alabama delegation elected that was committed to nomination of Justice Woodbury.

The Democratic state convention got under way on February 14. Immediately a struggle ensued. "By a trick at the outset," James E. Saunders reported, "we [the Hunkers] lost the inside track. The arrangement amongst our friends...was to make [Nathaniel Terry] chairman which

would have secured the nomination of electors and delegates of the purest water!" By a clever parliamentary tactic the Chivalry defeated Terry, replacing him with one of their own. But the Party faithful--the "Hunkers" --won on two issues: Most of the delegates would be selected by Congressional districts rather than by the convention itself (despite some grumbling from the "Chivalry")and William R. King was unanimously recommended for the Vice Presidency.[83]

The delegates next turned to the platform, and the instructions to those it would send to the Baltimore Convention. Despite the reluctance of some party loyalists, they accepted Senator Bagby's suggestion that Alabama Democrats not support anyone who was for the Proviso.[84]

While the delegates debated, the Montgomery-Mobile ultras were preparing a coup. Yancey and Campbell collaborated in putting together a series of six resolutions, "The Alabama Platform." It demanded that slavery be positively and legally guaranteed either by a statement in the forthcoming Mexican treaty or by Congressional fiat.[85] Two planks pledged Alabama's delegation to the Baltimore Convention not to support for the "offices of President and Vice President" anyone who was in favor of excluding slavery from the territories. The concluding resolution called upon the convention to accept the Platform "as instructions to our delegates to the Baltimore Convention...."[86] But there was no resolution passed demanding that the delegates bolt the Baltimore Convention if the "Alabama Platform" was rejected.

Yancey introduced these resolutions to the state Convention at an opportune time--at a late hour, just before the Convention adjourned, while many representatives slumbered and others were out for a "scent

of air." He also claimed to have a letter from Levi Woodbury (given to him by Dixon Hall Lewis), excerpts of which seemed to sustain the principles of the "Alabama Platform." The Woodbury letter gave the Chivalry a mechanism to discredit Buchanan, Dallas, and Cass. Only Buchanan had spoken out on the territorial question recommending the extension of the 36-30 line to the Pacific.[87]

The weary Democrats, a majority of whom were mesmerized by Yancey's oratorical flourish, unanimously endorsed the Alabama Platform. Party regulars accepted it because they desired the continued backing of the Chivalry in order to get King nominated as Vice President. Many Hunkers felt that it was "nothing more than an expansion of opposition to the Wilmot Proviso and a declaration against General Cass and Mr. Dallas."[88] But another eyewitness to the events saw a more diabolical intent. "I have now talked with Yancey about the resolutions"; Governor Reuben Chapman suggested that Yancey was attempting to take over the party leadership: "His object was no doubt to instruct our delegation (in effect) to vote for Woodbury but in that he did much more...mischief than that. The resolutions must help him [Yancey]." Chapman, moreover, found that the resolutions on Congressional authority over slavery in the territories were contradictory. An upstate Democrat knew a cabal was being hatched: "I am of the opinion that the Calhounites are determined to rule the State and let nothing be done that does not stop them."[89] A Whig, H. B. Jones, saw clearly the conflicting constitutional principles of the Alabama Platform: "You will discern in their resolutions a beautiful 'consistency' in <u>one</u> they declare that Congress has <u>no authority whatever</u> over the subject of slavery in the territories."

On the other hand, they insisted that because Congress had treatymaking powers it could devise a slave code for the territories. "Wouldn't that be a valuable clause if they have no authority whatsoever in the matter?"[90] Hunker James Saunders, after giving the resolutions a close reading, doubted "whether Mr. Yancey himself would now insist upon the South pursuing the suicidal course of writing resolutions. Were I a member of the Senate or the House I should disregard them as fatal to policy or principle."[91]

A sober account of the state Convention came from Felix Grundy Norman, a party regular, who insisted, "the resolutions are all things to all people..." and Yancey "has unwittingly sanctioned a principle he does not believe correct and one he never dreamed of advocating." Norman said the whole design "was to shut the door against Buchanan, Dallas, and Cass" thus boosting the Presidential ambitions of Levi Woodbury. Of all the presidential contenders, Woodbury came closest to Calhoun. "The convention was strongly scented with Calhoun vagaries which accounted for the Woodbury groundswell. If Woodbury and his adherents are successful his administration would contain...that peculiar clap of political non-descripts, [who] hope to foist themselves into office. In fact, with Woodbury in office the Calhounites hope to play the part Clay had played in 1841 before Harrison's death "The power behind the thrown, greater than the thrown itself." Norman concluded by emphasizing that "nobody in Alabama does believe or will admit" the federal government's "authority over slavery."[92] Clearly, Yancey was using the "Alabama Platform" as a device not only to play "kingmaker" in the national Democratic party but also harness the Alabama Democracy to his design.

In all this it is difficult to discern what role Dixon Hall Lewis would play. Except for giving Yancey the alleged Woodbury letter which he read at the State convention, Lewis was typically silent. Although the Senator was pro-Woodbury, it was not clear at that time whether or not he would take a back seat to Yancey.

Yancey claimed sole authorship of the "Alabama Platform." But those close to the Convention attributed it to "a slippery politician of Mobile."[93] "I wrote the resolutions offered by Mr. Yancey to the Montgomery Convention," disclosed John A. Campbell. He then pointed out that Congress did have the authority to prevent slavery from the territories. He told Calhoun that the Northwest Ordinace of 1787, the Missouri Compromise of 1819, and the admission of Texas with slavery restricted above 36-30 offered enough constitutional precedent. The Constitution, Campbell also asserted, did not specify that slaveholders were to be shielded in the territories.[94] Campbell never made public his position on the legality of the "Alabama Platform." Later, when a member of the Supreme Court, he would use it as the basis of his Dred Scott brief. How does one account for such intentional deception? A recent analysis finds the answer outside the framework of legal theory: Sheer ambition guided him. In 1848 Campbell's sights were on the Supreme Court. He needed support from southern senators for the appointment, and his course was obvious.[95]

Speculation among Democrats centered on how Zachary Taylor would react to the issue of slavery expansion. "General Taylor is popular," a north Alabama Democrat noted, "but all parties seem to be some-what uncertain as to his real sentiments touching the great questions....

If he can get a no-party nomination he will be very hard to beat."[96]

Before the warring Democrats left for their convention, a further issue divided them. Senator A. P. Bagby, a south Alabamian, announced his retirement to accept a foreign mission; and many highland Democrats argued that the vacancy belonged to them. However, party men in the hill country suspected that Governor Reuben Chapman had been co-opted by the Montgomery Chivalry. Chapman tried to avoid a confrontation by appointing Hunker manager William Refus King to Bagby's seat. King, Chapman surmised, would be acceptable to north Alabama, and south Alabama could not complain because King resided there.

But the choice of King produced more distrust. Some Democrats believed that King had made a deal with the Chivalry which obligated him to them. Others believed that Governor Chapman needed the approval of the Montgomery clique before selecting King.[97] All this was conjecture. Obviously King's selection did nothing for party harmony. Baltimore would fragment it further.

Yancey still could not get a public commitment from Woodbury on his position on slavery extension. He had talked freely--at the time that the Alabama delegation arrived in Washington (on May 19)--of having a letter confirming Woodbury's support of the "Alabama Platform." One delegate disclosed that he would only reveal it to those who pledged to keep the contents confidential. Other Alabama delegates said that Yancey had no letter, that it was just a ruse. A. Solomon, an extreme southern-rights advocate, affirmed reading the Woodbury letter and found it unacceptable. The delegates caucused upon arriving in Baltimore: nine voted for Buchanan and six, led by Yancey, for Woodbury.[98]

In the Convention Cass and popular sovereignty triumphed overwhelmingly, but Yancey tried to get the Convention to veto "local control" over slave extension with a minority resolution to the party platform. Yancey urged the delegates to sustain southern rights in the territories; otherwise, he declared he would not work for the ticket. His minority report was buried by a 216 to thirty-six vote. Then, obeying what he conceived as the dictates of the "Alabama Platform," Yancey bolted --but only one Alabama delegate followed.[99]

Yancey stopped in Charleston, South Carolina, on his way home and delivered a bitter indictment of the southern delegates at Baltimore. He called upon "Southrons" to construct an independent movement built upon the principles of the "Alabama Platform." Summoning them to meet in convention and select a southern President and Vice President, he then qualified this most extreme suggestion by noting that it might still be premature. After his address, the Charlestonians passed a resolution denouncing Cass and popular sovereignty.[100]

Even before Yancey returned to Montgomery, he came under fire. Party loyalist A. C. Mathews had only scorn for Yancey's "non sensical resolutions," which made a "John Donkey" of him. "He was trying to make himself conspicuous by his gabbing....A few more conventions for him to figure in, will make him so ridiculous as to render him perfectly harmless."[101] One Montgomery party paper castigated fellow Democrats for not stopping Yancey at the state Convention in February. "Yancey can always insist that he was obeying the instructions of the Convention thus giving him his only vantage ground in defending his course at the Baltimore Convention." Nevertheless, it "only remains now to sing

Yancey's requiem and write his epitaph."[102] A large Montgomery rally for Cass and Butler denounced Yancey's "anti-democratic, antagonistic" activities.[103]

Yancey spoke before a Democratic gathering in Montgomery on June 19, 1848. He condemned the Alabama delegation for violating their commitment to the "Alabama Platform" and disregarding southern interests. Furthermore, he added, "popular sovereignty is [a] more objectionable form of the free-soil doctrine than the Proviso itself, since it gave the 'Mexican negroes' presently living in the territories the right to decide the slavery question." Concluding, he proclaimed his loyalty to the Alabama delegation's instructions and, therefore, he could not "support General Cass for the Presidency."[104] Yancey's listeners did not endorse his bolt at the Convention. However, the next evening, Montgomery Democrats met again and praised him for consistency, but also decried those who sought to "misrepresent Cass's opinions and disorganize the party."[105] Yancey confronted more criticism at a Wetumpka meeting. Democrats there listened to his appeal and then passed resolutions which complimented him for his honesty but censored him for his judgment. They would canvass for Cass.[106]

Meeting again in Montgomery toward the end of June, Alabama Democrats condemned Yancey's course. John Cochrane of Eufaula, an "old hunker of the first water" (who would become a southern-rights member of the "Eufaula Regency" in 1851) told the audience that popular sovereignty "provides the South with a solution to her rights in the Mexican cessation." F. S. Jackson, a party regular, attacked Yancey for his inconsistency in not assailing the Baltimore Convention and Cass until

"his own pet resolutions were rejected by that body....It would be better for the democratic party if all such disaffected, inconsistent, impracticable factionalists as Mr. Yancey and the few who adhere to him, could go over to the camp of the enemy."[107]

Yancey was almost alone, for only a few members of the Chivalry identified with his position. Ostensibly this meant that they could not vote for Cass and that they too had shed their Taylorism a few months before.[108] Dixon Hall Lewis made himself unavailable; not a word, either of encouragement or disapproval, came from him. Thus, William L. Yancey's plot to play Democratic "kingmaker" had failed, and he was deemed anathema by Alabama Democrats--both Hunkers and most Chivalry.

The state of the Whig party was significant especially to some of those Alabama Whigs who were disaffected by the results of Whig resolution meetings in Alabama. Pre-convention Whig meetings in Alabama had errupted into struggles over the Wilmot Proviso and over Taylor's candidacy. For example, at a Whig meeting in Athens, Alabama, a "small fight over the Wilmot Proviso erupted."[109] Whigs held meetings throughout the state to appoint delegates to district meetings to choose a slate for the Philadelphia Whig Convention. In late May Alabama Whigs prepared to embark for Philadelphia to join in naming the "sphinx like" Zachary Taylor.

With the Whig choice made, some southern members, including a contingent of nullifying Whigs from east-central Alabama, looked to Yancey. These Whigs said they were estranged because of Whig Vice Presidential nominee Millard Fillmore's Congressional votes of 1838-1839 in favor of anti-slavery petitions. Former Alabama Democrat James Belser told a

Montgomery Whig audience "we are free to admit that he [Fillmore] is not exactly the 'right stripe' for Southern Whigs."[110]

Encouraged by these Whig defections, Yancey began to organize a third party based on the "Alabama Platform." He wanted to hold a Convention in Montgomery to pick "true Southrons." "We have at last started," Yancey buoyantly announced to Calhoun: "Taylor's position in the late Whig Convention has thrown into our arms all those Whigs who were for him....Belser resigns his place on the Taylor electoral ticket. Campbell of Mobile quits his Taylor ground and is with us." Yancey speculated as to who "shall we rally for President? Tazewell and Jeff Davis are suggested here. Will they do? I was despondent a week ago, I am now hopeful."[111]

As more Democrats fell into line behind Cass, Dixon Hall Lewis came under constant pressure, from Hunkers and Chivalry alike, to make a public statement. Finally Lewis broke his silence with a letter to Yancey. He urged Yancey to drop all plans for a third party. "Outside of South Carolina an independent nominee has no chance." If Yancey could not vote for Cass, Lewis wrote, then he "should remain neutral and await the reformation of the state party." Concluding, Lewis recalled his obligation "to the party which required him to support its nominees"; and a few days later he came out publicly for Cass.[112] For himself, Yancey replied to Lewis, there was no thought of personal advancement; only "the best for my country...I was striking for rights and purposes far above the lure of party." Nevertheless, he wrote bitterly and sarcastically, the "power of party...could drive men so completely from their position and cause them to curse a friend." Yancey asked whether

his cause at Baltimore and his subsequent speeches justified "the destruction of the present organization" which Lewis' pro-Cass position would bring about. Lewis had approved the "Alabama Platform" and Yancey felt that he was under obligation to support it. Lewis, however, was under a new obligation to his "political friends." "This," Yancey asserted, "is extraordinary." Lewis had been his mentor in exposing "that system of party organizations...in the hands of...drill sergeants." Finally, "in great sorrow," Yancey wondered, "will we ever gain strength by yielding to the north and by submitting to encroachments and by breaking our pledges?"[113]

The "Chivalry," then, was splintered. Lewis led one faction for Cass; another under Yancey dedicated itself to the defeat of the Democratic ticket. Only two Democratic newspapers, the Montgomery State Sentinal, suspected of being financed by Yancey, and the Eufaula Democrat, organ of the recently formed Eufaula "Regency", upheld Yancey. The isolation of this Yancey bloc is fundamental in understanding the emergence of secession sentiment. It is only when the extremists found themselves outside the Chivalry, their "southern-rights home," that some members turned to dissolution of the Union as the southern solution. Consequently, as a result of this split, those who supported the national Democratic ticket joined forces with the Hunkers. Henceforth, the Montgomery Chivalry ceased to exist. It became known as the Montgomery "Regency" and emerged as the leading regular Democratic organization in the state.

On July 5 Joseph Lesesne, a Mobile ally of Yancey, argued that the south must soon "be prepared to say whether we will withdraw from the Union, or purchase a further fraternity in it by giving up our slaves

and consenting to social ruin and disgrace."[114] Later in the month Sampson W. Harris, an Alabama Congressman and Yancey's law partner, warned the House of Representatives that "the wrongs already threatened have weakened, in many a patriotic bosum the sentiment of attachment to the Union of the States. Men now use familiar words which twenty years ago would have been deemed treasonable."[115]

At this time Yancey himself had not yet considered secession. In August, he published a seventy nine page polemic that defended the Alabama Platform and his course at Baltimore; and, shocking his readers, he also recommended that Alabama Democrats vote for Taylor as the lesser of two evils.[116] Alabama Whigs were delighted. Democrats lashed out at yet another example of his insubordination. John A. Winston accused Yancey of trying to destroy the Party, while editor Thaddeus Sanford charged Yancey with a "ruling appetite--a thirst for notoriety...."[117]

Yancey's influence on the presidential election is difficult to determine. Regular Democrats minimized the import of his advice to party members. C. C. Clay, Jr., a perennial office seeker, told George S. Houston, "I do not know of a single democrat who will support Taylor or Fillmore...in north Alabama. I do not believe Yancey can reduce the democratic margin one hundred votes in the whole state."[118] Montgomery's foremost "Hunker" newspaper expressed elation at Yancey's defection: "We would rather see him going over bag and baggage along with other opportunists to the Whigs. Yancey has done Cass and Butler all the harm he can...." Editor John Cragin predicted "that [Yancey and his collaborators] will be trying to sneak back into the democratic ranks soon enough."[119]

As the campaign progressed, some former bolters and neutrals re-

turned to their old parties. Former Democrat James Belser joined the Whigs and later came out against Millard Fillmore whom he characterized as an abolitionist. Still later he changed his mind about Fillmore again noting that "now there is much in his character to commend him to the favorable consideration of his fellow citizens."[120] In August William R. King, who was silent previously, threw his support to the Democratic nominees: "Every Southern man who loves his country, should give a decided support to Cass and Butler." Their election, he hoped, would force a compromise on the troublesome question of slavery in the territories." Felix G. Norman, a confidant of George S. Houston, shrewedly commented upon some fellow Democrats: "Leroy Pope Walker cannot be trusted. He is too much on the...Elmore and Yancey string....I can never forgive him for the manner in which he palmed Yancey on us as a delegate to Baltimore." Although Walker came out for Cass, Norman found that "he can't be trusted," and he further suggested that Yancey be thrown out of the party along with other Democrats "who are out for Taylor." Norman also predicted that the dangerously overweight Lewis would die in office opening the way for a north Alabamian to fill his senate seat. However, he would have preferred a south Alabamian in the Seante to "opportunists like L. P. Walker or David Hubbard." Norman further cautioned, that if the Senate vacancy were to occur soon that Reuben Chapman would probably seek the position for himself. Most of all, Norman warned against Walker getting the senatorial seat for "his ambition is too much."[121] Norman's prophecy about Dixon Hall Lewis proved correct, and his death in October had important consequences. It opened up another Senate appointment, thereby placing Governor Chapman in a very sensitive

position. It exacerbated antagonisms between north and south Alabama.

In November the Whigs nearly accomplished the impossible. Cass carried Alabama by only 881 votes out of a total of 61,000 ballots. Only five counties in south Alabama went for Cass, almost causing the Democrats to lose the state. That they did not was due to the majorities Cass ran up in the "Avalanche" counties of north Alabama.[122] Many Democrats stayed home in November. They did not trust Cass, and Taylor never took a specific stand on the Proviso. William Dickson, from Buzzards Roost, a traditional "Hunker" stronghold, asserted, "not a single Democrat that voted here, voted for Taylor they done [sic] the mischief by not voting at all. I believe Alabama is as democratic as she ever was, but there was so many misrepusentations of Cass, being a northern man and would turn out like Van Buren, was what done the business."[123] What effect Yancey had on the outcome cannot be determined. Clearly, his support for Taylor did not bring massive numbers of Democrats out for the Lousianian. As noted above by William Dickson, more Democrats stayed home than crossed party lines.

Governor Reuben Chapman, after the election, selected former Governor Benjamin Fitzpatrick to fill the Senate post of the late Dixon Hall Lewis. A wealthy planter-lawyer from Autauga county in central Alabama, Fitzpatrick was the second south Alabamian in the Senate. Upstate Democrats expressed irritation. Clement C. Clay, Sr., demanded that Reuben Chapman "be denied the nomination again [for Governor]."[124] "I have this week seen men from all northern counties," Joseph Acklen stated: "the dissatisfaction of the appointment is universal, not against the man, but as slighting the upcountry." He heard rumors of a deal

whereby Fitzpatrick would "resign in two years and give Chapman a chance." As to the future of the Governor, "Pope Walker and [Jere] Clemens will give it to him smartly from the stump...but it is now my best information he will be killed off by a convention and pass into a state of 'reticancy' without knowing how he got there."[125] State senator Daniel Coggin discovered a conspiracy between Chapman, a north Alabamian, and the "Montgomery clique"; all he declared should "be turned out of office."[126] "Gov. C. chooses Fitzpatrick," the sagacious upstate Hunker James E. Saunders stated, "because he did not want to offend all those from North Alabama who wanted the seat. The Montgomery Regency was instrumental in getting B. F. the post."[127]

Controversy over the Fitzpatrick appointment persisted into 1849. The specter of conspiracy continued to hover over Chapman's decision. "Chapman is in league with the Montgomery Regency which is becoming as odious as the Albany Regency which for years has dominated New York," wrote highland Democrat R. C. Brickell. He continued, Fitzpatrick had been a long-time member of the Chivalry which explained his elevation.[128] One upcountry Whig claimed that Chapman told him there were "Twenty-five direct and indirect applicants in north Alabama for the appointment." Fitzpatrick was chosen because of his central location and because of Chapman's desire not to alienate these twenty-five contenders. The same Whig noted Chapman's unpopularity upstate and "judging from some Democratic papers in south Alabama it seems that his support there will be lukewarm."[129]

The charge that Fitzpatrick received a Senate seat because both he and Chapman belonged to the "Chivalry" is not easily disposed of. The

"Chivalry" or Montgomery Regency had always contained two segments--southern-rights extremists and moderates--and an Alabama Governor would have to be sensitive to their pressures if only because they, too, were at the state capital. Chapman, furthermore, rarely stood with the extremist faction. Indeed, his "Southern credentials" had come under attack by a radical Black Belt journal which suggested "it would be as well for him to retire and for the people to elevate some of our discontented patriots."[130]

Benjamin Fitzpatrick, brother-in-law of the late Dixon Hall Lewis, was considered a Montgomery Regency leader by Alabamians, but he was no Calhoun ideologue. He was circumspect and seldom made his views public. During the dispute over his Senatorial selection, Fitzpatrick stepped out of character and published an explanation of his designation in several highland Democratic newspapers to placate upcountry hostility. He recognized the claim of hill-county Democrats to one of the Senate posts, but William R. King, although from southern Alabama, had had northern support in getting elected. The north then, if they were not satisfied with King, should fill his seat with a northerner.[131] Thus, Fitzpatrick was trying to shift public criticism from himself to his fellow Black Belt Democratic colleague.

John C. Calhoun also contributed to the fracturing of Alabama's party structure. In December 1848 he began a last effort to smash the traditional party system and fashion southern unity. Inspired by the growth of free-soilism and driven by presidential ambitions, he issued "The Southern Address." It pictured the horrors of Black domination, which would befall the South unless the section was united and firmly

opposed to abolitionism. The two races, he warned, could not "live together in peace and co-operation...except in their present relation." If the northern anti-slavery cabal gained ascendancy, then emancipation would take place and the south would become the permanent home of "disorder, anarchy, poverty, misery, and wretchedness." The south had to unite, if not, the people must prepare their defenses and use all means "without looking to consequences" to protect "their property, prosperity, equality, liberty, and safety."[132] Calhoun's appeal of negrophobia was an attempt not only to stir secessionist sentiment among white Alabamians but, more importantly, to erode southern loyalty to the national Whig Party.

Calhoun's polemic went before the entire southern Congressional delegation for endorsement. Four of Alabama's seven representatives signed it: Sampson W. Harris, S. W. Inge, Franklin Bowden, all Democrats, and John Gayle, a Mobile Whig. All came from areas of dense slave populations. Three were holdouts: Two Democrats from north Alabama districts of slight to moderate slave concentration, and Whig Henry Hilliard from the Montgomery second district in the heart of the Black Belt. Both Senators Fitzpatrick and King assented.[133]

This Address rekindled the hopes of Alabama's ultras and indeed of all politicians who saw it as the issue that produced votes and victory. The most favorable reaction came from the eastern Black Belt. Those who attended a Montgomery mass meeting expressed a willingness to cooperate with all Southerners "in open and manly resistance." One group of citizens in Russell County resolved: "There are evils far greater than that of a dissolution of the Union; and among these are submission

to wrong, to injustice, and the degrading terms which a tyrannical majority may seek to force upon us." Another gathering in Mobile reaffirmed the "conduct of the Southern delegation in the adoption of the Southern Address."[134]

Governor Chapman, sensing that support of Calhoun's Address might salvage another term for himself, recommended to the legislature that a convention of the people of the State be called and provision be made for a general Southern convention, in the event Congress passed any measure "having to exclude slavery from the territories. Alabama ardently desires to perpetuate the Union but not at the expense of the rights of her people." State Representative John A. Winston, once an ardent enemy of the ultra doctrines of Calhoun, caught the fever and introduced a resolution in the lower House: "That in the event of the passage by Congress of any act contemplated by the Congress against the institutions of Alabama, Alabama's Representatives should not participate in the action of that body."[135] Meanwhile, Robert T. Scott, an upcountry Hunker and confidant of Governor Chapman, expressed dismay at Calhoun's Address. "I fear that it [the Southern Address] will injure our party. I have already heard it assimilated to the Hartford Convention....When political leaders undertake to lead the masses to disunion they will find themselves mistaken, the people love the Union....It is best to let the Lion sleep."[136] Scott's evaluation of Alabama sentiment would prove correct. For example, many planter Whigs in west-central and south Alabama who remained silent during the agitation over the "Southern Address" would vote overwhelmingly for restraint in the Congressional elections of 1849. Moreover, Hunker Democrats made their Unionism known, forcing some out-

spoken southern-rights candidates to moderate their Calhounism. But before the elections, other Alabama politicians began exploiting the Southern Address.

Congressman George Smith Houston of the upstate fifth district, as previously noted, had a constituency inclined toward Jacksonian nationalism. Thus, Houston's highland yeomanry living in counties of low slave density, were fervid national Democrats. Moreover, they had always resented the control Black Belt Democrats exerted over the state party. Houston, furthermore, always voted with northern and western Democrats on land and debtor measures which directly involved the self-interest of his upcountry supporters. Now in 1849, Houston eyed a Senate seat --both of Alabama's Senate posts were up for renewal in the fall--and he tried to use his refusal to sign the "Southern Address" for political advantage.

Consequently, he fueled the ready made resentment of his constituents against south Alabama and ultra southern rights by espousing the cause of north Alabama and the Union. This tactic would divide the state and hopefully win the Senate.[137] However, upon returning to his bailiwick, Houston found a disenchanted electorate. "I find <u>very general discontent</u> amongst my friends for not signing the Address," he confided to Howell Cobb. He successfully fought off an attempt by a local Democratic bloc to pass resolutions in favor of Calhoun's Appeal. The slavery issue was continually being stirred for selfish ends, Houston asserted. Calhoun, he claimed, had revealed to Stephen A. Douglas that continued agitation over the slavery question was necessary to the success of the Democratic party in the South. Houston, however, was unable to carry

out his strategy: The fifth district seemed persuaded by the "Southern Address."[138] He then dropped out of his Congressional re-election attempt and devoted his time to behind-the-scenes activity for his Senatorial bid. But Alabama was momentarily drawn to Calhoun's latest maneuver; and Houston consequently did not have a chance for election to the upper House. Feeling isolated, Houston reproached Governor Chapman and Senator King. The former, he charged, played a perfidious game by spreading "Calhoun fever" into north Alabama. And the latter, with the help of some of his Hunker allies, had a "childish overweening desire" to stay in the Senate. That is why King "signed the address; and his friends taking their cue from it, are pressing the address with more vigor and zeal than even the Calhoun men, if possible. They are...determined to get him back into the Senate.[139] With Houston out of the Congressional race, David Hubbard, a perennial antagonist and a radical Calhounite, filled the vacuum. Hubbard won election to Houston's post by default.

In the late spring this call for southern unity struck a responsive chord in other parts of Alabama. "The soundest minds in the Southern States are forced to the conclusion that either slavery or the union must give way," announced the Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, a Democratic organ whose bent had been moderation.[140] Typically, the most vehement advocates of Calhoun's "Address" were in the eastern Black Belt. The ultra clusters in Montgomery and Barbour counties had set their hopes on defeating second district Whig Congressman Henry Hilliard, who did not endorse the Calhoun statement. In the spring radical southern-rights Democrats and Whigs joined with second district moderate southern-rights Democrats for the sole purpose of defeating the common enemy--national

Whig Henry Hilliard. Hilliard's opponents were led by the extremists; namely, Yancey, his law partner John A. Elmore, Thomas Mays, and Thomas Williams--all lawyers.[141]

These ultras villified Hilliard: his motives, in not joining his Alabama colleagues who supported Calhoun's protest, "must be seen as his anxiety to occupy a 'National position'..."; by his action he deserted his homeland.[142] Henry Hilliard was a national Whig on most issues, and his chief support came from the Whig planter conservatives in the west-central counties of his district. These wealthy planters considered any agitation of the slavery issue harmful to their interests. They believed the national ferment over slavery could produce a consensus that would eventually destroy slavery in the South. But Hilliard's refusal to sign the "Address" was motivated by more than conservative Whig principle. He desired a federal foreign assignment and wanted to stay in the "good graces" of the Taylor administration. John M. Clayton, Zachary Taylor's Secretary of State, advised Hilliard to run for re-election on Taylor's policy that a territory could choose its own position on slavery as it achieved statehood. If successful with Taylor's policy, Hilliard would have a good chance for an overseas appointment.[143]

In their assault on Hilliard, the Montgomery radicals found a group of allies. These were disaffected Whigs in nearby Barbour County. John C. Calhoun's nephew John A. Calhoun accepted responsibility for breaking up the County's Whig party. "I declined a seat in the Senate of this state," he told his uncle, "in order to effect a certain end, the amalgamation of the old parties with a view to the formation of a new one," based upon the "Appeal." John A. Calhoun turned his Assembly

seat over to Jefferson Buford "a Carolinian, a nullifier, a Whig" who aided in bringing likeminded Barbour County Whigs into the Calhoun camp.[144] Many of these southern-rights Whigs lived in or near the town of Eufaula and became part of the "Eufaula Regency." Jefferson Buford, at 42, was the oldest; most of the Eufaula nullifiers were in their thirties. They were attorneys, small planters, and owned under fifty slaves. They all came to political maturity in the crucible of Alabama politics. Few of them considered party loyalty paramount. Some of them, like a number of their Montgomery counterparts, were consistent in their pro-slavery and secessionist ideology;[145] others, however, mainly saw the territorial clash as a means of "feathering their own nest." The latter were not ideologues but would compromise whenever the political winds shifted.

In May Yancey and the Montgomery extremists held a nonpartisan anti-Hilliard meeting. They issued statements denouncing the Wilmot Proviso, demanded federal protection of slavery in the territories, and called upon Reuben Chapman to convene the General Assembly if the slave restriction clause should pass Congress. These measures were seen as an attempt by the "hotspurs," along with some radical Whigs, to embarrass Hilliard. John Cochrane, Cass elector in 1848 and now part of the Eufaula clique, said of Hilliard: "sooner than go out of the Union, he would surrender our dear rights to the anti-slavery armies."[146]

Hilliard, however, won the approval of the regular Whigs who were controlled by the conservative planter-Whigs from the west-central cotton counties of the second district. After gaining the district Whig nomination, Hilliard asked Senator John M. Berrien of Georgia for an endorsement. Berrien, a Whig, had written a much milder criticism of the slave

restriction clause which was addressed to the whole nation. Hilliard wanted to publicize his ratification of Senator Berrien's address and obtain the Senator's support. "The Democrats," Hilliard uneasily commented, "are about to make a desperate effort to defeat me."[147]

Montgomery southern-rights radicals organized another assembly in Montgomery before the end of May. Yancey took the occasion to lash out at Hilliard as a traitor to the south. According to a Montgomery reporter, a great number of yeomen farmers were present and heard Yancey, and they proclaimed their fidelity to "southern rights."[148] Yancey, however, was not above attempts to compromise. Even before the May meeting, he made overtures to party regulars by attending "a supper for Mr. Polk" and made favorable remarks about the President's term in office.[149]

Hilliard still lacked an opponent when the state Democratic Convention convened in Montgomery on June 11 to select a gubernatorial candidate. Governor Chapman knew that most of north Alabama was arrayed against him because of the Fitzpatrick nomination and because of his suspected collaboration with the Montgomery Regency. Yancey endorsed him; so did other southern-rights cohorts. But Chapman, to avoid yet another inner party collision, dropped out of the running. Alabama's Chief Justice, Henry W. Collier of Tuscaloosa, emerged as a compromise candidate and south Alabama Democrats agreed to support William R. King in the November Senatorial election. Presumably, King agreed to cooperate more fully with the Montgomery Regency. The Convention then passed a series of resolutions directed at Henry Hilliard, denouncing those Alabama Congressmen who did not sign Calhoun's Address. Word came

out of the gathering that a fusion candidate would challenge Hilliard; and his close friend, James L. Pugh, was chosen. Pugh, a nullifying Whig member of the Eufaula faction, was a Taylor elector only the year before and he had campaigned vigorously for the Whig ticket.[150]

Yancey, the obvious choice to contest Hilliard, a Whig Unionist, did not want to run. He was probably aware of Hilliard's popularity in most of the plantation precincts of his district. The district's plantation regions had been Whig turf since the late thirties, and Hilliard's strength posed too formidable an obstacle for Yancey. Yancey then did not take a very active part in the second district campaign, although Pugh's advisers called him back from South Carolina (where he was settling a family dispute) to debate Hilliard--who declined to meet him.[151]

Alabama newspapers labeled the Pugh-Hilliard confrontation "The War of the Roses," and like the dynastic struggles of fifteenth-century England, it was a Whig family brawl. Pugh and his spokesmen condemned Hilliard for his opposition to the southern unity movement and for his initial refusal to sign the "Clayton resolutions." Clayton Whigs in "hotspur" Barbour County, issued a series of resolutions sustaining Calhoun's position and asking Alabama Whigs to get "behind the Southern Address." They also accused Hilliard of opportunism, bargaining slaveholders rights for the promise of a foreign mission. As election day neared, Hilliard's Methodism became an issue when Pugh inveighed against the pro-abolitionist position of the northern Methodists.[152]

Hilliard, after hesitating, publicly ratified the Clayton platform insisting upon his loyalty to the south. But later he rejected it again, noting that the pre-requisite for southern unity was imperiled by the

dismantling of southern Whiggery implied in Calhoun's Address. He also charged Pugh with being a chronic office seeker who had made a deal with the "Montgomery clique" in yet another attempt to destroy Black Belt Whiggery.[153]

When the election results were tabulated, Hilliard had carried his district by 795 votes. He won by getting large majorities in traditional Whig strongholds in the west-central and upper part of his district.[154] Hilliard's victory reflected the strength of conservative Black Belt Whiggery. As noted earlier, many central Alabama planter Whigs had almost as much scorn for the extreme southern-rights men as for the Abolitionists. Hilliard's supporters wished to conserve the Union and viewed themselves as moderate southernists. Although they were seldom outspoken, they were vehement in their accusation that Calhoun's tactics were merely a device to destroy their Party and get himself elected to the Presidency.[155] They had remained quiet during the turmoil over Calhoun's "Southern Address," but they made their sentiments known by rejecting the "crisis mongering" of the Montgomery and Eufaula ultras.

In the Mobile district the Administration's territorial policy was a major issue. Whig Congressional nominee Judge W. J. Alston defended Taylor's territorial policy and accused his Democratic adversary, planter-lawyer C. C. Sellers, of duplicity. On the one hand, Sellers had defended Polk's Oregon position outlawing slavery there, and on the other, he had demanded slavery protection in the newly acquired Mexican territory. Alston defeated Sellers by a 231 majority, and moderation triumphed in another Whig stronghold.[156]

The Democrats took the remaining five districts with only two of the successful candidates maintaining their Calhounism throughout the campaign: Sampson W. Harris from the upper-central Black Belt third district and incumbent Franklin Bowden from the seventh district, an original signer of the "Southern Address." The other candidates, like W. R. W. Cobb from the upstate sixth district, either attacked Calhoun's appeal or remained curiously silent about southern unity. For example, David Hubbard, who replaced George Houston in the fifth district, observed his constituents moved from support to opposition of the "Southern Address." By election day the hill country yeomenry returned to their traditional Jacksonian nationalism faith. Thus Hubbard kept his "ultaism" at "low profile" during the campaign.

Unionist George Smith Houston writing Howell Cobb of the defeat of "Calhounism" in the August elections, declared

> David Hubbard is my successor, an old nullifier tho' [he] had nothing to say about Calhoun's address. I once during the canvass heard he did, but when I asked him about it he denied it; he however is of that stripe. The Address men ran at Cobb very hard, with a talented man...and yet he has triumphed by about 1000 majority...all of the anti-Calhoun Address men have triumphed in these parts or hereabouts....[157]

Regardless of the nationalist turn in the elections, some Alabama politicians still talked of the necessity of radical resistance to "northern aggression." The November legislative session reflected these divisions over "southern resistance." The Mobile Register noted, as the Assembly got under way that, "the issue will be nothing short of ultimate emancipation and only immediate united action could preserve the rights which are dearer still than the Union."[158] Lame duck Governor

Reuben Chapman, who had been in touch with John C. Calhoun, sent a message to the House recommending that it make provision at once for convening a state convention if Congress should pass the Wilmot Proviso or any law excluding slavery from the territories.[159] John A. Winston, Yancey's implacable foe, also struck an ultra note when he urged southerners to unify "regardless of all party considerations...at all hazards to secure our rights of property in the African Race."[160] Democratic conservative Henry Collier, upon taking up his gubernatorial duties, asked the Assembly to formulate a position on slavery extension. The Senate responded boldly: "Alabama would never submit to any act of the United States government which prevents her from taking Slaves into the territories. If federal restriction is passed then the people of the slave states should call a convention to defend their common rights."[161]

That a group of moderates were now so aggressive is a reflection of important national developments. In mid-November Alabama newspapers reported California's constitutional Convention had barred slavery; here was yet another free-soil state. On the heels of this event, the Mississippi legislature issued a call for a southern convention. It would convene in Nashville, Tennessee, and would determine a slave state reply to California's constitution.[162] Though most of Alabama's legislators had either campaigned against Calhoun's "Southern Address" or had remained silent on the issue, none desired to have their "southernism" questioned. Events and public opinion could nudge a southern-rights moderate or even a Unionist into the Calhoun camp, especially if he was concerned about his political future.

While the Assembly debated the territorial issue, the scheduled

Senatorial election intruded. Some Democratic newspapers had been predicting that because of a Whig resurgence "a deep and well placed conspiracy is on foot to defeat us in our Senatorial elections. The Whigs were suspected of making agreements with Democrats "whom they suppose to possess higher political aspirations than love of principle or party...."[163] The two incumbents, central Alabama party regulars William R. King and Benjamin Fitzpatrick, were up for renewal. Upcountry Democrats displayed strong resistance to Fitzpatrick and a number of them sought Fitzpatrick's post; chief among them were Jere Clemens, David Hubbard, and Leroy Pope Walker. Former Governor Reuben Chapman and Whig Arthur F. Hopkins contested for King's job. "The Whigs are in high spirits," reported an observer, "and hope to profit largely by the dissensions in the opposition party."[164]

On November 30, 1849, the General Assembly halted its legislature proceedings and commenced balloting for the two Senatorial posts. King easily won election after a second ballot.[165] Fitzpatrick, however, was seriously challenged, especially by Jere Clemens who stopped him on the fifth ballot. Ironically, lawyer Clemens, a perennial upstate office seeker, had written George S. Houston several months earlier denying he had formed a "cabal with...L. P. Walker to...make...both Senators." Furthermore, "so far as I am concerned I am no candidate for anything...." Clemens said he would vote for a north Alabama man "but who I don't know"; possibly L. P. Walker, "if he wanted the nomination." Walker did indeed want the post, but was eliminated in the early voting.[166]

The session adjourned after the fifth ballot. Then the Whigs caucused. Rumors circulated that Clemens had contacted Whig managers

and consummated a deal. Events supported this talk, for the next day the Whigs withdrew from their candidate and voted with highland Democrats for Clemens.[167] South Alabama Democrats, angry over Fitzpatrick's defeat, charged Clemens with making a bargain with the Whigs. Low country Democrats claimed that Clemens, in exchange for Whig votes, promised to support the Taylor Administration. North Alabama Democrats were also arraigned for championing a candidate who "colored his water a little too deeply and had numerous other unsavory habits."[168]

Eighteen forty-nine ended with the Democratic party in its "natural condition," namely, fragmented. In upstate Alabama, an area of low slave density, the vast majority of voters were Unionists or southern-rights moderates with a very small bloc of ultras. In south Alabama, home of the slave-dense cotton kingdom, radical southernists, were a significant segment in the Montgomery and Mobile districts. Black Belt Democratic party regulars found it difficult to sustain their control of the south Alabama Democracy after the elections of 1849. These were years of intense slavery-territorial agitation and the Democratic regulars fought off attempts by the ultras to displace them as party managers. However, in the early fifties pro-Union sentiment continued to predominate in Alabama, and many Calhounites were forced to veer to moderation.

The Whigs were also splintered. Planter Whigs in central and west-central Alabama stood with Zachary Taylor and the Union. They felt that continual agitation of the territorial slavery issue could endanger the existence of slavery at home would would not only spell economic ruin for them but a racial calamity for the entire South. There were Whigs in the far east-central counties, small planters and lawyers, however,

who held extreme southern nationalist views which included an insistence on federal protection of slavery in the territories. In collaboration with like-minded east-central Democrats, these Whigs formed a new combination, the Eufaula Regency, and began co-operating with Montgomery Democratic ultras. Eighteen-fifty, therefore, promised to be a watershed year, the building of separate southern-rights and Unionists parties as Alabama confronted the Nashville Convention and Henry Clay's Omnibus Compromise bill.

CHAPTER IV

SECESSION OR SUBMISSION: ALABAMA AND THE COMPROMISE OF 1850

The end of the Mexican War presented the United States with a dire proposition. Would the territory gained from Mexico enter the Union slave or free? By 1850 some of these new territories affirmed their status. Not only would California enter the Union as a free state but New Mexico would as well. Southerners were aware this would destroy the Senate balance of fifteen free and fifteen slave states. To southern leaders this balance was their last bulwark in Congress, for their strength had already ebbed in the House. The South's political means of protecting slavery from northern encroachment was collapsing. Behind California and New Mexico, stood Utah, Oregon, and perhaps Minnesota in line for statehood. Since most southerners conceded that any state could control its own position on slavery, they could not oppose the admission of a state merely because it was free. Some southern politicians--many of them political "outsiders"--opportunistically fixed upon the issue of slavery in the territories and used it to assault national party loyalists in the south by accusing them of compromising southern interest for party unity, patronage, and spoils.

From 1850 to 1852 ultra southern rights men in Alabama capitalized on the question of slavery in the territories. Most of them were Democrats, living in the Montgomery and Mobile districts who desired the districts' Whig controlled Congressional seats. If successful, they then hoped to divest the Democratic regulars who controlled the Montgomery Regency of their power in the state. The pro-Union Whigs of Alabama

also tried to profit by the events of 1850. They attempted to make a political comeback by forming a coalition with north Alabama Union Democrats. Consequently, Alabama's brittle party system experienced another searing struggle which would leave the Whigs prostrate and the national Democratic Party loyalists supreme.

Through January 1850 the Alabama legislature debated what kind of action to take to meet the territorial crisis brought on by California's free soil constitution. The lower House urged a state convention to discuss "appropriate measures": the Senate wanted to follow Mississippi to a slave state convention in Nashville, Tennessee. Governor Henry Collier informed the General Assembly that most southern states had agreed to convene in Nashville to determine a proper response to "free soilism." Collier also asked the lawmakers to decide upon a method of selecting delegates to the forthcoming convention.[1] Senator William R. King typified the anxiety of many Alabamians when he lamented that "the slavery question is the all absorbing subject...and how it is to terminate God only knows." While in Washington, all his efforts would be exerted, as they had been in the past, to winning a compromise on "the dangerous question"--an outcome eastern Black Belt ultras would consider treasonable. King insisted upon his devotion to the Union. The present difficulties must be ironed out, King asserted, so that the country could reach its "high destinies." King warned, however, that the south would have to stand together as one if the fanatics and "unprincipled aspirants for political power of the north were to be stopped."[2]

In early February state representative L. P. Walker presented a measure in the Alabama House sanctioning the Nashville meeting and

suggesting a method of selecting the delegates: four at large were to be chosen by the General Assembly, two from each Congressional district to be elected by the voters.[3] The delegate selection proposal was referred to a special committee, chaired by Thomas H. Watts, a Whig planter-lawyer from Montgomery County. Watt's group had a Whig plurality on it and they adopted delaying tactics. They reported back that no convention should be held unless and until Congress adopted the hated Wilmot Proviso, and a state convention rather than a convention of all the slave states would suffice. The tactics of Alabama Whiggery was to take the pressure of the territorial slavery agitation off the Whig Administration in Washington and keep the slavery restriction onus on the Democrats. Disregarding Walker's bill, the House adopted the Whig sponsored alternative.[4] Two weeks later, state lawmakers met in an unofficial session and selected eight delegates to represent the state at large and four to represent each Congressional district.[5] Whigs attacked the Assembly's methods in choosing delegates. "If it were necessary to hold the convention," William Figures declared, "the Alabama delegation should be "clothed with power by the people"; and he predicted electorate indignation. The Macon Republican, a planter Whig journal, insisted that the Convention delegates should be elected by the people even though those selected were overwhelmingly moderate and conservative.[6] One Democratic paper could not understand why the people were denied a "hand in the outcome."[7]

To add to the growing controversy, Henry Clay, on January 20, 1850, introduced in the Senate a series of resolutions with all the major questions at issue: admit California as a free state; establish territorial governments in the remainder of the Mexican cession without

any restriction on slavery; establish a reasonable western boundary for Texas; assume the part of Texas' public debt contracted prior to annexation, provided Texas give up her claim to part of New Mexico; abolish slavery in the District of Columbia only if the people of both Maryland and the District consent, and then only with compensation to slaveholders; prohibit the slave trade in the District of Columbia; enact a new and effective fugitive slave law; affirm that Congress has not the power to deal with the interstate slave trade.

The Alabama press became a source of polemics triggered by Henry Clay's compromise measures and the upcoming Nashville convention. Democrat Thaddeus Sanford of the Mobile Register proclaimed, "the compromise resolutions just introduced into the Senate are precisely what we anticipated....They call on the South to concede everything...leaving us the shadow of what we are contending for."[8] After surveying national developments, a Eufaula Whig ultra said, "if I were certain it was not an infringement of the constitutional rights of the South to admit California into the Union, at this session; yet I would not volunteer such an opinion." Continuing, he cautioned, "who does not know that the North will go just as far as she may count on our submission...the north declared war against our institutions, we are demented, and bent upon suicide, if we submissively allow her to go on...."[9] The Whig-Unionist Macon Republican answered those who demanded disunion: "In the substantial assertion and maintenance of southern rights we will go as far as he who goes farthest; but we are only less attracted to the Union...and we will not give it up, we will not aid in dismembering it and breaking it into fragments until the South's position in it is absolutely unten-

able...." The Republican, speaking for the conservative planters of central Alabama, further cautioned "the people against the designs of demagogues, alarmists and agitators" whose only ambition "is to gain office."[10]

The Macon Republican's assessment of the motivations of "agitators" who glibly talked of disunion is a perception not to be ignored. Clearly, Clay's bill provided Alabama's political outsiders--the Calhounites--with yet another issue in their onslaught upon the state's national party faithful. If all national party men could be shown to be untrustworthy because of their desire to compromise the territorial imbroglio, then their accusers could replace them as the chief "wirepullers" in the state. The south Alabama extremists, however, found public sentiment unwilling to rubber-stamp the dismantling of the Democratic stewardship in Alabama.

As a result of Clay's recommended resolution of the territorial muddle, Nashville convention ratification meetings convened throughout the state. Most of these meetings, with national Whigs in charge, showed a conservative bent. A volatile nonpartisan gathering was held in Greene County, a Whig-planter stronghold. It passed a resolution demanding that the delegates to Nashville be instructed by the people before making any drastic resolutions even in Congress should pass anti-slavery measures.[11] In upstate Limestone county a group of citizens said "we cherish ...our federal union; and we are wholly opposed to a dissolution of the present federal union." But, they forewarned, "as patriotic Southerners, we should look upon such a calamity as second only--but still second--to the ruin of Southern institutions."[12] In Mobile, Whigs and Democrats resolved in favor of the Nashville meeting and disclaimed any purpose

of disrupting the Union.[13]

While Unionist sympathies predominated throughout most of the state, the eastern Black Belt became the center for "hotspur" agitation. Extremism became the hallmark of the Montgomery Advertiser, edited by the inscrutable Colonel J. J. Seibels. Seibels, from South Carolina, was vying with William L. Yancey for the leadership of the Montgomery firebrands. Both men had, as well, a transcending ambition to become "king-maker" within the state Democratic party. Each would endeavor to fuel public opinion against Alabama Democrats who would compromise slavery's rights in the new territories. For example, Seibels publicly accused Alabama politicians who cooperated with "northern party men" in seeking a solution to the expansion issue of being traitors to the South.[14] The Tuscaloosa Monitor, a Union-Whig organ, replied to Seibels by noting that the editor of the Advertiser seemed to regard "every man as an enemy to the South, who has not got his coat off and his sleeves rolled up for a fight; or in other words, every man is a traitor who thinks that this great sectional struggle may yet be amicably and honorably adjusted."[15]

Talk of secession, as the test of "manly southern resistance," became common among east-central Alabama Calhounites. In their attempts to incite public opinion, they were led by the "Eufaula Regency" and not by Yancey who was momentarily preoccupied with his law practice. They tried to commit the Alabama delegates going to Nashville to disruption, circulating a pamphlet which maintained that compromise could not reconcile the differences between the north and south.[16]

In May, Yancey took part in a Montgomery nonpartisan ratification

meeting. He served on the resolution committee, and authored a relatively mild resolution: "The...agitation of anti-slavery doctrines... has had the effect of disquieting the public mind of the South," and "has engrafted the doctrine of the Wilmot Proviso upon the California constitution." The federal government is bound by the constitution to protect property. Thus Congress "should excise the slave restriction clause from the California constitution and resolve slavery in the territory in favor of the South."[17] Yancey made no call for "manly resistance" against "northern aggression." Because the vast majority of Alabama voters had refused to follow his lead, Yancey in the late forties, was cautiously "feeling his way."

Ralph Draughon, Jr., observed that "secession sentiment was strong in the Spring of 1850 in Alabama,"[18] but the secessionism of some chronic "crisis mongers" was not to be taken as general state-wide opinion. The evidence presented here--the conservatism of those delegates chosen for the Nashville Convention, the Unionist-to-moderate tenor of the ratification meetings, Yancey's bland protest at the May Montgomery gathering, the persistence of Whig-Unionism--all of these factors testify to the political moderation of pre-Nashville Alabama.

The state's attention shifted to Congress, where Alabama's representatives were taking an active part in debates on Clay's compromise. Calhounite David Hubbard from the upstate fifth district was an exception. His only action was to send a letter to his constituents warning of the dangers to the south and to the country if the free-soilers triumphed. Hubbard's address suggested a massive abolitionist conspiracy. Northerners were uncanny; they "would use every weapon at their disposal

to obtain their objectives...." The North would "deceive, coax and threaten." He admonished his readers not to be hoodwinked by compromise, for the northern strategy was to "divide and conquer" by producing party unrest in the south.[19] Conspiratorial appeals became the stock-in-trade of most ultras whenever the territorial issue gained prominence. For example, Sampson W. Inge of the fourth Congressional district, in upper west-central Alabama (a region that overlapped into the Black Belt) condemned the "California Proviso" and complained that the north was intent on subjugating the south. California would be one more abolition state for the south to contend with; therefore he would oppose the "admission of California under the present plan."[20]

It should be noted that most southern Democrats were constantly under pressure in Washington to follow the lead of John C. Calhoun, recognized as the spokesman of southern-rights Democrats. However, there were southern Democratic representatives who endeavored to steer clear of "Calhounism." Those who did usually represented districts which were yeoman in character, where the soil was not conducive to a plantation economy, and where Jacksonian nationalism prevailed. Congressman W. R. W. Cobb, from Alabama's upcountry sixth district, an area of few cotton plantations, clearly typified the southern Democrat Unionist. During the California debates, Cobb introduced a resolution that called on all parties to settle their differences. Cobb wanted this "bone of contention" quickly resolved. He recommended the formation of a joint committee of six Senators--three of them from each section--and twenty House members with ten from each section. Their task would be to work out a compromise. The Cobb measure was tabled.[21]

Senator Clemens called for equal treatment of the south in the territories, attacked northerners as despoilers of the Union and of southern institutions.[22] Clemens' belligerance won admiration from the ultra press in Alabama. J. J. Seibels hyperbolically wrote, "what Murat was to Napoleon's Grand Army, Clemens is to the Southern host."[23] Ironically, King initially denounced all compromises and then voted for the Gott resolution which would abolish the slave trade in the District of Columbia.[24]

Whig Henry Hilliard, from the Montgomery district, spoke on both sides of the issue. Seibels also praised him for his condemnation of "Northern aggression."[25] But Hilliard in a letter to the National Intelligencer, the journal read by his conservative planter-Whig constituency, maintained "if there be within the United States a class of [those] who aim to desire to break up the Union...I wish it to be understood that I do not belong to that class."[26] Whig Congressman William J. Alston from the Mobile district was less equivocal. He discoursed on the economic and social benefits of slavery, and concluded that the north had just as much to fear from the Abolitionists as the south: "Awake!" he warned, "Or the Philistines will be upon you."[27] Regardless of these doomsday predictions, Alston joined his Whig colleagues in voting for all the measures in the Omnibus compromise bill.

The speeches of Alabama's Congressional delegation were widely reported to the state press, but newspaper attention as June approached centered on the coming Nashville convention. Misgivings still persisted about its necessity. Two leading Whigs, C. C. Langdon and Congressman Henry Hilliard, argued that no convention should be held prior to an

act of aggression by the federal government. Hilliard, thinking the meeting unnecessary, feared it might frustrate efforts to save the Union.[28] In Madison County a nonpartisan meeting was divided between southern nationalists and unionists. The former, led by C. C. Clay, Jr., urged resistance of "every invasion of southern rights short of secession," while the unionist forces, led by Whig George B. Beirne, came out against the southern convention and succeeded in getting their resolutions adopted by a two to one margin. Not intimidated, Clay harangued his listerners: the only salvation for the south was a unity movement like that promised by Nashville. Most of the Unionist-Whigs and Democrats had departed by the time he introduced a pro-convention motion. Overriding the previous resolution of the unionist camp, the pro-convention measure was carried unanimously.[29] Thus, the Madison county meeting was no barometer of upstate sentiment.

A further indication of Alabama's conservative mood on the eve of the Tennessee gathering was the outspoken position of some of the delegates. For example, before leaving for Nashville, delegate John Erwin, from slave-dense Perry County, declared "that a dissolution of the Union, or a desire to dissolve it did not once enter the minds or the heards of the upright men" representing Alabama.[30]

But apprehension concerning the Nashville meeting persisted. These fears were especially pronounced among first and second district planters who were among the most consistent Union advocates in Alabama. The editor of the Alabama Whig, located in the heart of planter central Alabama, asked whether all those who had been selected for Nashville would in fact go. William H. Murphy, a Whig delegate from the west-

central counties, said he would attend and urged other appointees to aid him there if the Convention's purpose was dissolution of the Union. He hoped the delegates would elaborate ways to protect southern rights and property.[31] Whig editor William Figures estimated "if the people of the state would speak out, we believe four fifths would be found in favor of the Compromise and thus settle the vexed slavery dispute."[32]

The apprehension of these planter-Whigs was based on the conviction that continued irritation of the territorial issues could build a broad consensus in the north and west that would eventually lead to the demand for extinction of slavery in the south. However, in the 1850's, some of these great planters came to support slavery expansion when they saw that their slave population was increasing at a massive rate. A safety valve, in the form of more slave territory, would have to be provided in order to maintain racial control at home. On the other hand, by the late fifties, the smaller planters all over south Alabama were the most strident among the slaveholders demanding more slave territory. They were just then beginning to see that their hopes of acquiring more cotton land in Alabama was hindered by the land monopolizing tendencies of the greater planters.[33]

Inevitably, the Nashville Convention and Clay's Compromise became strict party issues. Whig politicians were opposed to the Convention and Democrats assaulted the Omnibus measures, though upstate Democrats were more temperate: They considered the Tennessee meeting a gathering of "southern minds," no more. In June, William L. Yancey and southern-rights radicals were restrained, sensing the voter reticence. Ultras, moreover, suffered a loss of leadership: John C. Calhoun died on the

eve of Nashville.

Only twenty-one of the thirty-six Alabama delegates went to Nashville. Of these fourteen were Democrats and seven Whigs. Six came from north Alabama, and three resided in the Mobile district.[34]

John A. Campbell, who captained the delegation, led no secession revolt at Nashville and the conservative element carried the day. The convention contented itself with harmless resolutions, chief of which was the extension of the Missouri line (36-30) westward to the Pacific. Sounding the only radical note, Robert Barnwell Rhett attacked Henry Clay's Compromise bill, pleaded for southern unity, and criticized the delegates for not speaking out against submission. A resolution was passed condemning the Omnibus measures pending before Congress. But the vote on this was clearly partisan with Democrats voting in favor of the resolve and Whigs against.[35]

Seven Whigs and one Democrat in the Alabama delegation voted against the Nashville resolutions because of their anti-Compromise position.[36] Whigs considered the Democratic maneuver directed against the Omnibus measures as one not wholly based on principle. It was part of Democratic Party strategy against their traditional opponents in the White House and in Congress. Significantly, southern Democratic ultras and moderates joined together, for the time being, in their opposition to the proposed Congressional Compromise.

When news of the Nashville resolutions reached Alabama, ratification meetings were organized across the state. Thomas H. Watts, influential Montgomery Whig, chaired one "nonpartisan" gathering in the state capitol. He urged support for Clay's measures. Yancey, who shared

the platform, demanded ratification of Rhett's Nashville address. Before the meeting broke up everyone agreed, however, that extension of the Missouri line to the Pacific was acceptable. But nobody, Yancey included, could suggest what kind of action to take if "southern rights were not protected."[37]

Like the Omnibus bill, as noted above, the acceptance or rejection of the Nashville Platform became a partisan question. Regardless of the noncontroversial aspects of the results of the Tennessee meeting, Alabama politicians, especially the eager office-seeking southern-rights ultras, tried to stir public sentiment on the Nashville resolutions. Thereby they hoped that heightened voter concern for slavery's rights in the territories could bring electoral success in the 1851 state elections. For example, the north Alabama Clay family, through their family newspaper the Huntsville Democrat, had been particularly emphatic in demanding southern resistance to all compromising schemes. Although a Democrat, Clement Clay, Jr., had his sights set on running against sixth district Democratic-Unionist Congressman W. R. W. Cobb in 1851. Clement Clay, Sr., chaired a Huntsville assembly that endorsed the Convention's work, especially the resolution condemning Henry Clay's compromise scheme.[38] Later when the Compromise bill passed Congress, the Clays urged opposition. Whig editor William B. Figures clearly saw the motivations behind the Huntsville meeting when he commented, "the whole gathering was just a maneuver to make political capital at Whig and Democratic unionist expense."[39]

Significantly, some Democrats had misgivings about the events that transpired in Nashville. Although the Mobile Register sanctioned

the Nashville Platform, its astute editor Thaddeus Sanford, a party regular, privately disapproved of the resolutions and "would not say it in the paper." The essence of his charge dealt with the Platform's denial of California's right to exclude slavery: "If there is any political proposition to which the Southern Democracy is committed, it is to the doctrine that slavery is exclusively a state institution, and that the people of a state have a right to institute it or to abolish it, at their discretion."[40] Sanford was speaking for Democratic party loyalists and not for the extreme southernist wing in the party. A group of these southernists gathered together in Barbour County and paid no attention to constitutional subtleties. They asserted that the south should insist upon "a constitutional guarantee or an undoubted equivalent, that the subject of slavery will not be again interfered with by the Federal Government in any manner whatever."[41] Conversely, in neighboring Macon County, planter-Whigs met and voiced loyalty to the Union while condemning the Nashville proposal to stretch the Missouri line westward. They endorsed the Compromise bills pending before Congress and condemned "agitators at home who would rupture the tranquility of the Union."[42]

In late August, eastern Black Belt ultras began to bestire themselves as they saw that political capital might be gained out of fermenting opposition to the Omnibus bill. Montgomery and Barbour County "hotspurs," meeting at an all-day barbecue in Montgomery, heard speeches pledging resistance if Congress passed the Clay ordinance. This gathering, Yancey wrote, "took moderate yet firm ground."[43] The Whig Alabama Journal correctly ascribed the small attendance to "a want of sympathy in the agitation of this moment."[44] Not even the eastern Black Belt,

an area known for its ultraism, could be provoked into "manly southern resistance" in the summer of 1850. Before the meeting was over, Yancey was nominated by the gathering to represent Alabama extremists at a southern-rights assembly to be held in Macon, Georgia, at the end of August. Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina would give a major address and Georgia radicals were to make known their readiness for secession if the Compromise bills became law.[45] This meeting was significant in other respects. With John C. Calhoun dead, Rhett and Yancey would try to fill the leadership void in the southern nationalist movement.

Nearly 2000 attended the Macon meeting. Rhett urged Georgia to secede pending Congress's recognition of slavery's rights in the territories. Yancey also called for disunion, asserting that "the argument is exhausted and we must stand to our arms." No doubt Yancey was caught up in the emotionalism of the moment. This was one of the rare public occasions in which William L. Yancey openly advocated secession. His overture had a great deal to do with the temper of his audience, the majority of whom were predisposed to disunionism. It was at this meeting that Whig James A. Meriwether reported to Howell Cobb that the "godlike Rhett and his adjutant Yancey preached most eloquently in behalf of treason...." Although this first convention of southern-rights agitators was so highly charged as to earn its members the title "fire-eaters," it failed to stir Georgia or any other slave state.[46] William R. King best represented Alabama feeling, as well as that of most of the south, when he declared, "one thing is certain, I am no disunionist nor am I prepared to sustain the extremism of the hotheads." King would consent to secession only when all hope for safeguarding the "southern

states of their essential rights is gone...God forbid that such a necessity should ever be forced upon us."[47] King was fundamentally a moderate on southern rights and would remain so until his death in 1853. After all, for King, secession would mean forfeiting all political positions in the Union: personally it would mean beginning an uncertain political career under a new government controlled by possibly unreliable politicians. Furthermore, as noted above, King was expressing the sentiments of the vast majority of southerners as Congress prepared to vote on the Omnibus bills.

In Congress, as the summer wore on, the polemics over the Compromise measures once again engulfed the Alabama delegation. Senator King, who had been appointed to the Foote Committee of thirteen to work on the Clay measure, continued to display constraint in all his remarks.[48] Others, like David Hubbard, accused the north of pretending love for southern Negroes; just so they could cheat their "own white working men."[49] Sampson W. Harris denounced all the Compromise bills and declared the south could not accept them. Reserving his most bitter invective for the fugitive slave law, he charged the north with disregarding the old one and predicted it would do the same with the new measure.[50]

Reacting against such tirades, Democrat W. R. W. Cobb admonished his partisans to accept the compromise, "In times like these there is no New York, no South, no West--just the United States. What is the union of these states without communion of the people."[51] It should be emphasized that ultra Alabama Democrats were ignorant of public sentiment at home which was not susceptible to "hotspur" rhetoric.

During the senatorial debates, Senator Jere Clemens was all sound

and fury. He censured northerners for "circulating incendiary publications among our slaves...." During a night session Clemens announced, "I do not know what Alabama may do but if she determines to resist this [Compromise bill] by force, by secession, by any means, I am at her service....If this be treason, I am a traitor--a traitor who glories in the name."[52] The loquacious Clemens soon found himself involved with South Carolina "fire-eater" Robert Barnwell Rhett. Clemens was critical of "Southrons" who could compromise with northerners. He accused Rhett of having too many Unionist companions. Rhett responded by observing that Clemens' real motives in defending southern rights was a desire to be re-elected.[53] Significantly, when Clemens finally found out the true opinion of the majority of his constituents he voted for the Compromise items and wrote his supporters that the final draft would strengthen the south.[54] Furthermore, two days before the bills had passed, Jere Clemens presented to the Senate a set of resolutions drawn up by Montgomery fire-eaters. These pronouncements predicted civil war if the territorial issues were not settled to the satisfaction of the south. But Clemens admitted, these resolutions did not represent over one-tenth of the people of Alabama. He said that he wanted southerners to resist incursions on their rights but wasn't willing to light the torch of civil war.[55] Clearly, Clemens was now more in line with public feeling in his section.

Clemens' colleague Senator William R. King, by mid-September, was yearning for a settlement. He stated that he would support the bill calling for the abolition of the District of Columbia slave trade on the grounds that the public sale of slaves in the capitol, violated every-

one's good taste. Furthermore, a fugitive slave ordinance, he claimed, would be advantageous to both sections.[56] Quite obviously by September 1850 most moderate southern Democrats had dropped their opposition to the Whig sponsored settlement of the territorial impasse. Without question, the general conservative-to-moderate tenor of their partisans back home was a major factor in determining their acquiescence.

By the end of September, the Compromise measures had passed. As signed by President Fillmore, the final version had the following provisions: New Mexico was created a territory without the Wilmot Proviso, and Texas' claim to part of New Mexico was vacated for an indemnity of $10,000,000; California was admitted as a free state; Utah was created a territory without the Wilmot Proviso; a more stringent slave law was enacted; the slave trade was abolished in the District of Columbia.[57]

Both Alabama Senators voted for the Omnibus acts along with Congressmen Cobb (D), Alston (W), and Hilliard (W). Voting against the measures were Franklin Bowden (D), Sampson W. Harris (D), S. W. Inge (D), and David Hubbard (D). All those who voted against the compromise acts had built their political careers on southern militancy and probably thought that massive radical pro-slavery sentiment would peak when news of the passage of the Congressional Compromise reached their constituents. However, when the four Democrats returned to their districts--upper-central and northwest Alabama--they found the franchised either apathetic or backing the Congressional settlement.

But opposition to the Compromise appeared significantly in the two districts represented by the Whigs. As noted previously, Henry Hilliard of the Montgomery district and W. J. Alston of the Mobile

district had voted for the Omnibus measures. This inspired opportunistic Democratic ultras in the first and second districts, with their sights set on the Congressional elections of 1851, to hold public meetings and and compose petitions rejecting the Compromise in an attempt to create a public mood favorable to secession.

In Lowndes County in the heart of Hilliard's bailiwick, protests against the Compromise began to take place. Southern nationalists called an anti-Compromise meeting and invited William L. Yancey to make an address. Yancey could not attend but sent a letter decrying "this great fraud on the South...the issue then is before us. Congress has boldly tended it--submission or secession."[58] Anticipating another southern Convention that would recommend "manly resistance," he advised the Lowndes ultras to petition Governor Collier toward preparation for Alabama's participation in a slave state Assembly. Yancey also urged those gathered to construct "Southern Rights Clubs" wherever 100 men could be gotten together: "We shall know each other and we shall know, too, our foes." He concluded by emphasizing that Alabama had been disgraced "by a base submission to the unconstitutional act of a free soil Congress."[59] Thus, through the creation of Southern Rights Clubs, Yancey was attempting, as he did in the late forties, to build a movement to propel himself into the position of power broker in both state and national politics.

On the heels of the Lowndes meeting, the Eufaula Regency met and drew up a request to Governor Collier. It stated that a special legislative session should be called that would take steps to protect Alabama from Congressional assaults.[60] Ultra editor J. J. Seibels wrote Governor James Hammond of South Carolina asking him what his state would do with

respect to secession if Georgia backed out of supporting secession. Georgia legislators, however, meeting at the end of October declined to lead any disunion movement.[61]

Governor Henry Collier cautiously remained neutral, neither sanctioning nor rejecting the Congressional Compromise. The Governor's office was in Montgomery where the "fire-eaters" were most active in trying to build a consensus for resistance. Thus, Collier was under pressure from ultras to make a pronouncement against the Omnibus ordinance and issue a call for a "Southern Convention." He was opposed to calling a southern meeting unless the people demanded one. Alabama's Nashville Convention delegates decided to gather again to discuss the present crisis and Collier did not want to move until they, as well as other southern states, had acted. While Collier watched and waited, the Atlas, Montgomery's most radical newspaper, did not. The paper, which was allegedly financed by Yancey, rhetorically asked, "Why should we not secede?"[62] J. J. Seibels, vying with Yancey for control of the Montgomery firebrands, pronounced in his Montgomery Advertiser: "Submission or resistance are now the only alternatives...we shall not hesitate to use the latter."[63] John A. Campbell, meanwhile, pressured Governor Collier to announce a state convention or publicly announce his refusal to do so.[64]

In the east-central counties of the Montgomery district pockets of secessionist feeling were on the rise. John Cochrane of the Eufaula clique did not think there could be immediate secession, but rejoiced that Alabama "hotspurs" engineered a gradual increase in disunionism which by a "more or less rapid, but perfectly certain process would leaven

the whole lump."[65] One Barbour County southern-rights gathering petitioned the Governor for an Alabama Convention to decide upon secession. Russell and Macon Counties formed southern-rights clubs and sent unsigned petitions demanding that the state take action against the recently passed Compromise measures.[66] It is significant that no figures were published as to how many people attended these meetings.

The Mobile district, home of another Whig representative, also witnessed a rise in ultraism. A fire-brand newspaper appeared in first district Dallas county and declared: "We believe the late compromise measures will warrant the secession of all slave holding states from the union....We believe it the duty of every Southern State, collectively or alone to secede from the union."[67, 68] In early November 1850, Governor Collier received a disunion petition from forty-two Dallas County extremists. Frustrated in efforts to take over a local Whig-Union meeting, they had formed a southern-rights organization. They passed resolutions prescribing secession as the "ultimate remedy" for the south. George W. Gayle, a state legislator and former United States District Attorney appointed by Van Buren, was one of the leaders of these Dallas fire-eaters.

Under pressure from these firebrand cliques, Governor Henry Collier finally answered that public opinion had not agreed on what measures to take and that he would not impulsively decide because the consequences might be "irreparably disastrous."[69] The Governor had taken an accurate reading of the public pulse. Unionism and southern-rights moderation dominated Alabama. For example, C. C. Langdon, Connecticut-born Whig editor of the popular Mobile Advertiser, was a strong Unionist, and his

sentiments were shared by the vast majority of Whigs in the Mobile district. He told his readers that "in comparison with the American Union, the institution of slavery is not worth a groat"; and "all other objects sink into insignificance."[70] A massive meeting of Montgomery Whigs, led by lawyer-planter James Abercrombie and Howell Rose, insisted that the compromise had to have a chance to work.[71] In early November, in Marengo County, one of Henry Hilliard's important Whig-planter fiefs, a ratification meeting was held in which Whig planters predominated, and bitter debates ensued. John Wittenley, a Whig lawyer-planter, introduced a motion sustaining Congress. It carried, and Marengo was in the Union camp.[72] Senators William R. King and Jere Clemens returned from Washington to drum up further support for the Congressional settlement. After arriving in Montgomery, King commended the Whig meeting in Marengo. The Whig Macon Republican praised Alabama's two Democratic Senators for voting for the Compromise and said that the issue "is not a party question but of national loyalty."[73] Unionist meetings under Whig leadership were organized in Macon, Mobile, and Pickens Counties in mid-October; and all claimed hundreds attended.[74] Nearly 2000 flocked to a nonpartisan Union assembly in Mobile in late October.[75]

Moderate southern-rights or Unionist Democrats from south Alabama, politicians like Benjamin Fitzpatrick and Thaddeus Sanford, did not participate in the Union movement because of its decidedly Whiggish character. With the Congressional elections a year off, the ultras in the south Alabama Democracy were stirring up support in the lowland Democracy. They had hopes of replacing the two Whig Congressmen representing the Montgomery and Mobile districts. Meanwhile, Sanford's Mobile Register,

a Democratic moderate southern-rights journal, steered a middle course between approval of the Compromise and disunion. By October 15, however, Sanford could "see in secession nothing that will add one iota of additional security to our property in slaves. He who advocates disunion should be prepared to show some stronger reason for it than the abstract right to resist wrong. He should be ready to show, firstly that it can be made effective, and secondly that it gives reasonable promose of a remedy...."[76] Except for pockets of secessionist sentiment in Madison County, bailiwick of the Clay family, the overwhelming majority of north Alabama Democrats were against "Rhettism." Through the upcountry, Democrats and Whigs held Union meetings which sustained the Compromise.[77]

By October, Senator Jere Clemens came under attack by the radical south Alabama press for his "newly found unionism." Whig editor William B. Figures could not understand the controversy over Clemens when Col. King "is permitted to pass unquestioned." King published letters in newspapers contending that the Compromise did nothing to dampen the "honor of the South" which stands in all its "original purity." The Constitution, he claimed, "has not been violated." Why, Figures asked, is Clemens attacked? The answer "is because Mr. C.'s term expires <u>first</u> and there will be a chance sooner for somebody to fill it. Does this prompt the attack on the one, and the sparing of the other?" King voted for the Compromise measures, Figures noted, and was a member of the Foote Committee of thirteen which drew up the final draft. "His role must be embarrassing to the Democratic agitators in south Alabama." The attacks on Clemens like the stirring of extremist sentiment in south-central Alabama were being done to build a movement that would topple the state's political

insiders--both Whigs and Democrats--especially those of a moderate or Unionist cast. Former Governor John Gayle believed that secession was being manipulated by "the madness of fanaticism in Alabama, by those office-seekers who are practiced political Demagogues."[78]

Both Figures and Gayle correctly saw that many in the south Alabama Democracy were using extreme rhetoric for political gain. But by November, because of the strong sentiment in the state for the Compromise, the Democratic Congressmen who voted against the Compromise were wavering. Figures assessed this shift of position on the part of Alabama Democratic southern-rights Congressmen who voted against the Omnibus bill but after arriving home and testing public opinion now had second thoughts:

> Harris and Inge are restrained by a wholesome fear of the ballot box and are thus openly fearful of confessing treason. Bowden <u>individually</u> is for <u>secession</u>, but goes with his district which is not. Hubbard was a rank Rhettite while in Washington; but during his stay among his constituents, he was mute as an oyster--he is an old fox and knows the political currents too well not to see nullification, disguised under the soothing name of secession, will not go down with his people. He has, however, sinned enough to secure his defeat by some good old Andrew Jackson Union Democrat in his district.[79]

George Smith Houston, aware of Hubbard's difficulty, made a strong Union speech in the yeoman fifth district at the end of November. He asserted that Alabama "should hold herself amenable to the laws of the Union however trying the circumstances or delicate the duty to perform."[80] Houston would have no trouble unseating Hubbard in the forthcoming Congressional race.

While Unionism reigned supreme in north Alabama, the second session

of the Nashville Convention got under way. Only five delegates from Alabama attended: Reuben Chapman (D); George Williams (D); C. C. Clay, Sr. (D); John A. Calhoun (D); Jefferson Buford (nullifying Whig). The Alabama delegates who did not attend may have agreed with Whig William M. Byrd of Marengo County who announced, "I am against all unnecessary agitation--the country wants peace and quiet and cannot hope for such a result by reassembly of the same delegates."[81] The southern Convention adjourned after condemning the Compromise and reaffirming southern resistance to aggression. It was a dismal affair. To further deflate secessionism, the Georgia legislature (in December 1850) approved the Georgia Platform: "The state would abide by the Compromise but would resist--even to a disruption of the Union--any more assaults upon the South.[82] During the Alabama state elections of 1851, this Platform became a rallying device for southern-rights Democrats who were still equivocal on the Congressional settlement. Also some ultras supported the Georgia Platform and posed as conditional Unionists in order to appease public sentiment.

There were fundamental economic causes for the lack of secession sentiment in 1850. Cotton profits made a comeback in 1850. Its price had risen from a low in 1848-1849 of 7.5 a pound to a profitable 12.3 cents a pound in 1850.[83] In September 1850 at the height of the turmoil over the Compromise, a Sumter County planter wrote Governor Henry Collier that "some of us here have good crops some of the best ever...how grand the crop is...."[84] This prosperity, remarked the fire-eating Spirit of the South, explained the reluctance to undertake resistance "because there is plenty to live on, because we are out of debt, and cotton brings

a good price, many are in so good a humor and so well satisfied...as to shut their eyes...in the consoling reflection that the future cannot hurt them."[85] The Whig Alabama Journal implored secessionists to ponder whether "disunion will not give us a better price for cotton--will not increase the value of slave property--will not render them more secure --will not diminish taxation but will be likely under the best...state of affairs to double taxation, diminish the price of our staples and reduce the value of slaves and land fifty percent."[86] Former Governor James Hammond of South Carolina, visiting Mobile in the fall of 1850, noted that disunionism had little chance against the high price of cotton.[87] Thus, south Alabamians living in the cotton regions of the state, pleased with high cotton prices, were not ready for disruption in 1850. Throughout the turmoil over the Omnibus bills, north Alabama especially reaffirmed its traditional loyalty to the Union.

As a result of the pro-Union sentiments of the vast majority of the electorate, few Democratic party regulars--the Montgomery Regency--in south Alabama took part in the disunion gatherings organized by Montgomery, Barbour, and Dallas county ultras. Most of those who did were relatively young status-seeking lawyers and small planters. Montgomery Regency party loyalists, except for Senator William R. King, generally remained quiet and allowed the "hotspurs" to agitate the secession issue. The Whigs of south Alabama claimed the Union issue for themselves. Thus they left conservative-to-moderate lowland Democrats isolated while "firebrand" Democrats tried to provoke secessionism among the voters. Some of these Democratic ultras knew by the end of November that the electorate could not be moved; nevertheless, they continued to call for

the manipulation of the disunion issue. For example, Perry County Assemblyman and future secession Governor of Alabama, Albert B. Moore, confided, "Before the common people will be prepared to resist insults and injustices, in the proper manner, they must be made to know and feel that they have been thus treated and this can only be done by the press, and public description...."[88] As noted earlier, the motivations of the east-central Alabama ultras was not based on southern principle exclusively: The firebrand definition of southern rights in the fall of 1850 meant not only noninterference with white racial domination at home but secession unless Congress abrogated the Compromise of 1850 and replaced it with federal protection of slavery in the territories. Many of these crisis mongers were agitating southern rights for the purpose of unseating the two Whig Congressmen in the Montgomery and Mobile districts whose terms expired in August 1851. Since both Whig representatives had voted for the Congressional settlement, the Democratic ultras of the first and second Congressional districts were trying to fashion enough secession sentiment to topple the Whig mastery of the two lowland regions. If the radical southern-rights men could achieve this political goal, they could then possibly replace the Democratic party regulars in south Alabama--men like King, Benjamin Fitzpatrick and Thaddeus Sanford--as the power brokers in the Alabama Democracy.

Union Whigs saw the dilemma of Democratic conservatives and viewed the Union issue as a means of making a political comeback in the state. They could gain control of the state, by aligning with Union Democrats in north Alabama, and possibly win over Democratic regulars in south Alabama.

The Democratic firebrands in the Montgomery and Mobile districts were paying little heed to the public mood of their regions in their use of disunion rhetoric to discredit the Whigs. At a January 7 meeting of ultras from Henry and Barbour Counties, resolutions were passed condemning the Omnibus bills, which "ultimately could force the South to secession, we believe the public mind and resources of the South should be prepared for that alternative."[89] These radical opportunists had almost a total misunderstanding of the disposition of the citizens they addressed their appeal to. For example, W. H. Crenshaw, a Butler County planter, declared that, "I am not with the ultras....My doctrine is to fight the issue in the Union and under the Constitution...."[90] By the end of January, some radicals finally began to see the necessity of tempering their message. These ultras began broadening their appeal by insisting the southern rights clubs were not designed to destroy the Union, but to save it by thwarting abolitionism. They were, to be sure, looking toward the August elections. Consequently, Eufaula firebrand Jefferson Buford assured an audience that rather than dissolve the Union they intended to maintain it "by putting an end to this war upon the Constitution and upon our rights....We do not declare an intention to dissolve; we make no threat that we will secede in any contingency."[91]

While some eastern Black Belt ultras began shifting ground, Whig-Unionists began to organize. Some of the foremost Whig leaders in south Alabama gathered in Montgomery on January 19. The vast majority from west and south-central Alabama were lawyers, doctors and small planters, and there were also prominent slaveholders: Robert Jemison from Tuscaloosa; Thomas H. Watts from Montgomery; R. M. Patton from Lauderdale,

all of whom owned over 100 slaves.[92] The Convention sustained the Congressional Compromise and denied the right of secession. With their sights set on the August elections, they endorsed the following slate for Congress: editor C. C. Langdon in the Mobile district, rather than W. J. Alston; and James Abercrombie of Russell County, who took Henry Hilliard's place in the Montgomery district when the latter decided not to run. The campaigns in the Montgomery-Mobile districts promised to be bitter, and quite possibly Hilliard and Alston did not want to go through distressing canvasses. Hilliard did agree to stump for Abercrombie. Judge William Mudd was selected to run in the third district; William R. Smith ("little Billy"), a former Whig editor who became a Democratic legislator in 1843 and a Unionist in 1850 to 1851, was selected for the fourth Tuscaloosa district; George Smith Houston and W. R. W. Cobb in the upstate fifth and sixth districts were endorsed--their selection represented a fusion effort with upstate Democrats. Significantly, neither Houston nor Cobb rejected the Whig endorsement. Alexander White, erstwhile Democrat who became a Union Whig in 1851, was selected for the seventh Talladega district.[93]

The Whig slate was formidable causing more Democratic Southern Rights Clubs to temper their plea. Furthermore, additional ultras began to recognize the moderation of the vast majority of south Alabama voters. Thus the Lowndes County Southern Rights Association maintained that secession was only the last resort and offered to cooperate with those favoring other means of resistance.[94]

A convention of Southern Rights Clubs opened in Montgomery on February 10th. Only eleven counties sent delegates, ninety-seven in all.

Almost all of them were Democrats from the Montgomery and Mobile districts, again indicating the relative weakness of secessionist sentiment. William L. Yancey, who wrote the Convention resolutions, defended the right of disruption by any state. However, he modified a call for Alabama secession and in so many words said that Alabama should take this step only if another slave state seceded. The resolution in its final form read: "the question of the secession of Alabama is reduced to that of time and policy only." In a dramatic mood, confirmed "hotspur" delegates went beyond Yancey and amended his plank, to read, that Alabama secession "is only a question of time."[95] Yancey obviously was aware of the popular disposition in the state for tranquility but he was out "Yancied" by southern nationalists who wanted to go beyond his equivocal stand.

The secession resolution that emanated from the Montgomery meeting splintered Alabama's southern-rights movement. Three Democratic newspapers, all claiming to be resistance organs, asserted that the term "time" (in the modified Yancey resolution) was too extreme. If "time only" would determine Alabama action, Thaddeus Sanford declared, then he did not believe in the right of secession. Sanford, essentially a southern-rights moderate and party regular, insisted that Southern Rights Clubs must repudiate the recommendations of the Montgomery convention: "Let us reject such ultra and quixotic schemes." The Mobile Calhounite John A. Campbell agreed and opposed single state secession, advising instead a boycott of northern goods. The Mobile Southern Rights Association under John A. Campbell later affirmed the right of disunion but considered it "unwise for any state to secede by itself." Its meeting

was the scene of a violent dispute between fire-eater Percy Walker and party-regular Thaddeus Sanford, editor of the Mobile Register, who wanted an outright denial of the right of disunion.[96]

Reflecting the Democratic rift, party newspapers in north Alabama wanted to purge "stright outs" from the party: "Yancey and Co. are now known--their purposes are revealed. Nothing but disunion will satisfy them. Nothing but rebellion by Alabama. We accept the issue. This Union is yet precious to us."[97] Yancey's reputation as a consistent secessionist partly resulted from this press characterization. Clearly, his behavior at the late southern-rights convention in Montgomery reflected more caution than "fire." Contributing to the internecine Democratic party conflict, Senator William R. King added an element of conspiracy. He saw a plot being hatched and told friends that his eyes had been opened to the objects of the "self styled Southern Rights men" whose real goal was to carry out "their disunion project" after promoting themselves "as the bold defenders of Southern Rights. Good and true men will abandon them to the fate that awaits them--the condemnation of every patriot in the land."[98] King's observations were politically inspired; he had his hopes on the 1852 Democratic vice-presidential nomination.

Understandably, the Whig press in particular presented Yancey as the chief "secession culprit." The Alabama Journal and the Macon Republican assigned the final version of the Montgomery southern-rights resolutions to him, despite the fact that it was extremists who had amended his resolutions in favor of separate action by Alabama.[99]

While Democrats splintered over which "Southern" policy to pursue,

district leaders in the spring of 1851 began selecting their candidates for the forthcoming state and Congressional elections. Governor Henry Collier was the unchallenged nominee for a second term of the party regulars. However, throughout the spring, Union Democrats confronted challenges from southern-rights Democrats; in some instances southern rights or secession Democrats disregarded the Congressional nominations of district party men and contested the regular selections. For example, Democratic-Unionist George Smith Houston wrested the fifth district nomination from incumbent ultra David Hubbard who persisted in running against Houston as a secessionist Democrat. Williamson Cobb, another upstate Democrat-Unionist, had no trouble in retaining support from district party men in the sixth district but confronted Robert Murphy, a southern-rights Democrat who stopped short of advocating secession. Significantly, C. C. Clay, Jr., who had planned to run against Cobb, declined to contest giving up the challenge to Murphy. In the fourth Tuscaloosa district, incumbent S. W. Inge, who refused to vote for the Compromise, declined to run. He was replaced by planter John Erwin, a former Whig, who stood as a southern-rights Democrat but was "utterly hostile to disunionism in any of its phases." In the Montgomery district, east-central "hotspurs" were able to nominate John Cochrane, a Democratic legislator from Barbour County, who had been a state elector for Lewis Cass and advocate of squatter sovereignty in 1848. Now in 1851 Cochrane adopted the mantle of Democratic secessionist. In the third district Sampson W. Harris ran for a third Congressional term as a southern-rights Democrat. He stood on the Georgia Platform even though it sustained the Compromise which Harris had voted against. In the seventh district

rank opportunist Samuel F. Rice thought that he could gain a Congressional seat by campaigning as a secessionist Democrat. He was defeated for Congress as a regular Democrat in 1845, became a Whig in 1848, and once again a Democrat in 1851. John Bragg, a moderate southern-rights Democrat, gained the Mobile Democratic Congressional nomination.[100]

Before the Congressional campaigns got under way, news reached Montgomery in mid-May that South Carolina southern-rights organizations had gathered to consider forcing their state into disunion as the only means of combatting the Congressional Compromise. Palmetto state radicals maintained that with California and New Mexico accepted as free states, the political doom of the south had been determined. Hence, at the end of May 1851 Montgomery southern-rights members also convened. Yancey again wrote resolutions encouraging South Carolina secession and stated that all slave states had a duty to come to her aid if the federal government used force to prevent it. If "South Carolina should fail to secede, such failure will be the death knell of all hope of resistance to federal oppression...it will crush the spirit of the South and tend to consolidate this government upon the ruins of States Rights."[101] Significantly, Yancey did not propose intervention by Alabama on behalf of South Carolina but cooperative defiance by the entire south.

Editor J. J. Seibels, meanwhile, had reached the end of his patience with Yancey. He had contended that sectional unity was a prerequisite to secession, and urged another southern convention. His proposals were tabled by the Yancey-led assembly, whereas all of Yancey's were adopted. Seibels then condemned Yancey and "his group of extremists." He also attacked them for not fraternizing "with any man or set of men

who will not now advocate a secession of Alabama from the Union." All who suggested a course short of secession of Alabama "were to all intents and purposes submissionists or in other words, there could be but two positions secession or submission."[102] This was an unfair reading of Yancey's resolutions. He was not proposing Alabama secession but co-operative action by all slave states if South Carolina should secede and if the federal government should use force to prevent it. Henceforth Yancey's and Seibels' violent enmity became notorious.

The actions of the Montgomery southern-rights men did little to resolve the stance of south-central Alabama Southern Rights Clubs; especially with the summer campaigns underway. Should Alabama ultras insist that all radical candidates for office take a disunionist stance or a more moderate position? To resolve this predicament, ninety representatives from nineteen Clubs attended a June state-wide Southern Rights Convention in Montgomery. As they had four months earlier, south-central and east-central counties dominated. The Mobile organization under John A. Campbell ran the meeting, and Yancey authored a set of moderate resolutions. All were now well aware of the temper of public opinion in the state. Consequently, they did not advocate the secession of South Carolina. Alabama, like all southern states, should defend the right of any slave state to secede and if the federal government acted coercively, then force should be employed by her sister states.[103]

Yancey's and Campbell's moderation extended to the gubernatorial candidate. Although critical of the Compromise, Governor Henry Collier had maintained a conservative position. He never endorsed South Carolina's position, did not speak in disunionist terms, and refused to call

a state convention to deal with the territorial crisis. Therefore, many Democratic ultras opposed him. Under Campbell's deft leadership, however, and Yancey's compliance, the Convention came out for Collier. One reason for the endorsement was the position of Benjamin Shields, Collier's opponent. A Marengo County Democrat and a planter-lawyer, Shields was running with Whig support. He began his campaign with the motto, "Union right or wrong, at all hazards, and to the last extremity." Campbell's strategy rested on the assumption that an outright secessionist would have no chance against a party regular like Collier or against an avowed Unionist like Shields who had Whig support.[104]

Campbell's stewardship of the Convention, it should be noted, was a fascinating contrast to the erratic, demagogic, and discordant guidance of Yancey's at past Southern Rights Club meetings. Unlike Yancey, he tried to improve the prospects of ultra southern-rights candidates. Because of the prudent guidance of John A. Campbell, Alabama's Southern Rights Clubs rejected the radical scheme of separate state secession proposed by South Carolina Rhettites. Rather they proposed a united action of all cotton states only if the federal government were to use force on a seceding state.

Despite Campbell's attempts to improve the position of ultra southern-rights candidates, they were in political trouble as the Congressional campaigns heated up in July. The most bitter campaign occurred in the Montgomery district, where ultra John Cochrane contested Whig-Unionist James Abercrombie. (Abercrombie had replaced incumbent Henry Hilliard who had refused his party's re-nomination.)

In the early spring Cochrane had come out for secession. He "prayed

God that the South may tear herself from the power of the Monster which does not conceal its purpose."[105] John Cochrane was one of those radical Barbour County "hotspurs" who had been agitating the disunion issue since the fall of 1850 while aiming at the Congressional seat of Henry Hilliard. However, after the June Southern Rights Convention, Cochrane "stopped breathing fire" and was circumspect on secession.

Second district Whigs desperately wanted to retain their hold on the Montgomery district Congressional seat, and they prevailed upon Hilliard, an outstanding debater, to take the stump for Abercrombie. Montgomery district Democrats confronted with the prespect of answering one of the state's most outstanding polemicists turned to William L. Yancey whose reputation as a stump speaker was renowned. Thus, Cochrane and Abercrombie had little chance to debate.

In the first clash between Hilliard and Yancey, the former tried to put the secession onus on Yancey and his "client" Cochrane. Hilliard maintained that no state had a lawful right to secede.[106] In a debate at Union Spring, outside of Montgomery, Yancey scrupulously avoided the secession question and railed against Hilliard's vote for the Compromise bills. He also noted that his opponent had "too friendly an attitude towards leaders of the North."[107] Hilliard replied by reminding his audience that Yancey, while a Congressman, had voted for the Oregon bill with its slavery exclusion amendment. He also cited "Yancey's...desire to dissolve the union" announced at the Macon, Georgia, fire-eaters assembly in 1850. Both Unionists and southern-righists in attendance agreed that Yancey had failed to deal with the real issue, namely secession.[108]

In their next encounter, Yancey confronted the disunion issue, following a long-winded, three-hour, account of the constitutional relationship between federal and state government. "Action must be taken," he declared, "to reduce the power of the central government which prevents the spread of slavery into the territories, and if that action failed Alabama would have a constitutional right to secede."[109] Hilliard responded that secession was revolutionary and not constitutional. Secession "was the best way to destroy slavery. If the South left the Union all remaining options of slave migration in the United States would close."[110] In their last clash, Yancey returned to Hilliard's southernism. He charged the former Congressman with making speeches to "Abolitionists and Negro thieves" in Boston and "wondered where Hilliard's true sympathies lie."[111] Yancey's ad hominem tactics caused the remaining debates to be canceled. He had not addressed himself to the question of single state secession, but had only insisted on the theoretical right of secession.

When the election results were tabulated in the Montgomery district run-off, Abercrombie triumphed by a 1600 margin.[112] These results confirmed the moderate-to-conservative mood of second district voters. The election outcome, to some degree, was a triumph for Whig-planter conservatism.

However, in the Mobile district Democrats won a Congressional victory only because of the sagacity of their standard bearer. John Bragg, following the lead of the June resolutions of the Alabama Southern Rights Convention, recognized the right of secession but opposed separate state action. He also claimed to be a better "Southron" than his Whig adversary, editor C. C. Langdon (who was born and reared in Connecticut).

Bragg was able to unite all factions hostile to Langdon and he won by 1523 votes.[113]

In the upper-central third district incumbent Sampson W. Harris, a rabid southern-rights advocate who had voted against the Congressional Compromise, restrained his ultra impulses. He was criticized for his moderation by local fire-eaters who refused to go along with the June resolutions of the Southern Rights Convention. They condemned Harris as "one of the most dangerous conciliators of the South because he opposes separate state secession." Harris' tactics worked, however; he stood on the Georgia Platform--conditional Unionism--and defeated Whig William Mudd by 538 votes.[114]

Two former Whigs and sometime Democrats squared off in the fourth (Tuscaloosa) district: John Erwin, a wealthy planter with 169 slaves, and Judge "little Billy" Smith. Both opposed secession and sustained the Compromise of 1850. Smith took only two of the five counties but won by a slim edge--fifty ballots.[115]

Southern-rights ultra Democrat David Hubbard in the upcountry fifth district was silent on the disunion issue and had to defend his vote against the Compromise. George Smith Houston had the support of regular Democrats as well as Whigs and beat Hubbard in a landslide victory.[116]

Democrat Unionist W. R. W. Cobb in the sixth district had a victory over Robert Murphy his Democratic southern-rights challenger by a majority of 3605 votes.[117]

Samuel F. Rice, the ultra southern-rights standard bearer in the seventh district, shifted to endorsement of the Georgia Platform when

voters did not respond to his radical secession plank; he lost to Alexander White, his Whig-Unionist opponent, by a 373 plurality.[118]

Thus the seven elected Congressmen--five Democrats and two Whigs --campaigned as outright Unionists and conditional Unionists. These Congressional results, in sum, reflected the Unionism of Alabama voters regardless of their section. In 1851, cotton prices persisted over twelve cents a pound. Few Alabamians wanted to jeopardize that.

Governor Henry Collier defeated Benjamin Shields, a Democrat who was running with Whig support. Shields dropped out of the race because of poor health in July, but his name remained on the ballot. Stepping out of character, Collier spoke to the compromise and secession questions. He did not approve or disapprove of the Compromise. And he asserted that no slave state convention would be held unless the southern people demanded one. He also came out against "all secession schemes."[119]

A significant feature of the campaign was the fusion of north Alabama Union Democrats and Whig Unionists. This was part of a Whig stratagem to gain political ascendancy in the state. Democratic party regulars understood this Whig ploy. Three regulars, in a letter to the Huntsville Democrat, rejected this tactic because it not only threatened Democratic control but also gave credence to Democratic ultras. "The amalgamation of Whiggery and Democracy we regard entirely unnecessary as the dissolution of the Union is threatened only by small numbers of persons in this state." If the firebrands were left "to their own reflections without being treated as a party demanding the combined opposition of Whigs and Democrats they would have to change their tactics in order to be elected."[120]

Despite the air of conciliation manifested by the election returns, some newspapers continued their attack on those opposed to "straight out" secession. Foremost among them--all east-central papers--were The Spirit of the South, journal of the Eufaula clique; the Hayneville Chronicle; and the Dallas Gazette, mouthpiece of the Dallas County ultras. After the 1851 outcome, they believed "all is lost--life, liberty, lands, slaves, all is lost--overwhelmed on the torrent of anarchy, which abolition will pour upon our glorious land."[121] Or as another lamented, "The proposition [election results] then amounts to a total surrender of ourselves and all we have into the hands of an abolition party."[122]

The Whig press responded to the ultra journals by accusing eastern Black Belt southern-rights leaders of disunionism and opportunism. A Whig paper identified the leaders of "the traitorous bands of Disunion in the state." Yancey and his law partner John Elmore, both from South Carolina, led the list followed by "George Goldthwaite an old Cass man; John Cochrane, also a late Cass man; George Williams, a nullifying Whig; Jefferson Buford, a nullifying Whig; Mr. James Pugh, a former Taylor elector and South Carolina nullifier; Col. Seibels and John A. Campbell, devoted followers of Mr. Calhoun and no one else." The account further stated "nine times out of ten they will prove to have come from South Carolina (whether calling themselves Whigs or Democrats of late) they are nullifiers." Their all-consuming "wish is to ride both the old parties to the devil and to control the Government for themselves."[123] It is interesting to note that the disunionists on the list had all been quiet on secessionism during the 1851 election. Seibels parted company with the Montgomery ultras. Campbell maneuvered himself into a centrist

southern-rights position. After his defeat, Cochrane tended more to his law practice and suppressed his secessionist sentiments. Yancey did not come out for immediate secession while stumping for Cochrane.

After the August outcome, Yancey was particularly despondent. He indicted all traditional party organizations, observing that "the Southern Rights cause, per se, has no organization here"; and he also perceived the motives of most southern-rights extremists: "One half of those who were its advocates in name, are as much submissionists as the Union men. I look on merely and will take no part in aiding a reorganization of the old Democratic party. A Presidential election would effectively kill off all that remains of Southern Rightism if its friends were to go into it, under old party colors."[124] Yancey's prediction would prove correct. In 1852--a Presidential election year--there was an exodus of southern-rights men back into the Democratic party.

Students of Alabama's secession movement have affirmed the leadership role Yancey played in the events of 1851. Henry Meyer contends that Yancey led "a strong faction in Alabama, the 'Yanceyites'," which exhibited a zealous devotion to the idea of secession.[125] Alabama ultras, according to this interpretation, unwaveringly adhered to principle. But, as indicated, Yancey's political behavior in 1851 was erratic. At the February southern-rights meeting in Montgomery his cooperative secession resolution was amended from the floor by a "hotspur" bloc. In June he yielded to John A. Campbell and the Mobile Southern Rights Club. Campbell swung the delegates into line behind a mild resistance resolution that supported collective southern action. Yancey also joined the Convention in endorsing conservative Governor Henry Collier for re-

election. He carefully shunned instant secession while debating Henry Hilliard and talked only of the abstract right of disunion. From the time of his resignation from Congress, states Ralph Draughon, Jr., Yancey usually was consistent in refusing to cooperate with Democrats unless they lived up to what he regarded as correct principles.[126] But as noted above, his correct principles included evasion and often a refusal to commit himself to outright secession. Clearly, there were more consistent southern nationalists. George W. Gayle of the Dallas County ultras displayed a more determined adherence to unqualified secession than did Yancey. Yancey's most consistent characteristic was an immoderation which alienated those around him. His antagonists were legion. Bellicose rhetoric, a hot temper, and an overweaning ambition for political power and notoriety, seem to have been his most distictive traits.

* * *

After the 1851 election, Alabama Democrats began reorganizing their party with Governor Collier, Senator King, Benjamin Fitzpatrick, Thaddeus Sanford, and Secretary of State William Garrett among the prime movers. All of these party regulars came from south-central Alabama and, as noted earlier, they played a minimal role in the acrimonious political struggles of their region in the campaign of 1851. Whig editor William B. Figures remarked that Democratic reorganization means "putting the State back under the Montgomery Regency."[127] Editor J. J. Seibels helped out by boosting the stock of William R. King for the vice-presidency in 1852. Admitting that he had formerly been at odds with King, Seibels now declared that past differences should not fore-

close the necessity for party harmony.[128] In addition to being a unity measure, reorganization would have other functions; namely, bringing all Democrats, especially upstate Unionists who collaborated with the Whigs, into line in time for the forthcoming Presidential campaign. As to Democrats who by choice remained "outside the pale," Democratic loyalist Thaddeus Sanford felt that it would be "a Godsend to our party if Yancey and the hotspurs no longer curse our councils by their traitorous alliance."[129] Similarly, Senator John Slidell of Louisiana praised Alabama's regular Democrats for their leadership in putting the party back into the national Democratic ranks and advised, "As to the Rhetts, Yanceys, and etc., the sooner and more effectively we get rid of them the better...."[130]

On January 8, 1852, the Democratic party held its state Convention and adopted a resolution standing on the finality of the Compromise. "The south Alabama Democrats and their newly found Union allies [upstate Democrats] met," an observer to the caucus reported, "and the former pushed the latter forward by giving them the promise of offices." The meeting unanimously endorsed William R. King for either the presidential or vice-presidential nomination. Delegates to the national convention in Baltimore were chosen.[131] By early spring the traditional shaky alliance between Alabama Democrats had been re-established.

With the re-united Democrats controlling the General Assembly, they turned on their opponents. They pushed an ordinance through the state legislature which redistricted Congressional districts in order to give themselves an advantage. It gerrymandered Black Belt Whigs counties and, increasing the number of Democratic upcountry counties, gained three

more legislature seats for the Democrats.[132]

Alabama Whigs, besides being electorally crippled in Alabama, faced another dilemma when they met to select a delegation for their presidential nominating convention to be held in Philadelphia. Many believed that Millard Fillmore was the only viable Whig candidate outside the south, and instructed delegates to vote for him. The Whig leaders, Judge Arthur Hopkins of Mobile and Thomas Hill Watts, the rich planter of Montgomery, deplored the national party schism into cotton and conscience factions. They felt that the northern wing had been abolitionized. The fear of Congressmen Alexander White and James Abercrombie that abolitionized Whigs could control the convention and that, therefore, Fillmore did not have a chance, prompted them to decline nomination as delegates. Both believed that a candidate not committed to the Compromise would be chosen. Winfield Scott's selection confirmed their suspicions and they refused to campaign for him.[133]

During the presidential contest of 1852 Alabama Democrats went great lengths to point out to all Unionists--Whig and Democrat--that their party nominee, Franklin Pierce, could be depended on to uphold the 1850 compromise. Meanwhile, Scott was depicted as a tool of the anti-slavery [Conscience] Whigs of the north.[134] Taking advantage of the vast pro-Compromise sentiment in Alabama, William R. King, who was selected as the vice-presidential nominee on the Pierce ticket, publicly stated, "I was probably the first individual in the slave holding states who publicly took ground in favor of acquiescence." He made it known that if he became President he would veto any attempt to repeal the Fugitive Slave Act. Senator King expressed satisfaction at sharing the

ticket with Pierce. Though possibly limited in "information and political experience," Pierce was a "firm and decided supporter of the constitutional rights of the South."[135]

With the presidential campaign heating up, "last ditch" ultra southern-rights delegates, sixty-two in all from eight east-central counties, met in Montgomery on September 13 to decide whom to support for the Presidency. This was part of a growing movement throughout Black Belt counties in the Gulf states (particularly Mississippi and Alabama) to nominate fire-eaters for the 1852 presidential election. They endorsed two southern-rights extremists, George Troup of Georgia for President and John A. Quitman of Mississippi as his running mate.[136] Troup was a radical southern nationalist and former legislator from Georgia, and Quitman was an ex-governor of Mississippi.

Yancey remained silent on the Presidential question. Dallas County firebrand George W. Gayle asked him to quell the uneasiness of the ultras, who had heard that he would campaign for Pierce. "If my vote were at all necessary," Yancey replied, "to give the vote of this state and to elect General Pierce in order to prevent the election of General Scott, I should feel it my duty to vote for General Pierce."[137] Yet he insisted Troup and Quitman were his first choice; but he did not campaign for them. He did not even cast a ballot in this election, and justifying it, he claimed that legal business had taken him away and he couldn't vote.[138] Since 1846, like his intellectual mentor, John C. Calhoun, Yancey had condemned national party loyalty for its temporizing effect; but in 1852 he began a flirtation with the Democratic party which would ultimately effect his entering its ranks again.

In Alabama, Pierce and King defeated Scott and Graham, 26,637 to 14,713. The Troup-Quitman ticket received 2175 votes.[139] The turnout percentage was 47; that is, less than half of Alabama's eligible voters, 53 percent, did not vote.[140] The Whigs carried seven counties --all in south-central Alabama--and four of them had high slave percentages.[141] Troup took two Black Belt counties--Lowndes and Barbour--home of the Eufaula Regency. The meager showing of ultra southern rightists was restricted to the Black Belt: slightly over 200 votes in Autauga and Dallas Counties and nearly 150 in Wilcox County. They collected ten votes in north Alabama; and five each in Franklin and Lawrence Counties.[142] Significant numbers of east-central Whigs, C. C. Cole affirms, cast ballots for Troup and Quitman because they felt Pierce and Scott were too northern in orientation.[143] Certainly, Barbour County's "nullifying Whigs," led by Jefferson Buford and James Pugh, voted heavily for Troup. Pierce swept the highland Democracy and twenty-seven counties in south-central Alabama. The total vote was 23,000 less than the entire vote cast in the Congressional elections of 1851.[144]

For a majority of Alabamians, then, the issue had been settled in 1851. Union sentiment predominated. Pierce? Scott? Troup? All this was anti-climatic. Of greater importance was that Democratic party regulars maintained control. And of even greater consequence was that the Whig party began to disappear after 1852. Thereby the strongest Union bloc in south-central Alabama was eliminated and new political opportunities opened up for these aggressive "hotspur" cliques in east-central Alabama.

CHAPTER V

THE SIMMERING FIFTIES: FACTIONALISM, OPPORTUNISM, AND SOUTHERN RIGHTS

By the eighteen fifties most central and south Alabama Democrats as well as some Whigs from east-central Alabama referred to themselves as southern rights advocates. In the fifties southern rights meant maintaining the economic benefits of slavery along with preserving the only system of racial adjustment that could effectively keep blacks controlled and subordinate. Southern Rights also intended the expansion of slavery westward. The more strident among these Southern extremists, also insisted that Congress pass a federal slave code insuring slavery's existence in the South and its rights in the territories. This was "The Alabama Platform" first proposed in the late 1840's. Many south Alabama politicians also considered southern rights challenged by northern criticism of slavery, and went so far as calling for a halt--by statute--of all criticism of the south's peculiar institution. Most of these southern extremists, throughout much of the 1850's, did not call for secession. They still saw their political future tied to the national Democratic party. The vast majority of their constituents did not find disunion to be a rational solution to the national debate over slavery.

These south Alabama politicians were obsessed with gaining high office. Consequently, while southern rights advocates, they would often challenge each other in local and congressional elections, and by acusing each other of being "soft on southernism", they would manipulate the southern-rights issue to their own advantage.

However, by 1853 southern-rights agitation had subsided, although

some residual Black-Belt southern rights associations did continue to operate. These clubs functioned as pressure groups within the south-central Alabama Democracy. Leading fire-eaters tended to be inactive in the mid-fifties and southern rights receded in importance. William L. Yancey, for example, became a full-time lawyer for three years, seldom taking part in politics.

Another manifestation of waning sectional tensions was Alabama's initial response to the Kansas-Nebraska Act of May 1854. Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas chairman of the Senate committee on the territories confronted the territorial question. He had supported the Compromise of 1850, but he reopened the slavery issue in 1854 when he sponsored the Kansas-Nebraska Act which, superceded the Missouri Compromise. This act endorsed the popular sovereignty doctrine--all questions pertaining to slavery in the territories were to be left to the people residing there. Upstate Alabama, which had areas of lowest slave density, understandably endorsed the measure with enthusiasm. South-central Alabamians, who lived in areas densely populated by slaves, first expressed concurrence with and only later resentment toward the act. One reason was simply indifference to matters so remote from the State. Indeed all of Alabama was preoccupied with such issues as bank reform, temperance, and state aid for railroads; by 1853 local issues preoccupied Alabamians; so did Whig attempts to forestall Democratic gerrymandering.

In 1853 Governor Henry Collier selected Benjamin Fitzpatrict to complete the senatorial term of Vice President-elect William R. King. King had died in the spring of 1853, and with his death leadership of the Alabama Democracy passed to Fitzpatrick. King's death not only re-

moved the leading exponent of unionism in south Alabama's Democracy but also a party manager whose ability in pulling disparate elements together was unmatched. When the territorial controversy heated up after 1856, Fitzpatrick's skill in uniting all factions of the party--ultra, moderate and unionist--would be severely tested and found lacking.

Eighteen fifty-three also marked the last gubernatorial term of Governor Henry Collier, and the State confronted congressional, legislative and senatorial elections as well. Temporary silence on the issue of slavery did not bring to an end the factionalism within the Democratic Party. Nor did it stifle the opportunistic scheming among southern rights politicians--and the jockeying for position. Witness, for example, the political opportunism of Democratic State Representative Bolling Hall from Autauga County in the third Congressional district who sought high political office.

Hall considered himself a defender of southern rights; so did Sampson W. Harris, the third district Democratic Congressman. But Hall began in January 1853 a private campaign to wrest the third district Congressional nomination from the incumbent Sampson W. Harris. Hall, a Montgomery Regency political boss from Autauga County, joined his "advance man" newspaper editor John Hardy, in planning to pave the way for his own elevation by securing the gubernatorial nomination for Representative Harris.[1]

Even though Hardy learned that Harris himself rejected the gubernatorial trade off,[2] there is evidence that most of the Montgomery Regency were also behind Harris' removal from his present post.[3] While in Selma, in Dallas County, Hardy wrote Hall that "the Democrats I have talked to

...are disposed to give aid to any respectable man other than Harris--the Southern Rights men are opposed to his running, to a man, while the Union portion are disposed to try somebody else." Furthermore, Hardy confided that a district convention would be forthcoming and "if the thing is discreetly managed you can be the nominee for Congress...."[4] In sum, although Hall like Harris was a Democratic southern rights advocate Hall's appetite for high office did not deter him from contesting a fellow "Southron."

The Democratic state convention got under way in Montgomery on May 2, 1853. Only thirty-eight of the fifty-two counties sent delegates since northern and south-eastern regions of the state failed to do so. John A. Winston, an opulent and flamboyant planter-lawyer from Sumter County, was considered the frontrunner for the gubernatorial post. Winston had publically taken a stand against state aid for railroads and other internal improvements, thus receiving support from anti-internal improvement Democrats all over the state. Winston had three contenders: Judge Thomas A. Walker of Benton County, his most serious challenger; Sampson W. Harris of Coosa, placed in nomination by Bolling Hall's supporters; and J. L. F. Cottrell of Lowndes. By the seventh ballot Winston became the unanimous choice of those assembled, and Hall's strategy to get Harris nominated was thwarted.[5]

After Harris' defeat in the Democrat caucus, John Hardy revealed to Bolling Hall that he had been unable to get support for Hall in the various district Democratic meetings, and advised him to try and retain his Assembly seat. A Montgomery Regency worker told Hall that the Southern Rights Club of Mulbury in Autauga County was "prepared to nominate a

southern rights candidate for his seat." Hall's correspondent also said that he would try and control "the Club at Battville and appoint such delegates to the proposed County caucus as will certainly attend and oppose any nomination being made except yours."[6]

Southern-rights ultra W. D. Smith soon emerged as Hall's chief opponent, and C. M. Jackson, another key Montgomery Regency campaign worker, sent a party loyalist to see Smith and try to prevent him from challenging for Hall's seat. Finally, however, Jackson advised Hall not to continue obstructing Smith's candidacy for, he concluded "it would be more pleasant for you to meet and contend openly against a tangible opponent, than to be antagonized...continually by those who are disaffected towards you." He was sure of Hall's success, he added, despite the fact that "90 per-cent of the Whig party in this County will vote for your Democatic Southern Rights opponent."[7] This information indicates that even though many Whigs in Autauga County were vocal unionists they were willing to put principle aside in order to defeat a hated member of the Montgomery Regency.

Seeking help from any and all during the canvass, Hall agreed to uphold temperance reform if elected and received support from the chairman of Alabama's Temperance Society.[8] By July W. D. Smith dropped out of the race,[9] and Hall was informed by a Regency member that "scarcely any Southern Rights Democrat" would vote against him.[10]

As to the Whigs, they held their convention in Montgomery--in order to select a gubernatorial candidate and fashion a party platform. Alabama Whigs, ever fearful of the growing fragmentation of the national Whig party--the struggle between Cotton and Conscience Whigs in the North--

came out against the further annexation of the territories unless the rights of slave states could be provided for. They chose as their candidate Richard W. Walker of upstate Lauderdale County. Referring to the growing dissent within the national Whig party, he told the delegates that Alabama's politicians should stop trying to manipulate national issues that really had no effect on the State; and he called instead for a vast program of internal improvements. However, before the gubernatorial campaign got under way he became ill retired from the race and was replaced by William S. Earnest of Jefferson County.[11]

Democrats nearly swept the congressional and gubernatorial races. John A. Winston easily defeated his Whig opponent for Governor; and Bolling Hall succeeded in holding on to his legislative seat.

Other local elections of 1853 illustrate the growing opportunism exhibited by Alabama's politicians. In Montgomery second district, Whig Congressman James Abercrombie confronted southern rights Democrat David Clopton of Tuskegee, Macon County. Abercrombie had been an outspoken nullifier and states rights Democrat in 1832; by 1844 he was a Whig nationalist. In 1849-1850 he advocated a rigid defense of southern rights, but was a union Whig again after the Nashville convention. In yet another switch, in 1852, he rejected the Whig presidential candidate as being too "northern." This reversal caused the Democratic fire-eating Spirit of the South to endorse Abercrombie as a more forthright southern nationalist than Clopton and this in turn helped to secure Abercrombie's victory.[12]

In the Huntsville sixth district the redoubtable Democrat unionist W. R. W. Cobb confronted the influential southern rights Democrat C. C.

Clay, Jr. In previous challenges Cobb defeated a distinguished array of fellow Democrats including William Acklin, a north Alabama party manager, and Senator Jere Clemens. Now in 1853 he won overwhelmingly, receiving massive unionist support, both Democratic and Whig, and carrying every county in the district except one. After his defeat, Clay announced: "The time is not far distance when an advocate of southern rights instead of being reviled as a disunionist, will be respected in north Alabama as maintaining the Union."[13]

Democrats won every congressional race except one. Three of the victors were southern rights Democrats and three were considered pro-union. James Abercrombie, the only Whig elected, campaigned as a southern rights Whig. With the exception of William Smith in the fourth Tuscaloosa district, all those who were victorious in south-central Alabama--a region of dense slave population--campaigned as southern rights advocates regardless of their party. Such advocacy would presist in south Alabama and provide a congenial home when secession sentiment returned in the late fifties. However, some conservative Whig-unionist planters from west-central Alabama would reappear during the presidential campaign of 1860 and make a last effort to keep the State in the Union.

During the fall of 1853 Bolling Hall served as a clearing house for political news on the forthcoming senatorial election. Democrat Jere Clemens was up for reelection, and Benjamin Fitzpatrick, who had been appointed to William R. King's seat, required legislature confirmation. Fitzpatrick's election by the Assembly was assured. Clemens, however, faced certain defeat. All of south Alabama stood against him since he had antagonized the Democracy by supporting the Taylor-Fillmore

administration.

C. C. Clay, Jr., a keen observer of political maneuvering analyzed the candidates and left the door open for himself:

> Clemens swears he will be elected as he was before ...if he can't be elected by the Dem. party he will be by the Whigs...I do not think he can be elected by either party. L. P. Walker will be urged forward by some friends; but as his Democracy only dates back to '44, the old men of the party think his probation not long enough....Genl. Houston['s] claims are urged by the Union Dems...and favored by the Whigs....And last and perhaps least of the list of patriots who are willing to serve their country is your humble servent....I confess to you that I desire an election because I feel that I have been beaten by an ass for the H. of Rep. [Cobb] because of my state rights principles and thro' a combination of Whigs and pseudo Dems., who falsely represented me as a Disunionist.... It would be best to elect one Senator from this region. It would tend to harmonize the party, to remove sectional strife, and if chosen from the states rights wings, to revive the sinking fortunes of the party [southern rights segment of the Democratic party] in this region. You see the Whigs here are determined to unite with the Union Dems. ...and thus crush the States-rights men who aspire to any office. Without some help we will be crushed.[14]

It is unlikely that there was a cabal of upstate union Whigs and Democrats to "crush" Democratic southern rights candidates. But Clay pointed to the 1853 gubernatorial returns in order to show that John A. Winston had been beaten by A. Q. Nicks--the choice of upstate union Democrats who had boycotted the 1853 convention--in Dekalb and Marshall Counties, that Winston had received a slight plurality in Madison and slim margin in Blount, Jackson, and St. Clair Counties.[15] According to Clay, this meant that unionism was ascendent in the highland counties owing to a plot between Whig and Democratic unionists. Clay failed to note that

north Alabama, the region of lowest slave density in the state, had been strongly pro-union since Andrew Jackson's presidency.

Upstate unionist Nathaniel Davis was, he told Hall, "of the opinion that two Senators cannot be elected from the South or North Alabama nor can two be elected from the Southern rights Democracy nor two from the Union Democracy, the only safe plan at this time will be to take one from north and one from the south and one from the S. R. Dem. and one from the Union side." He recommended Benjamin Fitzpatrick and George Smith Houston.[16] However, there were south Alabama southern rights Democrats who, when confronting north Alabama Democratic aspirants for federal office, would insist upon candidates espousing southern rights principles. This Democratic party leader agreed upon Fitzpatrick but recommended L. P. Walker, a sometime southern rights agitator from North Alabama, for Jere Clemens senatorial seat. A month later, however, George Yelverton wrote Hall expressing his support for Eufaula ultra and Democrat John Cochrane who was seeking the same senatorial post. In support of his brief for Cochrane,Yelverton cited Cochrane's pro-Buchanan stance in 1848.[17] In sum, it is difficult to determine ideological consistency among many southern rights advocates. They praised national party regularity and at the same time embraced "devotion to southern rights."

At the end of November 1853 the General Assembly met to select two senators. With little opposition Benjamin Fitzpatrick was elected for the term which was to expire in March 1855. C. C. Clay Jr.'s appeal to southern rights partisans in south Alabama coupled with upcountry support gave him enough votes to unseat Jere Clemens and to become senator. A Whig paper lamented that two "fire eaters had been elected."[18] This

is somewhat exaggerated since Fitzpatrick had never identified with the extreme southern rights faction in south Alabama. Likewise, Clay never carried his southern rights convictions so far as to mean disunion.

With the territorial question quiescent during this period, the Democrats again turned to their opposition. Alabama Whig strength was centered in the east and west-central Black Belt region of massive slave density. The Whigs tried to repeal the 1843 "white basis"--which abolished the federal ratio, the three-fifths compromise, and excluded blacks in reckoning population in the formation of congressional districts. On January 20, 1854, the Alabama senate defeated this Whig maneuver in a strict party-line and sectional vote: The Black Belt Whig counties voted for it and the Democratic counties of north and south Alabama opposed.[19] The Democrats then took the advice of G. T. Yelverton and gerrymandered the Whig Black Belt counties. Montgomery, Macon, and Russell Counties, which were formerly in the second Montgomery district, were placed in the third district. This district would be carried by the Democrats in the 1855 congressional election. Lowndes and Butler counties were moved into the second district which also tipped that traditional Whig enclave into the Democratic column in 1855. These maneuvers confirmed the Montgomery Regency's control over the Black Belt second and third districts.[20]

The elimination of Alabama Whigs had dire consequences for union sentiment in the State. Most unionists in south Alabama had grouped around the Whig party. With it gone, the only effective union organization in south-central Alabama disappeared. The area fell under the control of a Democratic party dominated by southern rights defenders--either moderates or radicals. By the late fifties, it was hazardous to

be an outright unionist in south Alabama. Although, as noted earlier, during the crisis of 1860 some old conservative planter Whigs tried to make a comeback with the Constitutional Union Party in order to preserve the union and slavery.

The 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act compounded the problems of Alabama Whigs. Whig leaders like Henry Hilliard and Thomas Watts saw the popular sovereignty doctrine embodied in the Kansas-Nebraska bill further erode the principles of the Compromise of 1850--considered a Whig solution. For conscience Whigs in the North now lined up behind absolute prohibition of slavery in the territories and began aiding in the construction of a national party to that end. By 1854 some Alabama Whigs joined the Democrats, but the majority moved into the Know-Nothing party.

Kansas-Nebraska, which superceded the old 36-30 line established by the Missouri Compromise, committed the Democratic Party and the executive branch to popular sovereignty. To Alabama ultras this measure meant that, with a preponderance of northern migrants already in Kansas slavery could not extend westward. But Alabama's congressional delegation, except for Whig James Abercrombie hewed the party line and voted for the measure. They did so for a few apparent reasons. Alabama's Congressional delegation's support for the Kansas-Nebraska bill derived from the belief that the federal government was legally bound--whatever the territorial governments did--to protect property in slaves. The influential Mobile Register was also willing to endorse the measure; it said both north and south had mutually agreed to "repeal the unjust restriction of 1820 and to refer the whole subject of slavery in the territories and States to the people there of, under the controlling restrictions of the

Constitution."[21]

Another motive was northern anti-slavery opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act which inspired Southern congressmen to support the measure. For example, the Alabama Beacon declared, "in view of the violent opposition it [the Kanasa bill] encountered from the....Abolitionists the South especially, and the true friends of the country have a cause for congratulation."[22] A Democratic organ noted "that the Southern people are unanimous in support of the measure."[23] A claim that was not as unequivocally accurate as this paper declared. For example, in the Alabama Assembly firebrand David Hubbard presented a resolution in 1854 which maintained that if the southern interests were jeopardized by federal anti-slavery acts Alabama would resist these ordinances. State representative James Belser, occasionally a Whig and a Democrat and sometime fire-eater and sometime unionist asserted that if the Kansas bill were passed and if it threatened southern rights he would recommend "resistence to the uttermost." Hubbard's resolution passed 42-14.[24]

Perhaps the state political scene seemingly so contradictory on this territorial issue is best explained by J. L. M. Curry. Curry in the late fifties would wear the mantle of southern-rights extremist and be elected to Congress from the seventh Talladega district. But in 1854 he wrote to Senator Clay and congratulated him for his vote in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska bill: "Men here universally approve your action but there is no excitment--no fever, on the subject it is seldom alluded to in private or public--and so far as the introduction of slavery is concerned, such a consummation is hardly hoped for."[25] In sum, David Hubbard's resistance resolution to Kansas-Nebraska apparently reflected a minority position. Most Alabamians, it seems, approved the Douglas

ordinance or greeted it with apathy.

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1854 Alabama Democrats began to prepare for the 1855 congressional elections. Writing to Clay, J. L. M. Curry declared that "the division of our state into North and South Alabama, and the election of candidates according to degrees of latitude ...begin now to work their own cure...." An upcountry Democrat, Curry informed Clay, that Clay was not the unanimous choice of north Alabama. But Curry also told his correspondent that the Senator was considered an outstanding southern loyalist.[26]

Indeed Clay had earned his "southron" credentials by opposing the latest Homestead bill which he, along with Black Belt southern nationalists, maintained would draw poor southerners to rich northern lands. Not only would the south lose a good deal of its population if the bill were to be enacted but, he added, "it will prove a most efficient ally for Abolition, by encouraging and stimulating the settlement of free farms with Yankees and foreigners precommitted to resist the participacy of slaveholders in the public domain."[27]

We may speculate as to why Clay opposed the Homestead bill while two upstate Alabama congressmen favored it. Clay needed the good opinion of south-central Alabama Democrats, most of whom were southern rights advocates, since they held the balance in the legislature. Coming from the highland Democracy, he had to prove his "southron" credentials to Black Belt southern nationalists. [Later, this collaboration during the 1860 crisis, was to prove very advantageous for Clay who looked forward to high office in the southern confederacy.]

As Democrats prepared for the 1855 contest, William L. Yancey saw

little future for himself in Alabama politics. "Do you not wish to come to practice law?" he despondently asked his brother, "If so I will sell out my premises to you and my practice at a low price and I will remove to California."[28] His depression would disappear as the territorial question and the end of Alabama's Whig party revived opportunities for advancement.

For active politicians, however, the disappearance of the Whigs and the rise of the American party only created problems. For example, attorney A. B. Meek, a Mobile Democrat saw the new party thwarting his return to the legislature. "The Know-Nothings," he wrote, "are numerous hereabouts embracing many Democrats '<u>non plupia</u>' all our calculations. They will certainly draw a candidate of their own...and so large a body would no doubt elect any one man as there will be many candidates in the field....almost our whole Bar are aspirants...."[29] Many south Alabama Democrats, eager for advancement would agree. Impeded by a Democratic party bulging with incumbents, they joined "homeless" Whigs in the American party and a new political alliance developed.

Know-Nothing power made itself felt in the fall of 1854 when a Mobile mob nearly beat a Catholic priest to death. That same autumn "American" mayors were elected in Mobile and Montgomery.[30] Various prominent Democrats were alleged to have joined the Party which advocated a policy of "America for the Americans." Among them were John Cochrane of Eufaula Regency fame, new editor of the Mobile <u>Register</u>, John Forsyth and William L. Yancey. The complete list of converts to Know-Nothingism represents a "who's who" of Democratic outsiders. At least four of the group had held elective office before[31] and had been defeated in elections.

Among them, too were chronic office seekers who felt little loyalty to the Party. The State political situation, however, was fluid. One finds important Whigs affiliating with the Democrats after 1854. Among them was William B. Figures, editor of the Southern Advocate.[32]

A caucus of Know-Nothings met in January 1855 in Mobile and considered four candidates to run against John A. Winston for Governor. All four candidates--J. M. Withers (mayor of Mobile), R. A. Baker, George D. Shortridge, and James L. Price--were former Democrats.[33] Since Democratic Governor Winston was strongly opposed to state aid to railroads, the Americans took a pro-State-aid position in an attempt to attract Whig nationalists and upstate Democrats partial to internal improvements.

The Whigs, meanwhile, were hopelessly divided. Some wanted to maintain the Party and select a Whig candidate for Governor; others talked of fusion with the Americans. A Whig faction from east-central Alabama favored Winston's negative stance on internal improvements but could not vote for a Democrat.

Some dedicated ultras still considered southern rights foremost among all questions affecting Alabama, and they could be induced to campaign on that issue. However, the rise of the Know-Nothings and the attendant issues of state aid, temperance reform, and foreign influences in Alabama sometimes overshadowed Southern nationalism and the growing controversy over Kansas and popular sovereignty. Governor John A. Winston, a southern rights extremist in 1850 made only slight reference to squatter sovereignty in his first campaign speech. He spent most of his time attacking state aid.[34] Southern rights clubs seldom met. Ultras from Montgomery, Eufaula and Dallas Counties turned their attention to other

issues. George W. Gayle, leader of the Southern Rights Association of Dallas County chaired a Democratic County meeting and composed a series of resolutions sustaining Governor Winston and his anti-State-aid policies. None of the resolves referred to southern rights or secession.[35]

In June 1855 the Know-Nothings gathered in Montgomery. Two-thirds of the delegates, according to the Montgomery Advertiser, were former Whigs. They nominated conservative Democrat Judge George D. Shortridge of Selby County for Governor. Southern rights sentiments received passing notice in a resolution calling for non-intervention by the federal government with slavery.[36] Shortridge was selected because he would be all things to all men for state aid, for railroads in regions that favored it and critical of it in areas that were opposed. Shortridge also favored temperance reform and immigration restriction. He rarely mentioned the "abolitionist menace" and the need to combat it.

The Know-Nothings came to pose a great threat to Democrats. In fact Black Belt southern-rights Democrats were more concerned with local defections to the American party than with the struggle for power between southern moderates and ultras within the Democratic party. For instance, C. M. Jackson, Montgomery Regency power broker advised Bolling Hall that Lewis McWhorten, Black Belt Democrat legislator, was ready to bolt to the Americans. Jackson outlined Regency strategy to forestall desertions and Know-Nothing endorsements of Democrats: "Our policy it appears to me is plainly indicated to be first to prevent through our friends still in the Order [Know-Nothings] the nomination of a democrat by the K-N's.... If the K-N's nominate him [McWhorten] as a Democrat the defection from their [Know-Nothing] ranks might not be sufficient to ensure us success."

However, he continued, "the Whig party and the Democrats that might fuse with the Americans would defeat us."[37] Winning local elections and preserving the State's Party organization was clearly more important than proselytising southern rights to many southern rights Democrats in central Alabama.

During the summer, charges and countercharges of Know-Nothing membership reverberated among the candidates. Congressman George Smith Houston, a union Democrat running for re-election in the highland fifth district, was accused of joining the American Party. He denied the charge but did not discourage Know-Nothing support of his candidacy.[38] Democrat O. H. Bynum, formerly Houston's ally, condemned him as being "neither fish nor flesh, trying to hold with the hare and run with the hounds...." Referring to Houston's refusal to attack the American Party, Bynum maintained that "the Democratic party cannot support a man who will take to his hole in times like the present." He asked Democratic fire-eater David Hubbard, Houston's perennial antagonist, to oppose the Congressman.[39]

In the fourth district congressional race, William R. Smith, a former Whig and occasional Democratic representative failed to get either a Democratic or a Know-Nothing endorsement and ran as an independent. His opposition, southern-rights agitator Sydenham Moore accused him of being a Know-Nothing and of collaborating with "the order at the North" which is "thoroughly abolitionised....Their [Northern Americans] presses do not conceal their hatred of slavery and their contempt for the 'slave aristocracy'!" This fourth district congressional campaign was acrid with Moore accusing his opponent of being "soft on southernism," but in spite of Moore's accusation he was easily defeated by Smith in a district

that still had a traditional Whig electorate.

Percy Walker, once a Whig then a radical Southern rights Democrat, now found it expedient to stand as the American party congressional candidate in Mobile's first district. His Democratic adversary James Stallworth, a planter-lawyer, condemned his apostasy which was attributed to Walker's "sheer desire for office." Stallworth wondered whether he still "professes to hold to his states-rights faith or did he give that up as well as his old party?"[40] Walker, in turn, insisted that he had not parted from his "Calhoun faith" and received the support of a large bloc of first district southern-rights advocates. Walker also emphasized his support of state-aid, which was understandable, since the Mobile district had for years been a stronghold for internal improvements. (He defeated Stallworth by five hundred votes.)[41]

The congressional contest in the second district is of particular interest. Because of the Democratic gerrymandering--Montgomery, Macon and Russell Counties had been taken from the district, and Butler and Lowndes had been added--regional leadership fell to the Eufaula Regency in Barbour County. This leadership--composed of Whig nullifiers and southern rights Democrats--had supported ultra southern rights candidates with little concern for party loyalty since 1849. They backed Whig congressman James Abercrombie in 1853 when he discovered "southronism"--after running as a unionist in 1851. Eli S. Shorter, a Eufaula leader, won the district Democratic nomination and confronted Julius C. Alford, the American candidate. During the canvass Shorter was accused of being a Know-Nothing. He admitted having taken some of the initiation rites but said that he had declined membership upon learning the American's

position on non-Protestants. Both men claimed to be of a "pure Southern rights cast." Alford, a unionist in 1851, spoke of disruption in 1855 if the federal government did not admit Kansas as a slave state and repeal the Fugitive slave act. Nonetheless, toward the end of the campaign, he indicted Shorter for being a secessionist. Shorter responded by disclaiming the disunion label and contending that he stood by the Compromise of 1850. But in the territorial disputes of 1850-51 Shorter had called for secession at various times. Now in 1855 he maintained that if he were elected he would sustain the Franklin Pierce administration. He further deflected interest from the secessionist issue by concentrating on local issues, and was elected with a 1200 vote plurality.[42]

The campaign in the Montgomery third district pitted James F. Dowdell former seventh district congressman, against Thomas H. Watts Montgomery planter-lawyer. The two major issues were both local: state aid, and Watt's earlier attempt in the Alabama legislature to block illiterates from sitting on juries. Many southern rights Whigs from the east-central counties voted against Watts because of his new affiliation with the Know-Nothing Party which nullifying Whigs thought unsafe on southern institutions; and Dowdell outdistanced the once powerful Whig unionist by a majority of 534 votes.[43]

Despite misgivings on the part of some erstwhile allies George S. Houston was re-elected without opposition in the fifth district. In the neighboring Huntsville district W. R. W. Cobb was accused of being a member of the Know-Nothings by his independent challenger James M. Adams. Cobb denied the charge but said nothing to offend the Americans and defeated Adams by more than 2500 votes.[44]

In the seventh district, to complete the political picture, incumbent Democrat Sampson W. Harris retained his seat against former Democrat William B. Martin who was running as an independent with Know-Nothing support.

The Democrats, then carried five districts and the Americans with Whig support netted two congressional seats in the Tuscaloosa and Mobile districts. Democratic Governor Winston outpolled George Shortridge by 12,000 ballots. His party, as usual, controlled the legislature: there were sixty-one Democrats and thirty-nine Americans seated in the lower House and twenty Democrats and thirteen Americans in the senate.[45] Most Whigs had aligned with the new party as they saw their national organization hopelessly crippled and their local party organization gerrymandered into political powerlessness.

As significant as the emergence of the American party in this 1855 campaign was the manipulation of the southern rights issue. The habitual tendency of some Alabama politicians to shift from unionism to southernism and back again reflected their political opportunism--the desire for office. Many Democrats and Whigs had joined the Know-Nothings simply because their ambitions had been frustrated in their own parties. Equally frustrated were the small slaveholding lawyer-politicians--men who lacked a meaningful economic stake in the status quo. Black silt lands and slaves were selling at a premium in the mid fifties, and consequently these small slaveholders found their economic advancement blocked, they turned to politics in their endless quest for status. Cynically using any and all issues to vault themselves into office, they frequently became outspoken Southern nationalists. Percy Walker is a prime example.

A small slaveholder and marginal planter, Walker had built a reputation as a radical Whig and Calhounite nullifier. He served in the General Assembly but, having ambitions for higher office, he left the Whigs and aligned himself with the Democrats. But his progress was blocked there, because the Party had too many aspirants, and he then joined the Americans, thereby gaining a congressional seat.[46] There was another group of chronic Southern chauvinists in the Black Belt who confined their activities to planting. Some entered politics and continually agitated for more cotton and slaves. These were the small planters who could not afford to pay the rising costs of new cotton land in Alabama and by the late fifties were agitating for the re-opening of the African slave trade and federal protection of slavery in the territories.

However, the 1855 campaign, to repeat, was marked by an almost total lack of interest shown in the Kansas question. Local issues and the scramble for office dominated. After the election, however, C. E. Haynes of the Dallas Gazette reopened the old wound. He declared that "the only reliable hope for the Southern people can have of securing their just rights is to depend and rely upon themselves." Settlement of the territorial question, he thought, was "impossible...short of a dissolution of the Union." He continued: "We are as much as one solitary individual can be a secessionist of the strictest sect. We can see no peace--no quiet--no rest to the South short of the adoption of this remedy." Acknowledging that "a majority of our people are in favor of the Union," Haynes nonetheless predicted that "the slave states would not receive the slightest injury by seceding from the free states."[47] Still like his

Dallas County fire-eating collaborator, George W. Gayle, he cooperated with the local Democrats. Both endorsed and campaigned for regular party nominees.

By late 1855 other south Alabama papers also re-discovered the Kansas question and a menacing new political combination in the north: free soilers who combined politically in favor of slavery restriction. What would become the Republican Party prompted the West Alabamian to proclaim "the object of the coalition is to concentrate all the anti-slavery strength against the Democratic party....They threaten vengence against the South." This was an "attempt on the part of free soilers and Abolitionists," the editorial concluded, "to assume the time honored name of Republicans...to wage a crusade of Abolition fanaticism against the Southern...states."[48]

In Barbour County, traditionally a hotbed of southern nationalism, a Kansas meeting was held in November 1855 and from Eufaula Regency firebrands Alpheus Baker, E. C. Bullock, Jefferson Buford, and L. L. Cato issued a series of resolutions denouncing the Massachusetts Immigrant Aid societies for "flooding the Kansas territory with settlers hostile to Southern institutions." The final resolve called upon the Alabama legislature to finance an Alabama slaveholders expedition to Kansas to check the "Abolitionist menace." Editor C. E. Haynes praised the Eufaula action and complained that "Dallas County with her twenty odd thousands of slaves is still silent while this great issue is at stake. We make this statement with a feeling of shame." Haynes called Barbour County "the truest Southern County in the South."[49]

A week later Assemblyman Richard W. Walker offered another set of

resolutions--"That no restriction or prohibition of slavery, shall hereafter, by any act of Congress be extended over any territory of the United States." Walker recommended that Congress implement the John A. Campbell-William L. Yancey doctrine of federal protection of slavery in the territorities.[50] On November 30, 1855 a bi-partisan petition signed by Governor Winston, Benjamin Fitzpatrick and seventy-seven other legislators summoned Democrats and Americans to a Montgomery non-partisan Kansas meeting on January 8, 1856.[51] Jefferson Buford, announced in mid-December that he would lead a contingent of Alabama slaveholders to Kansas to help win the territory for slavery.[52]

Meanwhile Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick came under attack for his moderation on the Kansas issue. Eufaula clique radicals and George W. Gayle of the Dallas County "hotspurs" considered Fitzpatrick too much the Democratic Party regular. The Spirit of the South, organ of the Barbour County ultras, asserted that "the lines must be put aside, and men must resist the inclination to vote for party interests and must unite in defense of Southern rights and we await Senator Fitzpatrick's views."[53] Now, unlike before unqualified "southernism" did not confront organized opposition in south Alabama. The traditional Whig-union party in south-central Alabama had disintegrated with many Black Belt Whigs joining the Know-Nothings who labored assiduously to avoid the territorial issue; and many nullifying Whigs of east-central Alabama had become Democrats. Significantly, there was also a bloc of Know-Nothing ultras in and around the Montgomery district. Thus, the major political structure in lower Alabama was controlled by Democratic southern rights moderates and extremists. As one political reporter observed in late 1855, "many of the

states rights Whigs joined the democracy....On southern rights they stood with the democracy in the lowlands."[54] From 1855 to the spring of 1860, therefore, for a union faction to survive in south Alabama it would have had to recreate itself within the inhospitable south-central Democratic Party or capture the Know-Nothings whose majority, both nationally and locally, labored to avoid the issue of sectionalism.

By the mid-fifties south Alabama's newspapers pictured the contest over Kansas as an anti-slavery revolutionary force working for the violent overthrow of constitutional government. They claimed that "Black Republicans" in Congress plotted to expel all slaveholders from Kansas at whatever cost. The Montgomery Advertiser proclaimed all members of the Kansas Aid Society swore to violate any law and sacrifice their lives if necessary in order to maintain the territory as free soil.[55]

Often conspiratorial imagery served in lieu of analysis of the territorial conflict. According to Congressman William R. Smith, the treason of the emigrant aid societies was "dark and hidden and sly." People complained of the brutality of the so-called "border ruffians" from Missouri but, he declared, at least there was a manly openness in their violence. "There is more devil in a sneak," Smith said, "than in a bully."[56] These remarks were published in numerous Alabama newspapers.

Much of the information Alabamians received about events in Kansas came from reporters on the scene. These journalists as Bernard A. Weisberger has observed, helped to make the sectional issue, for many, one of absolute rights and wrongs. They deliberately invented and embellished incidents. They made stories of torture, murder, and fire standard copy in the Alabama press especially in the Black Belt.[57]

A call for moderation and self-restraint came from a most unlikely source. On January 8, 1856, Democrats held a caucus in Montgomery. William L. Yancey, who had been in political retirement since 1852, attended the meeting and was called upon to make a speech. A substantial group of anti-Know-Nothing Whigs were also there. Yancey pleaded for a permanent union of the anti-Know-Nothing Whigs and Democrats, to be known as the Democratic and Anti-Know-Nothing Party, and asked for co-operation with conservative northern Democrats. The gathering adopted Yancey's Alabama platform of 1848--federal protection of slavery in the territories--but so modified, with Yancey's approval, as to enable both the southern-rights ultras as well as Alabama Democratic moderates to accept it. The resolution followed the lead of Stephen A. Douglas's popular sovereignty doctrine. It specified that the people of a territory could exclude slavery when they met in convention to draft a state constitution for admission into the union. To retain the allegiance of slaveocrats, however, one plank reaffirmed property rights protection in the territories. But east-central Black Belt fire-eaters were not pleased, and denounced him for accepting "squatter sovereignity."[58] Yancey, finally, was willing to co-operate with conservative Democrats in leaving the question of the authority of a territorial legislature to the courts.

Alabama's ultras protested. The State ought to resist even if it meant a disruption of the Union, any action by Congress impairing the rights of slaveholders. The Montgomery caucus selected a slate of nine presidential electors with south and north Alabama equally represented. Eighteen fifty-six was a presidential election year and Alabama Democrats

were solidifying their ranks before the national convention. The electors chosen from south Alabama were all southern rights advocates of varying degrees. Interestingly, two of the upstate electors, Yancey's brother, Benjamin, recently moved from Georgia, and Leroy Pope Walker of Madison County were ultras, and they were moderate to minimal slaveholders.[59]

William L. Yancey's proposal at Montgomery was, according to some of his contemporaries motivated by a desire to take over the Democratic Party. According to James Peebles, political confidant of Senator C. C. Clay, Jr.,

> both electors for the state at large [Yancey and Walker] are as distasteful to me as they are to a large majority of the Democracy of Alabama, but at a time when expediency, rather than acceptability, was the controlling power with the nominating convention, they were obliged to cast about for those men whose speaking powers alone would be most effectual in persuading the masses. Neither of the gentlemen referred to are not popular now; never have been, and never will be. Both have occupied positions which usually indicate promotion, both have used these positions to effect higher preferment, and both have signally failed. Yancey has always wanted to be the drum master. ...They have been unable to command the popular approvation, the electorship for the State, with all its popular and fickle demonstrations, cannot subserve the aims of a daring ambition....

A recent biographer of the Clay family agrees that Yancey in 1856 was seeking control of Alabama's Democratic party.[60]

Clearly, Yancey's earlier tactics in the late forties and early fifties--reflected overweaning personal ambition. Now in the mid-1850's he was using the Party once condemned by him as a traitor to Southern rights in order to stage a political comeback. By 1856 the political

situation was propitious for Yancey. The Whigs had disintegrated and southern rights Democrats reigned supreme in south Alabama. What better time for the "Young Demosthenes" to make his move!

Meanwhile in February 1856, the Know-Nothings met in Montgomery, endorsed Millard Fillmore for the presidency, and selected a delegation to attend their national convention in Philadelphia. The caucus leaders were all former Whigs; and with three exceptions,[61] all lived in the Black Belt and all were among Alabama's largest planter-politicians. Significantly two of the leaders, Thomas H. Watts and C. C. Langdon had been Whig-unionists--until 1856 when they followed the leadership of Whig nullifiers J. J. Hooper and James Belser and adopted a resolution that firmly approved the extension of slavery in the territories.[62]

The Alabama delegation to the Philadelphia convention refused to approve a Know-Nothing platform which said nothing about extension nor protection of slavery in the territories. This platform when accepted, inspired an exodus of Whig-Americans from south Alabama, especially from the Mobile district, into the State Democratic organization. Such old-line Whigs as Alexander White, Arthur Hopkins, and B. F. Porter, all agreed to stump for the Democratic presidential ticket.

By 1856, therefore, lower Alabama was becoming a bastion of southern nationalism as disenchanted Know-Nothings and Whigs saw the slavery extension issue as more consequential to their political futures than allegiance to the national Party ticket which ignored it. There is, to be sure, no conclusive evidence of mass conversions to secessionism at this time. Most Alabama politicians of Whig-Know-Nothing persuaism walked that thin line of all measures short of disunion. There was, of course,

a combination of conservative Whig-planters from west-central Alabama who were in political retirement through most of the fifties but re-emerged as Constitutional Unionists in the spring of 1860 and campaigned for old-line Whig John Bell of Tennessee.

Jefferson Buford one of Alabama's most fanatical fire-eaters, heaped more fuel on the Kansas fires by persisting in his plans for an expedition that would affirm the rights of slaveholders. Buford's quest soon became a cause celebre for other fire-eaters. Alpheus Baker, a Eufaula ultra, crusaded in Georgia and South Carolina in search of funds. Yancey took the stump in Alabama. So did former Whig-unionist Henry Hilliard who castigated the Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society as a harbinger of abolition. State Representative F. K. Beck, from slave-dense Wilcox County, introduced a bill in the legislature to appropriate $25,000 for Buford's journey. But the measure sobered the law-makers "Kansas fever" and they referred it to committee where it died.[63]

The legislators did issue a report on Kansas. It called for non-intervention by Congress, and it demanded that the federal government recognize Kansas' pro-slavery legislature. "The hope of receiving justice at the hands of our Northern brethren has long since expired," it declared "we will meet upon that common territory which shall be dyed with the gore of thousands of Southern patriots, who are willing to die in defense of their rights in the States and territories."[64] Such an assertion could only intensify Alabama militancy in the lowlands.

Understandably it would sharpen the ultra spirit and power in east-central Alabama. In Eufaula, for example, on March 31, 1856 Buford and his adjutant Alpheus Baker, brought about a hundred men together at

Eufaula and then journeyed to Columbus, Georgia and Nashville, Tennessee looking for more recruits. They went on to Montgomery and on April 4 Buford counted 350 men of whom one-hundred were from South Carolina, fifty were Georgians, one each from Illinois and Boston, with the balance from Alabama. Buford promised these volunteers free land in Kansas.[65]

On the eve of their departure Judge William P. Chilton, a Whig from Montgomery, addressed the expeditionary force. He was still a "union man," he insisted, yet he declared that every Southerner's rights had to be maintained in the union if possible, if not, then out of it. "The South had compromised too long," he asserted, it "had sacrificed too much for harmony. By this course the North had been encouraged to new acts of aggression. For the future the South must suffer no infringement of her Constitutional rights but must assert and maintain equality with the North."[66] Chilton's remarks represented yet another conversion in the continuous passage of important Whig-lawyer nationalists to the southern rights position. These Black Belt Whig power brokers were, at least in part, responding to the loss of party structure and to the imperatives of political survival.

On April 6 the Buford contingent left for Kansas under banners proclaiming "The Supremacy of the White Race, Kansas The Outpost." Such publicized objectives notwithstanding, those who joined were clearly as interested in Buford's promise of forty acres of Kansas land and support for a year as his commitment to make Kansas a slave state. To be sure, Buford himself, as Paul Gates has observed, "seemed as much interested in his land activities as in the slavery question."[67] A man of modest circumstances he, too, looked upon the Kansas adventure as a means of

personal gain.

To Southern rights extremists the fact that few if any slaves were being brought in to Kansas made little difference. Senator C. C. Clay--with an eye towards his ultra support in central Alabama--addressed the Senate about the "policy of Black Republicans and Kansas." Referring to the New England Emigrant Aid Societies, he proclaimed "an army with banners is preferable to a Trojan horse." And, consonant with this conspiracy view, he claimed that all free-soil measures restricting the expansion of slavery were simply a cloak for total abolition. "Whenever Black Republicanism shall take possession of this Government..." he predicted, "the South...will not pause to expostulate but will boldly throw her sword into the scale and assert her natural privilege of self-defense."[68] Similarly, Eli Shorter of the Eufaula ultras told his fellow congressmen that if Massachusetts did not repeal her personal liberty law, which offered protection to Negroes seeking to evade or resist slave catchers, and if the banner of "Black Republicanism triumphs, it will be the signal for the destruction of the...government." Both speeches were hailed by southern-rights newspapers, one of which declared that the responsibility for disunion would rest with the "abolitionized North."[69]

It should be stressed, however, that when men like Clay and Shorter indulged in disruption rhetoric they did so in order to retain their ultra credentials and their ultra constituency. For at this period, because of the Kansas issue, southern-rights sentiment predominated. However, Alabama Democrats as a whole still considered national party loyalty foremost and were wary of accepting the secessionist label.

In May 1856 the Alabama Democrats held a convention for the purpose

of appointing delegates to the national Party caucus. For the first time in years old Party leaders such as Benjamin Fitzpatrick and J. J. Seibels did not attend. Not having to contend with such Montgomery Regency power brokers, Yancey had little trouble gaining the chairmanship of the resolution committee. Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick before this convention met, had been proposed as a vice-presidential candidate. But his moderate southern rights position and his conservative Regency leadership irritated Party firebrands. Yancey, however, was silent on his candidacy, seeing his own future as that of a Party regular. The Democratic delegates adopted the "Alabama Platform"--federal protection of slavery in the territories--and instructed their delegates not to vote for a candidate for president who favored slavery restriction and popular sovereignty.[70]

However militant these instructions were, they were not followed by the requirement that Alabama's delegates bolt the national convention if the caucus failed to endorse the Alabama Platform or an anti-squatter sovereignty presidential nominee. Thus, the State Democratic organization seems to have made a rhetorical gesture to east-central Southern-rights advocates, no more than indicating that they were not "soft on southernism." Moreover, the Democratic convention had met in Montgomery--the heart of the eastern Black Belt--where extreme southern-rights sentiment was still prevalent among vocal blocs like Eufaula and Montgomery County ultras. The results of the later national meeting, which convened in Cinncinnati, and which did not confirm the Alabama Platform, reflects the willingness of the Alabama delegation to support the national party platform and ticket. It confirms the opportunism that motivated the

earlier resolutions passed by the Montgomery delegates.

On the eve of the Cinncinnatti convention most Alabama Democrats were favorably disposed to the renomination of Franklin K. Pierce. Editor J. F. Grant said Pierce could lead northern Democrats "to yield to the South....They ought to meet us in a noble, generous, national spirit, and say, 'Brethren, we know your all is at peril, but not so with us. We will not, to appease a fanatical feeling sacrifice those very democratic principles, we have met here to sustain'."[71] Grant's views--total northern acquiescence to southern demands--had become the south's version of compromise.

The national Democratic convention in Cincinnati took a definite pro-southern stance. The platform stood on the principle of non-interference by congress with slavery in state and territory. The delegates rejected Pierce because he proved incapable of bringing together all the disparate factions in the Democratic party. They also rejected Lewis Cass and Stephen Douglas and in effect rejected popular sovereignty as the solution for the problem of slavery in the territories. And Alabama Democratic delegates in following the national convention thereby eliminated Benjamin Fitzpatrick's vice-presidential bid. Alabama's delegates reflected a spirit of conciliation in light of the forthcoming nomination of James Buchanan. As minister to England from 1853 to 1856, Buchanan was removed from the increasingly bitter debate over slavery and thus became an ideal compromise candidate in 1856. James C. Breckinridge of Kentucky was selected as Buchanan's running mate.

Although the convention did not endorse the Alabama Platform, Democrats in Alabama greeted the Cincinnati platform and ticket with

enthusiam. "We will support Buchanan, of course, cheerfully, said Z. L. Nabers of the West Alabamian, "His name is a tower of strength for the preservation of republican principles." Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., told his father that "the nomination of Buchanan and Breckinridge will, I think prove very strong, probably, as any that could be made....As to the South it will be a safe ticket on the Slavery issue...."[72]

Probably no Democrat toiled harder for the ticket than William L. Yancey. Yancey we have seen, had changed his tactics, over a half dozen years. "I have adjured all sarcasm-invective and all allusions that will irritate or arouse a partisan feeling," and he declared, and "I endeavour to be entirely conciliatory." He found the Democratic platform to be a "constitutional one." Moreover, he noted, many Whigs "such as Col. Durr of Mobile...William G. Jones, Robert Smith--all of that city--Judge Hopkins too, Judge Ormond, John Whiting...," and they were "irreconcilable Whigs [and they] are with us."[73] Yancey, it is obvious, now sought favor with all segments of the Party.

Yancey's analysis of the situation illustrates the transition of Whig-Americans into Democratic ranks. These converts from south Alabama held that the American party candidates ignored the slavery question. The Alabama Know-Nothing electoral ticket was riddled. Five electors--all from the southern part of the State--had deserted. Luke Pryor, in breaking with Fillmore, declared that the slavery question was the "paramount cause for my defection."[74]

Yancey now the bell weather of the Party traveled the State. In north Alabama he pointed out that the Cincinnati platform had been adopted by all southern parties and should be considered a settlement of the

slavery issue. Southerners, then, should unite behind the Democratic party which now endorsed protection for slaveholding whether in the State or the territories. He avoided ultra phrases and all references to disunion.[75] His restraint produced political dividends. William B. Figures, editor of the upcountry Southern Advocate and a Whig-unionist convert to the Democrats observed in a letter to Yancey's brother, that "Col. Yancey is receiving golden opinions from our people which will be useful to him I hope."[76]

Yancey's antagonist, Whig-Unionist-American Henry Hilliard, gave an address in Huntsville, while campaigning for Fillmore, that was far more extreme than anything Yancey said during the campaign. Hilliard urged southern resistance to further aggression by the north. John C. Fremont's election by the "Black Republicans," he declared, would initiate a series of attacks against the south which would have to be opposed.[77] Hilliard's newly-found extremism can be explained by the recent gerrymandering of his district. Now no Whig-American could ever hope of winning high State or federal office except by affirming one's southernism, in alignment with the south-central Alabama Democratic Party.

Percy Walker's tactics also illustrate the political expediency of conversion to the Democrats. The one time Whig, then Democrat, and then Know-Nothing, had favored Fillmore until Fillmore accepted the American platform which Walker considered weak "in its southern rights expression." This position left him vulnerable vis-a-vis his Know-Nothing colleagues in Congress and he agreed to resign if sufficient county conventions met and requested him to do so. Walker was hung in effigy in Mobile and called a vicious traitor by diehard Know-Nothings, but he

served out his term before joining the Democratic Party.[78]

Yancey and Walker were not the only mavericks in the Democratic Party among southern-rights men to surface in 1856. Other anti-regular Democrats sought admission into Democratic ranks. James L. Pugh of the Eufaula Regency also stood as a Democratic elector. This inspired a Know-Nothing newspaper to trace Pugh's rather capricious political career.

> This gentleman is quite a young man and yet he has nearly boxed the political compass. First he was a Whig, a Taylor and Fillmore Whig elector....On the 8th of January 1849 he gave an expression of his principles in language following 'that I am decidedly opposed to any declared intention to resist this side of the passing of a law restricting slavery.' In the next place we find him what he was pleased to style a southern rights Whig, a candidate for Congress declaring that he was sounder on the Southern question than the regular nominee of the Whig party...he ran being supported by the eastern Black Belt Democracy. Next we find him dead against all National parties and an out and out southern rights man, going the rounds with Col. Cochrane who was hard pressed to defend his disunionism....In this organization he had a sort of name and place for a year or two, but in the meanwhile he showed evident signs of distress and it was discoverable that he was inching off towards the Democracy. And when the Know-Nothing question was gotten up, his disunion proclivities enabled him to take a good hearty state at the Union plank in its platform and he never stopped running until he was completely submerged in the slough of Bogus Democracy [the state Democratic Party] and as a reward for his chivalric act, they placed about his neck the Bogus collar [Democrat] and named him as the candidate for Elector for the second district. In the face of his former objections to national parties, he is now a right smart captain in the Bogus army [Democratic] doing battle side by side with Martin and John Van Buren, Thomas Hart Benton, and the balance of the other national Democratic free soilers.[79]

This partisan attack reiterates a central theme: namely the unhesitating

opportunism of Alabama politicians. There are so many--in addition to Yancey, Walker, and Pugh--who shifted from one party to another, from southernism to unionism and to southernism in the course of seeking public office. Clearly, such men as Yancey and Pugh, in 1856, bear little resemblance to the southern-rights anti-party extremists of a half dozen years earlier.

In November, the Democrats carried Alabama by a vote of 46,000 to 28,000. They won in forty-four to fifty-two counties; and Buchanan received 62 per-cent of the vote cast in the State. The Democrats made inroads in traditional south-central Whig enclaves. Mobile and Tuscaloosa districts went heavily for Buchanan. In Mobile an American majority of about 500 in 1855 shifted to a Democratic majority of about 1500. Tuscaloosa's 1700 vote majority for the Know-Nothing's in this same year became a Democratic majority of about 500 in 1856. Democrats made significant gains in the western Black Belt counties--areas of traditional Whig strength. Only the strenuous efforts of a cadre of old Whig Know-Nothing managers--Hilliard, Thomas Watts, William P. Chilton, and R. A. Baker kept the recently gerrymandered Montgomery district in the Fillmore column, and just barely. All of north Alabama went for Buchanan.[80] The Democrats, with one-time Party spoilers Yancey and Pugh doing yeoman service, succeeded by urging loyalty to the national party as the only defense against abolition.

Eighteen fifty-six witnessed the emergence of a new generation of lawyer-politicians who would play a consequential role in the power struggle of 1860-1861. Most of these "new Men" identified themselves as southern nationalists. After 1856 they saw the Democratic Party as

their chief means for advancement, though some would flirt with small "opposition" factions before 1860. Most important among these political novitiates were J. L. M. Curry, David Clopton, Sydenham Moore, John T. Morgan, Alpheus Baker, Jere N. Williams, and William F. Samford.[81] C.C. Clay, Jr. who was Senator in 1853, could also be considered one of the "new men" of the fifties. With only him as the exception, all of them case from central Alabama; all came to political maturity in the 1840's; all consequently, were nursed on pro-slavery politics; all were members of a new generation of pro-slavery zealots. All first ran for local offices--from sheriff to Assemblyman. Moore, Clopton, and Curry were elected to Congress in the late fifties as militant ultras. Clay campaigned for Congress twice and eagerly sought a Senate seat as a southern-rights Democrat. John T. Morgan sought numerous local offices in Dallas County while competing with George W. Gayle for the leadership of the Dallas County ultras in 1860. Alpheus Baker achieved notoriety as Jefferson Buford's lieutenant in the Kansas expedition. William F. Samford tried to play Black Belt "king-maker" and as a Democratic opposition candidate for governor in 1859. Furthermore, all were small slaveowners, except Samford; all fit the model of the frustrated "man on the make" who found their economic advancement blocked. By the late fifties much of the best land and slaves were selling at prices that only the most prosperous planters could afford, and so these thwarted small slaveowners turned to politics as a means of upward mobility. Eighteen fifty-seven. then, would mark their arrival on the national political scene.

After the 1856 election many Alabama Democrats, having been thwarted in their efforts for higher office, sought federal appointments. Congress-

man George Smith Houston wrote Clay to see what the Senator could do to procure a cabinet post for him. Benjamin Fitzpatrick and former congressman John Bragg were also mentioned as possible cabinet appointees.[82] C. M. Jackson of the Montgomery Regency bitterly complained to John W. A. Sanford, who dispenced patronage to the party faithful that he had not been rewarded for loyal service to the national Party.[83] Another central Alabama southern-rights Democrat Sydenham Moore, asked Senator Clay to use his influence to procure the Charge d'affaires vacancy to Belgium for him. Moore, however, learned that a member of the Montgomery Regency had already been promised the post. Later Moore wrote that although his "sensitive nature shrinks from the idea of being one of the vast crowd who will swarm the streets of...Washington in pursuit of office," he would consider the trip if another "honorable" position were available.[84] Moore did not get such a position but was elected to Congress in 1857.

Yancey was the most intriguing of office seekers. His elevation to Buchanan's cabinet had been recommended by the Dallas Gazette as well as by fellow Democratic electors before the election.[85] Yancey disclosed that "the college [Alabama electors] unanimously wrote a strong letter to Mr. Buchanan urging my appointment to a place in his Cabinet." He also noted that Howell Cobb of Georgia was about to reject a cabinet post and asked his brother--who could exert considerable political pressure--"to use his influence with Cobb and other Georgians and the South Carolina delegation" in order to procure a cabinet job for himself. "Waste no time in asking where you can use a favor, write Dowdell [Alabama Representative from Yancey's district] I cannot within propriety."[86]

In late December Georgia unionist Howell Cobb advised Benjamin Yancey "with your Brother my acquaintence is more limited but sufficient to make it with me a most agreeable duty to advance his promotion...."[87] But Yancey did not get the post because his past disruptive activities might be, it was deemed, embarrassing to Buchanan and other Democratic regulars. Moreover, one can only speculate, J. J. Seibels, whose enmity for Yancey dated back to 1851 possibly used his influence with Buchanan and other national party leaders to forestall Yancey's elevation.

Yancey hiding his disappointment, thanked Clay, for his aid and told him "let Mr. B. [Buchanan] be disembarrased of all considerations respecting me," he told Clay. Yancey felt that "I should have prevented my friends urging my name in connection with a Cabinet appointment." Finally, as if to confess his own inadequacy as a party loyalist, he revealed "I feel now, crippled for future usefulness, if ever we shall be forced to act against Mr. B...."[88]

The 1856 outcome reflected the inability of many Whigs and those Democrats of south-central Alabama who were alienated from their Party to construct a lasting political organization opposed to the Democrats. By the end of 1857 a vast exodus of Whig-Americans entered the Alabama Democratic organization, creating a one-party State. An absence of active state-wide organized party resistance meant that disunion would be fought out within Democratic ranks, which for years had been sectionalized and factionalized between upstate national party loyalists partial to the union and downstate southern-rights extremists and moderates--surrounded by a massive slave population--who resisted restrictions upon slavery and slave holding. By 1860, secession would become a malleable

issue between these sections and political cliques as they struggled for ascendancy.

Alabama Democrats began maneuvering as early as the fall of 1856 for the 1857 elections. Ambition for office and a desire to manipulate took priority over discussion of southern resistance to "Norther aggression" in Kanasa. William F. Samford is typical of many Alabama Democrats. A southern-rights man, he was willing to overlook political affiliations in the candidate he supported. For example, he concluded that southern rights ultra and former congressman Sampson W. Harris was unfit to be governor. Rather he preferred James Dowdell, a moderate southern rights man, or J. J. Seibels, whose pronouncements were placing him in the union faction of the Democratic party, for the governorship. Before January 1857 Samford was himself mentioned as a replacement for John A. Winston who was ending his second and final term as Governor. Samford excitedly informed the Montgomery postmaster that "except for Shorter [John Gill Shorter] I have the best chances." But he thought his aspirations might be frustrated by "the Clique that shoots from behind the stalking horse, of the Advertiser" [The Montgomery newspaper that was the organ of the Montgomery Regency].[89] Accordingly, he endorsed all the anti-Montgomery Regency men including Yancey, Clay, Dowdell, and Pugh.

Other Democrats entered the gubernatorial lists while Samford fretted about his prospects. From upstate Lauderdale County Judge John E. Moore, a party regular, and Judge A. B. Moore a sometime southern-rights man from Black Belt Perry County, threw their hats into the ring. John Cochrane was the Eufaula Regency gubernatorial candidata. Ex-congressman and upstate firebrand David Hubbard was also casting about for

support. Publishing a letter that announced his candidacy, he insisted that the South was in a dual war--with the North, which had Great Britain for an ally, and with its own political leaders who did not put "southernism" first as a test of party loyalty.[90] Hubbard's strategy for attaining the Governorship was to appeal to the extreme southern-rights wing of the Party in east-central Alabama, a course which had proven so successful for Senator C. C. Clay, Jr.

Legislative elections also were pending, C. C. Clay began campaigning for re-election to the Senate. From two sources he learned that Leroy Pope Walker a fellow highland southern rights defender was attempting to unseat him. "One thing he [Walker] has not forgotten, I am sure," J. H. Caldwell, editor of the Sunny South, related, "to wit: the plots and counter plots in Alabama, for your seat in the Senate." North Alabama party manager O. H. Bynum also confided to Clay that highland politicians were planning to back pro-Walker men for the state legislature.[91]

There were also senatorial stirrings in the Black Belt. William F. Samford, trying to play "king-maker," suggested another ultra for Clay's Senate post. "If we ever intend to make Yancey Senator it will not do to sacrifice him on the antagonism which his selection for the Governorship would excite...."[92] In other words, Samford was trying to organize a Montgomery district clique of Democratic outsiders hostile to the control of the Montgomery Regency. Yancey would serve as "drill master" of this clique in their quest for power and prestige.

Senator Clay, recognizing the need to firm up his support in central Alabama, wrote friends in the Eufaula bloc, reminding them of his views on southern-rights.[93] Clay received thanks from Eufaula ultra E. C.

Bullock who told him, "You have made hosts of warm friends in this part of Alabama...by vindicating the claims of cotton against Cod fish."[94]

One month before the State Democratic nominating caucus John Cochrane reassured Clay that a central Alabama rumor "that I had made a bargain with Judge L. P. Walker by which he was to go for me for Governor and I was to go for him for your successor in the U.S. Senate" had no foundation. Clay, increasingly anxious, asked Gabriel DuVal of the Montgomery Regency for information regarding a Black Belt cabal to replace him. DuVal did not think it possible "that such a combination as that suggested by you exists....Yancey, Cochrane, Winston, and L. P. Walker can scarcely by any combination of circumstances unite either with the other, or all together, for any object....Yancey at present is in bad health." DuVal then recommended a source of action which reflected the art of political management as practiced in ante-Bellum Alabama. Like so many other politicians, he wanted to play "king-maker" and increase his political power and influence in the State. On this occasion, he suggested to Clay that he unite all supporters for his re-election without any concern for ideological considerations. "Would it not be well for you to procure from some friend in the counties the names of six or a dozen of the leading men in each? I do not mean of those who are known in their counties as prominent men but of those who at the different precincts are the <u>working</u> men at elections, and who control their little centers of county politicians. I will willingly do so in Montgomery County."[95] This kind of advice bears witness to the fact that the "chivalric" south practiced the same political "arts" as the ward "boss" of the north.

While the Democrats prepared for their convention, the Know-Nothings decimated by defections--changed their name to the "Whig-Americans" with the emphasis on Whig. This remnant of an opposition party suffered a major loss in April 1857. Henry W. Hilliard, the State's most renowned Whig-unionist, announced his conversion to the Democrats. The Democrats, he explained, were the only remaining bulwark against "the freesoil and Abolitionist combination at the North." Democrats, to be sure, were wary of their latest disciple. A Black Belt editor warned Hilliard that "there were Democrats enough to fill all of the state offices....Mr. Hilliard is thus notified to 'stand aside'." Hilliard, however, did have plans for running for congress in the second district, which evoked the following from another editor: "Let it be understood...that we are not in favor of hustling any new adherent into position and office, especially to the exclusion of old members of the party whose talents and services entitle them to preference."[96] Meanwhile, his old Party colleagues attacked Hilliard. The Whig organ, The Alabama Beacon accused him of helping to destroy the Whig party and J. J. Hooper of the Montgomery Mail ascribed Hilliard's motives to opportunism. "Seeing high office closed to him under the banner of a wounded party," Hooper asserted, "he joins the foe in hopes of winning office." But Gabriel DuVal a chief tactician of the Montgomery faction was elated by Hilliard's conversion and maintained that "it will help us wonderfully in this district and County."[97]

DuVal also evaluated the chances of various gubernatorial aspirants: "Judge A. B. Moore has probably more friends than any one else, but they are by no means zealous. Col. Samford, I think, has no chance. ...Even those who admit his intellection superiority suspect a want of

administrative capacity in him, and make his occasional hypochondria a grave political objection....Cochrane's votes in the legislature will beat him. Hubbard is still unsure."[98]

The Democratic caucus meeting in June 1857 seethed with intrigue. John A. Winston and John E. Moore a political trimmer--a chief characteristic of Alabama politicians--combined to press the latter for governor, and thereby reconcile north Alabama to the loss of a senatorship by the gift of the governorship. Thomas A. Walker, a former Whig and recent convert to the Democratic Party, revealed that John Moore and Governor Winston "have of late been as thick as runnaway negroes [sic]." Judge A. B. Moore of Perry County was selected on the twenty-sixth ballot, as a result of the efforts of the Montgomery Regency. The Party platform endorsed the national Democratic resolutions passed in Cincinnati and hailed the Dred Scott decision. No fire-eating speeches were made. Some newspapers contended that the defeat of Samford and Hubbard was a victory for conservatism over "uncompromising Southern rights." And George T. Yelverton, Democratic "king-maker" from west-central Alabama who worked closely with party regulars in the Montgomery Regency told Senator Clay, "I have been tried hard at by gentlemen from N. and S. Alabama to join a war upon you and F. [Fitzpatrick]." He claimed that John Cochrane blocked his endorsement of Clay and confirmed that a deal had been made between John E. Moore (the defeated gubernatorial nominee) and Winston "to make Moore Gov. and W. Senator."[99] All this was planned to put lameduck Governor Winston in the United States Seante and elevate upstate Judge John E. Moore to the Governorship. Winston was from central Alabama and John Moore from north Alabama thus both sections supposedly

would be placated by this John Moore-Winston scheme.

John E. Moore, after the convention, complained that his strategy for the nomination had been undercut by "the factions." In other words, Moore was attributing his defeat to the clusters of Democratic cliques--in Barbour, Dallas and Montgomery Counties who disregarded ideological considerations when it came to supporting someone from their own section. Selected nominee Judge A. B. Moore was from Perry County in the Black Belt. He received support, in other words, from both extreme southern rights blocs in Barbour and Dallas Counties and the moderate to conservative southernists in the Montgomery Regency. John Moore said he had determined "to disappoint the factions who were aiming for a breakup activated by a rule or ruin principle. I was unwilling to jeopardize the harmony of our party...so I withdrew after the twenty-fifth ballot."[100] He made no mention of his and Winston's alleged deal. Thus, the 1857 Democratic caucus became another example of that factionalism and opportunism characteristic of Alabama politics.

As the 1857 political campaigns heated up, south Alabamians began to worry over the Buchanan administration's "southern rights policies." Inverse causation is involved. Slavery in the territories increasingly occupied Alabamians as local issue receeded in importance. The latter, like state aid to railroads, bank and temperance reform, and the anti-foreign issue generated by the Know-Nothings, no longer inspired concern. Slaveholders' rights in Kansas provided more excitement. Buchanan appointed R. J. Walker of Mississippi as Kansas' third governor. During the 1856 campaign Walker had written a pamphlet predicting Kansas would surely become a free state; geographical factors and emigration, he thought,

made it inevitable. "I do not believe Kansas will become a slave state," he stated, and his pamphlet, selling a million copies gave such views national prominance.[101]

Some Alabamians feared Walker would oppose a pro-slavery constitution for Kansas. At a Montgomery meeting of June 27, 1857 second district Democrats led by William L. Yancey and some "Americans"--what one observer called "only a slim gathering" debated resolutions on Buchanan's Kansas policy. Yancey still conciliatory, presented a number of resolutions calling for Party harmony, urging "undiminished confidence" in Buchanan, at least until it could be proved that Buchanan and Walker were acting in collusion to undo the pro-slavery constitution in Kansas. Yancey was criticized from the floor for such moderation and P. H. Brittan, co-editor of the Montgomery Messenger, offered an amendment condemning Walker. Brittan's amendment was eventually tabled.[102]

In response to the Montgomery meeting on Kansas, William F. Samford from his position at Tuskegee complained that "the more I think of the Montgomery anti-Walker meeting the less I like it, and especially in the view of its utter disregard of Dowdell's [the district congressman who supported Buchanan] position and fortunes." Samford wanted to keep Buchanan's Kansas policies from becoming a major issue among Alabama Democrats. The debates at the Montgomery meeting could play into the hands of the Know-Nothings who then could take advantage of Democratic differences over the President's Kansas schemes and damage the chances of Congressional Democrats in the forthcoming elections. Thus, Samford foresaw problems for the district in the oncoming congressional elections: "There was no such exigency in our affaires that our Montgomery friends

needed to rush into demonstrations that might and may cost us the Dist."[103]

Party success still motivated William Samford, and like him, other ultra southern rights demagogues. Buchanan's Kansas policies found their way into the congressional races. Percy Walker, in the Mobile district, had little chance for re-election because of his refusal to support the National Know-Nothings in Congress. When he declined to campaign, Democrat James Stallworth defeated Whig-American James J. McCaskill by 1000 votes. Mobile Democratic party worker Colin Mcrae confided that "the course of the Administration in reference to Gov. Walker and Kansas has also weakened us very much in this Congressional district. If we had not had a popular candidate...we could not have canvassed the district." Then he asked Mobile post-master John A. Sanford to let Buchanan know "the opinion of the people here on this subject and that Walker's course will not be sustained by them."[104]

For Congressman from the Montgomery district, Whig-Americans pitted the old Whig attorney Thomas J. Judge against incumbent James F. Dowdell. Judge, known as a union-Whig in the early fifties, now ran as a "nullifying-Whig." He attacked Walker's appointment as well as "Buchanan's refusal to sustain slavery in the territories." He pronounced the national Democratic party soft on southern rights and along with J. J. Hooper the Whig nullifying editor he denounced the Demoracts. They were the "free soil Northern Democratic party." Hooper affirmed "the man whose vote is given to those who stand by the Administration, repudiates our rights in the territories and consent the restriction of slavery."[105]

Democrat James Dowdell faced by this strong Whig-American chal-

lenge, needed help. He got it from William L. Yancey and Henry Hilliard. Both stumped the district for him. Howell Cobb and Robert Toombs from Georgia were imported to lend their support. Central Alabama Democrats realized that the southern-rights issue was being exploited by a "mongrel" faction—Whig-Americans--which had no allegiance to a national party organization. Toombs declared that Walker's conduct in Kansas was a lesser evil than an American Party victory. Yancey was worried. He acknowledged the new turn of events as district Democrats responded favorably to Thomas Judge's criticism of Buchanan's maneuvers in Kansas. He blamed Walker for the Kansas dilemma but implored third district constituents to temporize their criticism of Buchanan until "all his views on the territories are made public."[106] Dowdell won a narrow 100 vote victory but a significant shift was in progress. Almost a plurality of the district which had one of the largest concentration of slaves in Alabama--perceived Buchanan's Kansas conduct as a threat to the south.

Democrat Eli S. Shorter, backed by the Eufaula clique, won an easy victory over Whig-American Batt Peterson in the second Eufaula district. Again there were straws in the wind. James L. Pugh, John Cochrane, and E. C. Bullock, three Eufaula stump speakers, attacked Buchanan's evasiveness on Kansas. But they nonetheless supported Shorter who avoided open criticism of the Administration.[107] They did so because of the old political criterion of opportunism--of winning an election which still governed their motivations.

In Tuscaloosa's fourth district Democrat Sydenham Moore having failed to get a federal appointment, challenged "little Billy" Smith who had represented the district as a unionist, Whig, and American since

1851. Moore, a southern ultra campaigned against Smith's congressional record. Smith, he charged, voted to censure Preston Brooks for canning Charles Sumner and opposed Jefferson Buford's Kansas scheme. Moore also questioned Smith's devotion to the South and condemned his erratic politics citing his many party shifts. Moore, by contrast, campaigned as a "fire-eater of 1850" who had not compromised his principles and he defeated Smith by over 1400 votes.[108]

Democrat David Hubbard--the enduring upstate ultra contested George Smith Houston the union-Democrat Congressman, his old antagonist. Hubbard attacked his nationalism, at times implied that Houston was a traitor to southern institutions. The fifth Florence district, however, sent Houston back to Congress with a majority of 900 votes.[109] Thus, affirming again the unionism of the fifth highland district.

J. L. M. Curry, also a Democrat, faced no opposition in the seventh district because incumbent Sampson W. Harris had died in the spring of 1857. Like Sydenham Moore, Curry prided himself on being both an ultra and a "new man." Politicians like them would help edge Alabama toward disunion after 1859.

Nor was A. B. Moore opposed for governor. Democrats, moreover, elected twenty-eight of the thirty members of the state senate and eighty-five of the 100 representatives in the lower House.[110] Moreover, for the first time, they had made a clean sweep of all the congressional seats. Alabama was becoming a one-party state, a situation which caused southern nationalists to announce the arrival of the millenium--a southern party based on southern principles.[111]

However, factionalism and intra-state sectionalism combined with

the ambition of political aspirants still frustrated Party unity. Democratic hegemony did not imply agreement on purposes. Principles were inconsequential as a political cement. Party loyalty remained capricious inspired more by a voracious hunger for office than anything else and it made for a brittle and capricious unity.

After the dust of the 1857 contest had settled, J. J. Hooper listed the foremost anti-Administration Democrats. They were State Senator E. C. Bullock, Jim Pugh "and a few other individuals scattered through Mr. Shorter's Congressional district," home of the Eufaula Regency.[112]

William F. Samford, acting as Black Belt "king-maker," appraised the results of the 1857 Congressional contests and proclaimed he was "for Clay's re-election to the Senate this winter." Also, he preferred Yancey to Fitzpatrick as Senator when the latter's term was up. Samford himself considered retirement from public life unless "Mr. Buchanan should send me to Europe as a Minister." Standing in his way were "Seibels and Fitzpatrick and their Montgomery Regency" who are "my enemies...and Yancey's and everybody else's except a few of their special friends." Samford's antagonism toward the Montgomery Regency had more to do with political ambition than with differences over Southern Rights. The Fitzpatrick-Seibels led Montgomery Regency never recognized Samford as a significant force in the State Democratic party. They never game him patronage and this disregard irked Samford. Samford's correspondent William P. Browne, a Black Belt Democratic ultra, also hostile to the Montgomery group stated, "In all you [Samford] say regarding the subtle, selfish and monopolizing policy of the Montgomery clique I heartily concur...." He agreed that Yancey was preferable to Fitzpatrick for the Senate. But Yancey, he

warned, "is not the man to keep always in that position. He is very ambitious. I could say much more but it is needless now. Yancey has been unstable in some things."[113] Browne's doubts obviously were inspired by Yancey's opportunistism. The politicisn who first sought power outside the Party (in the late 1840's and early 1850's) who then [in 1856] became a loyal partisan again, the politician who was clearly seeking to manage party policy, was not one to evoke absolute confidence.

Talk of the forthcoming senatorial contest inspired lame-duck Democratic Governor John A. Winston, who desired to replace C. C. Clay, Jr., as Senator, to advocate readoption of a reapportionment law having the Black basis--the federal ratio. Such a measure would return to the slave counties in the Black Belt of west-central Alabama representation for their slaves. Winston's Democratic opponents in north Alabama charged him with trying to build a voting base for the senatorial contest in this area. This was the region of the great Whig-planters many of whom had abandoned politics in the fifties as they saw their old party disintegrate. Winston, no doubt, was trying to build support with this quiesient political bloc. Henry D. Clayton of the east-central "hotspur" Eufaula faction home of the small planters where ultraism always held sway, relayed to Clay that Winston's suggested change back to the "black basis got a cold reception in east-central Barbour County." Z. L. Nahemy feared "that a Montgomery [Regency] influence is at work to elect Yancey in your place [Clay] so as to leave a clear field for Fitzpatrick hereafter....I told them [Montgomery Regency leaders] with some feeling that while I admired Yancey as much as any man, yet I would be d----d if I would sacrifice you for any man in the state."[114] All these feared plots

dissipated by November. Clay was the only candidate put in nomination and was re-elected to the Senate by acclimation by the legislature.[115]

With Clay's re-election confirmed, the Alabama Assembly again took up the Kansas question. It condemned Kansas governor Robert J. Walker for being against the introduction of slavery in the territory and thereby aiding "the cause of free soilism." Both houses passed a resolution calling on Buchanan to force Walker's resignation.[116]

Kansas continued to dominate Alabama politics in late 1857. Congressman James Dowdell, writing from Washington, reported that Douglas "differs with the President on Kansas affairs and goes the whole length with Walker. We loose Douglas with all his influence--we hope to be able to get along without his aid, but it will be by the skin of our teeth. Douglas will loose forever the confidence of the South." Gabriel DuVal also concerned by Douglas' conduct, reporting a rumor that Douglas "was going over to the Republicans if true...it will have one good result in materially weakening the confidence of the South in Northern politicians and in requiring from them a more consistent adherence to principle...."[117] In December the Alabama senate unanimously passed resolutions requiring Governor Moore to call an election for delegates to a state convention which would determine what steps Alabama should take to protect its rights and honor in the territories; the lower House approved with only two dissenting votes.[118]

Much of the nation's sectional conflict in 1857 was also animated by the depression of that year. Northern businessmen believed that the depression was the inevitable consequence of low tariff policy sponsored by the southern-controlled Democratic Party. In the south itself the

cotton prices were affected and new demands for Southern economic independence were heard in Alabama. Calls for direct trade with England also circulated. Direct trade would permit the South's cotton growers to bypass "Northern brokers thus relieving both producers and manufacturers from three or four extraneous profits and per-centages." One Alabama planter declared, "We have already paid humiliating tribute to others too long, and it is high time we announced ourselves commercially free and independent and acquire more slaves and cotton territory if we so desire." By November cotton dropped from fifteen cents to six cents a pound. In December cotton sold for eight cents a pound in New York and at six cents per pound in Liverpool. William F. Samford complained that "the money crisis of the last year came just in time to make my loss of a crop...so severely felt as to render the sale of my Tuskegee property [necessary]...." The Tuskegee Republican, in the heart of cotton rich central Alabama, summed up Alabamian reaction to the cotton situation by reporting that "the low price of cotton has engendered a spirit of discontent among many of our planters."[119]

Owing to the panic of 1857 there were renewed demands for reopening the slave trade which had been prohibited in 1808, and State representative William Nabers introduced a measure urging as much.

While south Alabamians debated the merits of re-establishing the slave trade, meetings were held endorsing the attempt of William Walker to take Nicaragua for slavery. Walker, who was from Tennessee, had achieved a reputation as a soldier of fortune in the cause of expanding Southern power into the Carribean. Arrested by Captain Hiram Paulding, on Buchanan's orders he was later discharged by presidential order.

Walker made his first public appearance in Alabama. He was welcomed by the Alabama Assembly which turned the Hall of the House over to a public meeting to honor him. After an overflow crowd, had heard him, it called upon Yancey to assess Buchanan's Latin American policy.[120]

Since 1856 Yancey had been a Party loyalist, a Buchanan elector, and campaigned vigorously for the Democratic ticket. Although his hopes of obtaining a Buchanan cabinet post had been frustrated, he avoided an open break with the Party over Kansas. He had attacked Robert L. Walker's published anti-slavery position, but that had been the extent of his anti-administration position. Now, with the growing ultra sentiment in south-central Alabama, Yancey opened "fire." He denounced the "course of our government...." He criticized the conduct of Paulding as "tyranical and unjustifiable and the old woman policy of the Administration." Walker's Nicaragua enterprise was, in Yancey's words, "the cause of the South." Yancey doubted that the south could ever again depend upon the national Democratic Party. A familiar theme crept back into Yancey's rhetoric: Northern Democrats could not be trusted to protect southern institutions. Not all Alabama Democrats reacted favorably to Yancey's revived ultra position. J. J. Seibels, editor of a new Democratic Party organ, the Montgomery Confederation, heaped scorn on Yancey for being in league with free-soilers and Americans in trying to destroy the administration and the Democratic party.[121]

During 1857 the struggle for control of Kansas intensified with the controversy over the Lecompton constitution esacerbating matters. The constitutional convention held at Lecompton had been chosen by less than a fourth of those listed as entitled to vote; and the free-state

element refrained from participating in what they regarded as a pro-slavery maneuver. After a struggle within the convention it was decided not to submit the constitution to an untrammeled popular vote: the people were merely permitted to vote for the "constitution with slavery," or for the "constitution with no slavery." If the free-state clause was approved, slavery would not exist in Kansas "except that the right of property in slaves in this territory shall [in] no measure be interfered with." It is obvious that only the pro-slavery element dominated the voting and, predictably, 6000 favored slavery and 600 opposed it. Free state men as well as all those who opposed the constitution boycotted the ballotting. But Buchanan recommended that Congress admit Kansas with the Lecompton constitution. Douglas then broke with Buchanan and was read out of the Party by Administration supporters.[122] All Southern Democrats considered the Lecompton constitution a matter of Party loyalty and none of them could now fault Buchanan.

In Alabama J. J. Seibels in January 1858 issued a call for a public meeting of Montgomery Democrats "to sustain the Administration and the Lecompton Kansas constitution." Henry Hilliard, the Whig-American who recently joined the Democratic Party, was the chief orator. Those assembled heard him defend Buchanan's present Kansas policy. Yancey, who was in the audience was asked by spectators to respond to Hilliard. He had not originally been invited to speak and now, "flushed with temper," he alluded to "the singular fact that Mr. Hilliard preceded me in addressing a Democratic meeting--that a yearling should take precedence of a Democrat of forty years." Yancey insisted that he had always upheld "that great principle of popular sovereignty in the territories." His

candor or memory can be questioned. He had refused to support Lewis Cass in 1848 because, among other things, Cass had come out for squatter sovereignty, and Yancey; with John A. Campbell, had favored federal protection of slavery in the territories. Yancey concluded by demanding that a Southern man replace Robert J. Walker in Kansas. "Mr. Yancey," Hilliard responded, "might be an older soldier in the cause of Democracy than myself, but it remained for the future to disclose which [sic] was the better one."[123] In sum, Yancey served notice, like the Yancey of old, that party loyalty would not guide his actions.

Apparently Yancey's tirade was inspired less by Buchanan's Kansas policy than by the personal affront of Seibels, who had ignored him in organizing the meeting; and by Hilliard, who was selected by Seibles as chief speaker and who was one of Yancey's bitterest foes.

State senator E. C. Bullock thought "the speech of William Yancey was a most magnificent exhibition of his intellectual and combative powers, but as a matter of discretion, there are variant opinions. I am sure that he inflicted wounds, which even time the great comforter, cannot heal." There are now evidently two sections of the democracy in Montgomery," the Tuskegee Republican reported. "One may be called the Yancey section and the other the Seibels-Fitzpatrick. The former is represented by the Montgomery Advertiser and the latter by the Montgomery Confederation [J. J. Seibels newspaper]. Neither I suppose has any love for the other...." "A bitter feud has arisen," the Pickens Republican pronounced, "between the party regulars [Fitzpatrick and Seibels] and the per se, Southern rights schools, or factions of the Alabama Democracy." According to this account "the gut of this feud is the merit or demerit of

James Buchanan."[124] William L. Yancey, in other words, was at war with the conservative pro-Administration leadership of the Montgomery Regency. The conflict was not only a struggle between Alabama's national party loyalists and Yancey's ultra southernism but it was a personality clash as well. As noted earlier Yancey and Seibels had an abiding enmity for each other dating back to 1850-51. It was almost inconceivable that these two enemies could long co-operate together in the same party.

The Kansas issue continued to agitate south Alabama Democrats. In late January 1858 the lower House passed a resolution which provided for a convention to be called by the governor, which would "take proper action" if congress refused to admit Kansas into the union with the Lecompton constitution.[125] Responding to the possibility that Congress would not approve this constitution, the Clarke County Democrat warned that "the South should at once put her house in order and prepare for the worse; for come what may we cannot see how we are much longer to remain in this union as equals...." Allen Henry, editor of the West Alabamian advised that "Southern men should reflect...if the Democracy is overthrown, we shall be in the power of Black Republicans."[126]

* * *

The divisive oratory employed by Alabama newspapers and politicians played a pivotal role in providing the psychological climate for considering secession as a rational option by 1860. Analysis of the slavery extension issue by ante-bellum Alabamians reflects what Richard hofstadter and David Brion Davis have called the "paranoid style." Davis contends that proslavery rhetoric was generated by conspiratorial delusions that bore

little resemblance to reality. In this respect J. L. M. Curry, in his maiden congressional speech, evoked conspiratorial demons as the cause for sectional tensions. Admission of Kansas as a slave state, he insisted, was "prevented by a abolition menace of cunning mammoth proportions." This meance also involved "mobocratic misrule and plunder, manifested in Millerism, Mormonism, spirit rappings, and socialism: Secret watchwords pass readily from mouth to mouth; organized bands wait but for an occasion to despoil and divide; burglaries and garroting and assassinations fill the columns of the newspapers." Similarly, firebrand Representative Sydenham Moore said "the thirst for power of those Black Republicans leaders, in whose hearts, as I believe, there lurks treason as dark as ever activated the blood-hound associates of cateline's conspiracy." Black Republicans, Moore asserted, like the ancient Roman cabal seek "an insurrection of the slaves to despoil and destroy the South." To Alabamians living in slave-dense counties such conspiratorial rhetoric struck a responsive chord conditioned as they were by a chronic fear of slave rebellions.[127]

There were, however, Alabamians who did not see the Kansas struggle as Armageddon. In a letter to the Tuskegee Republican, an anonymous writer observed that if "Kansas be rejected now, it would simply be a triumph of the advocates of the partly Northern and Southern construction of the Kansas-Nebraska act, over the advocates of either of which would result in no real benefit to the South, since slavery can not possibly exist in Kansas." William F. Samford privately confided that "the Lecompton prohibition was not Republican and the Senate I think has done well to provide for its abrogation. It was just nonsense for the South

to insist on it." Samford announced, "I am a Buchanan man! As to disunion, I have done with it....If I fight I will fight henceforth in the Union if I can."[128]

Others viewed the Kansas debate as an issue contrived for political gain. John Sanford, a planter expressed unconcern with Kansas. The cause of the turmoil, according to him, rested with politicians. He characterized them as "designing knaves" who "rave and rant about ideal rights and abstractions...." And, he added, the idea of Kansas "remaining a slave state with few slaves is too ridiculously absurd to be entertained for a moment....Is it not an outrage upon common sense ever to think about breaking up the Union" over the Kansas question? Southern politicians have kept the "country in a perpetual ferment and excitment upon the subject of slavery and appears to have been their chief employment until they have worried their constituency into a compliance with their designs which some of them long entertained---that of breaking up the Confederacy in order to project themselves into power." Sandord's view on Kansas was confirmed by the 1860 census which showed only two slaves residing in Kansas.[129]

In the United States Senate Lecompton passed by eight votes. It then went to the House, where an amendment providing for resubmission of the constitution to the people of Kansas passed 120 to 112. Congress now moved toward compromise. Under the adroit management of Alexander H. Stephens, an accomodation was struck in the "English bill" (after William H. English, an anti-Lecompton Democratic representative from Indiana), which received the support of both Houses and became law on May 4, 1858. Under its terms, the Lecompton constitution was to be resubmitted as a whole and connected with a federal land grant, contingent

upon its adoption. Alabama opposition to the Conference decision came from the east-central agitators, while the overwhelming majority of highland Alabamians sustained the decision. Many southerners who were at first recalcitrant fell into line after unrelenting Administration pressure. Alabama congressman James Dowdell found that the English compromise "is acceptable to the great body of southern-rights men of the South. It is in some aspects better than the original Senate Bill and there is no doubt of its passage and a quieting to the Kansas agitation at least for the present."[130]

Compromise critics were initially led by J. J. Hooper, the Whig-American ultra who called for resistance and condemned the Alabama delegation for selling out the "South's interests." Yancey, now in full revolt from the Democratic Party asserted that all southern congressmen except for two who had voted against the measure, were either traitors to their section or incapable of understanding the principles of the "English bill."[131]

Senators Fiztpatrick and Clay wrote long public letters explaining their support of the Conference compromise. Concerned for his south Alabama southern-rights allies, Clay addressed a letter to the citizens of Mobile. He argued that if Kansas rejected the terms of admission, the south would lose nothing, because as long as Kansas remained a territory, federal law would protect slavery; whereas, if Kansas became a state, she would send two Black Republicans to the senate and another to the House and soon exclude "slavery and slaveholders by law from her limits."[132]

Eli Shorter, from extremely pro-southern Barbour County, came

under severe attack by the Eufaula Regency and by the radical press in the eastern Black Belt for supporting the compromise bill. Defending his vote, Shorter stated, "every Abolitionist and Black Republican in both houses of Congress voted against and fought the Conference bill to the last." James Dowdell, attacked by ultras in his Black Belt constituency, also defended himself by saying "I am satisfied that the conclusion at which we arrived in the Kansas question is correct....Our honor is saved...no ground has been abandoned, no principle conceded to in the Bill."[133] Shorter and Dowdell--both claiming to be southern rights advocates--destroyed their reputations by voting for the Lecompton compromise and gave office-seeking ultras in their districts enough "evidence" to successfully challenge their congressional seats in 1859.

At this time, when contravery over the compromise bill was raging, Yancey was preparing for his attempt to dismember the State's Democratic Party organization. The Southern Commercial convention, to meet in May 1858 at Montgomery was announced. A series of these conventions, under the leadership of southern nationalist James DeBow had been meeting since 1837 to discuss common Southern economic problems. By the 1850's they had become forums for southern independence and helped to widen the gulf between the sections. The May 1858 meeting which would convene in Montgomery, was Yancey's opportunity to agitate the slavery issue. His assault would focus on the re-opening of the African slave trade. In general his argument went as follows: non-slaveholders and small slave-owners, frustrated in their attempt to buy slaves, had to be tied more firmly to southern institutions. Consequently, importations were needed in order to bring down the price of slaves. It was clear that no future

slave states could be created without the slave trade. For Yancey and other political aspirants, this issue was a symbol of southern loyalty. Significantly, Alabama planting interests were divided on it. Those in opposition, usually the major planter from the west-central counties, felt that any increase in slaves would lower prices and thus depreciate the value of their own slave holdings. Some cotton capitalists, furthermore, feared that new acres meant a larger crop and lower cotton prices. Others contended, using a familiar argument as old as slavery itself, that importations were dangerous because new slaves would be savage, hard to handle, and likely to spread discontent among those already in bondage.[134] However, the small planters of the eastern Black Belt knew their position rested on cotton and slavery. The great landowners steadily encroached on the lands of the less wealthy. Thus, the small operators, desperately trying to edge their way up the social ladder sought relief, by the late fifties, in demanding the re-opening of the African slave trade and suppression of anti-slavery sentiment everywhere. Their situation by 1858 was becoming desperate.[135]

Interestingly, not all southern radicals were favorably disposed toward rescinding the 1808 prohibition, and even some of its advocates admitted that chances of success were remote. There was virtually no support for it in congress. Of the fifteen Alabama delegates to the Southern Commercial convention Yancey could carry only Percy Walker and F. B. Shepard, two Mobile extremists.

Yancey, a month later, claimed that he was misinterpreted on the African slave trade question. A reading of his remarks, he explained, would show that he did not call for re-opening the trade. Despite such

denials and equivocation, political observers reported that Yancey "as the Yancey of old" had also hoisted the disunion flag at the convention in preparation for destroying the Democratic party. This charge is credible in the light of Edmund Ruffin's private conversation with Yancey toward the end of May in which both agreed that diminished loyalty to the Democratic Party was needed before the South could strike for independence. Ruffin also talked to Percy Walker's close friend, attorney F. B. Shepard of Mobile, "who was equally zealous for separation...." He wrote a declaration for a "League of United Southerners," and showed it to Yancey, Shepard and Judge George W. Stone--associate justice of the Alabama Supreme Court; and, he reported, they "all seemed to approve the plan." Thus was born an organization which, according to its founder, would "endanger the national Democracy, to undermine the South's loyalty to the party."[136]

William L. Yancey published Ruffin's proposal in the Montgomery Advertiser, which was under a new editorship, one hostile to the conservative and pro-Buchanan Montgomery Regency leadership controlled by Yancey's old antagonists J. J. Seibles and Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

League members, according to this proposal, would combat all further compromises of southern rights in either party platforms or national legislation. The League would not run candidates for any office but would demand that members use all honorable means to secure the nomination of only southern rights men. In other words, the League intended to purge the parties of all those who were "soft on southernism." But its real aim--which was disunion--was not revealed until the unauthorized publication of Yancey's June 15, 1858 letter to James H. Slaughter of

Atlanta, Georgia. Therein Yancey confided "no national party can save us," he continued, "no sectional party can do it. But if we could do as our fathers did, organize 'Committees of Safety' all over the Cotton States (and it is only in them that we can hope for any effective movement), we shall fire the Southern heart--instruct the Southern mind--give courage to each other, and at the proper moment, by one organized concerted action, we can precipitate the Cotton states into a revolution."[137]

In speeches during July at Benton Bethel Church and in Montgomery, Yancey and Percy Walker, the Mobile ultra, urged their listeners to organize leagues, William F. Samford was convinced and returned to his fire-eating ways. He wrote three articles entitled, "Leaguers against the Intriguers," in which he attacked party loyalty, in general, and the Party bosses of the Montgomery Regency, in particular. Samford playing the idologue, clearly advocated disruption of the national Democratic Party: "The League will unite all those who are willing to fight for the South. The South will then be the league!"[138]

Democratic Party newspapers responded with the charge that the League was merely a combination of former Whig-Know-Nothings and disaffected Democrats whose purpose was to topple the traditional Party leadership and to take power for themselves. The Clarke County Democrat noted this fusion of political outsiders and opportunists in an editorial entitled, "The Fire-Eaters of 1858."

> In 1855 the know nothings gloried in the doctrine that the Union was the 'paramount political good.' Now in 1858 they are 'terrible fire-eaters' and can with difficulty be persuaded to remain in the Union. Democrats of the Dowdell, Shorter, Stall-

> worth type [all south-central Democratic Congressmen] are tame submissionists compared with them. ...They are strong for Southern Rights only so long as the Democratic Party is in power.[139]

William F. Samford, in a most revealing letter, countered charges made against the League by questioning Senator Clay's failure to support it.[140] "I never doubted your sincerity," Samford wrote, "and did not much regret your failure to connect me officially with this Administration....I am free to do what I should have done in any situation, criticize it....It does not come up to my idea of a Southern Rights Administration." From the beginning, Samford claimed, he had approved of the Lecompton constitution. He had long called for a Southern rights party and he now proclaimed, "You know I am for Yancey for Senator... I now think we shall have to make Yancey take the field as an independent democrat candidate to the Senate."[141] A scheme was set in motion that would topple the Montgomery Regency leadership by having Yancey challenge incumbent Benjamin Fitzpatrick for the Senate.

Fitzpatrick's term did not expire until March 4, 1861, but Yancey's supporters began organizing in the spring of 1858.[142] Their first efforts became apparent with an editorial on "The Treachery of Douglas," in the Montgomery Advertiser. Condemning Senator Fitzpatrick's support of Douglas it declared "Alabama required a more forthright defender of Southern institutions than Senator Fitzpatrick."[143] The Montgomery Confederation, the Regency newspaper, alleged that the Advertiser had been purchased by G. H. S. Shorter and N. B. Cloud to prevent "a certain man [Benjamin Fitzpatrick] from being re-elected United States Senator." Another paper, the Gainsville Independent, claimed that the Advertiser had zealously

championed "Mr. Y['s] Senatorial ambitions with the purpose of dividing the Democratic party." The Dallas Gazette hoped to see Mr. Yancey in the Senate but thought his position on the slave trade and Walker's filibustering would "seal his political doom." By the end of December the Advertiser ceased backing Yancey and gave as a reason his "connection with the League of United Southerners. With this association we have nothing in common....We are Democratic from principle...but we deny that Mr. Fitzpatrick has any better title to the office of Senator than any other Democratic leader."[144] Yancey did not take an active part in the initial scheme to make him senator. He suffered from "weakness, consequent want of energy...," he wrote his brother referring to his chronic back trouble which he believed had worsened. Moreover, he believed that the national elections were "disasterous to the South."[145] Yancey's estimate, however, was not shared by Democratic Party organs in south Alabama.

Some Democratic papers, rather than endorsing Yancey and his views lamented the growing sectional strife and made thinly veiled allusions to who and what was responsible for party and state turbulence. For example, the Montgomery Confederation pointed out in July 1858 that sectional tensions were being manipulated by "self seeking factionalists." Alabamians were not "going to be precipitated into secession for past aggressions....Some might have been driven to believe the two great sections of the Union were divided beyond reconciliation..." but, and it continued, this government "if rightly administered...was the noblest government ever devised by the wit of man." Its citizens would tell the world "that the day had not yet come" when this Union could be dis-

solved "upon the frivolous matter of the rejection of the Lecompton Constitution." The Dallas Gazette found that most of the grievances of the factionalists were imaginary. The South had not as yet suffered any very serious injury. Alabamians, if the truth were told still enjoyed their lands and their slaves. Party journals, then hoped that Alabama voters would have little enthusiasm for struggle against anticipated evils, or that they would be "in favor of a string of abstractions so contradictory and impractical that it would puzzle the shrewdest metaphysicians of the age to expound them."[146]

Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., however, was less sanguine about the future of the south. He excoriated Stephen A. Douglas for opposing Southern rights in the territories. "The enterprising and acquisitive Yankees will flock...there, with their notions," he grimly forecast, and "buy lands and silver mines and prepare" these lands "for non-slaveholding states before Southern men" could arrive with their slaves. The North was already too strong for "the South in the Union." Indeed, he concluded, "the South has no slaves to spare for acquired territories, unless the foreign slave trade can be re-opened."[147] But Benjamin Fitzpatrick, always the moderate, did not share his colleague's apprehensions when he reported from Washington that "Kansas has hardly been mentioned, it has had its day, I suppose."[148]

Clay sought the re-opening of the African slave trade, something he shared with Yancey. As the Kansas question receded in importance in early 1858, Yancey and other southern ultras renewed their agitation of this issue. Yancey wrote another series of pro-slave trade letters to various ultra newspapers in Alabama.

The African slave trade controversy kept the "pot boiling" into 1859. With congressional and local elections imminent and a variety of opportunists vying for political office, the southern-rights issue heated up. Congressman James Dowdell, an Administration Democrat, from the third Montgomery district, believed the Yancey-Samford opposition forces were too well organized[149] for him to win and decided not to run again. After disclosing his decision, Dowdell commented on the ease with which Black Belt voters could be stirred by sectional polemics. Events like the north's denunciation of Dred Scott and William Seward's declaration of an "irrepressible conflict" readily angered these southern voters who lived in the slave-dense cotton counties. Dowdell noted that many old local questions, such as bank and temperance reform and state-aid, no longer inspired much interest: "I fully agree...that southern rights principles are in the ascendent in this District and all that is necessary to success is the consolidation of the Democratic party's full strength....It should take the highest Southern Rights position..."[150] Dowdell's perception of heightened Black Belt concern with southern rights was valid. Sectional defiance peaked in early 1859, and with it came aspiring politicians willing to exploit such sentiments for political gain. Samuel Rice was one. Whig, southern-rights Democrat, and then Know-Nothing he announced his availability for the first district congressional seat. Rice maintained the union stood on the verge of <u>immediate dissolution</u>. He denounced both the Democratic Party, for bargaining away slaveholders' security, and Buchanan as the unwitting tool of the "free-soilers."[151]

William F. Samford also moved toward the extreme position. He had

planned to run for Congress from the third district, but changed his mind and instead announced his candidacy for Governor. Running as a "Democratic opposition Southern Rights Patriot," he inaugurated his campaign by taking over the editorship of the Auburn Signal and coupled his name for Governor of Alabama with that of Governor Henry Wise of Virginia for the presidency in 1860.[152] In concert with other eastern Black Belt anti-Administration Democrats of the Yancey-Samford clique, Samford charged that Governor A. B. Moore had neglected Southern interests when he failed to call a state convention after Congress refused to admit Kansas under Lecompton.[153]

Governor Moore defended himself against Samford's allegation that he was "soft on southernism" by asserting that Southerners should do everything possible to secure their rights in the Union, and should not submit to any more compromises. The fate of the South and the Union would probably depend on the next presidential election, he believed, and it would probably be between a "Black Republican" and a Democrat. The Democrats, Moore continued, would not nominate anyone not sound on Southern Rights, and Southerners must support the candidate in order to prevent the election of a Republican. He believed that a divided Democratic party in 1860 would be a calamity nationally. Moore triumphed by almost an 18,000 majority over his eccentric challenger. Samford's 2500 votes came from the ultras of Alabama's eastern Black Belt counties.[154]

Moore's pleas for remaining in the union had brought him victory at the pools, but anti-union feelings were growing nonetheless in the spring of 1859. Congressman J. L. M. Curry was,

> amazed to find the growth of the disunion sentiment among our people. Many in south Alabama absolutely desire such an event, many would not resist it, while nearly all seem to regard it but a question of time. [Stephen] Douglas's disaffection has demoralized us and we cannot persuade the South to confide in any Northern Democrat.

Stephen Douglas had, in the minds of many Alabamians, tied the national Democratic party to Squatter Sovereignty. The identification of Squatter Sovereignty, embodied by Stephen Douglas, with the national Democratic party, caused the Mobile Mercury to advocate a "Gulf confederacy immediately."[155]

Administration Democrats had to beat back challenges from Southern ultras as well as maintain their "Southron" credentials. In the first Mobile district Representative James A. Stallworth confronted Mobile fire-eater F. B. Shepard,[156] who labeled himself a "secession Democrat and a denouncer of national Democracy." The Mobile Register, now under the editorship and ownership of John Forsyth the former minister to Mexico was behind Stallworth's attempt to retain his Congressional post. Forsyth believed that only through a strengthened Democratic party could the South be assured of its rights. He led a district convention of regular Democrats which selected Stallworth and which passed resolutions sustaining the Buchanan Administration.[157] F. B. Shepard's support came from firebrands led by George W. Gayle, John T. Morgan, and erstwhile Democratic-unionist Judge George Stallworth--all part of a revived clique of Dallas County ultras. This clique was characterized by the Clarke County Democrat as follows: "Two or three years ago the Union with some of them was the greatest good....Now their greatest desire is to dissolve the Union....They are actually uproarious and defiant and will do anything

shortly unless paid (with elected office) to hold."[158]

F. B. Shepard attacked Stallworth for his vote on the conference (English) compromise bill and promised not to "vote for any man North of the Mason-Dixon line in 1860." James Stallworth, in turn, accused the Shepard/Gayle combination of being revolutionaries by insisting on secession, and he won by 3,094 votes.[159]

But moderates did not always carry the day. With James Dowdell out of the second district Congressional race, other Democratic leaders began maneuvering to gain the nomination. The former Whig-unionist Henry Hilliard, made his bid at a Democratic Montgomery caucus. Though he had the backing of J. J. Seibels and some other Montgomery Regency conservatives, Hilliard failed, which was a defeat for Montgomery's old party regulars. Another district caucus was announced. It would convene in Auburn, in Macon County, away from Montgomery control. Montgomery Regency party worker W. H. Northington wrote John Sanford that "Hilliard may receive the nomination at Auburn. I concluded I would test the feeling of the democracy here abouts. I found the opposition in our ranks against him intense...some saying they will not vote at all if he is the candidate. Others say they will vote for his opponent [Thomas Judge, Southern Rights Whig-American candidate]." Should Hilliard receive the nomination Northington warned, "I am fearful that old Autauga [a third district County] will be lost to the democracy in this canvass. I think therefore it will be the part of wisdom as well as prudence to use all honorable means to defeat him in the caucus...for the good of the party."[160] Many Montgomery region Democrats opposed Hilliard--and he did not win at Auburn either. Democrats there selected attorney David Clopton a

Macon County resident who owned seventeen slaves and who was known for his strident Southern Rights sentiments. The Auburn caucus, however, also adopted resolutions supporting Buchanan and cautioned:

> That the only general party organization which professes to respect the rights of the South in negro [sic] property is the Democratic party; that the overthrow of that time honored party will ensure the triumph of Black Republicans under whose rule it is impossible for the Southern people to live without moral degradation and imminent peril to social order; and that therefore, we believe it is the imperative duty of every patriot to labor zealously for the success of Democratic nominees, and the carrying out of Democratic principles in the administration of the Federal Government.[161]

Consequently, Seibels and other Party conservatives may not have been able to nominate Hilliard, but the Auburn resolutions reflected their control. Party regulars still exerted great power within the third district Democracy.

David Clopton confronted the ultra, Thomas J. Judge, who was running for a second time for the Montgomery district congressional post. Judge, a former Whig-unionist, in the early fifties, now told east-central voters that Alabama's Democrats could not be relied upon to "take the state out of the Confederacy if a Black Republican was elected in 1860." Clopton, conversely, insisted "that only the Democracy affords Southern institutions the hope of protection and deserved support of all Alabamians." But he conceded, "if a Black Republican were elevated to the Presidency then Alabama should consider disruption." Little difference, therefore, existed between the candidates on steps to be taken in event of a Republican victory in 1860.[162]

In the third district contest the tactics of Yancey's friends

were significant. They tried to pressure David Clopton into an endorsement of Yancey for Benjamin Fitzpatrick's senatorial seat. J. J. Hooper, in his columns in the Montgomery Mail, demanded that Clopton take a definite stand with Yancey or Fitzpatrick. Moreover, two Democrats in the district opposed each other for the state senate and their differences rested upon the forthcoming senatorial clash between Yancey and Fitzpatrick. The Montgomery Confederation, a Fitzpatrick journal, found the pro-Yancey candidate for Assemblyman guilty of factionalism and wondered if Yancey would vote for Clopton, the district's Democratic nominee.[163]

Blocs of radical Whig-Americans and anti-Montgomery Regency Democrats in Montgomery, Lowndes, and Dallas Counties running for the legislature announced their support for Yancey in mid-July. Thereupon, Yancey wrote a public letter in support of Thomas Judge the Whig-American ultra Southern Rights candidate. This action, according to J. J. Seibels, was another example of Yancey's traitorous activities, dating back to 1846, "He [Yancey] will use any and all factions--even the Know-Nothings to defeat the Democracy and break down its organization: All for his own ambition."[164]

During the summer, Yancey accepted an invitation from Robert Barnwell Rhett to speak at Columbia, South Carolina and present a program which all southern-rights men could agree upon at the forthcoming national Democratic convention scheduled for Charleston, South Carolina. Yancey recommended that if the convention failed to uphold the slaveholders' rights in the territories, southern-rights delegates should withdraw and organize a new convention that would select southern candidates. If

the Republicans won at the polls the southern bloc was to secede before the inauguration. Both Yancey and Rhett--who also spoke--carefully avoided the question of separate state secession. Since 1850 secessionists had debated this issue of a single state going its own way. It was a potentially dangerous tactic, since there was no guarantee that the rest of the south would follow. The alternative was co-operative action by all southern states meeting together in convention. Southern legislatures, Yancey suggested, should instruct their governors to call state conventions in event of a Republican victory.[165] Yancey's strategy was now twofold: (1) to gain control of the Alabama state Democratic organization by forcing a showdown with Party chief Benjamin Fitzpatrick over the latter's senate seat and (2) to destroy any vestiges of southern-loyalty for the national Democratic Party by making impossible demands upon northern and western Democrats convened at Charleston; namely, constitutional guarantees for slavery in the territories. Yancey hoped that if Charleston delegates failed to comply, then all southerners would bolt the convention and form a southern-rights Democratic presidential ticket. A Southern candidate might garner enough votes to prevent a majority for any candidate thus throwing the election into Congress where southern nationalists would bargain their votes for a territorial slave code.

* * *

Secession was now the foremost issue in the congressional campaigns. Incumbent Eli Shorter of the second Eufaula district, home of the most radical ultras in Alabama had been much criticized for his vote in favor

of the Kansas conference bill. Barbour County ultras, in particular, tirelessly assailed him and Shorter wisely declined to seek re-election. His place was taken by James L. Pugh, a former Southern-rights Whig, then Democratic Party regular. Pugh campaigned as a regular: the national party was the only hope of southerners. His position split Eufaula Regency ultras, some of whom endorsed Pugh's opponent J. E. Sappington a union Democrat in the early fifties who now ran as southern-rights Democrat, who urged a federal law outlawing all anti-slavery agitation. The Democratic Party, he argued, was no longer a bulwark upon which southerners could depend. His campaign used the masthead epitith of the Eufaula clique's organ: The Spirit of the South, "Southern Rights in the Union or Independence out of it." With a nod toward William F. Samford, Sappington proclaimed "I protest, like Samford, against any national party affiliation." When the ballots were counted, James Pugh had 500 votes, and won the office he had sought since 1849.[166]

Southern rights dominated elsewhere. Sydenham Moore in the fourth district and J. L. M. Curry in the seventh, both of whom voted for the Kansas Conference bill, told the voters that that was the last compromise they would make with "free soilism," and faced only slight competition, and were easily re-elected to Congress. North Alabama's two persistent Union Democrats, George Smith Houston and W. R. W. Cobb were returned to Washington, thereby going against the trend. Both confronted ultras at the polls, but were confirmed by secure pluralities in districts that had long histories of party regularity and Unionism.[167]

According to Lewy Dorman, the results of the 1859 election indicate that Alabamians accepted the national Democratic party as the defender

of Southern rights and rejected the ultraism of the Yancey and Samford adherents. This evaluation is doubtful. A further assessment is in order. The Congressmen elected from south-central Alabama were all relatively young men; all under forty-five. Except for Pugh, they were all small slave-owners as well, and none were planters. Thus their stake in Southern Rights were political rather than economic. They were all eager to "get ahead" politically and they utilized politics as their means of mobility. Moore, Curry and Pugh have already been discussed. Ambition for office--elective or appointive--they had tied their fortunes to the South's "Hennenvolk" Democratic ethos--one white man is the equal of every other white man--regardless of status.[168] Pro-slavery politics was then, fundamental to their future advancement. South Alabama Congressmen, regardless of their committment to the Party, were potential fire-eaters in 1859: they could afford to endorse the moderate National Democratic party at this time, since John Brown's raid and Lincoln's election were yet to come and since a pro-Yancey position was not to their political advantage.

Suggestive of the search for status in politics was the Mobile organization "Young Man's Southern Rights Democratic Association," a club committed to the preservation of slavery. It claimed a membership in the first Mobile district of "260 young men--mostly lawyers," which inspired a critic to observe "that the continued growth of lawyerism in Alabama had produced a class of demagogues always on the scent for office."[169]

In 1859, in south-central Alabama, we have seen, Party regulars were being pressured by political outsiders who talked freely of secession. Governor Moore was attacked by firebrand William F. Samford; David

Clopton had to modify his statements of national party loyalty under Thomas Judge's disunionist assault. F. B. Shepard and F. S. Sappington campaigned as ultras and forced their rivals, who were Party regulars, to concede that secession could become a reality if a Republican were elected in 1860. Meanwhile George W. Gayle founded a rabid secessionist journal--The Slaveholder, which attacked Democrats who remained loyal to the national Party. In sum, these were outsiders and malcontents. They were frustrated in their desire for power and prestigue by, in part, the conservative leadership of Benjamin Fitzpatrict and the Montgomery Regency which controlled much of the federal patronage and spoils coming into Alabama.

In the fall of 1859 William L. Yancey and his south-Alabama colleagues--William F. Samford, F. B. Shepard, J. E. Sappington, George W. Gayle along with Barbour County ultras led by State Senator E. C. Bullock, continued their assault on Fitzpatric and the Montgomery Regency which he controlled. Their object was to push Fitzpatrick out of the United States Senate, replacing him with Yancey. Toward this end they were aided by the Montgomery Advertiser which, reversing its stand, again came out for Yancey as Senator. The Eufaula clique's Spirit of the South and J. J. Hooper's Montgomery Mail also provided editorial support. Fitzpatrick was not a loyal "Southron," these newspapers insisted. He coveted the vice-presidency and would even serve with "the enemy of the South, Stephen A. Douglas."[170] Fitzpatrick's high standing among national Democrats and his support for Douglas assisted the ultras who had gathered around Yancey. It furnished them with ammunition in their offensive against the Montgomery Regency and its Party chieftan. Fitzpatrick, under

pressure, wrote C. C. Clay, Jr., that "I am as much opposed to Squatter Sovereignty [the Douglas doctrine] as you or anybody else." He believed that former Governor John Winston would be his most serious competition for the Senate, obviously minimizing Yancey and his faction. In a newspaper interview Fitzpatrick denied that he favored Douglas as the Democratic nominee, but said he would vote for the Convention choice. He emphasized further his refusal to sanction any platform that did not secure "our rights and equal justice to all sections of the Union."[171]

In 1859, then, Alabama Democrats were on the verge of one of their classic "blood letting" feuds--reminiscent of the earlier struggles between Dixon Hall Lewis and his south Alabama "Chivalry" and William R. King and his north Alabama "Hunkers." The hostility between Yancey and Fitzpatrick soon pulled their sons into conflict. The Tuskegee Republican reported that the young men had gone to South Caroline to fight a duel over charges which had been printed regarding the Senatorial election.[172]

Yancey's grab for power was opposed not only by Fitzpatrick and Seibels. John Forsyth, editor of the Mobile Register and a newly elected representative to the Alabama House, was an outspoken Douglas Democrat. He delivered no less than fifteen speeches against Yancey's attempt to gain the Senatorial candidacy. Calling it a "disorganizing plot," he rhetorically asked: "what Democrat wishes to play into the hands of Yancey who is trying to bring ruin...on the organization for his own ambition?"[173]

In early December 1859 Alabama lawmakers debated a resolution to hold the senatorial election. State Senator E. C. Bullock, Yancey stalwart and Eufaula clique manager, described what would be the abortive

effort to topple Benjamin Fitzpatrick. "I do not think there is much probability that any further effort will be made to bring it [the election] on this winter." Friends of Senator Fitzpatrick resignedly told Bullock they too would not renew their attempt. Yancey, desparate to force a decision, was checked by new developments which frustrated beyond question his election attempt. Montgomery fire-eater M. J. Safford was the immediate cause of this frustration. The Montgomery Regency had used its patronage power to procure a political job for Safford. Returning the favor, he came out for Fitzpatrick. Safford "was put down on our list as certain," stated E. C. Bullock, "and the fact that two members from Dale County could not be induced to go for Y. One of them came out at one time for Yancey, but had not the backbone enough to resist the local [Montgomery Regency] pressure."[174] No Senatorial election, therefore, took place. Both factions knew they did not have the necessary majority for a victory.

Yancey's bid, then, was stalled, but the overriding significance of the aborted senatorial contest was the failure of the Montgomery Regency to re-elect Fitzpatrick. The Regency simply did not have enough legislative votes to return him to Washington. A special session of the legislature would have to be held before March 1861, when Fitzpatrick's term expired, in order to determine his fate; none was convened, a rebuff that can be attributed to the heightened opposition in south Alabama to national Democratic Party loyalists, which in effect meant to the Montgomery faction, increasing antagonism toward this clique was triggered by John Brown's raid. Harper's Ferry was ascribed not only to Abolitionists and "Black Republicans," but also to northern Democrats

who were not sufficiently "southernized." Democratic Party loyalists throughout the South came under attack. Consequently, the Fitzpatrick-Seibels faction was on the defensive.

The failure to have a "showdown" did not deter Yancey and his managers in their quest to take over the State Democratic organization. The events of 1860, as the subsequent chapter will show, would offer new opportunities to these Black Belt agitators.

One view, that of Charles Denman, of Yancey's political behavior in 1858 had it that he realized the Democratic Party under Northern control would not protect Southern Rights. His actions, according to this interpretation, were determined by consistent adherence to principle as opposed to politics.[175] But we have also shown that his political course can be attributed to personal ambition and pique as well. Yancey's disenchantment with the national Party, after stumping and serving as Democratic elector in 1856 and after sustaining Buchanan's Kansas policy, was caused by his failure to obtain a federal cabinet post and, later, a Senate seat. These frustrations, coupled with insults from old antagonists like J. J. Seibels and Henry Hilliard, heightened his alienation. Furthermore, Yancey's hostility toward the Fitzpatrick-Seibels-dominated Democratic leadership in Alabama was intensified when this bloc welcomed Hilliard. Frustrated and bitter toward those who he felt had prevented his deserved elevation to the Senate, Yancey co-operated with Ruffin and Rhett in the formation of "Leagues of United Southerners." And then he tried to smash the State's Democratic party organization and its loyalty to the national Party. In point of fact, Southern Rights agitation became the means by which Yancey sought the fulfillment of his political

aspirations--which was to lead the Alabama Democracy.

South Carolina Governor James Hammond, commenting upon such ambitions, enjoined, "We must be guarded and warned of the impracticable, radical and provincial partisanship of such schemers and ambitious demagogues as...Yancey and Co. or the country will drift into either ruin or disgrace or both."[176] But Governor Hammond described only half of the equation: Yancey's actions can best be characterized by dedication to Southern principle as well as by self-aggrandizement.

CHAPTER VI

NEGROPHOBIA AND POLITICS: ALABAMA SECEDES

The sectional trumoil that inspired Alabama's decision to secede is clear enough. The existence of slavery, the rise of abolitionism in the north, agrarianism versus industrialism, and differences in constitutional interpretation all contributed by 1860 to an explosive situation in which war between the sections might break out at any moment. What this explanation lacks, however, is an appreciation of the multitude of local factors which animated individual slave states to disunion.

In Alabama, as we have seen, many internal forces were at work which contributed to secession. For example, intrastate sectionalism between north and south Alabama dominated the State's ante-bellum political history. Upstate, where the soil was not conducive to cotton cultivation, slavery never took hold. Therefore, the region's yeomen farmers supported the national Democratic Party and the union. South Alabama--especially its Black Belt--contained the richest cotton lands and highest slave concentration in the State. And here southern nationalism predominated. Both sections, we have seen, fought to control the governorship and United States Senate seats.

In addition to the chronic factionalism based on the State's north-south division, there was also severe fragmentation among Democrats in central and south Alabama. Those in central Alabama were controlled by the Montgomery Regency which dispensed the State's federal patronage. By the late eighteen forties the Montgomery clique was factionalized between extreme southern-rights advocates led by Dixon Hall Lewis, and

national Party regulars under Senator William Refus King. These two sections of the Alabama Democracy bitterly contested Senate seats and federal patronage.

After the death of Lewis and King, conservative Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick managed the Montgomery organization. However, the searing territorial disputes of the late forties and early fifties produced new Black Belt ultra blocs--the Eufaula Regency and the Dallas County "hot-spurs"--which challenged the moderate leadership of the Montgomery Regency.

The Whig Party throughout Alabama's cotton lands was also fragmented. Whig-Unionists, composed of conservative Whig planters, held sway in many west-central counties and in the Mobile district. Until their end in 1853 these Whigs provided the major structure for unionist sentiment in south-central Alabama. But, there was also a southern-rights Whig element in east-central Alabama which challenged the Whig planters of the Black Belt.

By 1858 the Whig-American party structure disappeared. Vast numbers of ex-Whigs and former Democrats-turned-Know-Nothings entered the Democratic Party. What all these factions shared in common was a desire for office. This political migration, however, created the problem of too many candidates for a limited number of offices, which in turn increased Democratic factionalism. In the eighteen fifties a new generation of lawyer-politicians emerged. They consisted of men of modest economic circumstances--small to moderate slaveowners--whose economic mobility was blocked because quality cotton lands had become monopolized by the major planters and the lands available were selling at astronomical prices. Thus, politics became their vehicle for social mobility. From

the Wilmot Proviso through the Kansas disputes, these lawyer-politicians used the southern-rights issue for their own ends. Most were political outsiders, men on the make. They sought power by attacking the national Democratic regulars who controlled the Party machinery. Moreover, they habitually shifted from extreme to moderate southernism. They also changed party allegiance with regularity. At times they tried to manipulate public opinion; on other occasions they followed the general consensus. By the mid-eighteen fifties most south Alabama Democrats considered themselves southern-rights men. In fact they ran against each other for state and national office, questioning their rival's dedication to the "southern way of life."

Compounding Democratic difficulties was William L. Yancey of Montgomery. Although returning to the national Democratic fold in 1856, he had declared war against Party leadership after he failed to acquire a post in President Buchanan's cabinet. He turned against the Montgomery Regency when they welcomed two of his bitterest enemies--ex-Whig-Unionist Henry Hilliard and editor J. J. Seibels.

The radical southern rights platform again became Yancey's modus operandi in his assault on Democratic Party loyalists. In 1858 he collaborated with Edmund Ruffin in organizing the League of United Southerners "to fire the South to Secession." Although Yancey had co-operated with Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina in recommending disunionism, he soon backed off from advocacy of secession. His disunionist views, it seems, were more a reaction to frustrated ambition than any systematic plot to dismantle the Nation. Nevertheless, opportunist that he was, Yancey persisted in agitating the Southern-rights issue by demanding a

federal slave code for the territories. On this issue he was joined by ex-Whig-Americans from east-central Alabama who, like himself, had never been part of any political inner circle. Divisive sectional sentiments popular with Black Belt and south Alabama voters could conceivably enhance their own careers.

In 1859 William L. Yancey ran for Benjamin Fitzpatrick's Senate seat. Clearly, this was an attempt to dislodge the Montgomery Regency which had been loyal to the national Democratic Party. Outstanding among Yancey stalwarts was the Eufaula Regency, under the tutelege of state Senator E. C. Bullock and the erratic planter-editor William F. Samford. Also supporting Yancey were erstwhile Whig-American nullifying editors like J. J. Hooper of the Montgomery Mail. Hooper, an extreme Southern chauvinist, was one of the State's most consistent and outspoken advocates of secession.

William L. Yancey's 1859 attempt to obtain a Senatorial post and to topple the Montgomery Regency failed, in part, because some southern-rights legislators pledged to him changed their votes with the promise of political jobs from the Montgomery Regency.

It was the lack of a specific issue that really blocked anti-Party cliques from taking over the Alabama Democracy in 1859. An issue was needed that could be dramatized and politicized as an immediate threat to the stability of Alabama's slave owning counties. Such an issue would demonstrate that a Democratic Party controlled by northerners was not capable of protecting Southern institutions.

Almost from the moment that black bondsmen were introduced into Alabama there was a pervasive fear of slave uprisings. Any act of re-

sistance on the slaves' part was met with immediate retribution. At times whites panicked as rumors of slave rebellions spread through Black Belt communities. Alabama passed a host of slave codes that attempted to govern both slave and free black behavior. Nat Turner's rebellion in Virginia traumatized white Alabamians, causing them to tighten their already stringent slave ordinances.

With the rise of immediatists in the ranks of Northern abolitionists, white Alabama confronted a new sentiment which called for something other than colonization or gradual emancipation. From the eighteen thirties through the eighteen fifties Alabama southern-rights agitators played on the racial fears of the State's white population by maintaining that the northern wing of both the Democratic and Whig had become abolitionized.

On the eve of the national debate over the Wilmot Proviso, a movement to halt the domestic slave trade began in central Alabama. This campaign was an indication of white apprehension about the uncontrolled growth of the black population. While Alabamians fretted over the merits of the 1850 Compromise, an African Colonization society was organized to rid the State of its freedmen.

The Republican Party emerged in 1854. It drew together many diverse elements, all of them being cemented by a common opposition to the further extension of slavery in the territories. Taking a contrary view, rising Alabama politicians like Congressmen C. C. Clay, Jr., J. L. M. Curry, and Sydenham Moore were thereby able to gain office. They insisted upon the south's determination to acquire more slave territory for slavery and pictured the Republican Party as central to a vast northern conspiracy dedicated to abolitionism and to the destruction of

southern society.

Alabama's political opportunists who capitalized on the interrelated issues of southern rights and the Republican threat to their section appealed to a very susceptible electorate. Southerners had lived with slave insurrection anxieties for generations. Now they feared that abolitionists would either subject the south to a bloodbath by forcing the violent overthrow of slavery or would precipitate a race war by denying slavery room to expand. In spite of these fears, however, southern-rights agitators still lacked a single dramatic event that would point up the danger of southern Democrats compromising with the northern Democratic political establishment. On the night of October 16, 1859, they had that event. John Brown, on that date, led a determined band of black and white abolitionists in an attack upon Harpers Ferry, Virginia. Their purpose was to incite rebellion among Virginia slaves which then hopefully would catalyze slave upheavals throughout the cotton states. When news of Brown's abortive raid reached south Alabama, its white population reacted hysterically. Alabama's southern-rights factions, to repeat, now had their long-desired incident.

No issue galvanized white fears or engendered such blind hatred for the north as did John Brown's aborted insurrection attempt. Terrible visions of Alabama slaves murdering and plundering their masters became standard fare in the State's Black Belt press. Newspapers recalled the 1792 Santo Domingo slave revolt. Editors reported that John Henry Kagi, one of Brown's confederates, had marked out a chain of Alabama Black Belt counties where he had traveled and where bondsmen were expected to rise. Allegedly, Russell, Macon, Lowndes, Autauga, Dallas, Wilcox,

and Monroe counties were marked on his map.[1] One lesson drawn from John Brown's raid was that newcomers were suspect. Community hostility was directed against all outsiders, especially those who deviated in any way from southern custom.

"Places on Brown's map designated the points of insurrection," revealed the Clarke County Democrat. C. E. Haynes editor of the Clarke Democrat claimed that abolition emissaries had been at work. "If the citizens living about the points designated on Brown's map have noticed any suspicious character and would make them known...much light might be thrown on this dark nefarious plot."[2] No central Alabama journal was as obsessed with detailing suspected incendiary activity as the Montgomery Mail.

Fire-eating editor J. J. Hooper, who drew no distinction between Republicans and abolitionists, recommended that all those living in or near the areas specified on Kagi's map should interrogate all slaves to determine "what communications had been held with slaves by Republican-free soil emissaries." Those who acted suspicious or those who professed "unsouthern" opinions were arrested and forced to leave Alabama. Hooper chided Mobile officials for being too lenient with suspected incendaries. "They should have been whipped, ducked, tarred, feathered, ridden upon a rail and then hanged to a tree."[3]

Such pronouncements contributed to the crisis mood in central Alabama. For instance, Loachapoka, in Tallapoosa County, concerned citizens gathered in order to adopt measures for the "protection of our citizens and property against the evil and mischievous designs of Republican abolitionists and other characters dangerous to the interests of our

community." They passed a resolution recommending that R. W. Inman, a hardware dealer from New York and "a suspicious character," be returned to the north. Macon County organized a vigilance committee "to guard against strolling Osawatamies [John Brown type incendiaries] and preserve a strict police in the neighboring towns and their vicinity." Hooper again warned: "never before is it so necessary for us to sleep with one eye out at the window. Patrol! Patrol!! Patrol!!!" Autauga County residents created a vigilence committee to keep a watchful eye over all transients. The Southern Era confidently asserted that "the anti-slavery movement ramifies the entire south," and that "there are agents and emissaries of the Black Republican Party scattered throughout Alabama."[4]

What made Alabama newspapers so sure that abolitionists Republicans were traversing Alabama was the northern response to John Brown's raid. The activities of the "Secret six," highly respected New England Brahmans who financed Brown's raid, were widely reported. Moreover, the Alabama press quoted Joshua Giddings of Ohio, who said that he looked forward to the day "when the torch of incendiary agents shall light up the towns and cities of the South and blot out the last vestiges of slavery." Northerners who condemned Brown's execution encouraged the Forence Gazette to proclaim, "The Brown sympathizers, the north and the Republican Party are full of treason and blasphemy! John Brown the murderer and assassin is held up as a saint, an apostle of liberty."[5]

George W. Gayle, editor of the Cahaba Slaveholder, announced that it would be fatal to place any hope in the conservatism of any northern class. "On our own arms must we rely to preserve slavery secure and profitable." Upstate firebrand David Hubbard claimed that the entire north

had been abolitionized. Montgomery district congressman David Clopton claimed the "Black Republican Party is steadily advancing to power and in the event of success, the Union cannot be maintained." Representative Sydenham Moore of the Tuscaloosa district knew that the north had become subverted by anti-slavery radicals and that they had silenced conservatives in this section. He deplored a sectional fanatical party like the Republicans who could gain power by deluding and manipulating the voters.[6]

John Brown's raid, then, was exploited by Alabama's southern-rights factionalists. Northern Democrats as well as Republicans could be no longer trusted unless they were firmly under southern control. "Union demonstrations by our Northern brethren are grand humbugs," observed Congressman J. L. M. Curry. Union meetings in the north are "participated in by many men who will turn around tomorrow and vote for Republicans."[7]

Through December 1859 Alabama's press fueled the panic of whites living in the slave-dense Black Belt. An "unsound traveler" was caught bearing a letter from "old Ossawatamie," and there were demands that he be lynched. Anyone connected in any manner with plots to burn and murder, the Eutaw Whig suggested, should be sent to "where they would be burried." A suspect was arrested in Autauga County for "having in his possession several letters from some of Brown's men in the North...he was bound over in the sum of $10,000." Barbour County officials charged a new resident, Josiah Bass, with making abolition statements and tarred and feathered him and "rode him out on a rail." A peddler, one Albertson, was incarcerated in Cahaba, Dallas County for being "an abolition emissary." A crowd gathered outside the jail, and a lynching was barely averted.

In Tuskegee, Macon County, a stable was burned (and eighteen horses were lost), allegedly the work of an "incendiary." Alabamians were told to be on the lookout for Frederick Garstacke's Wild Sports in the West, "a viler, more abominable, lying, abolition publication was never printed," declared the Southern Advocate, "surely our booksellers can find some way to prevent such books from being foisted on them...they can let it be understood that they will destroy and not pay for them."[8]

Few Alabama newspapers raised questions about the reliability of these incendiary stories. To be sure, John Forsyth, editor of the Mobile Register and part of the conservative Democratic inner circle, protested against "such dangerous teachings--behind every bush a slave rebellion leader."[9] But Forsyth's call for reason was disregarded.

Meanwhile, goaded by the terrifying thought of losing racial control, Alabama's legislature turned its attention to strengthening domination over the slaves. The General Assembly heard demands to halt the emancipation of bondsmen by owners, since White Alabamians had always viewed free blacks as a potential "spark" for slave rebellion. John Brown's raid brought renewed pressure to completely remove the freedman from Alabama. The legislature passed restrictions on free-blacks. One measure declared void all wills which emancipated slaves, either directly or indirectly; prohibited the authorization of the removal of slaves, directly or indirectly, from the State; for the purpose of freeing them. Another act provided that any freedman might voluntarily select a master and return to the status of slave. State Senator E. C. Bullock also presented a petition from the Marengo County grand jury asking that a bill be passed that would prohibit all commercial activities between

blacks and whites.[10]

The Committee on the Judiciary in the lower House was instructed to inquire into the expediency of changing the law of evidence in order "to meet the insidious designs of the Abolitionists." Any white man suspected of "encouraging or promoting sedition among our negroes, shall be liable to conviction upon, negro evidence, provided that such evidence does not contradict the testimony of white persons the Jury deems credible."[11]

A bill introduced in the Senate, and later passed, imposed a tax on "book peddlers." The West Alabamian commented that "Yankee book and periodical agents inflict injuries on Southern institutions. Tens of thousands of books, pamphlets and papers are annually printed and distributed to empoison the Southern mind." Its editor called for the passage of a book-salesman tax which could put the focus on abolitionist literature and the traveling sellers who "often are tampers of slaves and the insidious mouth vendors of northern fanaticism." The lawmakers in the course of their deliberations on this "salesman act," also denounced Hinton Rowen Helper's The Impending Crisis and called upon constituents to suppress the anti-slavery tract.[12]

The lower House passed a resolution eighty-seven to one, which condemned northerners when, "their leaders have been preaching a crusade against our institutions, which in their estimations justifies and sanctifies murder, arson and rebellion; a state of feeling which wholly unfits them for political brotherhood." Stephen A. Douglas was also denounced as an enemy of the south, and Douglas' squatter sovereignty doctrines were pronounced subversive of the rights and property of

southerners. Editor and state representative John Forsyth, a Douglas partisan, responded by noting that northern Democrats were of a conservative temper and were friends of the south.[13] The vast majority of Alabama's Democratic inner circle, being pro-Douglas, would support him for the presidency.

The Black Belt press did its part in influencing legislative opinion. It called upon the lawmakers to prepare for the "irrepressible conflict." For example, the Gainsville Independent in slave-dense Sumter County insisted "the Militia system of our state must be revised and improved," and asked furthermore that the State's slave patrol system be improved. It further urged the legislature to establish a regular police patrol unit which would make "a servile insurrection impossible."[14] Reacting to white apprehensions, the General Assembly provided for the organization of volunteer corps in each county, not to exceed 8,000 men. In order to equip these forces, it budgeted $200,000, a sum larger than that appropriated by any other slave state, after John Brown's raid, for equipping the militia. It would raise this sum by levying a surtax of 5 percent on all State taxes and a poll tax of 25 cents on each white man between 18 and 45. It also provided for the State-supported education of two young men from each Alabama County in the privately-owned military academies at LaGrange and Glenville. The cadets would be under obligation to return to their respective counties and drill the militia. A charter was also granted to the Southern Fire Arms Company to manufacture fire-arms within the State.[15]

Significantly, those legislators who favored passage of the militia measures were part of Alabama's anti-Montgomery Regency forces.

Some Montgomery Regency men, unmoved by this panicked anti-abolitionist sentiment, saw other implications in the military measures. State senator William Garrett wrote to fellow conservative Lewis Parsons that the militia ordinance was designed "to aid the Southern movement" in south Alabama. Garrett demanded "at the outset a clear and official explanation of the amounts expended and contracted," and he urged that these sums "be brought before the people." Don't let these "schemers keep it a secret." The people ought to know the cost of every aspect of this militia program, including "commissions to communities to purchase muskets." Under the "specious cry of Southern Rights they have been fattening upon the people of Alabama."[16] William Garrett's advice went unheeded: Alabama taxpayers were never informed about the costs of their new military program.

Another indication of public anxiety was the passage of a legislative resolution directing the Governor, in event of a Republican victory in November, 1860 to call a convention to determine state action. The resolution passed seventy-five to two in the lower House and unanimously in the Senate.[17] Upstate representatives voted for the measure because they were no doubt intimidated by the mood of belligerance, particularly in the state capital, that followed Brown's raid.

Given these sweeping and extreme actions by the lawmakers some qualification is in order; otherwise the climate of opinion governing Alabama might be misread. Not unexpectedly secession sentiment was high in central and south Alabama, regions of massive slave concentration and a traditional hotbed of southern chauvinism. These were the areas rife with daily insurrectionary scares. But in north Alabama, where

slavery was not a dominant feature, there was a general tendency towards moderation. According to Joseph Hodgson, many upcountrymen "were ready to deny that occasion existed for extreme action, and in the event of the meeting of a convention, would be ready to resort to any delay by which the passions of the hour could be assuaged and the dreaded spectre of disunion be exorcised."[18]

It is difficult to determine the motives of many southern rights advocates at this stage. Some like George W. Gayle were ideologues who would brook no compromise over slave protection. Others like William L. Yancey functioned on two levels--a desire to maintain southernism and an interest in using the issue to gain power. Then there were the rank opportunists that William Garrett alludes to. Outstanding among them was Judge Samuel Rice who served in every party in pre-Civil War Alabama and finally became a Republican in 1870. However they all shared one objective--the dismantling of the conservative Montgomery Regency.

Alabama's warring Democrats were scheduled to meet in Montgomery in early January 1860 to select delegates to the national Democratic convention scheduled for Charleston, South Carolina. On the eve of the State's caucus the anti-Montgomery Regency cliques were in the ascendent for weeks prior to this caucus. William L. Yancey and the other factions hostile to the national Democratic party had been working to block Alabama's endorsement of Douglas at Charleston. They were insisting that all presidential aspirants among the national Democrats would have to endorse a resolution calling for a federal slave code for the territories.

But Douglas, a leading contender for the nomination, had since 1854 upheld the principle of popular sovereignty (whereby the people of

a territory, either through a territorial legislature or a constitutional convention, could accept or reject slavery). By blocking Douglas, Yancey and his collaborators were also striking a blow at two of his Alabama supporters, Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick and J. J. Seibels of the Montgomery faction. The anti-Douglas movement in Alabama was initiated by William M. Brooks, a Yancey man who chaired the Perry County Democratic meeting which rejected Douglas or any other candidate who did not affirm constitutional protection of slavery. Eighteen other Democratic county meetings were held after Harper's Ferry, and the shock waves it evoked, and all confirmed the Perry County resolution. A few gatherings even adopted resolutions maintaining that "the election of a Black Republican to the Presidency would be sufficient cause for secession."[19]

The most divisive pre-convention caucus was held in Montgomery. William L. Yancey and other Montgomery agitators prepared to dislodge the pro-Douglas Montgomery Regency by having Montgomery Democrats commit themselves to the federal slave code proposition. The conservative Montgomery leadership knew the forcing of the slave-protection issue would further fragment Alabama's Democrats and might result in the senatorial defeat of Benjamin Fitzpatrick at the March 1861 session of the legislature. Such a possibility notwithstanding, Fitzpatrick and the conservatives around him still supported the Democratic Party's 1856 Cincinnati platform--the doctrine of federal nonintervention in the territories. These Party regulars felt that Douglas would campaign on that plank and that he had the best chance of winning nationwide. Furthermore, Alabama's national party regulars were convinced of the impracticality of any Democrat being selected who favored congressional protec-

tion of slavery in the territories--which Benjamin Fitzpatrick even called a baneful abstraction.

There had been two meetings of Montgomery County Democrats to select delegates to the State Convention. The first on November 12, 1859. The November 12 gathering at the height of the post-Harper's Ferry panic found the anti-Montgomery Regency Democrats in control. They elected Samuel Arrington as chairman and James T. Holtzclaw, a Yancey law apprentice, and George W. Whitman as acting secretaries. The caucus proceeded to the matter of federal protection of slavery in the territories. It approved resolutions that would commit Alabama's delegation to Charleston to this position. The caucus then debated the logic of a Douglas endorsement. Yanceymen noted Douglas' position that the people of a territory could exclude slavery prior to the formation of a state constitution, finding it evidence that he was an unsound candidate. Almost redundantly, the caucus advised southerners to demand federal protection.[20]

William L. Yancey, to no one's surprise, was named to lead the Montgomery County delegation to the state caucus. His faction's strategy at this caucus was evident. They would topple the Montgomery Regency by a direct assault on Douglas, thereby forcing a split among state Democrats. They would themselves then replace the discredited pro-Douglas bloc as the party "wirepullers" in Alabama, and Yancey would become United States Senator and State party chieftain.

The national party regulars stormed out of the county caucus, and J. J. Seibels called for a second caucus of Montgomery Democrats to meet in December and select a contesting slate of delegates to the state convention. He asked that

those not in agreement with the pro-Douglas conservatives abstain from attending.[21]

But Yancey and Thomas L. Arrington among other anti-Douglas Democrats did attend the Montgomery caucus. When a committee was appointed to draft resolutions and appoint delegates to the state convention, Arrington condemned the motion, arguing that delegates had already been appointed by the earlier Montgomery meeting. Yancey holding the floor, refused to recognize pro-Douglas Regency men and also appropriated the Democratic label for the southern-rights bloc. He accused the national party loyalists of trying to destroy Alabama's Democratic organization.[22] This intra-party struggle recalls the clashes of the late 1840's between the pro-Union faction led by Senator William R. King and the Alabama Calhounites under Senator Dixon Hall Lewis. The issue then as well as in 1860 was not only southern rights but who was going to direct the fortunes of Alabama Democrats.

After the Yancey-led clique left the hall, Party regulars reorganized themselves and appointed their own delegates to the State convention. The delegation was made up of leading Montgomery Regency men: J. J. Seibels, Henry C. Semple, Henry Hilliard, George Goldthwaite, and John D. Phelan. All of them were elderly lawyers, judges, and planters who had been fighting party battles since the 1840's, and who feared a divided national and local Democrat Party. Schism could mean the end of their power in Alabama--as well as the election of a Republican President. They did not want the State's Democrats to demand a platform unacceptable to northern Democrats. The Dred Scott decision, they reasoned, gave constitutional sanction to slaveowners to take their slaves wherever

they wanted, and it could be endorsed by "true Democrats," both north and south, and it could serve as a point of concensus for the party. They hoped that by standing firm they could thwart the opportunists grouped around William L. Yancey.[23]

National Democratic loyalists, however, faced an insurmountable obstacle. Alabamians--especially in slave-populated central and southern regions were, after Harper's Ferry, more than ever opposed to popular sovereignty and to its author, Stephen Douglas. Responsibility for their fears, rested with the "abolitionized North." Alabama Congressman J. L. M. Curry wrote Governor A. B. Moore, who stood close to the southern-rights wing of the Democratic Party, "Our Convention can hardly hesitate upon our right to the Federal protection of our property in the Territories...the people of the South are with us now."[24] After noting the defensive mood of his fellow Mobilians, Democrat Levi Lawler wrote, "I am willing to see one more effort to save the Union; but I should regard the nomination of Judge Douglas, or the election of a Black Republican as fatal to its perpetuity. If the northern Democracy <u>force their man</u> upon the party, the harmony and unity of the party will be broken and defeat certain."[25] Thus, with significant public opinion arrayed against them, Alabama's pro-national Party managers confronted a severe test to their authority as the state convention began on January 11, 1860.

The vast majority of delegates were not the Democrats of the eighteen forties and early fifties. Most were ambitious young men who were just beginning their political careers as southern-rights advocates. Among the most prominent were several youthful lawyers who were sponsored by older Black Belt southern-rights factionalists.[26]

The convention was embroiled in factional conflict from the outset, with leadership of Alabama Democrat's at issue. The southern-rights malcontents demanded federal protection of slavery in the territories and thereby blocked an endorsement of Douglas. Montgomery Regency Democrats, however, were willing to leave the question of popular sovereignty to any future decision of the Supreme Court. Their avowed object was to secure Douglas' nomination and thereby preserving the power of their leader, Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

The first struggle was over the seating of contested delegations from Montgomery County--the Yancey-led faction and those selected by Montgomery Regency's rump caucus. The extremists succeeded in appointing John T. Morgan, Dallas County firebrand, to head a committee of six to pass upon the two contested delegations. Morgan reported in favor of the Yancey bloc and claimed that Montgomery Regency leaders were disrupters who refused to abide by Democratic Party practices. The convention concurred with the Morgan committee, by a vote of 211 to 110, and the Yanceyites were seated.[27] But even before the delegation issue was settled, the southern-rights faction won an important victory which sealed the fate of the national party regulars.

William L. Yancey, William F. Samford, and E. C. Bullock had carefully planned their tactics toward the end of controlling the meeting. Yancey moved for the selection of a temporary chairman early on the first day, and nominated H. D. Smith a southern ultra from Lauderdale County. Trying to out maneuver Yancey, conservative Nicholas Davis placed Unionist J. M. Bulger in nomination. Bedlam broke loose. When the shouting subsided, Leroy Pope Walker nominated another southern-rights man Francis

S. Lyon, who was confirmed by the delegates, thereby placing the anti-Montgomery Regency forces in control. Lyon's acceptance speech was nothing less than a slave-protection code for the territories that would satisfy the south.[28] In sum, on the issues of electing a chairman and the seating of contested delegations, the anti-Fitzpatrick and anti-Douglas forces could claim victories.

The delegates next turned their attention to the platform they would recommend to the national Democratic party at Charleston. Yancey was selected to head the platform committee. His committee instructed Alabama's Charleston delegation to offer as a plank in the national party platform a federal slave code for the territories. If the national Democrats at Charleston did not approve the Alabama resolution, then Alabama's delegation was instructed to withdraw. A second measure offered by Yancey's committee declared opposition to the nomination of any candidate for President who did not abide by the Alabama platform. Of 445 delegates, seventy-one mostly from north Alabama, opposed the withdrawal instructions, but only twelve voted against the one binding a presidential nominee. Leroy Pope Walker was chosen to lead the Alabama delegation at Charleston.[29]

William L. Yancey, ending the convention's deliberations, maintained that every state Democratic faction was represented on the resolutions committee and that the platform was framed as a guide for the national Party.[30] Clearly, this was a disingenuous assessment. Montgomery Regency Douglas supporters had been denied a voice on the resolution committee, and the Yancey bloc of firebrands actually sought a southern-controlled national Democratic party. This objective could

only be achieved by putting a southerner in the White House. If the ultras could help bring it about, then they would control the Alabama Democrats and Yancey would be senator and patronage dispenser in the state. John Brown's raid had given them, political outsiders up to now, the opportunity they long sought--in order to divest Alabama's Democratic inner circle of its authority. Because of the actions of the State convention, the national Democratic Party faced its severest test since the 1848 squatter sovereignty convention.

John Forsyth, in the General Assembly, complained that instructions to Alabama's Charleston delegation were in effect an ultimatum that would split the national party and bring on a Republican victory. Forsyth, J. J. Seibels, and highland Douglasite Joseph Bradley told Douglas that the actions of the Alabama Convention reflected the politicians' will rather than the peoples'.[31]

It is questionable, however, that all southern-rights politicians were of one mind. Some of the moderates among them voted for the resolution to withdraw at Charleston simply as a threat, believing that fear of Democratic schism would force the Douglas men to make concessions to southern demands. If the threat failed, the delegates might disregard its instructions to withdraw. Other Alabama delegates confided that even if the Alabama delegation did bolt at Charleston, this would not break up the Party or the Union: in some fashion or other the Democrats would reunite before the 1860 campaign got under-way.[32] Therefore not all the southern-rights men were determined disrupters. Many looked upon their instructions as just one option among others.

Charleston was buzzing with rumors about the intentions of the

Alabama delegation. Few of the Alabama delegates could be described as absolute disunionists. William L. Yancey, John T. Morgan, and L. P. Walker at best could be designated as conditional unionists. Although they came to the Convention pledged to withdraw if they didn't get a platform endorsing a slave code and a pro-southern president, they still never threatened disunion. Significantly, they were considered disunionists in Alabama where their reputations as "uncompromising Southrons" were at stake. According to Allen Nevins,Yancey and his followers came to Charleston to dissolve everything--the Party, then the Union.[33] However, their strategy was simply to maintain their new mastery of the State party and to secure southern domination among national Democrats. There was no plot to use the convention as a test run for secession.

Yancey, moreover, was as mild as a windless May morning. From first to last, the reputed fire-eater went about Charleston listening intently and with utmost courtesy to every faction. Neither his words nor actions demonstrated the confirmed disunionist. Northwest delegates at Charleston said that he was the father of the "Alabama Platform"--the federal slave code--that would guarantee the dissolution of the Convention. Yancey retorted that he had done no more than an honorable man had to do, and that he would go in all good will, only where duty led him. An Alabama delegate, following Yancey's course, asked newspaper columnist Murat Halstead "what was the Democratic platform for if it was not for the vindication of the great constitutional principles." Halstead wryly countered, "The Democratic party is an organization for the purpose of obtaining Federal offices or in other words a political Corporation like a great lottery Co. for the distribution of spoils."[34]

And indeed the slavery imbroglio was, in part, a device to capture leadership positions in the State and nation so that old malcontents and new political aspirants could dispense and receive patronage.

Douglas Democrats came to Charleston to gain the nomination for the little giant and frame a popular sovereignty plank. John Forsyth wrote Douglas that his supporters from the north and west should "stand firm and insist on your nomination as indispensible to Democratic secession and a break will be made in the phalanx of Southern opposition." The thinking of the Douglas men was obvious. They knew that the Alabama delegation had instructions to withdraw if their resolutions were not adopted. Only the Mississippi delegation had agreed before the Convention to join in walking out. Douglas' advisors said that he could not ask for anything better. It would rid the Convention of his most hostile opponents and win the nomination and platform for them. Douglas had thought for some time that southern radicals represented a minority position in that section. Thus, he had made his appeals to Alabama moderates like Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick and John Forsyth. After observing Yancey's concilliatory manner in Charleston Forsyth wrote Douglas: "My fear is that Yancey...will not...stand up to the instructions and leave the convention." Upstate unionist Joseph Bradley also told Douglas that he was "now afraid the fire-eaters will not bolt." By the second day's proceedings, however, six other slave states agreed to follow Alabama out of the Convention if their sectional demands were rejected. Their decision came after the resolution committee adopted Douglas' federal nonintervention position.

By these developments the pro-Buchanan faction were jockeyed into

prominence. Their twin objectives were to stop Douglas and gloss over the divisive slave code issue. Buchanan wanted a second term, which was almost an impossibility and, hating Douglas, he worked to prevent the latter's nomination. Buchanan's chief "wire puller" at Charleston was Senator John Slidell of Louisiana. He had helped make Charleston the convention site since South Carolina was anti-Douglas territory, and he made promises of patronage to any and all delegates who could be pledged to stop Douglas.

On the evening before the convention debate over the platform, the pro-Buchanan clique of Senators--Slidell, James A. Bayard of Delaware, and Jesse D. Bright of Indiana--sent for Yancey. They prevailed upon him to recognize the implications of the Alabama instructions. If the slave-state delegations bolted, it would ensure a Douglas victory with a nonintervention platform. The Buchanan Democrats knew that Douglas could never be nominated by a two-thirds majority as long as the south stayed in the Convention.[36]

Yancey agreed to remain in Charleston. Richard Taylor, son of the former President Zachary Taylor and a delegate from Louisiana, was present at the meeting and revealed that Yancey "undertook to call his people together at that late hour, and secure their consent to disregard their instructions."[37] Ironically, these were the same directions William L. Yancey himself had imposed on the Alabama delegation.

"We waited until near dawn for Yancey's return," Taylor recalled, "but his efforts failed of success." Ex-Alabama Governor John A. Winston, a Douglas man, insisted that "they should be obeyed to the letter and carried the majority of the Alabama delegates with him." Probably Winston

sought to wrest the leadership of the Alabama delegation from Yancey by making it adhere to the Yancey-inspired withdrawal resolutions and thereby to secure Stephen A. Douglas' nomination.

The next day the convention began to debate the Yancey and Douglas platform reports. The former had been drawn up by fifteen southerners and their California and Oregon supporters. It denied the right of any territorial legislature to abolish slavery, to prohibit its introduction, or to destroy or impair slaveholders rights; and declared it the duty of the federal government to protect the rights of persons and property in the territories. It was in substance the condition of Alabama delegates for remaining in the Convention. And it was totally unacceptable to Douglas.[38]

The Douglas plank which was accepted by the Douglas-controlled resolutions committee was basically the same as that included in the 1856 Democratic platform; namely, federal non-interference with slavery in the territories. This time the platform contained the added statement that questions regarding the rights of property in states and territories, arising under the Constitution, were judicial in character and that the Democratic Party was pledged to abide by and faithfully carry out such determination of these questions as the Supreme Court had made or might make.[39]

Reflecting his ambiguous behavior of the previous night, William L. Yancey's address to the Convention was a combination of vague conciliation and southern nationalism. After reviewing the history of the issues dividing the north and south he asked that the Democratic party rededicate itself to "the high principles of constitutional government and act ac-

cordingly." He denied that either he or the Alabama delegates were disunionists--nonetheless he declared that the Union would be broken up, if constitutional principles did not prevail. He pleaded with southern delegates to present a united front in favor of a platform that recognized their rights and guaranteed their honor, and he concluded by turning on Douglas. Both reports were presented to the Convention which adopted the Douglas plank by a vote of 165 to 138.

When the Douglas platform was accepted, Leroy Pope Walker of Alabama enumerated the reasons why his delegation could not endorse it. Then the delegates left the hall, followed by those from Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Florida, Arkansas, and Texas. After the walkout Douglas was unable to secure the necessary two-thirds majority for the nomination. This was because of a resolution offered by John R. Howard of Tennessee demanding that any candidate must receive two-thirds of <u>all</u> the votes originally represented at the convention in order to be nominated. The Douglas men had based their whole strategy upon the assumption that only two-thirds of the votes remaining in the convention after the bolt would be necessary. When the Howard resolution passed 141 to 112, even the most optimistic among them began to lose hope. With 202 of only 254 remaining votes needed to nominate, Douglas would now have to carry every free state delegation plus 19 votes from among the seven full slave-state delegations remaining in the convention. That was impossible. The Convention adjourned after fifty-seven ballots, to meet in Baltimore June 18, 1860. The bolting delegates, meanwhile, organized a meeting a day after their departure. Yancey spoke in favor of moderation. Many of the bolters, meanwhile, had second thoughts.

They began to seek a way back into the national Party by dragging their feet on the issue of a separate southern political organization and they refused to endorse a southerner for the presidency. The bolters then adjourned, to convene again in June at Richmond, Virginia.[40]

It is difficult to access the behavior of Yancey and other southern nationalists at Charleston. Ex-Governor James Hammond of South Carolina viewed the performance of Alabama's delegates as rank expediency. In Yancey's ambition to be a senator, to replace Benjamin Fitzpatrick as Alabama's party chief, he had persuaded the Alabama Convention to bind the state's delegation to "that slave code position--a stance that was intended to discredit all Douglas Democrats in Alabama."[41] Congressman Martin J. Crawford of Georgia concurred with this judgment: "In reference to the difficulties at Charleston it all grew out of the Senatorial race in Alabama. The platform that came out of the state's Democratic convention was made for the purpose of electing its author [William L. Yancey] to the Senate of the United States."[42]

Yancey and other Alabama ultras, as indicated above, tried to present themselves in Charleston as southern moderates. Yancey's main political target was Alabama itself. When the pro-Buchanan's bloc brought their proposal to stop Douglas, he readily agreed. There was a political advantage in not bolting, and it may have been a factor in Yancey's decision. Anti-Douglas Buchanan Democrats might be useful in obtaining Administration support for his move to replace Fitzpatrick whose senatorial term expired in March 1861. In other words, Yancey could not appear as fire-eater par excellance to those Democratic insiders he deemed important in furthering his political ambition. After Yancey

failed to keep the Alabama delegation at Charleston, ex-Governor Hammond said that he "lost control of the movement."[43] Even at the southern meeting after the bolt, as noted above, Yancey stressed caution and restraint, advice that many ultras thought uncharacteristic of a man who built a reputation on agitating sectional differences.

At Charleston, moreover, Yancey's position on the slavery question did not differ from southern-rights moderates like Mississippi's Jefferson Davis. Both were conditional Unionists. Yancey believed that both the Union and slavery could be preserved so long as the Democratic Party controlled the federal government and the south directed the Party. Such had been the intent of most southern Democrats since the 1840's. This purpose was in jeopardy in 1860 because leaders of all shades of opinion believed the balance of sectional power was shifting away from them.

Much has been written about Yancey's secession schemes tracing his role back to the formation of the League of United Southerners; his 1858 Slaughter letter, in which he suggested using the Leagues to "fire the southern heart to secession"; his co-operation with Robert Barnwell Rhet in 1858, when both spoke in South Carolina about the feasibility of separate state secession. However, much of Yancey's disunionism was only rhetoric for home consumption. He lived in an area of Alabama and in an age which considered such oratory to be "manly." Yancey used fire-eating demagoguery as a weapon in the campaign against conservative Alabama Democrats. He invariably retreated when accused of preaching outright secession; witness, for example, his denial of the implications of his disunionist remarks to James Slaughter, or his claim to being

misquoted at the 1858 Southern Commercial Convention in Montgomery when he had talked openly of secession if the African slave restriction were not lifted.

Few southern nationalists at Charleston demanded secession. The panic and hysteria triggered by John Brown's raid had momentarily subsided. Murat Halstead rejectes the theory that the southern bolters were trying to split the Party, thereby ensuring the election of a Republican president, and precipitate secession. Both Democratic wings would later nominate their own presidential candidates, and the south would seek to throw the election into the House, where it hoped to elect a president favorable to the slave states.[44]

There were also many southern Democrats who longed to get back into the good graces of the national Democracy before the June Convention. Radical secessionist Robert Barnwell Rhett from South Carolina judged the Charleston withdrawal as a mere tactic. After Charleston, Rhett ridiculed those southern Democrats who departed hastily to mend fences at home and then to seek readmission into the national party.[45] To be sure there was also an ideological minority, men such as Alabama editor George W. Gayle, who insisted upon secession as the south's only option.

William L. Yancey, immediately after Charleston, appeared weary and frightened. How would the people of Alabama view events at Charleston? In a letter to Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., he shows the strains produced by recent events:

> You have doubtless seen that both conventions have adjourned--making no nominations--The Nat'l was demoralised--factious and adjourned to save

> an open disruption. Ours had timid and perhaps wise men in our councils, who were unanimous as to the platform and as to the holding another Convention in Richmond....You and our delegation each and all must take an early occasion, in your places, to speak of our action here and must sustain us...call for aid of every man. I send...large numbers of my speeches and our protest....Give them circulation...where it will tell on our cause. Do it at once--so as to bear on the election of delegates to the coming state convention--prompt and efficient action is the order of the day....An early occasion and a decided stand by you, Curry, Pugh, Clopton, Moore ...will have vast influence not only in Alabama but over the whole South....I write in great haste--amidst such noise and confusion....[46]

Yancey, no doubt, feared also that his actions at Charleston would be interpreted as a failure of nerve and of leadership. Certainly Robert Barnwell Rhett believed as much: there was obviously "some want of nerve in the management of the bolters...and an evident want of stewardship. Yancey is not capable in that way, however great an orator and debater."[47]

As far back as the factional struggles of the late forties and early fifties in Alabama, Yancey repeatedly showed an inability to lead and often followed the more astute guidance of Dixon Hall Lewis and John A. Campbell. He failed to direct effectively Alabama's Southern Rights Associations (of 1851-1852) formed at his behest. They became merely vehicles for other Black Belt politicians who wished to manipulate the southern-rights issues for their own advancement. Yancey's ineffectual attempt of 1858 to perpetuate Alabama's Leagues of United Southerners helped finish them off in late 1858. All these developments, as well as Yancey's dismal performance at Charleston, bear out Rhett's evaluation. Clearly, he lacked the intuitive touch of leadership.

* * *

Alabama's bolting delegation returned home to a greeting of criticism and praise. The Montgomery Advertiser spoke of the delegates "walking firmly out of the Convention in the path of duty and honor... bearing with them the respect and admiration of a Nation." Interestingly, this newspaper which was being financed by Yancey categorically denied that the walkout was "a disunion movement. It was a movement to uphold the constitution. It is not even a movement to form a Southern sectional organization."[48] Yancey, in a two-hour Montgomery speech to an ultra audience, tried to maintain his extremist reputation. He said that Alabama would lose her self respect and honor if she sent delegates to the National Democratic Convention at Baltimore in June.[49] As in the past, such pronouncements helped to enhance his image among national party Democrats as a disunionist. Some Alabama southern-rights newspapers blamed the collapse of the Charleston convention on the Douglas faction. Pro-Douglas men, they alleged, demonstrated that a determination to rule or ruin the party: "It seems strange to us that when the Northern Democrats found the South so united and determined against Douglas they still remained unwilling to make any concessions and still refused to unite with use in presenting to the country some candidate whom both sections of the union could have supported."[50]

The pro-Douglas press was convinced that the crisis was part of a carefully engineered plot to destroy the Union by disrupting the Democratic Party and thereby assuring a Republican victory, which would be used as a pretext for secession. The Southern Advocate, still under

the editorship of William B. Figures, the former Whig-Unionist and now a Douglas Democrat, objected strongly to the "Yancey group prating of southern-rights as if they were the whole South," talking of "Southern interests as if they owned all the negroes in the South," clamoring about "Southern honor as if they were the only people in the South!" The majority in the South could not be didicated to nor led by the "nose... and they didn't like...Yancey."[51]

Pro-Douglas papers attempted to brand Yancey a radical disunionist by publishing his 1858 James Slaughter letter which recommended using the Leagues of United Southerners to raise secession consciousness among southerners. Thus, Yancey and his supporters, these papers concluded, had a "grand design" which was put into operation with the Charleston walkout. Significantly, none of the Alabama newspapers published accounts of Yancey's attempt to keep the State's delegation at Charleston. Presumably the purpose of Alabama's Douglasites in putting the secessionist label on Yancey was to keep him on the periphery of national Party politics. No sober-minded party regular would allow an irresponsible firebrand to replace Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

John T. Morgan also came under attack. He was villified by both Montgomery Regency Democrats and the State's most consistent secessionist George W. Gayle, Morgan's Dallas County neighbor. The Montgomery Confederation claimed Morgan had a most checkered political career: "He commenced his political career as an old line Whig"; then, during the 1850 Compromise debates he became a southern-rights man; he was part of the Know-Nothing leadership in Dallas County in 1855; Eighteen fifty-six he supported James Buchanan and he became a "disrupting Democrat"

again in 1859; and later, with Yancey's aid, he became the credentials chairman at the State Democratic Convention and helped lead Alabama delegates out of the Charleston Convention. The Confederation's conclusion: "A most consistent cleaving to principle!"[52]

Confirming the charges of opportunism leveled at him by the Confederation, Morgan upon returning to Alabama began to equivocate in his support of the Democratic rump meeting of Southern-rights delegates at Richmond. Charging him with a lack of sincerity and a failure of nerve because Morgan would not declare his honest intentions for secession, George W. Gayle claimed that Morgan "is so afraid of the charge of disunion, for fear of his personal political fortunes" as the secessionist tide seems "to have receded somewhat in south Alabama...." Gayle concluded, Morgan and his "kind were after a little petty County supremacy. I will wash my hands of any such fizzling crowd, and for my part, they all might all go to h-ll."[53]

The possibility of being cut off from national Party spoils and patronage for an uncertain future must have given ambitious office seekers like John T. Morgan second thoughts. Even Congressman James Pugh, an ultra from Alabama's extremist Eufaula district in the heart of the Black Belt, believed (in May 1860) that fire-eaters like Robert Barnwell Rhett were advising action too extreme. Pugh had been "cursing Rhett loud and deep," reported South Carolinian John E. Ashmore: "I have never heard more earnest denounciations."[54]

Meanwhile, at a May 5th Democratic meeting in Montgomery, ex-Governor John A. Winston, a pro-Douglas man, denounced the defeated slave code platform of the Charleston convention. The disharmony between the national

party loyalists and the anti-Montgomery Regency faction--men like Yancey and Morgan--was still pronounced. At stake was not only the question of the national Party's position on slavery in the territories but who was going to control the State organization.

On May 7, at the urging of John Forsyth, Montgomery Regency stalwarts led by J. J. Seibels along with north Alabama Unionists--all pro-Douglas men and Party regulars met in Mobile and decided to organize the "National Democracy of Alabama." They agreed to run county meetings that would elect representatives to a convention scheduled for Montgomery on June 4. This convention would select delegates to the national Democratic Convention in Baltimore.[55] On the same date of June 4, the anti-Douglas factionalists who had control of the State meeting of January 1860 were to hold their own caucus to choose delegates to the Richmond rump session.

Montgomery then, was a city in political turmoil on June 4. The two state Democratic factions met to elect delegations to the Baltimore national Democratic Convention and to the Richmond rump convention. The national Democrats surprised their opponents by assembling a relatively imposing body of delegates. All the counties, except Morgan, of the Tennessee Valley sent delegations. So did half of the Black Belt counties and five counties in south-west Alabama.[56]

The pro-Douglas men in Montgomery reaffirmed the 1856 Democratic plank of federal nonintervention in the territories, and approved the Douglas platform of the Charleston Convention which endorsed the Dred Scott decision. They then elected delegates to the Baltimore Convention. J. J. Seibels was chosen as delegation leader. The vast majority of

those selected were from north Alabama. John A. Winston ended the proceedings by excoriating the Richmond Convention "as calculated to precipitate the South into a secession from the Democratic Party and from the Union itself--for which there is now no good cause, and for which the South is wholly unprepared...."[57]

The ex-Governor failed to mention a prime motive of Alabama's regular Democrats--to regain mastery of the State Democratic organization. In June, momentum was again with them. No new "outrage" to the "Southern way of life" had occurred. John Brown's raid might be only an aberration it was thought. The ultras had been wavering since Charleston. Many had second toughts about cutting themselves off completely from the national Democratic party.

The southern-rights caucus in Montgomery did pass a resolution upholding in principle the platform passed by the state convention in January 1860. It also vindicated the action of Alabama's delegates at Charleston. However, reflecting the changed mood, William L. Yancey made a plea for restraint. He personally wanted to see the Richmond Convention nominate a candidate and then adjourn. But to pursue such a course, he admitted, would not be advisable since Mississippi and Louisiana had already accredited delegates to both Richmond and Baltimore, and four other states were likely to follow the same policy. Yancey stressed the twin need for Southern unity and for moderation as well as conciliation. He urged the Montgomery caucus to accredit delegates to both Richmond and Baltimore. He read a statement which, he thought, should be made to the national Democratic Party in order to dispel the charges that Southerners favored disunion. It read: "We come once again to you,

as brethren, offering you the olive branch of peace. Do us simply justice--protect us, when necessary to our safety, and we will once again be a united as well as a constitutional party." The caucus acted on Yancey's suggestions for conciliation and directed the former Charleston delegates to attend both the Richmond and Baltimore conventions. None of the bolters protested this bitter prescription--that directed them to Baltimore, hat in hand, seeking forgiveness and readmittance into the national councils of the Democratic Party. L. P. Walker was chosen for a New York mission to get support from New York Democrats for Alabama's seceding delegation at Baltimore.[58]

Clearly, then, southern nationalists from Alabama were not interested in June 1860 in leading any disunion movement, especially when the public mind was not receptive--nor was it in the late spring--to such a prospect. It is more difficult to determine, however, if these southern-rights advocates were willing to compromise on their demand for a congressional slave code for the territories. Certainly, Douglas and his supporters would brook no compromise on federal protection for slavery --they stood absolutely opposed to it.

J. J. Seibels immediately accused "Yancey Democrats" of going to Baltimore in order to disrupt the national Convention again. He also charged Yancey with "manifest inconsistency," since he had stated earlier that it would be dishonorable for any Alabamian to attend the Baltimore Convention.[59]

Seibels and John Forsyth were confident that their wing of the Alabama Democracy would be seated at Baltimore. They had a strategy to defeat once and for all the Yancey faction. They had, in a letter

to Douglas recommended Benjamin Fitzpatrick for the vice-presidency, insisting that such a development would defeat and enable national Party Democrats to carry Alabama. Seibels had sounded out Fitzpatrick and had received what he thought was a positive response.[60]

Meanwhile, Alabama bolters arrived in Richmond. There the newly formed Constitutional Democratic Convention was at a standstill. No platform was adopted or nominations made, and after a two-day session the remaining delegates left for the Baltimore meeting.

Before continuing to Baltimore, Yancey stopped in Washington where a significant event took place. Douglas' east coast manager George Sanders of New York visited Yancey and said he was authorized to offer him second place on the ticket. Sanders added, in order to persuade Yancey, that Douglas would probably be dead within six months of the election anyway. Yancey scorned the offer, possibly recognizing that it would be impossible for him to stand next to the hated Douglas in Alabama--and on nonintervention platform no less! Interestingly, however, Edmund Ruffin, the Virginian secessionist went to see Yancey about this time at the excited request of Alabama Congressman James L. Pugh, a friend of Yancey's. Ruffin said Yancey "received me very politely--but he did not seem disposed to converse freely and I inferred, as I had heard intimated, that he was fearful of saying something to commit himself."[61] The possibility exists that Yancey hadn't entirely rejected the Sanders' bid at the time of Ruffin's visit. In any case, he did refuse to make any disunion committment to the Virginia ultra.

The Douglas Democrats were well organized at Baltimore. They went into the Convention with a firm base of northern strength and took

the nomination by force. Yet they did nothing that would unnecessarily antagonize the south. Douglas had aimed his recent senate speeches at isolating southern extremists from the south and had not tried to make a frontal assault on the section as a whole.

On the seating of delegates, the Douglas-controlled credentials committee called for seating all the southern Douglas delegates who were challenging the Charleston bolters. Yancey argued the claims of Alabama's bolters, but their credentials were challenged and only the Seibels-led faction was seated.[62] This caused South Carolinian James Hammond to observe that "it was silly enough to secede at Charleston on a very distant and improbable issue, it would have been amusing if it had not been so mortifying to see Yancey and the other leaders of this great splurge... stand amazed and bewildered at their own success, with their fingers in their mouths utterly unable to lead an inch further; but then to see them sneak back to Baltimore, humbly entreat to be re-admitted into the same convention with platform unchanged and to be so scronfully rejected."[63] This refusal to seat the Alabama delegates, as well as the other bolting delegations, irreparably divided the Party.

The Douglas men now began a frenzied and belated effort to re-establish their candidate's credentials as a nationalist and as a willing arbitrater of sectional differences. They did indeed offer the vice-presidency to Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick, who was immediately deluged with telegrams from constituents demanding that he decline. President Buchanan and Alabama Democrats convinced Mrs. Fitzpatrick that the Senator would be "eternally ruined if he accepted" and asked her to intercede. Smarting from the rebuff at the hands of the Douglas Democrats,

Yancey visited Fitzpatrick and appealed to the southern patriotism of his old political enemy, urging him to reject the offer. J. J. Seibels, however, counseled Fitzpatrict otherwise: "To refuse now would be to cower before your enemies disgrace your best friends and place yourself in a most unenviable position." But Fitzpatrick withdrew, explaining that Seibels had misunderstood their conversation in Washington; and he declared: "to accept a place on the ticket with Douglas whose views are entirely opposite to my own would compromise my political integrity."[64] One suspects, however, that Fitzpatrick would have welcomed the opportunity to run with Douglas. He had never identified with the extreme southern-rights wing of the Democracy, neither in Congress nor in Alabama. On southern rights he differed with the fire-eating C. C. Clay, Jr., his senatorial colleague from Alabama. Indicative of his ambivalence, when he turned down the offer, Fitzpatrick denounced the "distracting differences at present in the ranks of the Democracy." He further implied that these differences were engendered by extremists, such as Clay, who heated the passions. This produced the final break between Fitzpatrick and Clay; henceforth they would have neither social nor political associations.

The vice-presidential nomination went then to Hershal V. Johnson of Georgia. Johnson's willingness to accept it and Fitzpatrick's inability may reflect the degree of control that the southern-rights cliques in Alabama had over the State Party, especially in Fitzpatrick's excessively "southern conscious" region of central Alabama. Fitzpatrick refused to join the campaign against Douglas in Alabama and was thought to be friendly to the national Party nominee.[65]

The seven bolting Charleston delegations and other state delegations north and west met in Richmond's Maryland Institute on Saturday, June 23, 1860 and adopted federal protection of slavery in the territories as its major plank of what they called the "National Democratic Party" --just to confuse the nomenclature even more. Incumbent vice-president John C. Breckenridge was unanimously nominated for President and Oregon Senator Joseph Lane for vice-president.

Even a casual look at Breckenridge's record discloses that he did not represent the interests of southern chauvinism. Far from being identified with the slave-code extremists, he had made a speech in 1856 that distinctly favored federal nonintervention in the territories. He refused to join either side in the Lecompton debates and absented himself from the Senate rather than break the deadlocked vote over the Kansas Constitution. The Kentuckian, moreover, was known to be on friendly terms with Douglas. Actually, the Breckenridge-Lane tickets had been devised by the Buchanan bloc--Representatives John Slidell of Louisiana, Howell Cobb of Georgia, and the President himself. The ticket was put together in order to destroy Douglas and hopefully quiet the Party rebels.

With the Democratic Party hopelessly divided, giving a decided edge to the Republicans, Edmund Ruffin conversed with various Alabama delegates. He learned that they would chose secession "as soon as a Black Republican shall be elected President which we suppose will occur next November." He talked with Governor A. B. Moore and he "intimated very clearly that he thought the southern states ought to secede before Lincoln is inaugurated as President."[66]

Much of Ruffin's report of secession sentiment among Alabama dele-

gates was probably idle talk on their part rather than determined conviction. Many Alabama ultras, Joseph Hodgson wisely argues, believed that with three or four parties in the field no one could obtain an electoral majority, the House of Representatives would choose a president, and the slave states by adroit trading could achieve its goals--a federal slave code in the territories and a Democratic Party under southern control.[67] The only impediment to this plan would be a Lincoln victory in November. Then southern extremists would be forced to turn to a southern Confederacy.

In addition to the two contesting groups of Alabama Democrats, there were two other parties that sought the presidency: the Constitutional Union Party and the States Rights Opposition Party. Both were composed of former Whig-Americans. The Constitutional Union Party, took national shape in the spring 1860, and was especially strong in Alabama's western counties of the Black Belt. Its state power rested with old Whig-Union planters of west-central and south Alabama as well as with pockets of Whig-Unionism in north Alabama.

Constitutional Union followers traced their Whigism back to the late eighteen thirties and early forties. They prided themselves on a conservative faith in orderly progress--internal improvements, protective tariffs, stable currency fixed by the federal government. They equally scorned fire-eaters and abolitionists. They believed that secession would destroy their economic and social domination at home as well as produce racial havoc throughout the South. They looked with disdain on the strident younger Whig ultras of east-central Alabama with their pro-slavery agitation. Interestingly these Whigs were lawyers and editors,

not major planters. The Constitutional Unionists, then, wished to conserve the nation, though many of them believed in states rights. Unfortunately, these men were as old as John Bell, their candidate. The young southerners had other loyalties.[68]

The Constitutional Unionists identified Yancey and Alabama's ultras as outright secessionists. On the question of slavery rights in the territories, however, Bell himself took evasive middle ground. He ignored the slavery issue and party platforms, and made the sole issue the constitution, the Union, and the laws.

Bell's Party had newspaper support throughout the State. In north Alabama, the Athens Union Banner rallied upcountry voters to the ticket. So did the Montgomery Post in central Alabama. C. C. Langdon of the Mobile Advertiser, an old Whig chieftain, turned his columns over to Bell's cause. In late May, the Constitutional Unionists issued the following call:

> We honestly believe that today there are over 30,000 conservative voters in Alabama who do not sympathize with or wish to vote for either wing of the Democracy of Alabama....That the disunion wing of the Alabama Democracy has control of the party in Alabama....Yancey and his ilk have control and unless conservative men rally around some sound National men, such as Bell and Everett [Edward Everett of Massachusetts, Bell's running mate] and put both wings down, Alabama will be lost.[69]

The fourth and smaller party, the States Rights Oppositionists, was a makeshift organization containing radical Whig-Americans. Most had co-operated with Democratic ultras in their assault on Democratic Party regulars in south Alabama during the local elections of 1859. They refused to join the Constitutional Unionists or initially either

segment of the Democratic Party. Among them were some of Alabama's most strident fire-eaters: Thomas Judge, the Whig "nullifier," who campaigned for Congress in the Montgomery district in 1857 and 1859 as a disunionist; George Shortridge and Judge Samuel Rice, both of whom moved from party to party and from unionism to secessionism as they sought office; and J. J. Hooper, editor of the Montgomery Mail who competed with George W. Gayle editor of the Cahaba Slaveholder for the mantle of Alabama's most extreme southern nationalist. Among the State's most volatile southern chauvinists, these Whigs were, according to the Constitutional Unionists, always stirring up passions with their secessionist threats.

An Opposition convention was held in Montgomery on July 2, 1860. In attendance, too, were some old-line Whigs, men who had played a key role in managing the fortunes of the now-defunct central Alabama Whig Party. There was William P. Chilton, a law partner of William L. Yancey; attorney James Gilchrist; and Montgomery planter-lawyer Thomas H. Watts led the old "wirepullers." The convention was composed of seventy-eight delegates from seven east-central counties. These extremists advocated a new party based on the principles of the disbanded League of United Southerners. They passed resolutions supporting slavery extension in the territories but split over a resolution introduced by Thomas Watts that declared the views of Bell and Everett on slavery extension to be satisfactory. Watts was trying to bring the Oppositionists into Bell's camp and thus become the "boss" of a revived Whig Party in central Alabama. But the Whig ultras led by Hooper and Judge defeated him, and the Watts bloc left the Convention.[70]

The Oppositionists finally decided to support Breckenridge. During

the campaign itself, they advocated secession more consistently than did the Democratic ultras. J. J. Hooper, for example, used his paper to organize "Minute Men" clubs in the Black Belt to prepare Alabama for secession.

Although these Whig-American ultras joined with Breckenridge Democrats, they were not deterred from contesting their allies for local offices. They ran candidates for tax assessor and county commissioner in the Montgomery district. This inspired the pro-Douglas Autauga Citizen to gloat, "Great Yancey men--truly glad to learn it. Wonder how many of them would vote for Yancey if the contest should be between him and Thomas Judge for Congress in this district. These are only Yancey men between Yancey and Fitzpatrick." Editor William C. Howell asked Montgomery Breckenridge Democrats "if they intend to stand by and see their party beaten by Whig-American fire-eaters" who ostensibly supported their presidential candidate?[71]

Both wings of the Democratic Party as well as the Constitutional Unionists professed to be pro-Union. Each claimed that it alone could defeat the Republicans and avert disunion. However, the southern-rights moderates who arranged the Breckenridge ticket could not prevent ultras among Breckenridge partisans, such as J. J. Hooper from increasing racial tensions and secession fervor as Lincoln's election became imminent.

Since all of the parties equated Republicanism with black equality and abolition, none of them paid much attention to the Republican Party platform. Had they done so they would have found that it reaffirmed the equality doctrine of the declaration of independence without defining it in terms of Negro citizenship. The Republican platform deplored dis-

union just as the Bell, Douglas, and Breckenridge platforms had done. It recognized the power of each state to control its own domestic institutions. But then the Republicans had upheld the Wilmot Proviso--denying the authority of Congress or of a territorial legislature, or of any other power, to legalize slavery in the territories. They also rebuked efforts to reopen the African slave trade. On these two points, which rankled southern ultras, the Republican position was clear: slavery should be confined to its present territorial limits but that it should not be abolished entirely.

In a speech on February 27, 1860, and never reported in Alabama, Lincoln carefully avoided all excess. He repudiated Hinton Rowen Helper's anti-slavery tract, condemned John Brown's raid, and spoke in terms of sectional conciliation and broad nationalism. He shared some of the south's attitudes toward the Negro. For example, he praised the Dred Scott decision for its doctrine that a black could not be a citizen, and candidly declared, "I am not in favor of Negro citizenship." He emphatically disclaimed the doctrine of social equality for the races; he refused to press the repeal of the fugitive slave law; he took no stand against the admission of further slave states.[72] But these non-threatening views of the Republican candidate were not reported in Alabama's press during the campaign.

In Alabama, then, three well organized parties confronted each other as the great contest got under way. The Douglas forces contained the Montgomery Regency leadership and north Alabama conservatives. These national party regulars were older and had held positions of power in the state. Though having the fewest papers in their cause, they were

sustained by three influential newspapers located in three strategic locations. John Forsyth's Mobile Register aided Douglas in south Alabama. The Montgomery Confederation of J. J. Seibels fought for the "little giant" in the Black Belt. Upstate William B. Figures' Southern Advocate vigorously canvassed for Douglas and the Union. In central Alabama the Gainsville Independent and the Autauga Citizen came out for Douglas.

The southern ticket of Breckenridge and Lane had more Alabama press support than their opponents. It was endorsed by all extremist papers in central and south Alabama. In Montgomery, the Advertiser and J. J. Hooper's Montgomery Mail, claiming the largest circulation in the city enthusiastically backed Breckenridge. Other ultra journals in his camp were the Eufaula clique's The Spirit of the South and George W. Gayle's Cahaba Slaveholder and the Mobile Mercury. In north Alabama two influential papers came out for Breckenridge: C. C. Clay's Huntsville Democrat and the Florence Gazette. About fifty-four journals in all hoisted the Breckenridge and Lane banner on their mastheads. More than a third of them, as early as June 1860, approved the "right of secession."[73] Clearly, the Breckenridge faction included Alabama's major pro-southern agitators which compromised Breckenridge's Union pronouncements.

The Bell and Douglas parties shared a similar strategy. Although having no formal agreement, they seldom attacked each other. And they both attacked the past positions of Breckenridge and Lane on slavery. The Montgomery Post, Alabama's leading Bell paper, quoted Joseph Lane as saying he was against territorial legislatures exercising power to prohibit slavery; and editor Daniel Sayre also charged that Lane believed

they could not even establish it.[74]

Some Bell supporters in the Black Belt were more militantly pro-southern than were his followers in more southern counties. For example, they focused critically on Lane's claim that all Americans should submit to a Republican victory, "contrary to the South's attitude." They also condemned Breckenridge's approval of squatter sovereignty in a July 1856 speech. Thomas Watts, a Bell supporter aware of the militancy of his eastern Black Belt district, ascribed the Breckenridge doctrine of federal slave code in the territories to Bell, though the latter had not taken that position.[75] Both Watts and Sayre, editor of the pro-Bell Montgomery Post, came out for congressional protection of slavery in the territories. Both had visions of organizing a new opposition party to last beyond the November outcome. They took liberties with Bell's position on slavery in making their pitch to an east-central Alabama constituency which had always been predisposed to pro-slavery agitation. Meanwhile, Bell supporters in Mobile desired to leave the question of slavery protection in the territories to the courts. Many of these Mobile district Bell men were still pro-Union Whigs.[76] It seems safe to conclude that in lower Alabama, then, there was a sharp difference among Constitutional Unionists on the issue of congressional protection of slaves in the territories.

The vast majority of Bell men in north Alabama were Unionists. Ex-Senator Jere Clemens was uncompromising. In a Huntsville speech he assailed legislative resolutions pledging the State for forceful resistance in the event of Lincoln's election. This was a bad principle, by which a minority dictated to a majority. Republicanism might be the

cause of resistance in 1860, but it might be "a tariff, a bank, or some other cause tomorrow. Once in our history a tariff was invested with this importance. It may again. Go out of the Union because a Republican is elected President? Good God! Where is this to end?" Clemens also objected to the grant of so much power to the "secession" Governor as to enable him to "railroad" Alabama out of the Union. "If you are prepared to exchange all this for the horrors of civil war," he declared, "posterity can only say such madness came as a result of excess of happiness."[77]

Clemens later made a detailed report of the campaign in Alabama. He referred to "our Douglas cousins," described a vote for Douglas as "half a vote for us," and attributed much of the danger confronting the union to Buchanan: "I believe the old scoundrel would rather burst this government into pieces than see either Bell or Douglas in the White House."[78] Meanwhile, the campaign progressed, Thomas Watts failed to establish an effective organization for Bell in the eastern Black Belt; and, with a Republican victory almost assured, he announced that it would be cause for secession.[79]

Contesting Watt's secession assertion was Henry Clanton, another old-line Montgomery planter-Whig. If Lincoln were elected, he stated, the south should submit until the new President committed some unconstitutional act. Clanton noted both the Senate and Supreme Court were decidedly against Lincoln and that in all probability the House would be too. With both Congress and the Supreme Court hostile to Lincoln, if elected, he would be utterly powerless. Not to secede would not be submission to Black Republicanism but rather obedience to the Constitution and respect

for law and government.[80]

Late in the campaign, when it became evident that Breckenridge was the leading candidate in Alabama, supporters of John Bell attempted to unite the Bell-Douglas parties. Bell managers met in Selma on October 10 and passed resolutions instructing their electors to vote in the electoral college for any candidate who might be able to defeat Lincoln, providing the party of this candidate should have passed similar resolutions.[81] Alabama's Douglas men, however, refused to join with the Constitutional Unionists.

Douglas' own views on secession and popular sovereignty were often ignored or de-emphasized by his Alabama backers. Their campaign strategy was to expose the secessionists sentiment of Alabama's Breckenridge supporters. They proclaimed Douglas as the nominee of the official national Democratic Party, and the candidate for Union and equality. The pro-Douglas press devoted most of its columns to denouncing Yancey and the southern-rights ultras who sustained Breckenridge. Yancey was stigmatized as a secessionist. Southern Democrats, Douglas papers argued, were splintered and consequently could never halt the "free soilers" and, therefore, Yancey and his extremist followers had concocted a disunionist plot. Breckenridge was being used by them to divide the Democrats and to ensure Lincoln's election.

According to the Mobile Register, the south should compromise with northern Democratic leaders rather than reject them. Southerners, John Forsyth argued, could rely on northern conservatives like Douglas in the coming struggle. Like Jere Clemens, Forsyth could not see how principle or constitutional right might be vindicated or secured if the national

government became Lincoln's for four years. Alabama's Democrats must join northern Democrats to beat back the Republican threat. The territorial question was unimportant to J. J. Seibels and William B. Figures, and they were willing to await a Court decision as to an exact definition of slavery's status in the territories.[82]

Most of the propaganda of the pro-Douglas men was directed toward Yancey. Former Governor John A. Winston charged that the "Alabama Platform" --the slave code--was but a scheme to precipitate revolution. He asserted that "gentlemen might not admit it here, they might talk gingerly about it, but it was talked plainly in Charleston, and meant dissolution of the Union and nothing less." When the bolt had occurred, Winston stated that a number of Alabama delegates exclaimed, "thank God, the National Party is broken at last." The ex-Governor said that twenty years in politics enabled him "to smell several rats," and he noted that Yancey "strutted" in Charleston as a man who had accomplished his purpose.[83] Winston obviously was misrepresenting Yancey's behavior at Charleston. If anything, we have observed Yancey displayed a lack of conviction as spokesman for the extremist wing of the Alabama Democratic Party. Throughout the presidential campaign neither Winston nor any of the Party regulars who supported Douglas mentioned Yancey's co-operation with Buchanan Democrats in trying to hold Alabama delegates at Charleston.

All pro-Douglas and pro-Bell papers focused on Yancey's past secessionist statements. They claimed that he had single handedly initiated the 1848 Alabama slave protection plank, though John A. Campbell clearly shared responsibility. They pointed to Yancey's attempt to disrupt the Democratic Party at the 1848 convention in Baltimore. They again seized

upon Yancey's James Slaughter letter as damning evidence of a conspiracy to "precipitate the South into revolution." Some Douglas papers ran it daily as a reminder of Yancey's "treason."[84]

Yancey himself denied all the secessionist charges leveled against him, heightening the controversy, there was even a dramatic clash between J. J. Seibels and Yancey's oldest son in a Montgomery saloon--with Seibels wielding an umbrella and young Yancey a cane. Later Yancey wrote friends that to say "I favored the nomination of Breckenridge with no hope or belief of his election...thereby assuring the election of Lincoln....I pronounce it an infamous calunmy." The accusations urged against him, he declared, "are part of a grand conspiracy entered into to destroy my character--in order to destroy...the cause I advocate--the election of a Southern President."[85]

As the campaign progressed Yancey toured north and south alike speaking in behalf of Breckenridge. He invariably emphasized two themes: The Republicans posed a great threat to racial control in the South and he himself was not a secessionist. On September 27 Yancey spoke in Wilmington, Delaware. The issue of the campaign, he proclaimed, was the preservation of the Constitution--the constitution as defined by Yancey and by his South. He designated the Republican Party the "mulatto party" --which favored freedom for the slaves and universal amalgamation. Douglas was with them on that issue, Yancey maintained. He concluded with an allusion to himself as a "disunionist, twenty-seven feet high, weighing three-hundred pounds and eating a little nigger broiled every morning for breakfast, and a roasted Union man for dinner."[86] In October at Cincinnati, Ohio, he told a crowd that no part of the South would resist

if the Constitution were preserved through the election of Breckenridge, Bell, or Douglas. Only a Republican could, he asserted, force secession.[87]

In late October 1860 Edmund Ruffin, the Virginian disunionist, expressed dissatisfaction with Yancey's avoidance of secessionist rhetoric. He implored him "to assume the position in regard to secession that Patrick Henry did for the rights of the colonies in the time of the stamp act." Ruffin predicted political rewards if Yancey took the "high ground" of secession: "I earnestly desire that you may have assigned to you the best and most honored positions in the public councils....But not wait....I entreat you to assemble and address your fellow citizens ....Call upon Alabama to act forthwith to lead the movement...of secession."[88] That Ruffin should make such a plea suggests the absence of a disunionist's cabal of fire-eaters before Lincoln's election.

Yancey, in his northern travels stressed the racial theme. The north and the south had a stake in preserving the superiority of the "white race" which could only be retained by federal protection of slavery in the territories and the defeat of Lincoln. That northerners discriminated against free blacks was probably the basis of Yancey's expectation that the doctrine of slave protection would find favor with them. Feeding the fears of a Baltimore audience, he warned them that, with Lincoln's victory another John Brown with 5,000 men, would invade south; poison all the wells; set fire to all the houses, cities, and towns; murder and ravage all the women and children; set free all the negroes; drive out all the whites; and take possession of all the land.[89]

In Boston he declared,

> There isn't a man among you who is not welcome [in the South] if he doesn't come to steal our niggers. We have plenty of northern men in our cities; they do not try to steal our property, or to incite rebellion, and they stay. But let any one come with a lighted torch to this magazine under us--our slave population--to blow us up and to destroy our society, we would be less than men if we did not hang him to the highest tree.[90]

In New York City, again seeking to explain the South's plight and evoke the sympathy of northern listeners, Yancey emphasized the impending threat to slavery as well as its racial consequences:

> Suppose the Republican party gets into power, suppose another John Brown raid takes place... and that Lincoln...is in power, where will there be a force...to check that band? Our towns are burned...poison is found secreted throughout the South in order that it may be placed in our springs and in our wells; with arms and ammunition placed in the hands of this semi-barbarous people, what will be our fate?...Where then will be our peace, where our safety, when these people are instigated to insurrection when men are prowling about the South, knowing they are protected by an Administration that says that by Constitutional freedom is guaranteed to every individual on the face of the earth? Can you expect the people of the South to give such a government their assent?[91]

Yancey's racial appeal was utilized to convince northerners of the need of a southern president. To him Loncoln's election spelled race doom for the south. White northerners, those who shared with white southerners the same anti-Negro bias, would be held responsible if "Black Republicanism" came to power. Should it occur, Yancey claimed, the slave states had no alternative but to separate from a federal government controlled by "higher law fanatics." Before returning to Alabama, Yancey spoke in New Orleans and told his audience that Lincoln intended to reduce the south to another Santo Domingo.

While Yancey campaigned in the north, Breckenridge supporters in Alabama presented a divided front. Their Unionist speeches in the highlands, where Unionist sentiment prevailed, was often printed and praised by upstate Breckenridge organs like the Florence Gazette. But in central and south Alabama the overwhelming majority of Breckenridge newspapers and orators were fire-eaters. It followed that they condemned the timid and submissive attitude of the south. Yancey's "southron" rhetoric pales in comparison with the stridency of eastern Black Belt ultras--like editors J. J. Hooper and George W. Gayle. Gayle proclaimed, even before Lincoln's election was assured, "Give us that Gulf Confederacy. It is the only hope for the South....We have unwaveringly contended for the last ten years, that it would be better for all concerned to make two ...distinct governments of all the territory comprising the United States."[92] J. J. Hooper announced that even the victory of Bell, Breckenridge, or Douglas would not avert post-election difficulty: "There is no arbiter but the Sword, these fanatics--Republican Aolitionists--will respect the steel whips which tyrants have to be scourged."[93]

The Black Belt press that stood with these Breckenridge ultras persistently warned whites of the threat of racial amalgamation if their candidate were not elected. As the campaign heated up, another wave of insurrectionary fear struck central and south Alabama. No other journal was more zealous in reporting it than J. J. Hooper's Mail, thereby appealing to white racial anxieties and helping to harden the lowland concensus for secession.

At times these fears were based upon actual incidents of bondsmen retaliating against their owners. For example, two slaves were tried

and found guilty of killing their master on a plantation near Montgomery. Judge John Gill Shorter recommended that their execution take place at the site of the murder as an object lesson to would-be slave rebels.[94] J. J. Hooper inflamed the prevailing uneasiness in Montgomery County by telling his readers that Edward Everett, John Bell's running mate, endorsed the amalgamation of whites and blacks. That Everett's children went to school with blacks in Massachusetts was sufficient basis for the charge.[95] The Democratic Watchman, published in the heart of the Black Belt, alerted all slaveowners to the fact that southern Douglas Democrats were really the vanguard for northern Republicanism and that Douglas' doctrine of popular sovereignty was "Red Republicanism" in disguise.[96]

Fueling white Alabama's fears even more J. J. Hooper announced (on July 11) that "Texas is now aflame, abolitionist emissaries sent into Texas by Republicans and popular sovereignty Democrats have incited Texas slaves into firing white homes. He cautioned Alabamians to be on their guard. If an organized band of abolitionists were bold enough to fire southern towns before Lincoln's election, Hooper reasoned, what "may we expect from them afterwards?" White men had to vote for Breckenridge if only to "keep the abolitionists from getting control of the government." Hooper also alleged that an organized anti-slavery company were active in the south-western Alabama counties of Choctaw and Washington.[97] He condemned the Bell papers for sneering at the accounts of Texas fire scares and insisted that all whites adhere to Southern "principles."[98] The pro-Bell Montgomery Post under constant pressure from nearby Breckenridge papers, believed the stories of the Texas "uprisings" to be exag-

gerated but seemed to feel that where there was so much reportorial smoke there must be at least a little abolitionist fire.[99]

Pressures mounted on Black Belt editors whom Breckenridge partisans considered unsound on slavery or on secession. John Hardy, editor of the pro-Douglas Selma State Sentinel, told of efforts by ultras to drive him out of business. They first tried to buy him out, he stated and; failing to meet his selling price of $10,000 they attempted to ruin him by spreading the rumor that he had been "bought" with Douglas money. When this tactic failed, Hardy's enemies allegedly procured the names of the Sentinel's subscribers from post offices and then hired agents who attempted, unsuccessfully, to persuade them to drop their subscriptions. Then Yancey brought a libel suit against him. Finally, said Hardy, the ultras sponsored a public meeting in order to spread anti-Hardy sentiments. The beleaguered editor was particularly critical of J. J. Hooper's Montgomery Mail, which he labelled the "Negro insurrection daily." Hardy asserted that "we would not be surprised if Hooper did actually get up a second edition of John Brown's raid...to keep up the excitment for Breckenridge in the South."[100]

During the course of the election campaign some of central Alabama's pro-Douglas newspapers shifted in their political loyalties and endorsed Breckenridge. The Prattville Autauga Citizen dodged criticism that it was "soft on southernism" by declaring that either Breckenridge or Douglas would do. The Greensboro Alabama Beacon in Greene County switched from Douglas to Breckenridge in July.[101]

Stories of northern-inspired conspiracies continued to dominate the Black Belt press. An "old abolitionist" who was "caught and whipped"

in Pine Level, Montgomery County, got away, it was reported, and J. J. Hooper admonished his readers to "look out for him." The Montgomery Advertiser demanded that Whigs and Democrats put aside differences to combat the "Goths and Vandels of fanaticism who riot in our sanctuaries."[102] John T. Morgan contributed to the mood of fear and belligerancy when he called both Bell and Douglas "mulatto Republicans." He also recommended that "Irish and Germans were all inclined to be Republicans" and should be removed from Alabama.[103]

In Choctaw and Washington counties of south west Alabama, a meeting convened to determine the character "of a new secret association formed in their counties--"the Friends of Z society." Two of the association's organizers allegedly were abolitionists and, a witness testified someone said that if everybody in Alabama thought as he did slavery would not exist in the state in "three years." A resolution was passed to "drive these men from the County." The Clarke County Democrat advised that such abolitionists, when discovered, should be hanged, or not touched. After a while when the Texas tricks shall have been practiced here, our people will see the wisdom of the rope."[104]

Whites in Talledega County in upper central Alabama were panicked when "four strange white men and eight negroes," all well armed were found within fifteen miles of the town. A "negro boy," upon being arrested and whipped, revealed "a most diabolical plot...with our negro population contemplating the destruction of Talledega, the massacre of the citizens, and ravaging of the surrounding counties." A vigilance committee was formed and two newly arrived white men were arrested along with eight wandering blacks. The Talledega Reporter cautioned slaveowners to "keep

your slaves at home, and worthless traveling white men off your premises. Don't talk politics in their presence and hearing. We learn that the idea prevails among them that a black Republican is a Negro, and that if a black Republican is elected President, he will set them all free." One day after his arrest, a "white incendiary" was wrenched from his cell by a mob and hanged. The Reporter's editor noted that "the evidence against him, though not legal," was sufficient to prove his guilt.[105]

Governor A. B. Moore wrote a constituent in Talledega informing him that fifty pistols were en route to the militia: "The reason I send them is that there is quite an excitment in the neighborhood...in regard to the slaves. A Negro had made some disclosures which has alarmed the citizens--they yesterday purchased all the guns and pistols in Fayettville, and have begged me to order more pistols immediately." Moore observed that "these occurrences are becoming common throughout the slave states." He blamed Alabama's "treasonable demagoguery--the Unionists --for opposing the Military bill, the object of which is to make the people of Alabama secure against Northern fanatics and the poor misguided and deluded Negroes."[106]

Governor Moore's indirect observation about the ease with which slaves could be manipulated into violence typified white attitudes toward black resistance. They desparately wanted to believe that their slaves were truly content, for the psychological burden of admitting to the existence of alienated, savage, and vengeful black men surrounding them would have been crushing. The fantasy could be maintained, and the danger somewhat abated, if outsiders could be blaimed for disturbing a naturally well-ordered and safe society. Since public safety was of vital concern

to every white man, all could unite against the abolitionist intruder. The fear of insurrection was such that it even bridged the gap between the classes.

The shock waves produced by Talledgega's "uprising scare" spread across the slave counties. Too many local Negroes, the Autauga Citizen complained, "are allowed to have [church] meetings. We suggest to this community the propriety of putting out patrol companies, and would advise slave owners to keep their Negroes at home after dark." Apprehensiveness also reached into some north Alabama slave precincts. "Citizens of northern Alabama," the North Alabamian of Limestone County, exclaimed, "read a warning of dark suspicions. Who knows but what some deep-eyed villian under the guise of friendship may be at this time tampering with our slaves, and furnishing them with arms and poisons to accomplish their hellish designs." Later Talledega was warned from another source that "we are in imminent danger of the most revolting character." The south "is over-run with...low lived hypocritical scoundrels accomplished in the arts of "negro stealing and of underground railroad management. All Northerners should be suspect as agents of insurrection."[107]

If proof of these threats were needed, "recent" cases might be cited. At Coffeeville, Clarke County, for instance, some gypsies asked a planter to lend them some slaves to assist at a burial. The next day it was discovered that the casket contained ammunition and arms. Then, too, poison had been found on slaves in different part of Alabama, and in some cases angry whites had taken their revenge. The instigators, of course, were northern abolitionists,[108] and they inspired conspiracies of "Black Republicanism" which has "become so strong and so bold as to

attack our institutions on our own soil and wage a servile war upon us."[109]

In September more incendiary activities were "uncovered," together with instances of actual slave resistance. A free black baggage master on the Alabama-Mississippi railroad "was arrested for complicity in the nefarious plot recently discovered in Talledega County." A Barbour County vigilance committee tarred and feathered several men who were alleged to be abolitionists and drove them from Alabama.[110] Macon County whites formed posses to hunt down a Negro "who killed his overseer." The bondsman made his escape and "at last accounts had not been captured." Later a mob of whites of Tuskegee thought they had captured "the culprit" and "before the sun set he was burned to ashes." One Montgomery County slave was found guilty of inciting black bondsmen against the "white people of Alabama."[111]

The Black Belt Breckenridge press not only focused its attention upon lurking emissaries from the north who inspired slave conspiracies, it also kept the threat of racial amalgamation alive. An anonymous writer using the pseudonym "Cotton" in the West Alabamian, claimed that the Republicans "have two methods" to destroy slavery: to precipitate a slave rebellion and then force southern whites to "amalgamate with their former slaves." J. J. Hooper told his readers that "amalgamation at the South, as well the North, is the programme and hope of Seward and Greely." Their aim, he warned, in an obvious appeal to the nonslaveholder, "is to free the negroes and force amalgamation between them and the children of the poor men of the South. The rich will be able to keep out of the way of the contamination. But the poor white man of the South will not consent to the Seward plan; they will fight to death, first."[112]

Another unsettling event occurred during the summer and fall of 1860 and it engendered further anxiety in the cotton belt. By late June it was evident that the corn crop of Alabama was an absolute failure because of the worst drought in decades. "The yield can not be equal to local needs." Staple farmers maintained that "within the next six or eight months there will be much suffering for bread." Cotton, as well, "has been failing rapidly...the long continued drought is beginning to produce its effect even on the sun loving plant." Black Belt planters abandoned their expectation of a minimum five-million bales. By mid-August reports from Coffee County, one of the chief staple-producing counties in south Alabama indicated "that there is not a sufficiency of corn made for the general consumption of bread, saying nothing in regard to feeding the stock." Cotton "is very inferior, not making near half a crop, and rain is yet needed." South Alabamians talked of petitioning the Governor "to call the legislature together for the protection of property from levy and sale by execution until another crop... for under the present crop no man can buy a support for the next year and pay any debts."[113]

Cotton prices fell to eleven cents a pound, the lowest since 1855. On the Liverpool market cotton dropped below six cents a pound, the lowest since 1854. The lifeblood of Alabama was the credit that cotton could secure. When dought reduced the expected crop by more than a third, lines of credit contracted and money grew scarce. The credit pinch provided Alabama ultras with further evidence of northern conspiracy. George W. Gayle insisted that if Alabamians would quit trading with the north, they would cease giving "their dollars and cotton to a set of fanatics

whose sole aim and chief delights is...to make war upon our institutions and rights." Southern cotton and labor have indirectly "brought the Sharpe's rifles, hired the abolition emissaries and paid the John Brown's, that have...worked for the overthrow of...the South." Gayle recommended secession as a solution. It would end northern commercial and political domination of the south.[114]

As Lincoln's election neared, cotton prices in the north depressed further and markets shut down. Cotton piled up in commercial centers, some banks suspended specie payments, and much credit was shut off. Now more than ever the north became the scapegoat. Southern nationalists argued that the crisis was just the latest manifestation of Alabama's colonial bondage, that every tremor in the northern economy sent shock waves throughout the south. Alabamians, radicals proclaimed, had to control their own affairs.

Thus economic insecurity coupled with incendiary slave uprising scares did much to build a groundswell for secession in central and south Alabama--especially as Lincoln's election became certain.

There was, in addition to the current cotton crisis, another less dramatic but no less important economic factor--the condition of Alabama's small farmers. Small planters from the Black Belt, particularly east-central Alabama--knew that their position rested on cotton and slavery. The large planters owned the best lands, and by the late fifties had encroached on the lands of the less wealthy.[115] The aspiring plantation owner who sought mobility through the combination of slaves and cotton sought relief by demanding the reopening of the African slave trade, suppression of northern anti-slavery attacks, and the passage

of a congressional slave code for the territories. With the impending election of Lincoln and his policy of slave restriction, the situation of the small planter seemed desparate.

Nor should we neglect the aspirations of Alabama political leaders from the factors contributing to the State's growing willingness to secede from the Union. Ultras, many of them small slaveholders, had been political outsiders for most of their public lives. Their presidential campaign strategy had failed and a Republican was about to become President. Men like Yancey, who had never obtained high place or preferment in the Union conceivably might have their ambitions realized in a southern nation.

Toward the end of October firebrands shifted their attack from Douglas and Bell to Lincoln. They now called for disunion. L. P. Walker stated that a Republican victory would necessitate immediate secession.[116] "If secession were contemplated," the Florence Gazette advised, "would it not be better to secede immediately after the result of the election is known, while Buchanan and his cabinet who are friendly to the South have power than to wait till Lincoln and his wide awakes get possession of the purse and sword?" Others contended that Europe would never allow a civil war in the United States. Because slavery was essential to cheap cotton production and because western Europe depended on southern cotton, it was generally believed that Europe (specifically England) would not permit the north to upset the south's "peculiar institution." Neither would northern capitalists. They also depended on cheap cotton produced by slave labor. Alabama, therefore, would have nothing to fear by separate state secession.[117] "Within one month from this time," the Mont-

gomery Advertiser predicted "the South will be called upon to choose between submission to the rule of a party whose avowed purpose is the abolition, not the restriction of slavery....We are defeated in the Union, but out of it we are still masters of the world--cotton is king."[118]

By November 1, 1860 south Alabama had turned to military defense, excessively so. J. J. Hooper urged the arming of every county. Vile abolitionism, he warned, was at the threshold, "with torch and knife" in hand. This mood of belligerency prevailed. So wrote a Mobile correspondent to President Buchanan. He found public opinion "much excited" at the prospect of a Republican victory and forecasted that the Alabama Convention, which was to be called following Lincoln's election, would not be controlled by Unionists. A Virginia school teacher in Clayton, Barbour County, wrote of the situation there: "They are all violent fire eaters, are for disunion to a man, and speak of any one, who professes the smallest love of the Union, as a traitor to his country, namely the South...." He also noted that much of County's ultra sentiment could be attributed to the provincialism of central Alabama and the insularity of Black Belt whites: "The cause of half of the violence in public opinion here is their ignorance of politics; they never see any papers except local papers, and the Charleston Mercury."[119]

Some central Alabamians, particularly those in east-central counties--organized themselves into "Minuete Men" clubs pledged to carry out secession. J. J. Hooper provided editorial leadership in the formation of these 'hotspur" organizations. On the eve of the election, Hooper printed Robert Barnwell Rhett's false allegation that Lincoln's running mate, Hannibal Hamlin, was a Negro or a Mulatto. "White men of Alabama

are you ready for the doctrine of Negro-equality?" asked Hooper. "Do you believe in sending your sons and daughters-aye, your daughters to school with negroes and in asserting that the negro is their intellectual equal? A free nigger to preside in the Senate...the smell would be awful." Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., who had long ago tied his fortunes to south Alabama ultras said that he "would probably resign" if Lincoln were elected.[120] Clay, like other extremists, would take his chances for preferment in a southern Confederacy.

Lincoln's impending victory signalled the implementation of the Alabama legislature's ordinance which provided for a caucus which would determine State action. Governor A. B. Moore, however, was in a quandary and looked to the fire-eaters for assistance. State law specified that forty days should elapse between elections. He asked state Senator E. C. Bullock of the Eufaula clique for advicse about designating a day for the election of delegates to a State convention that would determine Alabama's response to the Republican victory. The Governor, moreover, wanted to forestall Alabama Unionists from blocking secession. "It is ...important that the election should not be ordered in advance...as the submissionists [Unionists] would no doubt, take advantage of it both in the election, and in the Convention to thwart the objects of those who will be for resistance in some form." E. C. Bullock, in reply, noted that Moore had the constitutional power to shorten the time between elections. He wanted it as short as possible, fearing that secessionist feeling would dissipate if voters had more time to consider "resistance."[121]

In spite of mounting pressure for secession, some Alabamians continued to argue against leaving the union. The few Douglas and Bell

newspapers in the lowlands presented the case against disunion by claiming that secession would be economically damaging to southern interests, especially in the territories and, far from ending violations of the fugitive slave act, would make such violations more numerous and more flagrant. J. J. Seibels inquired, "Suppose Lincoln should carry all the Northern states and be elected. What then?" He optimistically concluded that "we will have the Senate and perhaps the House....We will still have the Supreme Court and thus Lincoln will be powerless for evil."[122]

North Alabama indicated growing opposition to secession unless future developments warranted it or unless a convention of southern states formulated a common policy in the crisis. Many in the Tennessee valley maintained that it was unthinkable to sever their relations with the Union when Tennessee, to the north had no intention of seceding. S. D. Cabaniss of Huntsville assessed upcountry political sentiment for Governor Moore. His intent was to provide guidelines which might insure unity of all factions after the Republican victory. The Bell-Douglas parties, he thought, had a majority in each of the upstate counties, excepting Jackson and perhaps Morgan. Emphasizing a "very cordial sympathy between the old Whigs and conservative Democrats," Cabaniss concluded that the bond which united them was a common conviction that the "settled purpose" of the Breckenridge party was to "precipitate" a revolution. The upcountry believed that lowcountry ultras had concocted a conspiracy: They noted the walkout at Charleston, the military defense bill passed at the last secession of the legislature, and the resolution of February, which called for a "resistance" Convention if the Republicans

were victorious. Upcountry yeomen were convinced that Yancey and his followers could gain control of this proposed Convention and force Alabama into secession and "bloody war."[123]

Some days before writing his letter, Cabaniss heard the leading Douglas man in the area say that "if the people of south Alabama should succeed in putting the State out of the Union, they favored putting the Tennessee Valley out of the State, contending that secession would operate as an utter annihilation of all government within the borders of the state and that the people in this section could set up a government as their own." With this in mind Cabaniss doubted if any state-rights men could be elected to the Convention from the highlands.[124]

But the Unionism of some of the Bell men in central and south Alabama was more fragile than that held in the Tennessee Valley. The old Whig planters of west-central counties were stubborn Unionists, while their Montgomery district counterparts, such as Thomas Watts and Judge Thomas Revis, preferred southern-rights doctrines. J. J. Hooper was spokesman for Montgomery Whigs-turned-southern-rights men. He declared it was a great mistake to assume that Bell's supporters in the cotton counties would accept Lincoln. According to Hooper, the majority of Bell men in Montgomery favored secession if Lincoln were to become President. "The Southern people were divided as to men," Hooper argued, "but few will submit to free negro domination."[125]

The final days of the campaign witnessed the arrival of Douglas in Alabama. The first presidential candidate to make a tour of the states, he scheduled Alabama as his last stop. When Douglas arrived in Huntsville, Baptist Minister Basil Manly observed, "The political excitment is so

high here as to absorb everything...Douglas has friends and is to speak ....Is this the first time a candidate for the Presidency has taken the stump. This only confirms the opinion I had of him before. If I should vote at all it will be for Breckenridge--I do not look to a man nor parties...none can save our country...I become quiescent as the crisis approaches, God help us all!"[126]

When Douglas appeared in Montgomery he was hit by "addled eggs" from assembled Breckenridge men. He told an assemblage of several hundred, "I believe there is a conspiracy on foot to break up this union. It is the duty of every good citizen to frustrate this scheme." No one, he said, was more anxious to see Lincoln defeated than he; but, he insisted, "if Lincoln is elected, he must be inaugurated." He added that the Constitution provided the means for punishing a president if he attempted to violate any man's rights or if he proved a traitor to the country. "I hold that the election of any man on earth by the American people, according to the constitution, is no justification for breaking up this government," Douglas continued. He ended with a call for Alabama Union men to rally around the principles of federal nonintervention in the territories; "we will crush out northern abolitionism and southern secessionism."[127]

Douglas spoke in Mobile a day before the election. He was interrupted by two questions from a Breckenridge supporter: If the election were thrown into the House of Representatives and it came down to either Lincoln or Breckenridge, who would Douglas support? If Lincoln won would Douglas accept a seat in his cabinet? Douglas, in reply, would not support either candidate and, moreover, asserted he would not serve any

sectional president who advocated the doctrine of congressional intervention in the territories. The Mobile Advertiser, the local Bell paper, described Douglas' speech as "a Triumphant vindication of his consistency since 1850."[128]

On election eve Douglas accompanied John Forsyth to the offices of the Mobile Register where the results of the balloting could be had. Both men knew the outcome beforehand. Dispatches from the north and east made it plain that Douglas was overwhelmed and Lincoln victorious. It was no shock. For weeks Douglas had privately conceded defeat. Forsyth had already prepared an editorial, which was read to Douglas, endorsing the call for a state convention to debate Alabama's future in the Union. The wisest policy for Alabama Unionists, Forsyth contended, would be to yield to the widespread demand among central and south Alabamians for a convention: to elect as many conservative delegates as possible, and to try channelling matters into some safe action. Douglas dissented. If the Union men could not prevent a convention, he argued, they could not control it when the delegates convened. But Forsyth countered that the only way to manage the secession current was to appear to go along with it. His editorial appeared the following day.[129]

On November 6, Alabama gave Breckenridge 48,671 votes; Bell 27,834, and Douglas 13,613. Breckenridge's plurality in other words was 7,224 against both contenders. Douglas carried five counties: Mobile in south Alabama and Lauderdale, Lawrence, Madison, and Marshall in north Alabama.[130] In the four upstate counties, Douglas Democrats were better organized than the supporters of Breckenridge or Bell. Two former Whigs, William B. Figures, editor of the Southern Advocate and Douglas elector

Nicholas Davis, both of Huntsville, did yeoman work in effecting the Douglas victory in the four Tennessee Valley counties of upstate Alabama. This was also true in Mobile where John Forsyth's Mobile Register toiled tirelessly for the Illinois Senator.

Significantly, in the nine far northern counties, Douglas and Bell--the anti-slave code candidates--had a majority in every county except two, Jackson and Dekalb. The Douglas vote in this region was high, as indicated below.[131]

County	Bell	Breckenridge	Douglas
Lauderdale	444	706	790
Limestone	368	522	325
Madison	400	591	1300
Jackson	130	1760	565
Marshall	165	441	763
Lawrence	525	370	576
Morgan	144	549	545
Franklin	715	902	460
Dekalb	204	849	202
	3095	6690	5526

Central and south Alabama present a different picture.[132] The Black Belt, home of the cotton kingdom, had since the 1830's been a hotbed of southern chauvinism and negrophobia. Southern-rights ultras managed the Breckenridge campaign in the lowlands. To them the presidential contest was not only over the future of slavery in the Union but over control of the Alabama Democratic Party. Extremist support of Breckenridge was used to discredit the pro-Douglasmen who sustained their man and who had for years, up until January 1860, provided leadership for the State Democrats. Throughout the campaign, lowcountry Breckenridge men charged Douglas and Bell supporters with being "soft on sou-

thernism." Although emphasizing continuation of Union, they also stressed their party's platform calling for a federal slave code in the territories and an end to northern criticism of slavery. However, with Lincoln's victory assured by late October, these Breckenridge ultras came out for disunion. Their strategy of throwing the presidential election into the House of Representatives was defeated by the impending Republican success, and working within the "system" was no longer a viable alternative. Chronic political outsiders, they had nothing to lose and much to gain by striking for southern independence. After all, a revolutionary movement might serve the politically ambitious men who had never achieved high office in the old Union. The confederacy might gain eminence--if they helped to build it.

Lincoln's election had a devastating effect upon Union sentiment in south Alabama. To make matters much worse, it was turning out to be an extremely harsh year for the State's cotton economy. Crops had been poor, money was scarce, suspension of specie payments and of banks was being demanded. Food was selling at inflated prices. In this atmosphere of economic and political insecurity Yancey made a rousing speech in Montgomery in favor of immediate secession. He was followed by Governor Moore who also urged disunion. Mobile's businessmen opposed a separation, according to reports, but some observers found that nine-tenths of the lowland counties were secessionists. The Hayneville Chronicle reported: "There are not a dozen papers in the state, so far as we have seen, but warmly advocate the policy of withdrawing from the Union." The Richmond Whig noted that all pro-Douglas papers in central Alabama "have either had their Union batteries spiked; or else they have turned

with the tide and are as strong disunionists as any of their contemporaries." The Clarke County Democrat declared: "We do not know of a Bell paper or a Breckenridge paper in these parts but that favors secession at this time."[133]

The Democrat reported accurately. The Greeneville Messenger [in Butler County] for example, had consistently campaigned for Bell. After November 6, its editor, even while vowing that "we are no disunionists," saw no other possible course but "separation from the Union." The Selma Reporter of Dallas County, also a Bell paper, joined the secessionist camp. S. W. C. Watson, editor of Benton Herald, observed that "all the newspapers in Dallas County support the secession movement except the Selma Sentinel."[134] In Pike County, the Troy Advertiser, one of the few Douglas papers in the lowlands, proclaimed, "We for one throw off the garb of Democracy and go for secession at once. Before Lincoln's election we were against disunion...but now the die is cast...our only salvation is in secession." Rabid secessionist journals like J. J. Hooper's Montgomery Mail demanded the proscription of Unionist newspapers. "They ought to be banned from Alabama" because they were published by "abolitionists who hoped insidiously to propagate objections to and arguments against the institutions of the South."[135]

Leading political figures in south Alabama, supporters of Bell and Douglas in the past, now closed ranks with their old enemies. Old Whig manipulator Thomas Watts published a letter dated November 10, advocating the immediate secession of Alabama. For him, Lincoln's victory meant doom for the south. James Webb, an old-line Whig planter from Greene County and a Bell elector, declared, "that our future career is

to be of eternal discord and of angry crimination and recrimination, I conclude that separation, with all its consequences, is not only inevitable but desireable." John A. Winston, who had supported Douglas and collaborated with the Montgomery Regency, publicly announced, "I look upon the position of those who talk about an overt act as a lame and impotent text to avoid the issue...." As for co-operation with other slave states, "that is but a device of timidity and cowardice, or a piece of strategy for delay and postponment. My own views are that we should go into the Alabama convention and take steps for a separation."[136]

Whig Joseph Henderson of Camden, Wilcox County boasted to his brother, "We are all for secession down here. No opposition in this County. Very little in any of the counties down this way." The respected Montgomery Whig planter J. H. Clanton admitted to a Montgomery audience, that in the election he had declared in favor of waiting for an overt act before separating. The overwhelming majority which the north gave Lincoln served as that overt act. Now he, too, advocated immediate secession.[137]

Lincoln's election split the Montgomery Regency. By the end of November, J. J. Seibels believed that submission to Lincoln's administration would be "unconditional surrender. It seems to me we must part." The key to his conversion was racial fear. Secession, Seibels exclaimed, was preferable to remaining in the Union and being "stripped of a half million in slave property and to have turned loose among us thousands of freed blacks." He had no illusions that disunion could be done peaceably, never having believed that "a giant Nation could die without a giant struggle." But other Montgomery Regency stalwarts, Benjamin Fitz-

patrick and State Representative Bolling Hall, refused to come out for immediate secession and called for a Convention of cotton states to determine the course of resistance for the entire south.[138]

Letters from Black Belt and lowland planter Whigs calling for separate state action flooded Alabama newspapers in November. Planter W. H. Crenshaw insisted on immediate secession before Lincoln's inauguration. Old-line Whig Judge J. K. Henry demanded secession because overt acts sufficient for dissolution had been committed, and added that Alabama "ought to secede, even if alone." Bell protagonist M. C. Lane of Greeneville charged that more than sufficient crimes had been committed against the south to warrant secession. Stephen F. Hale of Eutaw, in Greene County, was another important Whig who stumped for Bell but who, after November 6, advised Alabama to take the course of "separate state secession." The most forthright Bell paper in east-central Alabama, the Montgomery Post, now concluded that the south could no longer submit to northern "aggression."[139]

Resolutions adopted at various public meetings in the lowcountry were held in Montgomery, Macon, Greene, Wilcox, Dallas, Choctaw, Pickens, and Mobile counties. All resolved to secede by separate action; all proclaimed the election of Lincoln "as grounds for secession."[140]

Two weeks after the election, Black Belt disunionists wrote a public letter to Governor A. B. Moore asking him to set a date for the election of delegates to a convention that would determine Alabama's fate. Although an ardent secessionist, Moore still procrastinated--in the hope that some other slave state would lead the secession movement. On November 14 he issued an address stating that he could not call a

Convention until after the electoral votes were counted in Washington. But he predicted that with the Republicans in power "slavery will be abolished in the District of Columbia, in the dockyards and arsenals, and where ever the federal government has jurisdiction. It will be excluded from the territories, and other free states will in haste be admitted to the Union, until they have a majority to alter the Constitution. Then slavery will be abolished by law in the states."[141]

Finally, one day after the official confirmation of Lincoln's election, Moore issued a proclamation. On December 6, he called for a state convention to meet a month later-on January 7th in Montgomery. He designated December 24, 1860 as the day for the election of delegates --for which act he was accused of violating the Alabama Constitution which provided for a forty day hiatus between all political contests. But Moore was under intense pressure from the secessionists to call an early meeting and, as noted above, he himself favored disunion.

* * *

Perhaps we should pause in the historical narrative at this point --and consider the state of mind of white Alabama; why they reacted to the election results as they did--with passionate and extremist rhetoric. Underlying the conviction of those who lived in counties with massive slave population and who considered Lincoln's election as "the last straw" was the consensual agreement that racial control was irrevocably threatened by what they considered an avowed anti-slavery Administration. Few south-central Alabamians, however, knew Lincoln's actual position on slavery. Nor did they carefully assess Northern racist sentiments. Directly after

his election, Lincoln reiterated his fundamental belief in the right of the states to maintain slavery in their midst and explicitly rejected interference with that right. Furthermore, he favored enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Act. Indeed, though it was a difficult concession for him to make, he was even willing to accept a constitutional amendment protecting slavery in the states.[142] Such moderate sentiments, notwithstanding, white southerners retained their particular image of Republicans as fanatics and abolitionists bent on freeing all bondspeople.

Looking to non-slaveholders and poor whites in particular, secessionists intensified their efforts to equate Republicans with black-white equality and disseminate reports of insurrectionary plots. There is an element of hysteria in J. J. Hooper's editorial statement:

> The recent elections...show that the North believes in the doctrine of Negro equality. That is the expressed doctrine of their leader Lincoln. Here in the South, we believe that the white man is better than the negro; and the poorest white man in Alabama would cut the throat of his daughter, before he would marry her to a negro....Horace Greeley, Senator Seward and such representatives in Northern sentiment, would be proud to have buck negroes for their sons-in-laws. Hamlin who is Lincoln's vice-President is a free negro, and boasts of his African blood....Let the North... be the home of the mixed race; and let the South be the home of the <u>white man</u>, proud of his race and proud of his race's superiority! Amalgamation at the South, as well as the North is the program...of Seward, Lincoln and Greeley. Their aim is to free the negroes and force amalgamation between them and the children of the poor men of the South. The rich will be able to keep out of the way of the contamination. But the poor white man of the South will not consent to the Lincoln plan. They will fight to the death first...amalgamation is viewed with horror here...with the South united...aye with a single cotton state to

> lead the way to independence--all the amalgamationists in the world cannot compel us to submit to their odious and hideous programme....We must leave the North with its vile free-negroism to shift for itself...Southern men are white men and intend to continue such.[143]

"There is but one safety for the South," Hooper insisted, "and that is to leave a Confederacy now moulded and fashioned for their destruction. ...We are a white people here; and those whoever they be who advise submission to a Republican government are our deadly enemies."[144]

Many south Alabama political figures and editorial writers affirmed the impending danger to the "southern way of life." Levi Lawler, Mobile southern-rights Democrat, expressed anxiety over the reaction of non-slaveholders to the election results but concluded that "those who do not own slaves are in the main true to their country [i.e. the South] and will defend the rights of their neighbors as well as their own. None of our people are willing to see the Negro and the white man stand upon a platform of social or political equality. The entent of the whole South and of the civilized parts is to keep the African in his continual subjection and it will be done. In my opinion the only effectual way to do it is to form a Confederacy of slave states."[145]

Judge John D. Phelan, a Montgomery fire-eater, claimed to know the purpose of Lincoln and the north. It was "the essential equality of the races, that the black is not an inferior race, and entitled to an equal status with the white man in Church and State, in office and honor, and in the great and sacred institution of marriage. Let the non-slaveholders of the South look to it." Phelan forsaw Republican rule repressing non-slaveholders and forcing "negro amalgamation" upon

the South. In which, he prophesied, a few generations, we "will see a mulatto race possess this country as they do in Mexico and Central America. Let the Southern non-slaveholder awake to their danger and strike for disunion." The strident editor of the South Alabamian concurred. With Lincoln in power Alabama "is exposed not only to amalgamation but to a servile insurrection."[146]

Xenophobia, intensified by real and imagined slave uprisings, continued to obsess Black Belt whites. A Carnival worker was detected in overly "familiar conversation with slaves" and was "railroaded out of town." The Mobile Tribune recommended that "every man or woman, known to entertain free soil or abolitionist sentiments" be expelled. Mobile residents were warned to be on the lookout "for dealers in Abolition books, etc." The Montgomery Mail heard that an Association of freedmen in Mobile had been discovered. J. J. Hooper asserted that "the time has come for the South to expel every free negro from its limits. They and we cannot live together." The Montgomery Advertiser reported that a vigilante patrol found letters confirming "that there are spies from the North or traitors among us. This is no time for either spies or traitors in our midst." In Mobile, a music teacher who "on several occasions had spoken abolition sentiments quite freely defying the citizens there," was forced to leave the city.[147] By December, then lowland Alabama seemed psychologically ready for unqualified secession. Many in central and south Alabama were prepared to accept immediate secession --"straight out"--without waiting for a convention of slave states to meet and withdraw as a bloc. In other words there was growing sentiment in lower Alabama for single state secession regardless of what other

cotton states did.

But not all of the State was of one mind. Upcountry counties in the north-central and Tennessee Valley, regions of low slave and cotton density--opposed disunion unless a convention of southern states formulated a common policy. Many in the Tennessee Valley maintained that secession was unthinkable while Tennessee directly to the north had no intention of seceding. Many highlanders believed that if Alabama seceded then Tennessee would become a staging area for a Union attack on north Alabama.

Upcountry leadership rested with a combination of Whig and Democratic Unionists. Two of them, for example, Congressmen George Smith Houston and W. R. W. Cobb were the only Alabama representatives who refused to sign an address of southern congressmen which was directed to their constituents and which called for separate state secession.[148] Old Whigs like Robert Jemison and William R. Smith of Tuscaloosa as well as Nicholas Davis of Madison and Jere Clemens from Lawrence were other important politicians who counciled moderation. Some of these men were stubborn Unionists and they would not countenance secession under any circumstances. Others would accept a Republican administration unless and until it committed an overt act against the South. If secession ever became necessary, they favored a co-operative action whereby the entire south would leave as a unit. At a co-operationist caucus in Leighton (in Lawrence County), those in attendence declared their opposition to unilateral state secession, but decided that they would approve any action taken by a Southern convention. Another such meeting in Tuscaloosa County was made up of "the piney woods Aristocracy--Robert

Jemison and William R. Smith and their friends." They also adopted resolutions demanding consultation with other southern states.[149]

Nor were these the only meetings in the north-central counties that rejected independent Southern states' actions. In Limestone County a resolution was passed stating: "We favor a convention of the fifteen slaveholding states to consider what is best to be done, trusting that there is yet a reasonable ground for a peaceful solution." In Tuscaloosa, the majority wished "first, to use all honorable exertions to secure our rights in the "Union...and if we should fail in them, we will maintain our rights out of the Union." The far northern counties of Limestone, Lauderdale, and Madison strongly advocated co-operation in the form of an all southern state convention and only en bloc action. For example, 100 "prominent" Hunstville citizens signed a petition calling for such a convention.[150]

Jere Clemens corresponded with Senator John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, who is best remembered for his attempts to fill Henry Clay's place and save the Union by compromise in 1861. Clemens revealed that "the Union men of Alabama have a difficult and dangerous part to play....Our hands are in the lion's mouth....it is more serious than I feared. I believed that the Bell and Douglas men combined would have a majority in the State...this expectation has been disappointed. Too many Union men in south Alabama had defected to the "fireeaters...If the election was held tomorrow two-thirds of the members elected would be for immediate secession." Clemens said that he differed with Yancey in believing "redress" could be obtained in the Union, and that Alabama Unionists only needed time. He predicted that in the forthcoming election for

delegates to the January 7 convention "the counties of the Tennessee valley would give large majorities against secession." "South of the mountains," however, "we shall be badly beaten and there is no concealing the fact that we are in great danger of being hurried into disunion before the month of January is passed."[151]

Clemens' point about the Unionists needing time to marshall their forces is crucial. Governor Moore, it will be recalled, had provided only three weeks for campaigning before the December 24 election for delegates. Moore and the disunionists knew that although secessionist sentiment dominated most of central and south Alabama, a more moderate temper might prevail by early January. Clearly, therefore, they opposed giving Unionists and co-operationists much time to present their case to the voters. Clemens' letter to the Florence Gazette, reflected the fears of most of north Alabama: "I know there is not in the whole of the Tennessee valley, arms and ammunition enough to resist the incursion of a band of five-thousand marauders....A state so situated absolutely requires time....Talking of peaceable secession will not make it peaceable."[152]

There were also a few pockets of cooperation and Unionism in the lowcountry. Four former Bell and Douglas newspapers opposed unilateral state action for secession. The Gainsville Independent in Sumter County pleaded for a convention of all the cotton states before "resistance is determined." The Autauga Citizen, the mouthpiece for Senator Benjamin Fitzpatrick and Regency ally Bolling Hall, advised Black Belt voters to exercise restraint. The Alabama State Sentinel of Dallas County warned its readers that there was a movement for disunion, and it urged the

friends of the Union to unite, irrespective of party, in opposition to secessionism. John G. Harvey, editor of the old-line Whig Alabama Beacon, scoffed at the notion that Lincoln's election was adequate cause for "immediate secession."[153] Only the Autauga Citizen, of the four journals was not located in the Whig-planter region of west-central Alabama.

There were even a few prominent men from the cotton slave counties who favored cooperation with the Union. Both Senator Fitzpatrick and Supreme Court Justice John A. Campbell were keenly aware that secession would mean the loss of high federal positions. Fitzpatrick had been elected President pro-tem of the Senate, and this honor would go by the boards if Alabama seceded. Fitzpatrick's Montgomery Regency was divided. His enemies controlled south Alabama. The only way to thwart old opponents who now saw their political careers tied to a Southern Confederacy was to buy time--in the hope that disunionist feeling would diminish as the weeks passed. Consequently, Fitzpatrick's tactic for salvaging power was to adopt cooperation. "The Southern states should go out together," he insisted, or at least, "a sufficient number...should go out to insure a new Confederacy."[154]

For John A. Campbell of Mobile, a Calhoun man before his appointment to the high court in 1853, the thought of surrendering his judicial post was both depressing and frustrating: "I do not regard the election of Lincoln as a sufficient cause for dissolution of the Union," Campbell observed. "The circumstances of his election impose the duty of moderation on his part....There is a radical division in his own party, and he was chosen because he was more conservative and constitutional in his opinions and ideas." He further asserted that the loss from fugitive

slaves was not material; "not one Southerner in ten thousand ever knew a man who had lost a slave by northern rescue." What the South really wanted, Campbell stated, "was a cessation of the agitation against slavery."[155]

* * *

To turn back to the political narrative, and to the contest for delegates to the State convention, it became evident that two parties had emerged. One bloc of voters favored separate state secession--that is unilateral state action--and the other endorsed cooperative action, with the slave states seceding en bloc. There were different shades of opinion among the cooperationists, varying from unconditional Unionism to support of secession only if the rest of the south would join Alabama in this final step.

The campaign for delegates began in late November. Secessionists from the Black Belt and southern counties enjoyed advantages that up-country moderates and conservatives could not overcome. For example, Governor Moore was a "straight out" seceder and he used the powers of his office toward such ends. Indeed, he had set the state convention date well in advance of Lincoln's inauguration.

Radical control of most Alabama newspapers was another handicap of upstate conservatives. The Breckenridge press had been stumping for secession since late October when Lincoln's election seemed assured. With wide newspaper coverage, the disunionists could mobilize the social unrest brought on by the Republican victory and bring Alabama's cotton kingdom behind their program of immediate secession.

As was to be expected secessionist in the Black Belt also organized vigilance committees. Such groups as "the Minute Men" enforced the orthodox view of secession and suppressed anything that appeared to be "northern." In many central and southern counties only the "straight outs" were sufficiently organized to prepare an electoral ticket, although contentious and close elections ensued between them and cooperationists.

Witness for instance, Autauga County where Bolling Hall, supported by Senator Fitzpatrick, ran as a cooperationist. Significantly, this was the last clash between the remaining leaders of the Montgomery Regency and Montgomery's ultras, to defeat their old conservative opponents and it would help to determine what faction would manage Black Belt politics. The ultras worked energetically to defeat their old conservative enemies. Bolling Hall warned of the horrors of disunion and of the military weakness of Alabama--of anything that would deter the voters from secession. He was defeated by twenty-three votes (603 to 626), by an opponent who enlisted Yancey's support. But in one central Alabama county bordering on the Black Belt, Tallaposa County, secessionists received a setback in the election for delegates; and it made "committed" Tallaposa disunionists to proclaim their devotion to the Union.[156]

Cooperationists dominated in the north-central counties. Upcountry Alabama had always differed from the southern part of the state. Except for two counties, its soil and topography were not conducive to cotton and slavery. This region, lying partly in the Tennessee Valley, sold much of its production across the state line in Tennessee. In other words, the upcountry possibly had greater economic and political ties to the north than in Alabama itself. Furthermore there was no railroad connecting

north and south Alabama, for the lowlands had always fought against a broad-based interstate transportation system. North Alabama, consequently, did not share the intense fire-eater views of the more isolated plantation communities of the Black Belt.

The tactics of Madison County secessionists, led by L. P. Walker, suggests the weakness of upcountry "straight outs." They offered to form a coalition ticket with cooperationists. The latter, led by Jere Clemens and Nicholas Davis, suspected that this concession was an ultra trick--by which their delegates would agree to vote with the cooperationists majority and then switch once inside the Convention. In any case, the cooperationists rejected their bid.[157]

During the brief campaign, the most common argument of both cooperationists and Unionists forces was that secession would not cure any of the evils of which the south complained. Cooperationists maintained that a convention of southern states might be able to secure redress of their grievances and press the enactment of some kind of federal slave code. Hasty action by the South they warned might turn the border states against secession and prompt them to form a third confederacy. Jere Clemens in numerous addresses asked a fundamental question: How would secession preserve slavery? With their section out of the Union, new slave territories would forever be closed to the South by a stronger and hostile north. Lincoln, moreover, would never allow the South to secede peacefully. There would be civil war and Alabama would be invaded and occupied by Union armies pouring through the Tennessee Valley. Conservatives also argued that Governor Moore's proclamation established convention election procedures was illegal because it allowed only

eighteen days between the dates of issuance and election, and Alabama law required a period of forty days. This unlawful act inspired many cooperationists to talk angrily of a conspiracy: and to find proof of it in earlier events--the legislature's provision for a convention in event of a Republican victory and the bolt of the Alabama delegation at Charleston. The State, they claimed, was being railroaded into secession.[158]

Secessionists avoided responding to the charge of election manipulation by the Governor. They attempted to divert attention to the idea that the two-week period between the delegates' election and the January 7 meeting of the State convention allowed time for adequate consultations with other states. The issues, they asserted, were more than a decade old and fully understood by the voters. These secessionists invoked their old image of a vast northern cabal dedicated to the overthrow of slavery. Lincoln, they argued, would tamper with the Court's membership and obtain a majority favorable to the exclusion of slavery from the territories, thereby reversing Dred Scott. According to this sinister line, Republicans were also plotting to abolish slavery in Washington, D.C. Indeed, no slave would be safe in the Union as long as Personal Liberty laws remained on the books of Northern states and the kidnapping of bondsmen continued. "Straight Outs" also warned that enough free states could be carved out of the territories to give Northerners the three-fourths majority needed to amend the Constitution and abolish slavery. These ultras insisted that, constitutionally, Alabama was within her rights in leaving the Union. In ratifying the federal Constitution, Alabama entered the Union by separate action: it should

leave by the same method. The North, moreover, did not want war and, would do nothing to prevent southerners from exercising their constitutional rights.[159]

Of great concern to upstate secessionists was the vast non-slaveholding population of their region. The last census had shown eight northern counties in which the slaves were fewer than 13 percent of the population. Small wonder that cooperationists were in a majority, and that outright Unionists controlled some Valley counties. Predictably, the most consistent argument used by secessionists to arouse non-slaveholders was the equation of Republicanism with black-white equality. Even without slaves most Alabama whites were responsive to a racial appeal. When Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., threatened to resign if Alabama did not secede before Lincoln's inauguration, he told the non-slaverholder that Republicans intended to make the Negro "his equal in political and social privileges." The slave would be the peer of the white man and would claim his "daughter in marriage."[160]

L. P. Walker also attempted to arouse the fears of non-slaveholders by evoking the image of servile insurrection. Speaking at a north Alabama meeting he admonished the politician who sought "to array the rich against the poor, or the poor against the rich." Those who taught non-slaveholders to believe that they had no interest in the preservation of slavery should be condemned, he continued: The yeomanry were as reliable as the slaveholder in this crisis. He asserted that "this whole subject has reached this simple proposition--shall Negroes govern white men, or white men govern Negroes: Remember now, that universal emancipation and universal suffrage, go together. When this point is reached,

and the ballot is free alike to black and white--my God! The infamy of such a possibility! Submit then, if you dare, for a single day, to the Administration of a man who proclaims this doctrine of universal emancipation, and...all that the freeman holds dear is soon ended....The whole social fabric of Southern civilization--the highest best ordered, and most perfect embodiment of human government the world has ever seen will pass away forever...." He cautioned that "in all great political crisis, delays are always dangerous. Delay now is destruction."[161]

Another upstate ultra told the readers of the Huntsville Southern Advocate that

> the nonslaveholders are even more greatly interested than the slaveholders: for upon the successful spread of Republican doctrines, carried to their legitimate results, the non-slaveholders are the ones who will suffer most. The slaveholders as a class are rich, and therefore would be enabled speedily to take themselves and their fortunes out of a country once more delivered over to barbarism and the besotted ignorance of central Africa. But the non-slaveholders, what an appalling fate would be theirs? I shudder to contemplate! What social monstrosities, what desolated fields, what civil broils, what robberies, rapes, and murders of the poorer whites by the emancipated blacks would then disfigure the whole fair face of this prosperous, smiling, happy Southern land.[162]

These immediate secessionists, the "straight outers," continued to play on white fears of slave revolt. After Lincoln's election the tactic was employed in order to build unity for separate state secession. J. J. Hooper was again prominent in reporting servile plots. In early December he revealed a massive insurrectionary conspiracy in the Black Belt--Pine Level, Autauga, Prattville, and Hayneville. "We have found a deep laid plan among negroes." The Montgomery Advertiser stated, "it

is general all over the country....We hear some startling facts. They have gone far enough in the plot to divide our estates, mules, lands, and household furniture...." Twenty-five slaves and four whites not known to the region were arrested. The authorities "whipped the Negroes" who confessed that slaves were "to make a general rise during the Christmas holidays. They are to kill the families on a certain night and then get together and take the County--Montgomery County. They look for aid from Lincoln and the Northern people. We cannot find out the exact time, but they generally pitched on...the 26th of December. No humbug in this!"[163] In an editorial J. J. Hooper instructed Black Belt planters to keep "non-resident vagrants away from their plantations. "Slaves are generally loyal but too many have the impression that Lincoln's election has made, or will make them free....Let close, rigid discipline and the omission of the usual Christmas holiday festivities, mark the year 1860 and the election of Lincoln as a black epoch with the Southern slave."[164]

Dallas County was also struck with slave revolt "fever" on election eve. The Dallas Gazette reminded County slaveowners to be on the alert. "Remember that fire, poison and the knife are supplied to bad negroes by our pious brethren of the North--let no stray vagrants remain about your premises--jail every suspicious character....Christmas week has been appointed by the Abolitionists and their Republican allies for a servile movement...dire circumspection should be exercised everywhere in the cotton region." Meanwhile Clarke and Macon counties expressed similar anxieties as the election and Christmas holidays approached. It was recommended that Clarke County slaves be prevented from "going to town" for Christmas day in light of the alleged uprising plot scheduled

for Christmas week. However, Issac Grant, editor of the Clarke County Democrat, dissented: If the slaves "are kept home during the celebration, they may think the white folks are uneasy, and such a thought might encourage notions that would not otherwise have entered their heads.... But at the same time, keep up the patrols." The Macon Republican reported that vigilance patrols had been organized to enforce order among the slaves during the holidays "to guard against strolling Osawatamies [John Brown raiders]." Praising such action of Macon's planters, the editor warned "never before was it so necessary for us to sleep with one eye out at the window. Patrol! Patrol!! Patrol!!!"[165] A friend of Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., stated that south Alabama's "negroes threatened to poison the water here....Some seem to think there is a great deal of rebellious feeling amongst the negroes....I would not be surprised ...they are so imitative, ignorant and undisciplined--in fact unfit for freedom...."[166]

The heavily-populated slave counties were united in the belief that racial authority must be maintained. Supreme Court Justice Campbell (who was from Mobile) admitted as much in confiding to ex-President Pierce that "many of these rumors of slave insurrections have no foundation at all and...all the facts of any must be exaggerated. But no community can exist or prosper when this sense of insecurity prevails."[167] It was precisely this "sense of insecurity" that Alabama ultras politicized in order to sustain the secessionist impulse prevalent in the low-country. By late December whites in the cotton counties were near-unanimous in the conviction that Lincoln and his Party would wreck racial havoc on the south.

As election day, December 27, 1860, neared the straight outs--

those favoring independent state action toward secession--strengthened their position. Governor Moore appointed sixteen commissioners to confer with leaders in other slave states whose legislatures and conventions were to meet prior to Alabama's. Among those selected as "ambassadors" were some of the State's most ardent secessionists: E. C. Bullock and John Gill Shorter of the Eufaula clique; Edmund W. Pettus, brother of the Governor of Mississippi, was sent to Mississippi; John A. Elmore, born and educated in South Carolina, was assigned to the Palmetto state; and L. P. Walker traveled to Tennessee.[168] It was the responsibility of these men to act as committees of correspondence, keeping Alabama officials informed of activities in the other slave states, and to stir up secession sentiment in these states. Thus, while sponsoring secession abroad, the straight outs were also promoting the cause of separate state action at home.

John A. Elmore addressed the Convention of South Carolina and advised its delegates to take immediate and unilateral action. Such action would exacerbate matters, and Alabama as well as the other southern states would speedily follow.[169] On December 20, four days before the Alabama election for delegates to its January 7, 1861 Convention, South Carolina did indeed secede. Alabama immediatists promptly challenged the cooperationists to "co-operate with South Carolina." The latters action, only a few days before the election gave Alabama secessionists an obvious propaganda advantage.

On the heels of South Carolina's secession, Alabama's congressional representatives--except for upcountry unionists George Smith Houston and W. R. W. Cobb--signed a public statement asserting that Repub-

lican leaders were determined to make no concessions to the south, and that the sections only hope lay in immediate secession by separate state action.[170] All of Alabama's Congressmen from the central and southern districts were intent upon pushing through secession before the excitment over Lincoln's election subsided.

Representative David Clopton from the Montgomery district, in a letter of December 13th to Senator C. C. Clay, Jr., strongly opposed compromise: "Many and various efforts are being made to compromise existing difficulties and patch up the rotton concern. They will all be futile." He was among several Alabama colleagues who had declined to vote on certain issues, "believing that we ought to keep ourselves clean of all compromises." Clopton conveying the general impression in Congress, asserted that, regardless of party, lawmakers believed dissolution of the Union was inevitable. Clopton himself, expressed a determination to die free rather than live a slave to Black Republicanism. "I would be an equal, or a corpse," he declared. "The argument is exhausted, further remonstrance is dishonorable, hesitation is dangerous, delay is submission...let the God of battles decide the issue."[171]

Obviously, Alabama cooperationists labored under great handicaps. Their best argument--namely, the need for concerted action among the slave states--was robbed of its force by South Carolina secession and the determination of most of Alabama's political leaders to follow suit.

On December 24 voters went to the polls to decide upon delegates to the January 7th Convention and in effect to determine Alabama's fate within the Union. The returns came in slowly, and it was not known for certain which side had a majority until the delegates themselves convened

two weeks later. "The returns have been so contradictory," Senator Fitzpatrick reported from Washington, "that we don't know now, which party has a majority in our convention."[172] However, Jere Clemens exuded confidence when he told Senator John J. Crittenden that "the nine counties of the Tennessee valley have given in a solid body for the Union. My own majority in this County [Madison]...is 1039....No returns have yet been received from the other parts of the state." Clemens adamently predicted that "the six mountain counties, adjoining us, will certainly vote as the Valley has done, for the Union."[173] Clemens left the mistaken impression that all cooperationists were Unionists. Although most upstate cooperationists were inclined toward the Union, many still regarded secession as constitutional, especially if a national compromise could not be achieved.

Confusion reigned across Alabama. For example, the Montgomery Advertiser, an ultra organ, computed the vote at 36,000 for secession and 27,000 for co-operation (an estimate which later proved correct), while a cooperationist journal said its cause was victorious by 33,000 to 24,000.[174] Part of the confusion may be attributed to the difficulty in learning the precise views of a number of candidates. In some counties the cooperationists wished to unite all factions opposed to separate state action, and it was desirable that they conceal their views, especially if they were more pro-Union than pro-secession: Otherwise some of the cooperationists might vote with the straight outs. It is even difficult to tell whether some of the defeated candidates were cooperationists or secessionists. In some counties both winner and loser were from the same party. This was the case in Henry, Limestone, Montgomery,

and Morgan counties. In Lauderdale County one of the defeated candidates was a cooperationist and the other loser was a straight out. It is also difficult to classify the candidates according to former political affiliation. Some had been prominent in the 1860 presidential campaign, but most were comparatively unknown.[175]

When the election results became known, the secessionists in central and south Alabama were in a majority. They won in twenty-nine counties for an approximate vote of 36,000. The cooperationists were victorious in twenty-two counties, collecting 28,000 votes. One County in north Alabama, Calhoun, elected secessionists, while one in south Alabama, Conecuh, gave a plurality for co-operation. In eight counties in the Black Belt the immediatists had no opposition, and the cooperationists went unchallenged in three upcountry counties. The total vote was about 65,000, 25,000 less than the total vote in the presidential election.[176]

A recent analysis of the Convention election by Thomas B. Alexander argues that approximately 75 percent of the Breckenridge voters in Alabama voted for secessionists candidates and that the remainder stayed home.[177] But this evaluation does not explain the thirteen counties just above the Black Belt that voted for cooperationists delegates. All thirteen--areas of low slave density--had been in the Breckenridge column, except two of these counties, Coosa and Tallaposa, voted heavily for Bell and Douglas. Significant numbers of Breckenridge voters in these upper-central counties voted for cooperation. This section of Alabama showed a marked increase in the number of voters over those who cast ballots in November. The graph below bears out this point.[178]

	Bell+Douglas	Breckenridge	Co-op.	Sec.
Marion	259	986	1,547	no record
Winston	187	203	477	only candidate
Blount	494	546	1,487	858
Cherokee	750	1,706	3,387	1,125
Fayette	396	1,299	2,200	692
Walker	406	446	796	143
Jefferson	322	831	675	374
Tuscaloosa	1,046	1,219	2,439	1,334
St. Clair	414	963	763	499
Talledega	1,165	1,307	3,455	2,927
Randolph	880	1,734	3,897	3,316
Coosa	1,550	930	3,322	2,738
Tallapoosa	1,568	1,451	4,827	2,949
	9,437	13,621	29,272	16,955

These Breckenridge counties were populated with yeoman farmers who owned few or no bondsmen, and economic independence made them less susceptible to racist anxieties or rumors of slave plots than the poorer whites of the low country. To the latter, emancipation would bring a direct confrontation with blacks in the labor market. Although the up-country yeoman farmers were also racists, they were not as negrophobic as whites further to the south. They witnessed bitter election campaigns and they gave their votes to the cooperationists candidates. Certainly, this was true in Tallapoosa and Coosa, two counties which formed a wedge that drove deep into the immediate secession region below.

In the Tennessee Valley, upcountry,where the combined Bell-Douglas vote exceeded the Breckenridge vote, 90 percent of the former Bell-Douglas voters cast their ballots for co-operation and the remainder did not go to the polls. In south Alabama, however,only a little over a third of the Bell-Douglas men voted for co-operation somewhat less chose immediatist candidates, and the remaining third did not vote--mostly in those

counties where no cooperationist candidate announced. All five former Bell counties in south Alabama elected straight out delegates. In Baldwin, Butler, and Macon, the vote for immediatists was in excess of 80 percent of the total and there had been no effective opposition. In Greene County, where a contest did take place, one of the straight out candidates, James Webb, had been a Bell elector, and he rallied many of his old Whig-planter neighbors to the immediatist banner.[179]

Slaveholding density determined the vote. Counties with a heavy slave population in 1860 were secessionist, and usually by a wide margin; whereas those with a small proportion of slaves were cooperationists. Half of the cooperationist counties had less than 25 percent slaves in 1860, while less than one-seventh of the immediatist counties were populated by over 50 percent slaves. Seventeen straight out counties were predominantly black, and nine of them were 62.5 percent so; no cooperationist counties had so high a percentage. The State's cotton-producing region were dominated by immediatists. They were a majority in counties that produced 25,000 bales of cotton or more in 1859: only one co-operation county grew that much. The immediatist counties, home of Alabama's large plantations, also had a higher per capita wealth than did the cooperationist counties. Fourteen of the latter had less than $1000 per capita wealth in 1860, but only nine immediatist counties were that poor. On the other hand, only two co-operation counties (Madison and Morgan) had a per capita wealth of $2000 or more in 1860; and ten secessionist counties ranked that high, with three above $5000.[180]

In the Black Belt, where the plantation predominated, the wealth obviously was concentrated in the hands of the planters. Many of them

joined the immediatists as a result of economic distress--depleted cotton prices brought on by drought--and Lincoln's election. As to small planters (those who owned 20-50 slaves) of east-central Alabama, they knew that status and place rested upon slavery and cotton. They were desparately trying to be upwardly mobile at a time when both slaves and good soil were held by the big operator and selling at a premium. They, above all others were demanding more slave territory and federal protection of slavery in this territory. These small planters viewed Lincoln's victory as a threat to their economic and racial security. Small wonder, then, that regions with dense slave population desired secession. Furthermore, they were goaded by demagogues who, after Lincoln's election, sought a southern confederacy where they believed, honor, white supremacy, and high office awaited them.

Before the January Convention met, Governor Moore took possession of Forts Morgan and Gains on Mobile Bay and the Federal Arsenal at Mount Vernon. These acts, and the dispatches of radical commissioners to the other slave state meetings, was done to pressure convention delegates into secession. Governor Moore informed lameduck President Buchanan of his actions and Buchanan did nothing, prefering to leave Lincoln with the crisis.[181]

The Convention met on January 7, 1861. Immediate secessionists among the delegates advocated prompt and separate state secession: the cooperationists favored an all Southern Convention to consider a redress of grievances or secession. Actually, in the latter group there were many different shades of opinion, varying from unqualified Unionism to advocacy of secession with the condition that other southern states would

support Alabama should she secede. In their ranks, too, were reluctant secessionists who wanted to make one last plea for southern rights in the Union and await an overt act against the south by Lincoln's administration.

There is an interesting correlation to be made between net worth and political views. (The Appendix provides a graph which gives a breakdown as to age, birthplace, occupation, slave ownership, and net property worth of each delegate.) The immediatists, holding an average of $26,270 (Median $20,000) in real property, were considerably wealthier than the cooperationists with $10,388 (median $5000). They were also wealthier in personal property, having an average of $60,523 (median $37,913) as against only $26,304 (median $11,400) for their opponents. Averaging 32.5 slaves each (median 19), the immediatists held twice as many as did their adversaries, whose average was only 15.9 (median 12). Thus the backbone of the secessionist drive was provided by the striving planter-lawyer who owned 20 to 50 slaves. The wealthier favored straight out state withdrawal from the Union: lawyers and slaveholders comprised the bulk of this bloc; and there was a high correlation between individual position, property and immediate secession.[182]

Jere Clemens, the cooperationist delegate from Madison County knew that his faction had a slim chance of "carrying a majority of the Convention." He hoped that "we may be strong enough to refer the question of secession to the people." Clemens wanted "to gain time" so that the forces of compromise in the north would hopefully settle the issue.[183]

But with the Convention being held in Montgomery where disunionism and hostility to compromise prevailed, the moderates were at a distinct

disadvantage. Cooperationist Thomas McClelland described the martial spirit that greeted the delegates upon their arrival: "State troops are parading in the streets here day and night and they have guards stationed nightly at the Capital, even this Sunday morning the first thing that saluted my ears was the drum and fife of the Minute Men." Moreover, the spirit of belligerency was evident throughout Montgomery all during the proceedings. "The troops and the People are very rabid," McClellan observed. "I frequently hear it said that the State must be taken out, or there will be a hanging...."[184]

Clemens, and ex-Whigs Nicholas Davis of Madison County and Robert Jemison from Tuscaloosa led the moderates. The straight outs were captained by ex-Whig Thomas Watts; ex-Know-Nothing John T. Morgan as well as Yancey, who characteristically alienated both friend and foe before the meeting was over.

On the eve of the first meeting, the cooperationists knew that they did not have the votes and conceded the contest for temporary chairman. William S. Phillips of Dallas County, an immediate secessionist candidate, was elected. On the vote for permanent chairman, immediatist William M. Brooks received 53 votes and cooperationist Robert Jemison, garnered 45 votes. Since neither Brooks nor Jemison voted, the voting strength was 54 for separate state secession and 46 for cooperation. This same breakdown of votes was displayed on all major issues until the secession ordinance was voted upon. On the first day of the Convention Yancey and Watts, who were old political antagonists, walked to the platform arm in arm "a token of unity against Northern oppression."[185]

Following the election of a permanent chairman, secessionist G. C.

Whatley introduced a resolution denouncing the United States Government and the "Black Republican." It also insisted that the people of Alabama would not submit to the "inauguration and administration of Abraham Lincoln." This was a maneuver by the straight outs to test the cohesiveness of the cooperationists. Heated debate ensued. The resolution implied, cooperationists William R. Smith and Sydney C. Posey claimed, that force would be used to prevent Lincoln from being inaugurated. This matter was settled by an amendment which read that Alabama would not submit to a Republican administration that adhered to slave restriction, in the territories and the watered-down version passed unanimously.[186]

The immediatists kept the pressure on the cooperationists with a propaganda campaign. For example, on the second day of the secession, A. P. Calhoun, South Carolina commissioner, addressed the delegates. He invited Alabama to join with South Carolina, which had already seceded, in the formation of a Southern confederacy. Governor Moore, following him, transmitted reports from Alabama commissioners to the other slaveholding states. The delegates learned that secession by the remaining southern states, including the border, was imminent.

Secession sentiment was frequently stimulated by telegrams from these Alabama commissioners and from Congressmen. E. C. Bullock reported that on January 7 the Florida convention had approved immediate secession. E. W. Pettus telegraphed that Mississippi had drafted a secession ordinance and would secede on the ninth or tenth. Congressmen Sydenham Moore and David Clopton telegraphed from Washington that House Republicans had refused to consider Crittenden's compromise and had endorsed the actions of the commander of Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor.[187]

After Commissioner Calhoun's speech had evoked an outburst of thunderous applause in the galleries, the delegates decided to bar the public from Convention proceedings. Before adjourning for the day they learned that the chairman had selected a thirteen-man committee consisting of seven immediatists and six cooperationists. This body would determine what action the convention should take in regard to federal relations. It would eventually draft the secession ordinance.

The third day produced debate on a proposed resolution to resist forcefully attempts to coerce any of the seceding states. On this point Yancey clashed with several cooperationists who insisted that they really represented the majority of Alabamians. Yancey, flushed with anger, exclaimed that any resistance to the will of the convention majority would be treason against Alabama. His constituents, upcountry Unionist Nicholas Davis sharply replied, denied the sovereignty of the convention because of the way it had been called. They would sustain the delegates' work only if it reflected the popular will, and the way to ascertain that was to hold a plebiscite on secession. They would meet Yancey, Davis concluded, at the foot of their mountains and settle the question of treason with bayonets.[188]

Watts and Morgan admonished Yancey for his intemperate and fire-eating rhetoric and tried to placate the cooperationists. Apparently, Yancey had not lost his talent for making enemies even among his own partisans. After the Convention he was not selected as a delegate to the Confederate Convention which would meet on February 4, 1861. He dejectedly wrote his brother, "I have no idea of ever returning to public life again,"[189] a vow, of course, which he did not keep.

The cooperationists attempts to gain time continued to meet determined opposition. On the fourth day these efforts to refer secession to a general Southern Convention and to have a popular referendum on disunion were both defeated by the identical votes of 54 to 46.[190] Some cooperationists, in voting for these measures felt that they had performed their duty to their constituents and prepared to join the straight outs. This shift of position, they argued, was prompted by a desire not to give the impression that Alabama was divided on resisting Republican rule.

Yancey presented an ordinance of secession drawn up by the committee of thirteen. The measure was accompanied by a resolution inviting other southern states to meet in convention for consultation at Montgomery on February 4, 1861. Confident of victory, the immediatists, pending Yancey's motion, gave the cooperationists an opportunity to speak in opposition to straight out secession. Several upstate cooperationists condemned the impending decision, maintaining that many north Alabamians preferred secession from the state, and annexation to Tennessee, to disunion. Others predicted war and disaster for the State. Jere Clemens affirmed that he would vote for the secession ordinance because it was certain to pass. He was right, the vote for passage was 61 to 39. Furthermore, fifteen cooperationists who voted against the resolution later signed it.[191]

After the secession ordinace passed, Chairman Brooks declared Alabama a free, sovereign, and independent state. Brooks advised the cooperationists to forget any plans of "reconstruction." Alabamians, he warned, are now independent: "and sink or swim, live or die, they

will dismiss the idea of a reconstitution of the old Union now and forever." On the same day that the Convention passed the ordinace of secession, it also affirmed the resolution inviting the delegates of all slaveholding states to meet on February 4 for the purpose of forming a Southern Confederacy.[192]

Political ambition and economic instability have already been cited as key factors for secession support. A deeper motive was summed up by delegate E. S. Dargen of Mobile, one of the straight outs on the committee of thirteen. In giving his reasons for support of the ordinance, he told the Convention that he had for years been convinced that the southern states would be compelled to secede or abolish slavery. The day had now come, he said, when Alabama must make that choice. Furthermore:

> if pecuniary loss alone were involved in the abolition of slavery, I should hesitate long before I would give the vote I now intend to give. If the destruction of slavery entailed on us poverty alone, I could bear it....But poverty...would be one of the least evils that would befall us from the abolition of African slavery. There are now in the slaveholding states over four million slaves; dissolve the relation of master and slave, and what I ask would become of that race? To remove them from amongst us is impossible....We neither have a place to which to remove them, nor the means of such removal. They therefore must remain with us; and if the relation of master and slave be dissolved, and our slaves turned loose amongst us without restraint, they would either be destroyed by our own hands...or we ourselves would become demoralized and degraded.[193]

With the Convention business completed, the doors of the hall were thrown open and crowds swarmed onto the floor. Montgomery's residents had been making their presence felt throughout the proceedings. To some

degree they acted as an emotional lobby for secession. For example, they had organized a mock convention in the Senate chamber on January 10, adopted an ordinace of secession, and appointed a messenger to convey a copy of it to "the lower house"--the real convention--and ask its concurrence.[194]

To the cheering crowd, a State flag made by the ladies of Montgomery was raised over the capital. Upcountry Unionists could not contain their depression and bitterness. A delegate viewed the new flag against the southern sky and wrote: "Here I sit and from my window see the nasty little thing flounting in the breeze which has been the pride of millions of Americans and the boast of freemen the wide world over."[195] Another lamented, "I have no language to express my feelings when the new flag unfurled in the capital, to see a large crowd...transported with joy at such an event...was to me a soul sickening spectacle that I ever witnessed in all my life."[196]

The news of secession spread across Alabama. Demonstrations of support in the Black Belt continued into the night. An exception was the house of Henry Semple, a Montgomery Regency conservative, which was kept in darkness when his neighbors dwellings were lighted because, he said, they would be in mourning before the year was out.[197]

Secession produced great bitterness in north Alabama. The Convention was denounced for not referring it to the people for their endorsement. Black Belt and south Alabama straight outs had deliberately avoided a popular referendum. They feared that it would have been voted down. The immediatists regarded such a procedure as costly, time consuming, and unnecessary. In the Convention they argued that they had

come fresh from the people, having been selected a few weeks before, and that they knew the popular will.

Nevertheless, bitterness was rife in many mountain communities. One upcountry County burned Yancey in effigy. The United States flag, it was reported, continued to fly over the courthouses at Athens and Huntsville after the adoption of the secession ordinance.[198] Lawrence County Unionist Thomas Peters praised the Union, declaring that outside of South Carolina "in the cotton states politicians are trying the experiment of getting along without the people. Thus far they have succeeded." He also predicted a bleak future for masters and slaves: "But in the end unless we resort to military government there will be a revulsion; and as the Negro is the sole cause of our present troubles the fury of the non-slaveholder will be turned against him and his masters and we will have another tragedy...."[199]

H. L. Clay believed that a successful attempt would be made to excite the upcountry to rebellion against Alabama and that there would be civil war in their midst. A proposal was even made to form a new state to be called Nickajack--out of the upcountry counties--which might possibly be joined by counties in northeast Georgie and eastern Tennessee.[200] But L. P. Walker, Alabama commissioner to Tennessee, reported that Tennessee would follow her sister states out of the Union. This news exerted moderation on the highlands. Once the war got under way, however, it is significant that north Alabama, particularly the nine Tennessee Valley counties, had the highest desertion rate in Alabama.

On January 21, 1861, Alabama's seven-man Congressional delegation withdrew from the federal councils. Of this delegation, two of them

were upstate Unionists, George Smith Houston and W. R. W. Cobb. (Cobb refused to leave with his colleagues and stayed on for an additional week in the capital.) The other five were ardent secessionists. James Pugh of the Eufaula Regency was one of the more vitriolic. In one letter toward the end of January, he wrote of his fears that upcountry Alabama and the border states would yet consummate an agreement thus undermining the seceded states. The only way to avoid the "calamity of reconciliation is war," he declared and, therefire, South Carolina had "the power of putting us beyond the reach of compromise by taking Fort Sumter at any cost." This would put an end to all schemes of reconciliation.[201]

Alabama's two Senators, Clay and Fitzpatrick, were divided on disunion. Clay had accused the "Black Republicans" of plotting to destroy the south's domestic tranquility, "imperiling the lives of our wives and children by their schemes of manumission." Clay and like-minded southern representatives may have turned to secession out of failure to win the presidency for the south and thereby manage the political future of the United States. Shortly after the Republican victory, he had admitted, "of course, we cannot live under the same government with these people, unless we control it." And just before he left Washington, Jefferson Davis told him, "We have piped and they would not dance now the devil may care."[202]

When the Confederate Convention began its deliberations in Montgomery on February 4, 1861, representatives were present from six seceding states of the lower south. Alabamians selected moderates to represent her and denied places to most of the ultras. Their thinking was obvious, many of the state's less extreme straight outs as well as her

cooperationists wanted to prove how rational and deliberate the new government would be. In so doing they would thereby demonstrate to the wavering border states that there was nothing to fear from a southern confederacy under "whiggish" rule. Furthermore, the broad middle spectrum of southern political opinion could be won over to secession only if the hard core radicals were repudiated. This came as a blow to Alabama's ultras who believed high office was their due for having fired the State to secession.

William L. Yancey, for example, was not chosen as a delegate. Despite this slight, however, and despite his protestations about ever seeking office again, he did aspire to the presidency of the Confederacy. There was, in fact, a general impression outside the Gulf states that either he or Rhett would be chosen. Although always misjudged as a strident disunionist, Yancey over the years alienated many southern conservatives and chauvinists with his extremist invective. Moreover, among insiders he was known to lack leadership qualities. The time for ultraism had passed; moderation prevailed. The Confederate Constitution, except for expressed recognition of slavery and prohibition of revenue tariffs and internal improvements, was like the federal Constitution that the lower South had just abandoned. Moderation dictated the choice of a president and vice-president. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, although an ardent sectionalist, was hardly a radical. Georgia Whig Alexander H. Stephens, a last-minute secessionist and clearly not a fire-eater, was elected vice-president.

Davis arrived in Montgomery on February 16, 1861. On the night his arrival, Yancey allegedly greeted him with these words: "The man

and the hour have met." Southern society was about to experience its most tragic episode, a civil war brought on largely by the south's fear of losing mastery over its slave population. On February 18, 1861, Davis took the presidential oath of the Confederacy on the portico of the capitol building at Montgomery.

EPILOGUE

When the war came many in north Alabama still opposed secession. During the course of hostilities 2,578 white Alabamians enlisted in the Union army, a large number of whom were from the "seditious" counties of Winston, Walker, Fayette, Marion, and Blount. The majority of these Unionists joined the first Alabama brigade--one hundred and fifty from Winston County alone.[1]

A far greater number of Union sympathizers remained at home and by maintaining the security of the hills, they furnished a refuge for thousands of deserters and conscription evaders, thus depriving the Confederacy of vitally needed manpower. Their hostile presence in the mountains served as a picket line for federal forces in the Tennessee Valley and a buffer against Confederate attack.

Another segment of the population also manifested disloyalty. Thousands of Alabama slaves--including once trusted servants--left the plantations. These massive desertions lead one to question how common and how real the "bonds of affection" between slaveowner and slave had ever been. Certaintly, many slaveholders lived in dread that their bondsmen once freed would menace them and their plantations. However, most blacks had a passionate attachment to freedom and a desire to live as independently as possible. In all aspects of social existence--whether in forming churches, seeking employment or education, strengthening their families, or entering politics--black Alabamians struggled for a way of life that would provide them with dignity and self respect.[2]

Civil War and Reconstruction ended political careers of some and

conversely opened up new opportunities for others in Alabama: Of those ambitious politicians who were active in the eighteen fifties, the capricious William L. Yancey is most prominent. He was denied the Confederate Presidency and offered the post of Attorney General. He turned down the nomination and accepted instead Davis' offer of a special diplomatic mission to Europe. As was to be expected, he proved to be diplomatically inept and was recalled. Upon his return, Yancey represented Alabama in the Confederate Senate, where he became the leader of the anti-Davis forces, thereby reverting to his familiar role of outsider who agitated against the established party system. Among other things, Yancey wanted to force Davis into a public statement commending him for helping to bring on southern secession.[3]

Benjamin Fitzpatrick, a conservative Democratic Party loyalist, had a high standing in the Senate as indicated by the fact that he served as President pro-tempere of that body for the last three years before Fort Sumter. He opposed secession, but in the end thought opposition was useless. Secession, we have seen, meant the end of his political career. He not only lost his high position in the Union but also his state organization--the Montgomery Regency--for it had finally been smashed by its foes, the southern rights ultras of the eastern Black Belt. Fitzpatrick retured quietly to his plantation near Wetumpka and lived there during the war taking no part in Alabama's Confederate politics. In 1865 he made a brief return upon being elected president of the State Constitutional Convention, but the Republicans soon disfranchised him.

Williamson R. W. Cobb, Alabama's consistent Upstate Unionist, was defeated for the Confederate Congress in 1861 but won in a renewed bid

two years later, when he managed to capitalize on the growing anti-war sentiment. In 1864, shortly after his term began, Cobb was expelled from that body for his pronounced Unionist sympathies.[4]

Cobb's Unionist ally, Congressman George Smith Houston, refused to serve in the Confederate army. But he also declined to take the oath of allegiance to the government of the United States, an act that commended him to white Alabama after Appomattox. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1865, though he was not permitted to take his seat. Then, in 1874, he became the redeemer Governor of Alabama--the first Democrat chosen for that office in the post-bellum years. His campaign--"the white man's movement"--was directed against the "nigger domination" of the State under Republican rule. Finally in 1879 Houston realized his old ambition of taking a seat in the United States Senate.[5]

Some of Alabama's old Whigs rode back into power as the State wearied of the war. Robert Jemison, a leader of the cooperationists, replaced William L. Yancey in the Confederate Senate. C. C. Clay, Jr., also served there until 1863 when he was defeated by Richard Walker, the former Whig-Unionist, later southern rights oppositionist, and finally moderate. Thomas Watts, another ex-Whig who joined the secessionist ranks after Lincoln's election, also took advantage of the growing wartime discontent and in 1863 defeated Governor John Gill Shorter of Eufaula clique fame who had replaced Governor A. B. Moore in 1861.[6]

Supreme Court Judge John A. Campbell, who began his political career as a Calhounite comrade of Dixon Hall Lewis and after his selection to the High Court in 1853 became a Unionist, was anathema in his own State after secession. His Unionist sentiments had won him many

powerful enemies--the most implacable being his old collaborator William L. Yancey. Although Campbell, now shed of his judicial robes, aspired to the position of Attorney General, his enemies blocked him. After the war Campbell is best remembered as an attorney arguing before the Court in Slaughter-House, a case which contributed to a reinterpretation of the fourteenth amendment.[7]

Other prominent Alabamians openly collaborated with the Union armies. Editor J. J. Seibels ran for the Confederate Senate and was defeated. He then took a commission in the Confederate army. By 1864 Seibels was part of a "secret treasonable peace society" in Alabama that sought to "take the state back into the Union on any terms." By 1865 Seibels was co-operating with federal forces and with the Republican Party.[8]

Ex-United States Senator Jere Clemens, who helped lead the co-operationists, accepted a commission as a Major General in the Confederate army at the beginning of the war, but later he defected, went to Philadelphia, and made speeches for the Union League.[9]

Judge Samuel Rice who was in turn a Democrat, Whig, Know-Nothing and secessionist, became a "scalawag" after the war and joined the Republican Party in 1870.[10]

Several Alabama fire-eaters eventually achieved the high offices they had been seeking since the late 1850's. Leroy Pope Walker, the straight out secessionist from Madison County, was appointed Secretary of War in Davis' first cabinet but proved to be utterly inexperienced in administration. He resigned, after coming under fire in the Confederate Congress and was offered instead a foreign mission which he de-

clined. He spent the balance of the war years as a Judge in a military court. By 1863 he was also collaborating with Alabama Unionists, drafting resolutions for the return to the Union. He defended north Alabama Unionists accused of treason in 1863. Walker in effect had again shifted position as Alabama sentiment soured against the war. After hostilities ended, he retired to his law practice and never sought political preferment again.[11]

Firebrand Congressman J. L. M. Curry fashioned a unique career in the post-bellum years. A man of distinctive scholarly gifts, Curry was appointed agent of the Peabody fund in 1881. This grant of George Peabody, a New England millionaire philanthropist, was created to encourage state normal schools in the twelve southern states. Curry established, through the fund, the first segregated normal school system in the south. He was also placed in charge of a fund set up by Connecticut philanthropist John F. Slater for black schools in the south. Owing to his reputation as an administrator, he was appointed by Grover Cleveland to be United States minister to Spain. By the time of his death, in 1903, Curry was better known for his achievement as an administrator than a secessionist agitator.[12]

Several Black Belt southern-rights opportunists who had yearned for political elevation in the late 1850's became Democratic machine politicians in the post-Reconstruction period. These former "outsiders" distorted Republican rule and emancipation in Alabama as "nigger domination" and rode into power on the wave of the "white man's movement." Thus, they found that appeals to white racial anxieties were still operative. Former Whig and later southern-rights Democratic Congressman

James L. Pugh helped reorganize Alabama's Democratic Party in the 1880's. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1880 and served sixteen consecutive years there.[13]

William C. Oates, a protege of Pugh's and member of the Eufaula clique, gained a reputation as an ultra in 1860 and became a Black Belt political manager after 1870. He served in the Alabama lower House from 1870 to 1872, and in 1875 was chairman of the Judicial committee at the State Constitutional Convention. He was elected to Congress from the Eufaula district in 1880, reelected six times, and resigned in 1894 when he became Alabama Governor. This former radical ultra--"the one-armed hero of Henry County"--then fought Populism in the State. In 1890, when the Farmers Alliance was strong, he bitterly opposed the Populists' sub-treasury scheme and led the Alabama hard money men. Interestingly, he was one of the few men who opposed the soldier and grandfather clauses of the post Reconstruction Alabama Constitution and demanded an equal standard of fitness for members of both races at the polls.[14]

Probably no Alabama demagogue after the war achieved as much success and notoriety as John T. Morgan. A man with consuming ambition, he helped lead the forces of "white supremacy" in overturning Republican rule in 1874. In 1876 he was elected to the Senate, where he remained until his death in 1907. Morgan had been a Know-Nothing in the late fifties and continued after the war to stir racial animosities. He was, however, a man who when it served his interests, disregarded racial convictions and party loyalty. For example, some Senate Republicans made an attempt to bar him. He soon won their approval by voting to confirm the appointment of Frederick Douglas as Marshal of the District of Columbia.

While in the Senate he joined Republican expansionists and came to symbolize the southern push for new markets. He waged a ceaseless struggle in behalf of United States efforts to penetrate Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Using the states-rights argument, he fought effectively from 1886 to 1888 against the Blair education bill for eradicating southern illiteracy. In 1900 Morgan led the successful southern attack on the Force bill--which would have abrogated the grandfather clause in the constitutions of the southern states--and in both national and Alabama politics, he became a power that it was not safe to disregard.[15]

Edmund Pettus, Dallas County ally of John T. Morgan who had gained a reputation for his fiery secessionists speeches, also became an important political manager in post Reconstruction Alabama. He replaced the deceased James Pugh in the United States Senate in 1897 and was elected on his own in 1907.[16]

Two fire-eaters--Thomas H. Herndon and Edward A. O. O'Neal--who were frustrated in their attempts at political advancement before the war--became important Democratic managers during Alabama's Bourbon period. Herndon served in Congress from 1878 to 1883 and was chairman of the Mobile Democratic organization. O'Neal played an important role in "the white man's movement" of 1874, was elected Governor in 1882 and re-elected in 1884.[17]

Two of the State's most outspoken secessionists both Black Belt newspaper editors--ended their careers obscurely. George W. Gayle of the Dallas County Slaveholder assisted in prosecuting the war so actively and expressed his views so freely that, at the close of the war, the federal authorities arrested him for conspiracy in the assassination of President

Lincoln. He was later discharged without a trial and lived out his last years as a farmer.[18]

J. J. Hooper of the Montgomery Mail was elected secretary of the Provisional Confederate Congress in Montgomery but lost his post of permanent secretary when Jefferson Davis moved his government to Richmond. He died in Richmond in 1862.[19]

One last episode merits attention because it highlights a major theme of this study. Several Black Belt slaveholding families found that the Emancipation of slaves and consequent loss of racial control was so unbearable that they sought asylum in Latin American countries that still maintained slavery. Most of those who left accepted the offer of welcome extended by Brazilian authorities.[20]

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1]For what historians have said about the causes of the Civil War see Thomas J. Pressly, Americans Interpret their Civil War (New York: Mac Millan Co., 1954); Hal Bridges, Civil War and Reconstruction (Washington: American Historical Association, 1964).

[2]George Frederickson, The Black Image in the White Mind (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 61.

[3]The counties making up this region were: Lauderdale, Limestone, Madison, Jackson, Franklin, Lawrence, Morgan, Marshall, and DeKalb.

[4]Counties comprising this area: Marion, Winston, Fayette, Walker, Blount, Cherokee, St. Clair, and Calhoun.

[5]The upper piedmont consisted of: Jefferson, Randolph, Talladega, Shelby, and Bibb.

[6]The lower piedmont: Pickens, Tuscaloosa, Coosa, Tallapoosa, Chambers, and Autauga.

[7]The ten counties of the Black Belt were: Sumter, Greene, Marengo, Perry, Dallas, Wilcox, Lowndes, Montgomery, Macon, and Russell.

[8]Pinywoods and wiregrass counties were: Choctow, Washington, Clarke, Monroe, Conecuh, Butler, Covington, Coffee, Dale, Henry, Pike, and Barbour. The two farthest southern counties which made up a separate region tied to the Gulf coast were: Mobile and Baldwin.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]Clarence Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Alabama Department of Archives and History, 1933). Denman notes that Alabamians feared slave upheavals but he does not document their persistency and depth. Consternation over slave behavior was initially recorded by Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," American Historical Review, Vol. 24 (October, 1928), pp. 30-43. Steven A. Channing, in Crisis of Fear: Secession on South Carolina (New York: Simon and Shuster Co., 1970), emphasizes racial anxieties as a major factor for that state's secession. William W. Freehling, Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina, 1816-1836 (New York: Harper and Row Co., 1966), cites slaves rebellion and emancipation scares as motivations for South Carolina's struggle with the Federal Government. David B. Davis, The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), also cites southern fear of slave insurrections which animated their assault on northern Abolitionists.

[2]William Dunbar, "Letters and Papers of William Dunbar, 1749-1810," p. 2, in James B. Sellers, Slavery in Alabama (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1950), pp. 12-13.

[3]Sellers, op.cit., p. 232.

[4]The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol. V (Mississippi), p. 299, in Sellers, op.cit., p. 16.

[5]Acts of the General Assembly, 1825-1826, January 2, 1826. During Alabama's formative period--1819-1830--the population more than doubled. Significantly, the black population in proportion to the white dramatically increased. The white population in 1820 was 85,451 and rose to 190,406 by 1830. The slave population was 42,450 in 1820 and increased to 119,121 in 1830. See Donald B. Dodd and Wynelle S. Dodd, Historical Statistics of the South, 1790-1970 (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1973), p. 2.

[6]James B. Sellers, op.cit., pp. 10-12, 127-140; Albert B. Moore, A History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University Supply Store, 1934), p. 360.

[7]James A. Tait, Plantation Memorandum Book, 1822 (Montgomery: Alabama Department of Archives and History), p. 11; Eugene Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery (New York: Alfred Knopf Co., 1965), p. 46. According to the Federal Census of 1830 large planters--owning fifty or more slaves--comprised less than 1 percent of the white population by the end of the twenties and they owned almost 15 percent of the

state's slaves. The major planters also owned the most productive lands and throughout the ante-bellum period they increased their holdings. See J. C. Kiger, "Some Social and Economic Factors Relative to the Ante-Bellum Alabama Large Planters" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alabama, 1947), pp. 18-25.

[8]Kenneth Stampp, The Peculiar Institution (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1956), p. 183; D. R. Hudley Diary, pp. 63-64, in Kenneth Stampp, op.cit., pp. 180, 256-257.

[9]Harriet Martineau, Retrospect of Western Travel (London, 1838), p. 243.

[10]The Tuscumbian, June 28, 1826.

[11]The Tuscaloosa Observer, June 20, 1827.

[12]The Mobile Register, June 21, 1827.

[13]The Alabama Journal, September 15, 1828.

[14]Acts of the General Assembly, 1826-1827, January 13, 1827, p. 14. The Huntsville Democrat, December 22, 1826.

[15]The Tuscaloosa Mirror, August 7, 1824.

[16]The Alabama House and Senate Journals, 1819-1865, pp. 13-14.

[17]The Southern Advocate, December 30, 1825.

[18]Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols. (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921), Vol. III, p. 152; James Birney to Ralph R. Gurley, August 23, 1827 in Lucille Griffith, Alabama: A Documentary History to 1900 (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1972), p. 174.

[19]The Alabama House and Senate Journals, 1819-1865, p. 209.

[20]Governors' Correspondence: Governor John Gayle Correspondence, 1831-1835, David Crawford to Governor John Gayle, July 18, 1831. Montgomery, Alabama: Alabama Department of Archives and History.

[21]Acts of the General Assembly, 1831-1832, February 14, 1832, pp. 16-18, 13-14.

[22] The Liberator, October 29, 1831, in Herbert Aptheker, American Negro Slave Revolts (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 310.

[23] The Southern Advocate, November 5, 1831.

[24] Moore, op.cit., p. 190.

[25] The Huntsville Democrat, October 14, 1835; Governors' Correspondence: Governor John Gayle Correspondence, 1831-1835. Governor John Gayle to Governor William Marcy, November 14, 1835. Montgomery, Alabama: Department of Archives and History; Thomas M. Owen, "An Alabama Protest against Abolitionism in 1835," The Gulf Stream Historical Magazine, 2 (March-May, 1904), p. 29.

[26] Moore, op.cit., pp. 190-191.

[27] Wilcox County Records, "Minutes of the County Court," 1830-1840, p. 56, in Sellers, op.cit., p. 234.

[28] The Southern Advocate, December 1, 1836.

[29] Henry Watson, Jr. to Julius Reed, August 23, 1835. Henry Watson, Jr. Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library.

[30] C. C. Clay, Digest of the Laws of the State of Alabama (Tuscaloosa: Markmaduke J. Slade, 1843), p. 545.

[31] Ibid., p. 547. Emancipation continued even after laws were passed modifying manumission. The following graph indicates the size of the free-black population:

1819 -- 500 free-blacks
1830 -- 1572 free-blacks
1840 -- 2039 free-blacks
1850 -- 2265 free-blacks
1860 -- 2690 free-blacks

See Sellers, op.cit., p. 361.

[32] Acts of the General Assembly, 1859-1860, p. 29.

[33] J. C. Kiger, op.cit., pp. 18-25.

[34] Limestone County Records, "Minutes of the Circuit Court" (1830-1840), pp. 81-82.

[35]Sellers, op.cit., p. 283.

[36]Letter dated Perry County, Alabama, December 24, 1840 in Herbert Aptheker, op.cit., p. 83.

[37]Peter Still, The Kidnapped and the Ransomed: Being the Personal Recollection of Peter Still and his Wife "Vina" after Forty Years of Slavery: Related to Kate Pickard (Syracuse, N.Y.: 1856), pp. 159-161.

[38]Moore, op.cit., p. 191.

[39]Acts of the General Assembly, 1840-1841, p. 74.

[40]Wetumpka Argus, March 9, 1842.

[41]The Huntsville Democrat, September 9, 1842.

[42]Limestone County Records, "Minutes of the Circuit Court" (1844), pp. 50-63 in Sellers, op.cit., p. 246.

[43]The Weekly Chronicle, April 24, 1846.

[44]Frederick Law Olmstead, A Journey in the Back Country (New York: Schocken Publishers, 1970), p. 203.

[45]The Jacksonville Republican, January 28, 1837; ibid., June 14, 1844.

[46]Col. A. J. Pickett to Hon. P. W. Kittrell, November 15, 1845. A. J. Pickett Papers, manuscript collection. Montgomery, Alabama: Department of Archives and History.

[47]State Journal and Flag, January 23, 1846; Sellers, op.cit., pp. 179-183.

[48]Wetumpka Whig, in A. J. Pickett, A Reply to the objections against the Prohibitionary Law in relation to the introduction of negroes (Wetumpka, Alabama, 1846), p. 7.

[49]The Huntsville Democrat, January 28, 1846.

[50]Acts of the General Assembly, December 14, 1846, pp. 3-5.

[51]Albert M. Friedenberg, "Solomon Heydenfeldt: A Jewish Jurist of Alabama and California," Publications of the American Jewish Historical

Society, No. X (Baltimore, Maryland, 1902), pp. 129-131.

[52]The Huntsville Democrat, January 13, 1849.

[53]The Mobile Register, January 15, 1836; ibid. November 16, 1835; the Huntsville Democrat, March 23, 1834; ibid., September 5, 1833.

[54]Robert Jemison, Jr., Letterbooks, 1844-1854. Special Collections Department, University of Alabama Library.

[55]The Huntsville Democrat, January 31, 1849. Up until 1850 cotton profits were uneven. Short staple was under ten cents from the late 1820's to 1850.

[56]The Wetumpka State Guard, February 12, 1849.

[57]J. C. Kiger, op.cit., pp. 18-25.

[58]The Eufaula Democrat, March 6, 1849; Judge Heydenfeldt's dissent seems to have hampered his career to such an extent that he moved to California in 1850, where he became a judge of the Supreme Court of that state. See Freidenberg, op.cit., pp. 131-132.

[59]The Huntsville Democrat, February 3, 1849.

[60]Ibid., September 5, 1849.

[61]The Wetumpka State Guard, October 2, 1849.

[62]The Huntsville Democrat, October 5, 1849.

[63]The Eufaula Democrat, November 14, 1849.

[64]The Huntsville Democrat, November 22, 1849.

[65]The Southern Advocate, November 21, 1849.

[66]Governors' Correspondence: Governor Henry Collier, 1849-1853. Unsigned letter, December 10, 1850. Montgomery, Alabama: Department of Archives and History.

[67]Wetumpka State Guard, December 7, 1849.

[68]Governors' Correspondence: Governor Henry Collier, 1849-1853. Petition of Mobile Merchants, January 23, 1850. Montgomery, Alabama: Department of Archives and History.

[69]Ibid., December 25, 1850.

[70]Clement Eaton, The Freedom of Thought Struggle in the Old South (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), pp. 377-378.

[71]The Mobile Register, December 3, 1850.

[72]John A. Campbell to John C. Calhoun, November 20, 1847, in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., Correspondence of John C. Calhoun: Annual Report of the American Historical Association, Vol. II (Washington, D.C., 1899), pp. 1142-1143.

[73]H. W. Connor to John C. Calhoun, January 12, 1849; ibid., p. 1190.

[74]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 6, 1849.

[75]Ibid., January 11, 1849.

[76]The Montgomery Weekly Advertiser and State Gazette, November 25, 1849.

[77]The Wetumpka State Guard, June 20, 1848.

[78]The weekly Alabama Journal, December 13, 1851.

[79]The Crystal Fount, December 12, 1851. The Whigs who helped organize the society were an impressive group: Henry W. Hilliard, ordained Methodist Minister, former University professor, state legislator, former charge d'affaires to Belgium and elected to Congress in 1845 and reelected through 1851; John Gayle, former governor; Robert Jemison, an important Whig-planter-industrialist; John A. Winston, president of the state senate.

[80]S. Wesley Jones to William McClain, June 12, 1848; ibid., August 4, 1849, American Colonization Papers (Washington, D.C., Library of Congress).

[81]Ibid., December 29, 1851; ibid.

[82]J. J. Ormond, et al., The Code of Alabama (Montgomery: Britton and DeWolf, 1852), pp. 234-236.

[83] Ibid., pp. 237-240.

[84] Ibid., pp. 241-243.

[85] Ibid., pp. 390-391.

[86] Charles Grier Sellers, Jr., ed., The Southerner as American (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1966); Ralph E. Morrow, "The Pro-Slavery Argument Revisited," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 57 (June, 1961), pp. 79-94. Booker T. Washington wrote that the testimony of blacks as to the southern dread of insurrection emphasized that slaveholders realized the wrong of slavery. (See Booker T. Washington, The Story of the Negro (New York: Harper and Row, 1909), p. 180.)

[87] Frederick Law Olmstead, A Journey in the Seaboard Slave, States in the Years 1853-1854 with Remarks on their Economy, Vol. II (New York, 1904), pp. 218-219.

[88] Charles Nordhoff, The Cotton States in the Spring and Summer of 1875 (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1875), pp. 5-6.

[89] The Montgomery Cotton Planter and Soil Man, August 11, 1857; Robert Starobin, Industrial Slavery in the Old South (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 19, 160; New York Herald Tribune, March 8, 1860; Sellers, op.cit., p. 197; G. F. H. Tarrant, Honorable Daniel Pratt: A Biography (Richmond, Virginia, 1904), p. 26.

[90] The Marion Commonwealth, in the Pickins Republican, October 8, 1857.

[91] George W. Frederickson, The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914 (New York: Harper and Row, 1971).

[92] A. P. Bagby, Governor of Alabama, November 2, 1840, House Journal, 1840-1841, pp. 17-40; Frederick A. Ross, Slavery Ordained by God (Philadelphia, 1857); Sumter County, Whig, February 6, 1856; Montgomery Weekly Advertiser and State Gazette, June 13, 1855; the Montgomery Weekly Mail, April 19, 1851; the Eufaula Democrat, January 20, 1850.

[93] The Huntsville Democrat, October 31, 1850; the Wetumpka State Guard, August 4, 1851.

[94] J. C. Nott to Squire, February 14, 1849; J. C. Nott to James Hammond, June 3, 1845, in Ralph E. Morrow, op.cit., pp. 86-87. For an elaboration of Nott's racial theories, see William Stanton, The Leopard Spots:

Scientific Attitudes toward Race in America: 1815-1860 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960).

[95]The Huntsville Democrat, September 7, 1854.

[96]Ibid., September 14, 1854.

[97]The Montgomery Weekly Advertiser and State Gazette, October 11, 1854.

[98]Ibid., November 2, 1854.

[99]Norman R. Yetman, Life under the Peculiar Institution (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1970), p. 310.

[100]George Rawick, The American Slave: From Sundown to Sunup (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972), pp. 103, 105.

[101]The Jacksonville Republican, July 10, 1855.

[102]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, July 20, 1855.

[103]Thomas E. Croome to Governor John A. Winston, December 12, 1855. Governors' Correspondence. John A. Winston, 1853-1857. Montgomery, Alabama: Alabama Department of Archives and History.

[104]W. J. Cash, The Mind of the South (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1960); John Hope Franklin, The Militant South (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956).

[105]Franklin, ibid., pp. 159-160.

[106]Ibid., pp. 160-161.

[107]The Jacksonville Republican, April 8, 1856.

[108]Acts of the General Assembly, 1855-1856, p. 18.

[109]The Mobile Tribune, July 17, 1856.

[110]The Wetumpka Spectator, August 15, 1856.

[111]Ibid., August 22, 1856.

[112]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, September 20, 1856.

[113]The Daily Messenger, November 5, 1856.

[114]Ibid., December 19, 1856.

[115]Harvey Wish, "The Slave Insurrection Panic of 1856," The Journal of Southern History, 5 (May, 1939), pp. 206-222.

[116]The Dorsey Dispatch, December 19, 1856; the Wetumpka Spectator, December 21, 1856.

[117]The Dallas Gazette, December 19, 1856.

[118]Laura White, "The South in the 1850's as seen by British Consuls," The Journal of Southern History, 1 (May, 1935), p. 57; the Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, December 13, 1856; the daily Montgomery Mail, December 11, 1856.

[119]The Tuskegee Republican, January 1, 1857.

[120]The Sumter County Messenger, in the Dallas Gazette, January 2, 1857.

[121]The Tuskegee Republican, January 29, 1857.

[122]The Clarke County Democrat, February 12, 1857.

[123]Sellers, op.cit., p. 191.

[124]The Independent American, April 15, 1857.

[125]Ibid., September 17, 1857.

[126]The Wetumpka Spectator, September 15, 1857.

[127]The Wetumpka Dispatch, October 2, 1857.

[128]The Wetumpka Spectator, October 22, 1857.

[129]Norman R. Yetman, op.cit., pp. 311-312, 263; Rawick, op.cit., p. 263.

[130]The Clarke County Democrat, October 1, 1857.

[131]The weekly Alabama Journal, October 24, 1857.

[132]Ibid., November 14, 1857.

[133]The Montgomery Mail, April 3, 1858.

[134]The Clarke County Democrat, October 1, 1858.

[135]The West Alabamian, December 2, 1858.

[136]Moore, op.cit., p. 373.

[137]The Montgomery Confederation, May 18, 1858.

[138]Owen, op.cit., Vol. V, p. 1718; William Garrett, Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama (Atlanta, Ga., 1872), pp. 624-625.

[139]The Montgomery Mail, May 12, 1858.

[140]Ibid., May 13, 1858.

[141]Ibid., May 14, 1858.

[142]W. L. Yancey to Thomas J. Orme, in John W. Dubose, The Life and Times of William L. Yancey, two vols. (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1942), Vol. I, p. 367.

[143]The Moulton Democrat, June 11, 1858; the Mobile Mercury, June 30, 1858; the Montgomery Mail, June 18, 1858; the Dallas Gazette, August 6, 1858; the Montgomery Confederation, May 25, 1858; the Clarke County Democrat, May 20, 1858.

[144]The Tuskegee Republican, January 16, 1859.

[145]J. C. Kiger, op.cit., pp. 18-25; the Clarke County Democrat, May 20, 1859.

[146]Fabian Linden, "Economic Democracy in the slave South: An Appraisal of some recent views," Journal of Negro History, 30 (April, 1946), pp. 160, 172, 178; Paul Gates, The Farmers Age: Agriculture, 1815-1860 (New

York: Harper and Row, 1960), pp. 146-147; Gavin Wright, "Economic Democracy and the Concentration of Agricultural Wealth in the Cotton South, 1850-1860," Agricultural History, 59 (January, 1970), p. 85.

[147] J. C. Kiger, op.cit., pp. 18-25; Clayton W. Williams, "Statistical Atlas of Ante-Bellum Alabama" (unpublished), Alabama Department of Archives and History; Sellers, op.cit., pp. 42-43. Large planters did not consistently control high political offices. A recent monograph has claimed that "the relatively cohesive social groups of the largest planters in the...Black Belt of Alabama seems to have lost much of their political influence by the late 1830's." See Morton Rothstein, "The Cotton Frontier of the Ante-Bellum United States: A Methodological Battleground," Agricultural History, 59 (January, 1970), p. 160. Although major planters did not hold important political posts their point of view however dominated the political parties in the state. This issue will be dealt with in a later chapter.

[148] J. C. Kiger, op.cit., p. 20.

[149] Moore, op.cit., p. 272. The slave percentage was about 70 percent near Selma and 65 percent near Montgomery. Eleven counties produced six-tenths of the State's cotton crop. They were Dallas, Greene, Lowndes, Marengo, Perry, Wilcox, Montgomery, Macon, Sumter, Barbour and Russell.

[150] The Tuskegee Republican, January 28, 1859.

[151] The Mobile Mercury in the Southern Advocate, July 21, 1859.

[152] Acts of the General Assembly, 1857-1858, pp. 285, 291; Acts of the General Assembly, 1859-1860, p. 35.

[153] The Independent Monitor, August 6, 1857.

[154] The Gainsville Independent, March 13, 1857.

[155] The Southern Advocate, October 26, 1859.

[156] Acts of the General Assembly, 1859-1860, pp. 28, 63.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama from 1850 (Wetempka, Alabama, 1935), pp. 198-213.

[2]Malcolm C. McMillan, "The Alabama Constitution of 1819: A study of constitution making on the Frontier," Alabama Review, 3 (October, 1950), pp. 281-283; Thomas P. Abernathy, The Formative Period in Alabama: 1815-1828 (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1962), p. 43; Malcolm C. McMillan, Constitutional Development in Alabama: 1789-1901 (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), pp. 70-71; Chilton Williamson, American Suffrage from Property to Democracy: 1760-1860 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 219; Ralph Wooster, The People in Power: Courthouse and Statehouse in the Lower South, 1850-1860 (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), pp. 20-21.

[3]McMillan, Constitutional Development, p, 40; Wooster, ibid., pp. 48-59.

[4]Wooster, ibid., pp. 90, 112; Clanton W. Williams, "Early Ante-Bellum Montgomery: A Black Belt Constituency," Journal of Southern History, 7 (August, 1949), p. 522.

[5]Willis Brewer, Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record and Public Men: from 1546 to 1872 (Montgomery, Alabama, 1872), p. 412.

[6]Abernathy, op.cit., pp. 111-145.

[7]Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols.(Chicago, Ill.: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921), Vol. III, pp. 983-984; United States Census Reports, MSSS., Schedule 4, Productions of Agriculture in Dallas County, Alabama, 1850, n.p. Located in the Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama, ibid., Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants in the county of Dallas, Alabama, 1850, n.p.

[8]William Garrett, Reminiscences of Public Men in Alabama (Atlanta, Ga.: Plantation Publishing Co., 1872), pp. 471-475; Alabama Tract Book, Lowndes County, pp. 137-144.

[9]Owen, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 1141; Garrett, op.cit., p. 164.

[10]Owen, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 1; Garrett, ibid., p. 555; United States Census Reports, MSS., 1850, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants in the county of Russell, Alabama, 1850, p. 203; ibid., 1850, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants in the county of Russell, Alabama, 1850, p. 203. The 1850

census listed Abercrombie's personal wealth including real estate as $500,000 and 107 slaves. Some of it may have come from his informal banking operations: He often lent money and for collateral received promissory notes or deeds on land or slave property.

[11]Albert B. Moore, History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1935), pp. 160-175.

[12]Abernathy, op.cit., p. 168. Also in 1827 a bill was defeated that would have prohibited the teaching of slaves by free persons. Southern and central counties favored the measure while highland areas opposed it. See ibid., p. 138.

[13]The Southern Advocate, October 1, 1828. In 1824, Andrew Jackson garnered 47.5% of the Montgomery County vote. Again in 1828, Montgomery voters were not enthusiastic for Jackson. 66 percent of those eligible to vote refused to. See Clanton W. Williams, "Conservatism in the old Montgomery, 1817-1861," Alabama Review, 10 (April, 1957), p. 104.

[14]The Southern Advocate, December 22, 1832.

[15]Owen, op.cit., pp. 285-286.

[16]Ibid., p. 726.

[17]Mobile Commercial Register, September 12, 1829; Moore, op.cit., p. 163.

[18]William Freehling, Prologue to Conflict: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina (New York: Harper and Row, 1965).

[19]P. J. Staudenraus, The African Colonization Movement: 1816-1865 (New York: MacMillan, 1961), p. 185.

[20]Charles S. Sydnor, The Development of Southern Sectionalism: 1819-1848 (Baton Rouge, La.: University of Louisiana Press, 1948), p. 318.

[21]Theodore H. Jack, Sectionalism and Party Politics in Alabama, 1819-1842 (Menasha, Wisconsin, 1919), p. 75; Williams, op.cit., p. 105.

[22]Moore, op.cit., p. 170.

[23]The Southern Advocate, May 29, 1837; Alabama Journal, June 11, 1837; Moore, op.cit., pp. 170-171.

[24]Huntsville Democrat, October 14, 1836. Upcountry Democrats gave Van Buren his margin of victory. South central states-rights Whigs and Democrats supported Hugh Lawson White.

[25]Ibid., August 14, 1837; Moore, op.cit., p. 172.

[26]Jack, op.cit., p. vii; Arthur C. Cole, The Whig Party of the South (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publishers, 1962), p. vii.

[27]Abernathy, op.cit., p. 161; Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama," Journal of Southern History, 23 (November, 1957), pp. 512-153; Clanton W. Williams, "Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-Bellum Alabama," Alabama Review, 1 (October, 1948), p. 280; Thomas B. Alexander, et al., "Who were the Alabama Whigs?", Alabama Review, 15 (January, 1963), p. 9; Wooster, op.cit., p. 46.

[28]Thomas B. Alexander, et al., "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-Bellum Two Party System," Alabama Review, 19 (October, 1966), p. 266.

[29]Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery (Boston, Mass.: Little Brown and Co., 1974), p. 129. The authors also argue that the relationship between the planter and servile class was marked by patriarchal features which were strongly reminiscent of manorialism.

[30]Lucille Griffith, Alabama: A Documentary History to 1900 (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1972), p. 200.

[31]The best known industrialist was Daniel Pratt who migrated to Alabama from New Hampshire in 1838. He built a cotton gin factory in Autauge County and became one of the chief manufacturers of gins in the South. Owen, op.cit., Vol. IV, pp. 1388-1389.

[32]Thomas B. Alexander, et al., "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-Bellum Two Party System," op.cit., pp. 248-250; Wooster, op.cit., p. 46. Grady McWhiney in his monograph "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama?" argues that the Whigs attracted as many non-planter types to their party as the Democrats. This runs counter to C. C. Cole who asserted that planters made up the bult of the Whig Party. However, McWhiney does not deal effectively with Whig leadership. With few exceptions Whig leaders were planters-lawyers. This was not case with the Democrats who had more lawyers among their stewardship. See Grady McWhiney, "Were the Whigs a Class Party in Alabama?", op.cit., pp. 510-522. Also, for Democratic party leaders, see Ralph Wooster, The People in Power (Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 1969), p. 123.

[33] Owen, op.cit., Vol. VIII, pp. 843, 467.

[34] Brewer, op.cit., pp. 440-441; United States Census Reports, MSS., Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants in the county of Monroe, Alabama, 1830, p. 117.

[35] Owen, op.cit., Vol. IV, pp. 1010-1011; ibid., p. 814.

[36] Huntsville Democrat, January 26, 1840.

[37] Ibid., July 27, 1839, July 22, 1839; Jack, op.cit., pp. 66-68; Moore, op.cit., pp. 173-175. Many Montgomery planters during the 1820's and early 1830's had been Jackson men, but the majority were not. Many Montgomery planters in the late 1830's and early 1840's were Democrats, but the majority of them by 1840 were Whigs. These Whig planters owned from two-thirds to three-fourths of the slave property in their region. See Alabama Journal, September 2, 1850. And Clanton W. Williams, "Early Ante-Bellum Montgomery: A Black-Belt Constituency," op.cit., pp. 495-525.

[38] Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, August 16, 1839; Huntsville Democrat, August 17, 1839; Mobile Commercial Register, August 8, 1839.

[39] Jack, op.cit., pp. 66-69; Moore, op.cit., p. 174.

[40] Garrett, op.cit., p. 379.

[41] Mobile Commercial Register, December 28, 1839; ibid., January 15, 1840.

[42] Jack, op.cit., p. 74.

[43] Alabama Journal, April 1, 1840.

[44] Mobile Commercial Register, May 18, 19, 22, 1840.

[45] Ibid., August 12, 1840.

[46] Alabama Journal, August 20, 1840.

[47] Mobile Commercial Register, October 16, 1840.

[48] Ibid., August 5, 1840.

[49]Clanton W. Williams, "Notes and Documents: Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-Bellum Alabama," Alabama Review, 1 (October, 1948), pp. 292-293.

[50]Alabama Beacon, November 28, 1840. William R. King desired the Vice-Presidency in 1840. He wrote his niece to urge her husband, a delegate to the Democratic convention at Tuscaloosa, to use his influence to get him into the Alabama Democratic party nomination. Also, King tried to use his persuasive powers on his friend James Buchanan of Pennsylvania to get the national party endorsement. King won local support but failed nationally. See, John M. Martin, "William R. King and the Vice Presidency," Alabama Review, 15 (January, 1963), pp. 35-54.

[51]Williams, op.cit., pp. 292-293.

[52]Jack, op.cit., p. 74.

[53]Dixon Hall Lewis to Benjamin Fitzpatrick, January 19, 1841, Benjamin Fitzpatrick MSS., The Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

[54]Huntsville Democrat, November 28, 1840; ibid., January 2, 1841; John W. DuBose, The Life and Times of William L. Yancey, Vol. I (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publishers, 1942), pp. 93-94. Yancey's life will be discussed in the next chapter.

[55]Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, September 15, 1840.

[56]Huntsville Democrat, January 9, 1841.

[57]Ibid., January 17, 23, 1841.

[58]Ibid., April 3, 1841. Crabb bolted to the Democrats in 1844. See Owen, op.cit., p. 411.

[59]Alabama Journal, May 12, 1841.

[60]Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, August 19, 1841.

[61]Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, December 21, 1842.

[62]DuBose, op.cit., p. 110.

[63] Alabama Journal, February 1, 1843; Lewy Dorman, op.cit., p. 96. North Alabama had the lowest slave population in the state.

[64] Carlton Jackson, "The White Basis System and the Decline of Alabama Whiggery," Alabama Historical Quarterly, 24-25 (Fall and Winter, 1962-1963), pp. 252-253.

[65] Garrett, op.cit., p. 247.

[66] Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, January 11, 1843.

[67] Jack, op.cit., p. 83.

[68] Jackson, op.cit., p. 252.

[69] Jacksonville Republican, May 14, 1841; Wetumpka Argus, July 11, 1841.

[70] Moore, op.cit., p. 180.

[71] Ibid., pp. 180-181.

[72] Alabama Senate Journal (1843-1844), pp. 197-199. Significantly, Terry owed the Bank $30,000. See, William R. Smith, Reminiscences of a Long Life (Washington, D.C., 1899), p. 276.

[73] Moore, op.cit., p. 183.

[74] Ibid., p. 185.

[75] John Quincy Adams, Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848, 12 vols., ed. Charles Francis Adams (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1874-1877), Vol. XII, p. 25.

[76] Alabama State Sentinel, September 5, 1860.

[77] William L. Barney, The Road to Secession: A New Perspective on the Old South (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), pp. 96-97. Alabama's frail party structure mirroed a similar political condition nationally. See Roy Nichols, The Disruption of American Democracy (New York: Mac Millan, 1948).

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Lillian Adele Kibler, Benjamin F. Perry: South Carolina Unionist (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1966), pp. 170-171, 365.

[2]Dwight Dumond, Anti-Slavery Origins of the Civil War (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1939), pp. 98-99; Dwight Dumond, The Secession Movement, 1860-1861 (New York: MacMillan Co., 1931), pp. 24-25; Woodrow Wilson, History of the American People (New York: MacMillan Co., 1902), pp. 111, 281; Clement Eaton, The Mind of the Old South (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana University Press, 1965), p. 267; Malcolm C. McMillan, "William L. Yancey and the Historians: One Hundred Years," Alabama Review, 4 (July, 1967), pp. 163-167.

[3]Frederick Jackson Turner, United States: 1830-1850 (New York: MacMillan Co., 1935), p. 245; Ulrich B. Phillips, The Course of the South to Secession (New York: Hill and Wang Co., 1964), pp. 134-135; W. J. Cash, The Mind of the South (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 99; J. W. DuBose, The Life and Times of William L. Yancey (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publishers, 1941); William Garrett, Reminiscence of Public Men in Alabama (Atlanta, Ga., 1872), pp. 681-706; A. B. Moore, A History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1935), pp. 193-199; Joseph Hodgson, The Cradle of the Confederacy or the Life and Times of Troup, Quitman and Yancey (Mobile, Alabama, 1872), pp. 339-528.

[4]Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr. to William L. Yancey, February 25, 1846, Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library; DuBose, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 30; Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., "The Young Manhood of William L. Yancey," Alabama Review, 19 (January, 1966), p. 29.

[5]Draughon, op.cit., p. 30.

[6]Ibid., pp. 30-31.

[7]Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., William L. Yancey: From Unionist to Secessionist, 1814-1852 (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Ph.D. Dissertation, 1968), pp. 12-36.

[8]Draughon, Young Manhood, p. 33.

[9]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., June 25, 1837, Benjamin Yancey, Jr., Papers.

[10]DuBose, op.cit., p. 32.

[11]Nathan Beman to Caroline Beman, April 3, 1837 in Draughon, Young Manhood, p. 36. After Yancey made a public career as a spokesman for southern institutions; a northern newspaper claimed that he had been dismissed from Williams for throwing a barrel through the window of a Methodist Church. See Boston Atlas, January 20, 1845.

[12]Gilbert Barnes, The Anti-Slavery Impulse (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964), p. 85.

[13]Nathan Beman to Caroline Beman, December 21, 1835, in Draughon, Young Manhood, p. 37.

[14]Nathan Beman to Caroline Beman, April 3, 1837, Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., Papers.

[15]William C. Yancey to Benjamin Yancey, Jr., June 25, 1837, ibid.

[16]Lillian Adele Kibler, op.cit., pp. 168-170.

[17]Ibid., pp. 199-211.

[18]DuBose, op.cit., p. 200.

[19]Ibid., pp. 91-127; A. B. Moore, op.cit., pp. 180-182, 196-197.

[20]DuBose, ibid., pp. 138-145.

[21]The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st session, Appendix, p. 951. Richard M. Johnson and William H. Browne, The Life and Times of Alexander H. Stephens (Philadelphia, Pa.: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1884), p. 207.

[22]Henry W. Hilliard, Politics and Pen Pictures (New York: G. P. Putnam and Son, 1892), p. 128.

[23]The State Journal and Flag of the Union, July 31, 1847; the Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, July 1, 1846; the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, July 11, 1846.

[24]Dixon Hall Lewis to Joseph W. Lesesne, April 6, 1846. Joseph W. Lesesne Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[25]Charles M. Wiltse, John C. Calhoun: Sectionalist, 1840-1850 (Indiana-

polis, Indiana: The Bobbs Merrill Co., 1951), p. 52; Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols. (Chicago: Clarke Publishing Co., 1921), Vol. III, pp. 271-273. Elmore's brother Rush later moved to Kansas to agitate for slavery; one of his sisters married Dixon Hall Lewis, and another married Benjamin Fitzpatrick.

[26]David Donald, "The Proslavery Argument Reconsidered," Journal of Southern History, 36 (February, 1971), p. 12. Donald uses the same analysis in accounting for the behavior of northern abolitionists. See David Donald, Lincoln Reconsidered (New York: Random House, 1956), pp. 19-36.

[27]Owen, op.cit., Vol. IV, p. 1824.

[28]Draughon, William L. Yancey: From Unionist to Secessionist, p. 173; DuBose, op.cit., pp. 155-157. Alleged voting fraud determined the outcome.

[29]The Huntsville Democrat, September 23, 1846.

[30]The Eufaula Democrat, November 4, 1846.

[31]Owen, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 888-891; C. M. Jackson to William P. Browne, June 1, 1846, William P. Browne Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History.

[32]Thaddeus Sanford to William P. Browne, August 21, 1846. William P. Browne Papers.

[33]Moore, op.cit., p. 188.

[34]Ibid. Lawrence County had one of the largest slave populations in north Alabama. See slave distribution map in Appendix. Franklin County's slave density was under 50 percent.

[35]The Southern Advocate, August 28, 1846.

[36]The Huntsville Democrat, September 8, 1846.

[37]The Southern Advocate, October 10, 1846.

[38]Clarence Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Department of Archives and History, 1933), pp. 2-3.

[39]Felix G. Norman to George Smith Houston, November 10, 1846, George Smith Houston Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library;

Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., "George Smith Houston and Southern Unity, 1846-1849," Alabama Review, 19 (July, 1966), p. 193. By 1850 Houston owned real estate valued at $20,000 and thirty-five slaves. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, Limestone County, Alabama, 1850, p. 98; ibid., Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Limestone County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 261-262. David Hubbard in 1850 owned thirty-five slaves. See ibid., p. 19. By 1860 he listed thirty slaves. See ibid., 1860, p. 14. His real estate worth in 1860 was $17,000. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, Limestone County, Alabama, 1860, p. 65. George Houston was a first cousin to Texas Unionist Sam Houston.

[40]The Eutaw Whig in the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, April 27, 1847; ibid., April 30, 1847.

[41]Owen, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 464-465.

[42]Campbell, Lesesne and Walker were under forty. All attorneys, Campbell became a Supreme Court justice in the fifties, and Lesesne and Walker changed their party affiliations twice in the fifties. See Owen, op.cit., Vol. III, pp. 293-294; ibid., Vol. IV, p. 1037; ibid., p. 1718. Walker, a chronic Southern Rights agitator, owned three slaves. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Mobile County, 1860, p. 25.

[43]The Eufaula Democrat, May 19, 1847. Interestingly, Yancey had borrowed $1453.00 from Chapman a week earlier. See receipt for a loan, April 27, 1847, William L. Yancey Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. Yancey used his mortgage as collateral for the loan.

[44]The Huntsville Democrat, May 26, 1847.

[45]Ibid.

[46]The Tuscaloosa Monitor, May 18, 1847.

[47]Franklin Bowden to William P. Browne, November 21, 1847, William P. Browne Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[48]Malcolm M. McMillan, "Taylor's Presidential Campaign in Alabama, 1847-1848," Alabama Review, 13 (April, 1960), p. 85.

[49]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, July 22, 1847.

[50]The Southern Advocate, July 30, 1847.

[51] Ibid., July 2, 1847.

[52] C. M. Jackson to William P. Browne, August 7, 1847, William P. Browne Papers.

[53] The Eufaula Democrat, June 23, 1847.

[54] The North Alabamian, July 23, 1847; the Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd session, Appendix, pp. 236-237.

[55] Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., George S. Houston, p. 195.

[56] Mrs. Clement C. Clay, A Belle of the Fifties (New York: Doubleday Page and Co., 1905), pp. 21-23.

[57] The Huntsville Democrat, August 26, 1847.

[58] Reuben Chapman to R. M. T. Hunter, August 21, 1847, in Chaplain W. Morrson, Democratic Politics and Sectionalism (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), p. 50.

[59] Joseph Lesesne to John C. Calhoun, August 21, 1847, in Chauncey S. Boucher and Robert P. Brooks, eds., "Correspondence to John C. Calhoun, 1837-1840," American Historical Association, Annual Report for the Year 1929 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), Vol. II, pp. 341-342.

[60] The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, September 25, 1847.

[61] Ibid., November 24, 1847. Hilliard's real estate holdings were listed for 1850 at $20,000. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, Montgomery County, Alabama, 1850, p. 295. By 1855 he owned sixteen slaves. See State of Alabama, Census Reports, Enumeration of Inhabitants, Montgomery County, 1855, p. 64. In 1860, he owned fourteen slaves. See ibid., Montgomery County, 1860, p. 43. In the mid-1840's, Hilliard's law partners were John Gill Shorter and Jefferson Buford, two future mainstays of the ultra Eufaula clique of Barbour County.

[62] The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, in the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, September 2, 1847.

[63] The Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, November 9, 1847.

[64] The Southern Advocate, November 13, 1847.

[65] Ibid.

[66] The North Alabamian, November 19, 1847.

[67] James E. Saunders to George S. Houston, December 3, 1847, George S. Houston Papers.

[68] The Southern Advocate, December 11, 1847.

[69] Dorman, op.cit., pp. 28-29.

[70] T. M. Williams, "Dixon Hall Lewis," Alabama Polytechnique Institute Historical Studies, 5 (1910), pp. 29-30. According to this account federal patronage played a significant role in the senatorial contest. Lewis wanted more federal jobs for his faction. After he supported Polk on the Oregon bill and the President's war policy, Polk instructed James R. Saunders, collector of the port of Mobile, to distribute more jobs to the Montgomery Chivalry. Thus Lewis had made his peace with Polk and was ready to make further concessions. See also Draughon, Yancey: From Unionist to Secessionist, pp. 179-180.

[71] William Fleming, et al., to William R. King, December 10, 1847, in Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, January 15, 1848; Felix G. Norman to George Smith Houston, January 23, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers. Norman signed the questionnaire and admitted its hostile import against Lewis and the Chivalry.

[72] Dixon Hall Lewis to William Fleming, et al., December 12, 1847, in Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, January 15, 1848.

[73] James E. Saunders to George Smith Houston, January 15, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[74] Felix G. Norman to George Smith Houston, February 10, 1848, Ibid.

[75] John A. Campbell to John C. Calhoun, December 20, 1847, in Jameson, ed., op.cit., Vol. XI, pp. 1152-1155.

[76] Draughon, op.cit., p. 181.

[77] William L. Yancey to William P. Browne, January 31, 1848, in the Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 8, 1848.

[78]Denman, op.cit., pp. 8-9. An opulent planter-manufacturer, Jemison became a key unionist leader in the late fifties.

[79]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, January 6, 1848.

[80]John C. Calhoun to Joseph W. Lesesne, February 11, 1848. Joseph W. Lesesne Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[81]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 5, 12, 1848. Another issue which augured future trouble for the two Democratic factions was the forthcoming senatorial election. This caused a Whig editor to assert, "The Hon. W. R. King may be considered the head of the Hunker faction and the ease with which the Hon. D. H. Lewis distanced him in the late Senatorial elections augurs no good for the Senatorial aspirations of any Hunker." See the North Alabamian, January 14, 1848.

[82]James E. Saunders to George Smith Houston, January 15, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[83]Ibid., February 26, 1848; ibid.

[84]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 17, 1848.

[85]Ibid. Most northern and western Democrats claimed that Mexican anti-slavery laws would carry over into the annexation.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Ibid., May 10, 1848. In the weeks before the Baltimore Convention, Yancey sought to persuade Levi Woodbury to make public his position on slavery extension. But Woodbury, on the advice of his son, did not make any public statements. His son, nevertheless, privately kept insisting that his father held the "southern position," Rayback, op.cit., p. 142.

[88]John Gayle to James Buchanan, February 16, March 9, 1848, in Joseph Rayback, Free Soil: The Election of 1848 (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky, 1970), p. 142.

[89]Reuben Chapman to George Smith Houston, March 29, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[90]H. B. Jones to Jefferson F. Jackson, February 19, 1848. Jefferson F. Jackson Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[91] James Saunders to George Smith Houston, April 3, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[92] Felix G. Norman to George Smith Houston, April 13, 1848, ibid.

[93] Alabama State Gazette, June 21, 1848. Most historians of the period consider Yancey as sole author of the Alabama Platform. See, for example, Allen Nevins, Ordeal of the Union: Fruits of Manifest Destiny, 1847-1852 (New York: Charles S. Scribners and Sons, 1947), p. 12.

[94] John A. Campbell to John C. Calhoun, March 1, 1848 in Boucher and Brooks, eds., op.cit., pp. 431-433.

[95] James P. McPherson, "The Career of John A. Campbell: A Study in Politics and the Law," Alabama Review, 10 (January, 1966), pp. 53-56. During the crisis of 1860, Campbell was a steadfast unionist.

[96] Thomas M. Peters to George Smith Houston, March 1, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[97] John N. Malone to George Smith Houston, March 3, 1848, ibid.

[98] Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, July 1, 1848; DuBose, op.cit., pp. 200-216.

[99] DuBose, ibid., pp. 212-221. Before he left, Yancey heard fellow Alabama Democrat John A. Winston tell the national party that Alabama would overwhelmingly support Cass and Butler. Winston was a wealthy planter-businessman. He owned 92 slaves in 1855 and by 1860 he held 110. See, An Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the County of Sumter, Census for the State of Alabama for 1855, p. 5. Also see, United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Sumter County, 1860, pp. 57-58. By 1860 his personal estate was valued at over $100,000. See ibid., Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, Sumter County, Alabama, 1860, p. 124. Winston despised Yancey and, like him, Winston had a volatile temper. In 1847, he burst into the office of a Dr. Perry of Gainsville, asked those present to stand aside and deliberately shot and killed the doctor. He then announced, "Thank God, I have killed the seducer of my wife and the destroyer of my peace." Winston, President of the state senate at the time, won aquittal from an Alabama Jury. See, the North Alabamian, June 18, 1847.

[100] Charleston Mercury, in the Huntsville Democrat, July 9, 1848.

[101] A. C. Mathews to George Smith Houston, June 6, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[102]The Montgomery State Gazette, June 19, 20, 1848.

[103]Ibid., June 21, 1848.

[104]The Montgomery State Gazette, June 20, 1848.

[105]Ibid., June 1, 1848.

[106]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, June 27, 1848.

[107]The Montgomery State Gazette, June 29, 1848. On Cochrane's Democratic party regularity, see John C. Calhoun to Joseph W. Lesesne, February 19, 1848. Joseph W. Lesesne Papers.

[108]Yancey was supported by three other Chivalry members, planter-lawyer George Goldthwaite, Mobile attorney Percy Walker and Yancey's law partner John Elmore. See the Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, September 21, 1848.

[109]The North Alabamian, May 19, 1848.

[110]The Montgomery State Gazette, June 23, 1848. James Belser had studied law with George Goldthwaite of the Montgomery Chivalry. See Owen, op. cit., Vol. III, pp. 131-132. Belser owned thirty slaves. See, Montgomery County Alabama Assessment of Taxes on Personal Property, 1853, p. 63, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[111]William L. Yancey to John C. Calhoun, June 21, 1848, in Jamison, ed. op.cit., p. 1144.

[112]Dixon Hall Lewis to William L. Yancey, June 27, 1848. William L. Yancey Papers.

[113]William L. Yancey to Dixon Hall Lewis, July 6, 1848. Dixon Hall Lewis Papers, Manuscript Collection, Auburn University, Ralph B. Draughon Library.

[114]Joseph Lesesne to John C. Calhoun, July 5, 1848, in Boucher and Brooks, eds., op.cit., p. 453.

[115]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, August 24, 1848.

[116]William L. Yancey, Address to the People of Alabama, pp. 66-74, 76, William L. Yancey Papers.

[117]The Montgomery State Gazette, August 21, 1848; the Huntsville Democrat, October 25, 1858.

[118]C. C. Clay, Jr. to George Smith Houston, July 19, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[119]The Montgomery State Gazette, August 10, 1848.

[120]Ibid., September 19, 1848.

[121]The Mobile Register, September 14, 1848; Felix B. Norman to George Smith Houston, July 27, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[122]Moore, op.cit., p. 201. Outstanding among the Whigs who labored for Taylor was lawyer James Pugh of Barbour County. In 1849, Pugh became a Southern Rights ultra and challenged an old friend, Whig Henry Hilliard, for his congressional seat. In 1850, Pugh owned sixty acres of land valued at $1000. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 4, Production of Agriculture, Barbour County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 353-354. He also owned twelve slaves. See ibid., Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Barbour County, Alabama, 1850, p. 398. In south Alabama, two Democrats who worked for Cass and popular sovereignty are noteworthy: ultra James A. Calhoun, nephew of John C. Calhoun, and John Gill Shorter who helped to organize the "Hotspur" Eufaula Regency.

[123]William Dickson to George Smith Houston, December 17, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[124]C. C. Clay, Sr., to ?, December, 1848, C. C. Clay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library. Fitzpatrick by 1850 had real estate worth $20,000. He had a 943-acre plantation. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 4, Production of Agriculture, Autauga County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 143-145.

[125]Joseph A. S. Acklin to George Smith Houston, December 10, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers. In 1850, Clemens owned ninety-four slaves, United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Madison County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 211, 213, 345.

[126]Daniel Coggin to George Smith Houston, December 24, 1848, George Smith Houston Papers.

[127]James E. Saunders to George Smith Houston, December 26, 1848, ibid.

[128]R. C. Brickell to George Smith Houston, January 16, 1849, ibid.

[129]E. R. Wallace to George Smith Houston, January 2, 1849, ibid.

[130]The Eufaula Democrat, February 6, 1849.

[131]The Florence Gazette in the Southern Advocate, January 19, 1849.

[132]Allen Nevins, op.cit., Vol. I, pp. 221-225.

[133]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 6, 1849.

[134]The Alabama Beacon, March 14, 1849; the Wetumpka State Guard, March 14, 1849, the Mobile Register, February 14, 1849. Numbers of those attending these meetings are seldom given.

[135]Moore, op.cit., pp. 203-204.

[136]R. T. Scott to Reuben Chapman, January 27, 1849, Governors' Correspondence, Reuben Chapman, 1847-1849, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[137]Draughon, "George Smith Houston and Southern Unity," op.cit., p. 203. Both King and Lewis were filling out the unexpired terms of Lewis and Bagby.

[138]Ibid., p. 205.

[139]Ibid., p. 206.

[140]The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser, February 15, 1849. Hilliard's district was divided between Southern Rights Democrats and Whig nullifiers in the eastern counties and a large plurality of Whig Unionist planters in the west-central counties.

[141]These ultra Southern Rights Democrats and Whigs were small to moderate slaveholders. Yancey, for example, held real estate amounting to $6,000. See, United States Census Reports, Schedule 1, Free Inhabitants, Montgomery County, Alabama, 1850, p. 268. In 1850, he owned eleven slaves. See ibid., Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Montgomery County, Alabama, 1850, p. 416.

[142]The Eufaula Democrat, April 10, 1849. Hilliard, a Methodist minister and former University of Alabama professor, was appointed by President Tyler to a ministerial post in Belgium. He served three terms in Congress--1845-1851. In 1856, he became a Know-Nothing, in 1857, a Demo-

crat. After the War, he ran for office as a Republican in Georgia. See Owen, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 814.

[143]Austin T. Venable, "Alabama's War of the Roses," Alabama Review, 7 (October, 1955), pp. 253-254.

[144]John A. Calhoun to John C. Calhoun, November 22, 1847, in Boucher and Brooks, eds., op.cit., pp. 410-411.

[145]Nullifying Whigs in the Eufaula Regency were James L. Pugh, Jefferson Buford, Alpheus Baker, E. C. Bullock. Democrats also made up an important part of the faction. Among them: Eli and John Gill Shorter, John Cochrane, Lewis Cato, Sterling Cato, Jere N. Williams, Henry D. Clayton, Tennent Lomax. All these men were lawyers-small slaveholders and editors. See, Henry Mayer, "A Leaven of Disunion: The Growth of the Secession Faction in Alabama, 1847-1851," Alabama Review, 22 (April, 1966), pp. 105-107. Eli Shorter owned forty-four slaves in 1859. See, United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Barbour County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 285-286. James L. Pugh owned twelve slaves in 1850. See ibid., p. 398.

[146]The Huntsville Democrat, May 12, 1849.

[147]Henry Hilliard to John M. Berrien, May 8, 1849. John M. Berrien Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[148]The Alabama State Gazette, May 30, 1849.

[149]The Wetumpka State Guard, March 29, 1849.

[150]The Huntsville Democrat, June 20, 1849. Pugh came from humble origins, starting as a store clerk, mail carrier. Interestingly at the Convention there was no disposition to censure the two highland Democrats, Houston and Cobb, for their refusal to sign Calhoun's address.

[151]Elias Earl to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., September 14, 1849, Benjamin C. Yancey Papers; C. B. Stone to William L. Yancey, August 26, 1849, William L. Yancey Papers. After the campaign, Hilliard was reported to have said, "the Democrats utilized all their card tricks and they even tried to bring a knave all the way from South Carolina." See DuBose, op.cit., pp. 238-239.

[152]Venable, op.cit., pp. 256-257.

[153]The Wetumpka State Guard, June 26, 1849.

[154]The Mobile Register, August 27, 1849.

[155]The Alabama Journal, September 14, 1849.

[156]The Mobile Register, August 10, 1849.

[157]George Smith Houston to Howell Cobb, August 10, 1849, in Ulrich B. Phillips, ed., The Correspondence of Robert Teembs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb. American Historical Association, Annual Report for the Year 1911, 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), Vol. II, p. 173.

[158]The Mobile Register, November 19, 1849.

[159]Denman, op.cit., pp. 37-38.

[160]The Mobile Register, November 23, 1849.

[161]The Macon Republican, December 27, 1849.

[162]The Mobile Register, November 19, 1849.

[163]Ibid., October 12, 1849. The Whigs gained fifteen seats in the lower House leaving the Democratic majority at eight. Whigs won control of the upper House by one vote. See the Wetumpka State Guard, October 14, 1849.

[164]The Wetumpka State Guard, November 21, 1849.

[165]Ibid., December 1, 1849.

[166]Jere Clemens to George Smith Houston, July 21, 1849, George Smith Houston Papers.

[167]The Mobile Herald and Tribune, December 2, 1849.

[168]The Wetumpka State Guard, December 19, 1849; the Macon Republican, December 6, 1849.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1] Journal of the Senate, 1849-1850, p. 340.

[2] William R. King to John Gayle, January 15, 1850. William R. King Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[3] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, February 20, 1850.

[4] Ibid.

[5] The Eufaula Democrat, February 19, 1850. Southern rights moderates and Unionists far outnumbered ultras. Thirty-six delegates were chosen. Among them were four firebrands: John A. Campbell (D), Jefferson Buford (W), R. C. Shorter (D), George Goldthwaite (D). See Southern Advocate, February 20, 1850.

[6] The Southern Advocate, February 20, 1850; the Macon Republican, February 28, 1850.

[7] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, February 23, 1850.

[8] The Mobile Register, February 5, 1850.

[9] The Eufaula Democrat, March 16, 1850.

[10] The Macon Republican, February 21, 1850.

[11] The Montgomery Alabama Beacon, April 20, 1850.

[12] The Huntsville Democrat, April 4, 1850.

[13] Ibid., May 2, 1850.

[14] Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, May 1, 1850. Seibels, a leading ultra in 1850 to 1851, by the mid-fifties, was appointed chargé d'affaires to Belgium. Even before his appointment he had broken with the firebrands and began cooperating with Democratic party regulars.

[15] The Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor in the Macon Republican, May 9, 1850.

[16]Albert B. Moore, A History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University Book Store, 1935), pp. 240-241; Ralph B. Draughon, Jr., William Lowndes Yancey: From Unionist to Secessionist, 1814-1852 (University of North Carolina, Ph.D. dissertation, 1968), p. 212.

[17]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, May 22, 1850.

[18]Draughon, ibid., p. 212.

[19]The Huntsville Democrat, February 7, 1850.

[20]The Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, p. 102.

[21]The Southern Advocate, May 29, 1850.

[22]The Mobile Herald and Tribune, March 5, 1850.

[23]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, March 13, 1850.

[24]The Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, p. 339.

[25]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, March 13, 1850.

[26]The National Intelligencer in the Montgomery Alabama Journal, March 12, 1850.

[27]The Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, p. 468. Alston owned fifty-nine slaves and 600 acres of land. See United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants in Marengo County, Alabama, 1850, n.p., ibid., Schedule 4, Productions of Agriculture in Marengo County, Alabama, 1850, pp. 883-884. Alston in the mid-fifties became a Know-Nothing and then in 1860 a Democrat.

[28]Moore, op.cit., pp. 240-241.

[29]The Huntsville Democrat, May 9, 1850.

[30]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, May 29, 1850. John Erwin, once a Whig but now in 1850 a Democrat, twice ran unsuccessfully for Congress in his district. See Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols. (Chicago: Clarke Publishing Co., 1921), Vol. III, p. 547.

[31]The Alabama Whig in the Montgomery Alabama Journal, May 22, 1850.

[32]The Southern Advocate, May 20, 1850.

[33]William L. Barney, The Road to Secession: A New Perspective on the Old South (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), pp. 3-48.

[34]Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 1850-1860 (Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 44-45.

[35]The Huntsville Democrat, June 13, 1850.

[36]Ibid., July 4, 1850.

[37]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, July 4, 1850.

[38]Ruth K. Neuermberger, The Clays of Alabama: A Planter-Lawyer Political Family (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1958), p. 110.

[39]The Southern Advocate, June 19, 1850.

[40]Thaddeus Sanford to William P. Browne, July 10, 1850, William P. Browne Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[41]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, August 16, 1850.

[42]The Macon Republican, August 15, 1850.

[43]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., August 17, 1850, in Draughon op.cit., p. 216.

[44]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, August 22, 1850.

[45]Draughon, op.cit., p. 218.

[46]James A. Meriweather to Howell Cobb, August 24, 1850, in Ulrich B. Phillips, ed., The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb. American Historical Association, Annual Report for the Year 1911, 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1913), Vol. II, p. 210. William Garrett, an Alabama Democratic party regular, said that Alabama Whig Howell Rose of Coosa County first used the term "fire-eater." See Dorman, op.cit., p. 47.

[47]William R. King to Dr. A. Saltmarsh, August 25, 1850, William R. King Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[48]The Congressional Globe, 31st Congress, 1st Session, Appendix, p. 647.

[49]Ibid., pp. 947-950.

[50]Ibid., p. 779. Reacting against such tirades as Harris', Professor A. P. Barnard of the University of Alabama (in a Fourth of July oration in Tuscaloosa) blamed the emotionalism of the day on "unprincipled agitators." One of their typical exaggerations, he said, dealt with the losses from fugitive slaves: "Actually, the census showed that there were not 200,000 free Negroes in all the free-states put together and their numbers had not...increased in the past twenty years. Let Alabama turn her back on these false excitements." See Allen Nevins, Ordeal of the Union: The Fruits of Manifest Destiny, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribners and Sons), Vol. I, p. 366.

[51]Ibid., p. 647.

[52]Ibid., pp. 1520, 1533, 1535.

[53]Laura White, Robert Barnwell Rhett: Father of Secession (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publishers, 1963), pp. 127-128.

[54]Holman Hamilton, Prologue to Conflict (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1966), p. 106.

[55]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, September 11, 1850.

[56]Congressional Globe, op.cit., pp. 1395-1397.

[57]Hamilton, op.cit., pp. 166-190.

[58]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, October 9, 1850.

[59]Ibid.

[60]The Spirit of the South, November 5, 1850. The Eufaula Regency controlled Eufaula Democrat changed its masthead in October 1850 to the "Spirit of the South: Equality in the Union or Independence of it."

[61]Dorman, op.cit., p. 48.

[62]Ibid., p. 43.

[63]Moore, op.cit., p. 244.

[64]The Mobile Tribune, October 12, 1850.

[65]John Cochrane to Thomas Ritchie, September 17, 1850, in the Spirit of the South, September 24, 1850.

[66]The Eufaula Democrat, September 10, 1850. Few Alabama newspapers gave attendance figures of the protest meetings taking place in 1850.

[67]Moore, op.cit., p. 244.

[68]The ultra newspaper in Dallas County was edited by George W. Gayle. Gayle, like most ultras, owned few slaves. By 1860, the Census listed three slaves in his possession. But the County itself had one of the largest slave percentages in the State--with 74 percent or 22,258 slaves out of a total population of 29.727. Clarence Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Alabama Department of Archives and History, 1933), p. 49. Clanton W. Williams, ed., "Presidential Election Returns and Related Data for Ante-Bellum Alabama," Alabama Review, 2 (January, 1949), p. 67; Owen, op.cit., Vol. III. p. 646.

[69]The Florence Gazette, November 9, 1850.

[70]The Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 1, 1850.

[71]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, November 6, 1850.

[72]John Witherspoon DuBose, The Life and Times of William Lowndes Yancey, 2 vols. (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publishers, 1942), Vol. I, pp. 252-253.

[73]The Macon Register, October 3, 1850.

[74]Ibid., October 10, 1850.

[75]The Southern Advocate, October 23, 1850.

[76]The Mobile Register, in the Southern Advocate, October 16, November 13, 1850. Dallas County ultras denounced the "vacillating course" of the Mobile Register and pledged neither to read nor correspond with the Journal again.

[77]The Southern Advocate, October 16, 1850.

[78]Ibid., November 20, 1850.

[79]Ibid., December 4, 1850.

[80]George Smith Houston speech, November 1850, George Smith Houston Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library.

[81]The Southern Advocate, October 16, 1850.

[82]Draughon, op.cit., p. 221.

[83]Harold D. Woodman, ed., Slavery and the Southern Economy (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1966), p. 6.

[84]Leistore James to Governor Henry Collier, September 9, 1850. Governors' Correspondence, Governor Henry Collier, 1849-1853. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[85]The Spirit of the South, October 22, 1850.

[86]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, July 23, 1850.

[87]The Mobile Register, December 4, 1850.

[88]A. B. Moore to Bolling Hall, November 15, 1850. Bolling Hall Papers. Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[89]The Spirit of the South, January 7, 1851.

[90]W. H. Crenshaw to Bolling Hall, January 11, 1851, Bolling Hall Papers.

[91]The Spirit of the South, February 4, 1851. Buford by 1860 owned four slaves after selling most of his slave holdings to finance his ill fated expedition to Kansas in the mid-fifties. See United States Census Reports, op.cit., Barbour County, 1860, n.p.

[92]Jemison owned 175 slaves; Watts held 178 slaves; Patton claimed 117 slaves. See United States Census Reports, op.cit., for Tuscaloosa, Montgomery and Lauderdale Counties, 1860, n.p.

[93]Dorman, op.cit., pp. 178-191.

[94]The Spirit of the South, January 28, 1851.

[95]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, February 19, 1851. The counties sending the largest delegations were Montgomery, Barbour, Lowndes, and Dallas. Southern Rights Clubs were organized in only three north Alabama counties--Madison, Lauderdale and Franklin. See the Huntsville Democrat, February 20, 1851.

[96]The Mobile Register, March 24, 27, 1851.

[97]The Jacksonville Republican, March 5, 1851.

[98]William R. King to F. K. Beck, March 3, 1851, William R. King Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[99]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, April 5, 1851; the Macon Republican, April 11, 1851.

[100]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, April 23, 1851.

[101]Draughon, op.cit., p. 244.

[102]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, May 28, 1851.

[103]Ibid., June 18, 1851.

[104]Ibid.

[105]Moore, op.cit., p. 247.

[106]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, June 12, 1851.

[107]The Chambers Herald, June 20, 1851.

[108]The Spirit of the South, July 20, 1851.

[109]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, July 12, 1851.

[110]DuBose, op.cit., pp. 262-264.

[111]Henry Hilliard, Politics and Pen Pictures, at Home and Abroad (New York: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1892), pp. 250-252.

[112]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, August 11, 1851.

[113]The Mobile Register, August 7, 1851.

[114]The Montgomery Alabama Beacon, August 16, 1851.

[115]Ibid.

[116]The Southern Advocate, August 2, 1851.

[117]The Huntsville Democrat, August 4, 1851. Editor J. Withers Clay called Cobb a disgrace to Alabama because of his uncouth manners and his unionism.

[118]The Montgomery Alabama Journal, August 16, 1851.

[119]Ibid. Although not a candidate for Governor, William Yancey received 411 votes.

[120]The Huntsville Democrat, July 17, 1851.

[121]The Spirit of the South in the Macon Republican, October 16, 1851.

[122]The Hayneville Chronicle in the Macon Republican, October 23, 1851.

[123]The Sumter County Whig, August 2, 1851.

[124]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., November 17, 1851, Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[125]Henry Meyer, "A Leaven of Disunion: The Growth of the Secession Faction in Alabama, 1847-1851," The Alabama Review, 22 (April, 1966), pp. 60-61.

[126]Draughon, op.cit., p. 171.

[127]The Southern Advocate, September 17, 1851.

[128]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, September 27, 1851. Seibels who labored tirelessly for re-establishing the old party structure was attacked by an ultra journal as being in the company of "northern Abolitionists." See the Dallas Gazette, March 16, 1852.

[129]Thaddeus Sanford to John Bragg, June ? 1852, John Bragg Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[130]John Slidel to Howell Cobb, January 28, 1852, in Ulrich B. Phillips, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 276.

[131]The Southern Advocate, February 4, 1852.

[132]The Sumter County Whig, February 17, 1852.

[134]Dorman, op.cit., p. 78.

[135]John Martin, "William R. King and the Vice Presidency," Alabama Review, 25 (January, 1963), pp. 50-51.

[136]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, September 22, 1852. The leading members of the Convention were: Yancey, John Elmore, Jefferson Buford, Percy Walker, Thomas Williams, J. G. Gilchrist, and George W. Gayle. Most of these Alabama ultras, we have already observed were modest to small slaveholder-laywers. For example, Williams, Elmore and Yancey all of the Montgomery Southern Rights Club, owned four, fifteen and thirty-five slaves respectively. See United States Census Reports, Slave Schedule, Montgomery County, 1860, n.p. These small planter-lawyers desperately tried to edge their way up the social ladder through the combination of land, slaves and office-seeking. Their ascendancy, they thought, demanded both more slave soil and war against Abolitionism. Their situation became more desperate as the price of land and slaves rose steadily in the late 1850's.

[137]DuBose, op.cit., pp. 269-270.

[138]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, November 13, 1852.

[139]The Sumter County Whig, November 9, 1852.

[140]Clayton Williams, op.cit., pp. 68-69.

[141] Ibid. Greene County ranked third in slave population. Macon was ninth in slave density. Monroe County and Montgomery County ranked fourteenth and seventh respectively. See ibid.

[142] Ibid. Barbour County ranked twentieth in slave density and Lowndes was ninth in slave population. See ibid.

[143] C. C. Cole, The Whig Party of the South (Washington, 1913), p. 274.

[144] Dorman, op.cit., p. 81.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, January 15, 1853.

[2]John Hardy to Bolling Hall, January 13, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[3]Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama, 1850-1860 (Wetumpka, Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), p. 90.

[4]John Hardy to Bolling Hall, January 13, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[5]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, May 11, 1853.

[6]John Hardy to Bolling Hall, May 13, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers.

[7]C. M. Jackson to Bolling Hall, June 28, 1853. Ibid.

[8]A. Semple to Bolling Hall, June 28, 1853. Ibid.

[9]W. H. Northington to Bolling Hall, July 13, 1853. Ibid.

[10]A. J. Pickett to Bolling Hall, July 13, 1853. Ibid.

[11]The Macon Republican, June 9, 1853; The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, August 17, 1853.

[12]About one thousand Whigs in three Black Belt counties defected and voted for Clopton because of Abercrombie's apostacy in 1852. However, he gained a similar number of Democratic votes in the lower part of the district and received help from the nullifying Whigs--the Eufaula Regency --of east-central Alabama. Dorman, op.cit., p. 88. The Spirit of the South, August 17, 1853.

[13]The Huntsville Democrat, August 7, 1853.

[14]C. C. Clay, Jr. to Bolling Hall, September 30, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Nathaniel Davis to Bolling Hall, September 2, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers.

[17] G. T. Yelverton to Bolling Hall, October 18, 1853. Bolling Hall Papers. George Yelverton was a Democratic Party organizer in west-central Alabama.

[18] The Southern Advocate, December 7, 1853.

[19] Dorman, op.cit., p. 98.

[20] Ibid., p. 99.

[21] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, March 11, 1854, the Mobile Register, May 28, 1854. Senator Stephen A. Douglas who authored the Kansas-Nebraska Act believed the 1820 Missouri line to be an irritation which kept the slavery imbroglio alive in Congress. By 1855-56 many in the south deemed the Kansas Nebraska Act anti-southern because popular sovereignty was so vague, it was open to any interpretation Douglas chose to give it. At times Douglas maintained that slavery could be dealt with at any territorial stage. When Douglas came out against the pro-slavery Lecompton Kansas constitution most southerners were convinced that Douglas was an enemy of the south.

[22] The Greensboro Beacon, June 2, 1854.

[23] The Jones Valley Times, April 1, 1854.

[24] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, February 16, 1854.

[25] J. L. M. Curry to C. C. Clay, Jr., July 5, 1854. C. C. Clay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library.

[26] J. L. M. Curry to C. C. Clay, Jr., July 11, 1854. C. C. Clay Papers.

[27] C. C. Clay, Jr. to James E. Broome, July 11, 1854. Ibid.

[28] William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., October 2, 1854. Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr. Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[29] A. B. Meek to Benjamin Fitzpatrick, December 20, 1854. A. B. Meek Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and His-

tory, Montgomery, Alabama.

[30]The Montgomery Mail, December 7, 1854.

[31]The group also included: Judge Samuel F. Rice; Congressman William R. Smith; state representative Percy Walker; planter-lawyer T. B. Betha; and two new politicians, John T. Morgan and Luke Pryor. See A. B. Moore, A History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University Book Store, 1934), p. 255

[32]The Alabama Journal, February 2, 1855.

[33]The Dallas Gazette, January 19, 1855; the Alabama Journal, January 20, 1855.

[34]The Dallas Gazette, April 20, 1855.

[35]Ibid., May 11, 1855.

[36]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, June 14, 1855.

[37]C. M. Jackson to Bolling Hall, June 6, 1855. Bolling Hall Papers.

[38]George S. Houston to Theodore I. Key, June 20, 1855. George Smith Houston Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library.

[39]O. H. Bynum to David Hubbard, June 21, 1855. David Hubbard Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[40]The Dallas Gazette, July 6, 1855.

[41]Ibid., July 24, 1855.

[42]The Independent American, July 11, 1855; Dorman, op.cit., p. 120.

[43]The Montgomery Mail, August 2, 1855. Because of redistricting James Dowdell shifted from the Seventh to the Third district. He had originally defeated Whig Alexander White in the Congressional race in the Seventh district in 1853.

[44]Dorman, op.cit., p. 122.

[45]The Dallas Gazette, August 24, 1855. Sampson W. Harris because of redistricting was shifted from the third to the seventh district.

[46]James Stallworth owned thirty-six slaves, Percy Walker owned three, and Eli Shorter owned forty-four. See Richard Bjurberg, A Political and Economic Study of Alabama Governors and Congressmen, 1831-1861 (unpublished M.S. thesis: Auburn University, 1947), pp. 140-160.

[47]The Dallas Gazette, September 14, 1855.

[48]The West Alabamian, October 8, 17, 1855.

[49]The Dallas Gazette, November 2, December 7, 1855.

[50]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, November 23, 27, 1855.

[51]The Dallas Gazette, November 30, 1855.

[52]Ibid., December 14, 1855.

[53]The Spirit of the South, November 20, 1855.

[54]The West Alabamian, October 10, 1855.

[55]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, January 14, 1856.

[56]Speech of Mr. William Russell Smith of Alabama on the Kansas Contested Election (Washington: John T. Towers, 1856), p. 88.

[57]Bernard A. Weisberger, "The Newspaper Reporter and the Kansas Imbroligo," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 36 (June, 1950), pp. 633-650.

[58]The Dallas Gazette, January 18, 1856.

[59]Benjamin Yancey owned 78 slaves and L. P. Walker owned six. See United States Census Reports, Slave Schedule 2, Talledega County, 1860, n.p. For Yancey see ibid., Cherokee County, 1860, n.p.

[60]James Peebles to C. C. Clay, Jr., March 11, 1856. C. C. Clay Papers. Ruth K. Nuermberger, The Clays of Alabama: A Planter-Lawyer Politician Family of the Old South (Lexington, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1958), p. 141.

[61]Arthur Hopkins and C. C. Langdon resided in Mobile and Parsons came from Talledega County in upper east-central Alabama.

[62]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, February 1, 1856.

[63]Ibid., February 1, March 11, 1856.

[64]Ibid., February 9, 1856.

[65]Walter Lynwood Fleming, "The Buford Expediation to Kansas," Alabama Historical Society Transactions (1904), pp. 175-176.

[66]Ibid., p. 177.

[67]Ibid., p. 109; James A. Rawley, Race and Politics (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1970), p. 130.

[68]The Huntsville Democrat, May 1, 1856.

[69]Speech of Eli S. Shorter of Alabama on the Massachusetts Personal Liberty Bill delivered in the House of Representatives, April 9, 1856 (Washington: Union Office, 1856), p. 16.

[70]Dorman, op.cit., p. 129.

[71]J. F. Grant to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 10, 1856. C. C. Clay Papers.

[72]Z. L. Nabers to C. C. Clay, Jr., June 11, 1856. C. C. Clay Papers. However, in the same letter Clay said, "it is a ticket for the Union wing of the Southern Democracy--such as Houston and Cobb....With our present nominees, the issues will not be fairly fought with Abolition and our triumph will be incomplete....Of course, I'll not say this except to those who feel and think with me and then in confidence. I shall do my best for the ticket...." See C. C. Clay, Jr. to C. C. Clay, Sr., June 7, 1856. C. C. Clay Papers.

[73]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., July 8, 1856. Benjamin C. Yancey Papers.

[74]The Clarke County Democrat, July 17, 1856.

[75]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, August 2, 14, 16, 1856.

[76]William B. Figures to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., September 8, 1856. Benjamin C. Yancey Papers.

[77]The Southern Advocate, October 2, 1856.

[78]The Dallas Gazette, August 23, 1856.

[79]The Independent American, September 3, 1856.

[80]Dorman, op.cit., pp. 133-134.

[81]The vital statistics on this group are the following: J. L. M. Curry from Talledega County in upper-central Alabama, owned 19 slaves in 1850 and increased his holdings to 29 in 1860; David Clopton, from slave dense Macon County owned 10 slaves in 1850 and 17 in 1860; Sydenham Moore, from Greene County, owned 9 slaves in 1850 and 12 by 1860; John T. Morgan, of slave dense Dallas County claimed 6 slaves in 1860; Alphus Baker, from ultra Barbour County held 6 slaves in 1860; William F. Samford, from Macon County in the heart of the Black Belt was the largest slave owner in the group with 64 slaves; C. C. Clay, Jr., from upstate Madison County owned 3 slaves. See for slaveholding statistics, Richard Bjurberg, op.cit., pp. 149-170. Also for an analysis of the "new men" of the fifties throughout the lower south see William Barney, The Road to Secession: A New Perspective on the Old South (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), pp. 85-122.

[82]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, December 3, 1856.

[83]C. M. Jackson to John W. A. Sanford, November 20, 1856. John W. A. Sanford Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[84]Sydenham Moore to C. C. Clay, Jr., December 8, 1856. C. C. Clay Papers. Ibid., February 19, 1857. Ibid.

[85]The Dallas Gazette, September 19, 1856.

[86]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., December 4, 1856. Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr. Papers.

[87]Howell Cobb to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., December 20, 1856. Ibid.

[88]William L. Yancey to C. C. Clay, Jr., January 14, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers.

[89]William F. Samford to Neil Blue, September 25, 1856; December 31, 1856. William F. Samford Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. After 1857 the Montgomery Advertiser would become a strident Southern Rights paper. J. J. Seibels would then become editor of a new Montgomery Regency paper the Montgomery Confederation dedicated to Democratic national party loyalty.

[90]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, April 21, 1857.

[91]J. H. Caldwell to C. C. Clay, Jr., February 18, 1857; O. H. Bynum to C. C. Clay, Jr., March 5, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers.

[92]William F. Samford to Matthew Blue, March 18, 1857. Matthew Blue Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[93]C. C. Clay, Jr. to E. C. Bullock, March 30, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers.

[94]E. C. Bullock to C. C. Clay, Jr., April 18, 1857. Ibid.

[95]John Cochrane to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 9, 1857. Gabriel DuVal to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 14, 1857. Ibid. When Winston did make his desire for Clay's senate seat known, his candidacy was criticized by portions of the Alabama press as "unfettered ambition," and "aspiring to a position which neither his talents, education, or intellect qualified him to fill." See the Wetumpka Dispatch, June 12, 1857.

[96]The Wetumpka Spectator, April 23, 1857, the Dallas Gazette, May 8, 1857.

[97]The Alabama Beacon, May 1, 1857; the Montgomery Mail, April 16, 1857; Gabriel DuVal to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 14, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers.

[98]Gabriel DuVal to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 14, 1857. Ibid.

[99]The Dallas Gazette, June 5, 1857; the Montgomery Mail, June 11, 1857; Thomas A. Walker to C. C. Clay, Jr., June 28, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers; George T. Yelverton to C. C. Clay, Jr., July 5, 1857. C. C. Clay Papers.

[100]John E. Moore to Matthew Blue, June 12, 1857. Matthew Blue Papers.

[101]James A. Rawley, op.cit., p. 205.

[102]The Wetumpka Spectator, July 2, 1857.

[103]William F. Samford to Matthew Blue, July 7, 1857. Matthew Blue Papers.

[104]The Clarke County Democrat, August 21, 1857; Colin McRae to John W. A. Sanford, July 23, 1857. Colin McRae Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[105]The Montgomery Mail, July 30, 1857.

[106]Ibid., July 20, 28, 1857; the Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, July 29, 1857.

[107]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, August 21, 1857; the Montgomery Mail, July 18, 1857.

[108]The Alabama Beacon, July 17, 1857; the Tuscaloosa Monitor, August 6, 1857.

[109]The Southern Advocate, August 21, 1857.

[110]The Montgomery Mail, August 30, 1857.

[111]The Southern Advocate in the Alabama Beacon, August 21, 1857.

[112]The Montgomery Mail, August 27, 1857.

[113]William F. Samford to William P. Browne, August 17, 1857. William P. Browne Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. William P. Browne to William F. Samford, November 1, 7, 1857. William F. Samford Papers.

[114]The Southern Advocate, July 23, 1857; Z. L. Naheny to C. C. Clay, Jr., September 10, 1857. C. C. Clay, Jr. Papers; Henry D. Clayton to C. C. Clay, Jr., September 10, 1857. Ibid. The West Alabamian, November 4, 1857.

[115]Ruth K. Nuremberger, op.cit., p. 155.

[116]The Montgomery Mail, November 29, 1857.

[117]James Dowdell to John W. A. Sanford, December 5, 1857. John W. A. Sanford Papers. Gabriel DuVal to C. C. Clay, Jr., December 21, 1857. C. C. Clay, Jr. Papers.

[118]The Clarke County Democrat, December 10, 1857.

[119] Ibid., November 12, 1857; the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, November 12, 30, December 28, 1857; the Tuskegee Republican, January 7, 1858; William F. Samford to Matthew Blue, December 14, 1857. Matthew Blue Papers.

[120] The Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, January 14, 1858.

[121] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, January 14, 1858; the Montgomery Confederation, January 15, 1858.

[122] J. G. Randell and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction (New York: D. C. Health and Co., 1969), pp. 115-116.

[123] The Montgomery Mail, January 29, 1858.

[124] E. C. Bullock to C. C. Clay, Jr., March 9, 1858. C. C. Clay, Jr. Papers. The Tuskegee Republican, February 4, 1858; The Pickens Republican, February 18, 1858.

[125] The Clarke County Democrat, January 28, 1858; the Mobile Register also demanded the acquisition of Cuba for slavery. See the Mobile Register in the West Alabamian, March 3, 1858. Also see the Tuskegee Republican, February 25, 1858.

[126] The Clarke County Democrat, March 4, 1858; the West Alabamian, February 24, 1858.

[127] Speech of J. L. M. Curry of Alabama on the Admission of Kansas, February 23, 1858 (Washington, 1858), pp. 5, 8, in David Brion Davis, The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), p. 42; Speech of Sydenham Moore, of Alabama, on Kanasa and the Evil Effects of the Slavery Agitation (Baltimore: John Murphy and Co., 1858), p. 16. For chronic fears of slave uprisings in Alabama, especially in south-central Alabama, see Chapter One of this thesis.

[128] The Tuskegee Republican, March 11, 1858; William F. Samford to William P. Browne, April 1, 1858. William P. Browne Papers.

[129] John W. A. Sanford, Sr., to John W. A. Sanford, Jr., April 19, 1858. John W. A. Sanford, Jr. Papers. Clarence P. Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Department of Archives and History, 1933), p. 75.

[130] J. G. Randell and David Donald, op.cit., p. 116; James Dowdell to John W. A. Sanford, April 27, 1858. John W. A. Sanford Papers.

[131] The Montgomery Mail, May 11, 1858.

[132] The Montgomery Confederation, May 11, 17, 1858.

[133] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, June 11, 1858; James Dowdell to John W. A. Sanford, Jr., May 10, 1858. John W. A. Sanford Jr. Papers.

[134] The Alabama Beacon, January 24, 28, 1859, the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, April 16, 1859. Both these papers were old-line Whig journals published in west-central and upper-central Alabama. Each represented conservative planter interests in their regions.

[135] Fabian Linden, "Economic Democracy in the Slave South: An Appraisal of Some Recent Views," Journal of Negro History, 31 (April, 1946), pp. 140-189. Gavin Wright, "Economic Democracy and the Concentration of Agricultural Wealth in the Cotton South," Agricultural History, 54 (January, 1970), pp. 21-48. Otto H. Olson, "Historians and the Extent of Slave Ownership in the Southern United States," Civil War History, 18 (June, 1972), pp. 114-116. Eugene Genovese, The Political Economy of Slavery (New York: Pantheon Publishers, 1965), pp. 243-270. Genovese does not effectively deal with the small planter, who at least in Alabama, was more strident than the major planter for re-opening the African slave trade and acquiring more cotton land in the United States and the Caribbean. Furthermore, it is of some significance that Alabama's most vocal Southern Nationalists came from east-central Alabama, a region of small planters and farming. For the support south Alabamians gave to the building of a slave empire in the Caribbean see Robert E. May, The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861 (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), pp. 224-244. Also for the small planter in the Black Belt see William Barney, op.cit., pp. 62-67. For the movement throughout the deep south for re-opening the slave trade, see Ronald Takaki, A Pro-Slavery Crusade: The Agitation to Re-Open the African Slave Trade (New York: MacMillan Co., 1971), pp. 23-85. An older interpretation which argues the prevelance of a non-slaveholding yeomanry in the Alabama Black Belt is Frank L. Owsley, Plain Folk of the Old South (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1949), pp. 181-187. Linden and Wright have shown, however, that the big planters in the central Black Belt continually encorached on the non-slaveholders' land throughout the 1850's. Moreover, Owsley does not come to grips with the "plain farmer's" desire to become a slaveholding cotton operator himself.

[136] William K. Scarborough, ed., The Diary of Edmund Ruffin: Toward Independence, October 1856-April 1861, Vol. I (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana

State University Press, 1972), pp. 195-196, 220.

[137]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, June 25, 1858.

[138]The Montgomery Mail, July 12, 1858; the Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, July 14, 1858.

[139]The Clarke County Democrat, July 10, 1858.

[140]It is not insignificant that Senator Clay had failed to procure for Samford a foreign ministerial post.

[141]William F. Samford to C. C. Clay, Jr., October 20, 1858. C. C. Clay Papers. William F. Samford to John W. A. Sanford, November 19, 1858. John W. A. Sanford Papers.

[142]In Alabama it was customary to have any election before the incumbent completed his term in order that his successor could qualify immediately for the previous term expired. The legislature regularly met and the second Monday in November of uneven years. If the legislature did not elect a successor to Senator Fitzpatrick or re-elect the Senator at the session of 1859-60, it would not have an opportunity to elect again until November of 1861,approximately seven months after the expiration of Senator Fitzpatrick's term. Unless, of course, it called a special session just for the purpose of electing a United States Senator.

[143]The Advertiser's condemnation was for Douglas' report to admit Minnesota as a free state.

[144]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, April 15, 1858; the Montgomery Confederation, October 30, 1858; the Dallas Gazette, July 23, 1858; the Gainsville Independent, November 27, 1858; the Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, December 23, 1858.

[145]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., November 7, 1858. Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr. Papers.

[146]The Montgomery Confederation, July 31, 1858; the Mobile Advertiser, August 17, 1858; the Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, April 15, 1858; the Dallas Gazette, November 22, 1858.

[147]C. C. Clay, Jr. to C. C. Clay, Sr., December 11, 1858. C. C. Clay Papers.

[148]Benjamin Fitzpatrick to Asa Briggs, February 19, 1859. Asa Briggs Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library.

[149] William F. Samford said he would contest Dowdell and campaign on congressional protection of slavery in the territories.

[150] James Dowdell to John W. A. Sanford, March 6, 1859. John W. A. Sanford Papers.

[151] The Clarke County Democrat, March 11, 1859. Similar to other Alabama ultras Rice was a modest slaveholder. According to the 1860 Census he owned 23 slaves. See United States Census Reports, Slave Schedule 2, Montgomery County, 1860, n.p.

[152] This caused a regular Democratic newspaper to remark, "The Signal sides with the Administration in the Kansas affair." Samford had again changed his mind about Kansas. "And the editor is in favor of re-opening the African slave trade. Governor Wise is against the Administration on Kansas and has condemned the resumption of the slave trade. Wise supports the territorial policy of Judge Douglas who is a defender of 'squatter sovereignty.' Verily are politicians (Mr. Samford) humbugs." See the West Alabamian, April 15, 1859.

[153] The Gainsville Independent, June 18, 1859; the Clarke County Democrat, February 3, 1859.

[154] The Gainsville Independent, June 25, 1859; the Southern Messenger, August 10, 1859.

[155] J. L. M. Curry to Thompson, May, 1859 in Roy Nichols, The Disruption of the American Democracy (New York: MacMillian Co., 1948), p. 256. The Mobile Mercury in the Mobile Register, April 15, 1859.

[156] Shepard like fellow "hotspurs" was a modest slaveholder. He owned 37 slaves. See United States Census Reports, Slave Schedule 2, Mobile County, 1860, n.p.

[157] The Mobile Register, May 10, 11, June 16, July 20, 1859.

[158] The Clarke County Democrat, May 2, June 23, August 18, 1859.

[159] The Dallas Gazette, July 29, 1859; the Clarke County Democrat, August 18, 1859.

[160] W. H. Northington to John W. A. Sanford, April 27, 1859. John W. A. Sanford Papers.

[161]The United States Census Reports, Schedule 2, Slave Inhabitants, Macon County, 1860, p. 85. The Montgomery Confederation, May 11, 1859.

[162]David Clopton defeated Thomas Judge by a slim 200 votes. The Democracy was put on trial for two more years by an eastern Black Belt constituency which had by 1859 become monolithic in considering secession a rational option given the election of a "Black Republican" president in 1860. See the Tuskegee Republican, August 4, 1859.

[163]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, July 6, 1859, the Montgomery Confederation, July 2, 15, 1859.

[164]The Montgomery Confederation, July 27, 1859.

[165]Laura White, Robert Barnwell Rhett: The Father of Secession (New York: The MacMillian Co., 1931), p. 159.

[166]The Southern Messenger, July 27, 1859, ibid., August 10, 1859.

[167]The Florence Gazette, August 10, 1859.

[168]Lewy Dorman, op.cit., p. 151. George Frederickson, The Black Image in the White Mind (New York: Harper and Row Co., 1971), p. 61.

[169]The Mobile Register, July 27, 1859; the West Alabamian, August 9, 1859. Interestingly, W. P. Chilton an old Montgomery Whig Unionist was elected to the state legislature as a Democrat and soon was in law partnership with William L. Yancey.

[170]The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, August 31, 1859.

[171]Benjamin Fitzpatrick to C. C. Clay, Jr., August 30, 1859. C. C. Clay Papers. The Mobile Register, November 1, 1859.

[172]The Tuskegee Republican, November 10, 1859.

[173]The Mobile Register, October 27, December 9, 14, 1859.

[174]E. C. Bullock to C. C. Clay, Jr., December 13, 1859. C. C. Clay Papers. Also by means of a Parliamentary tactic Yancey's supporters were able to defeat a resolution in the Senate to fix a day for election of a Senator during the current legislative sitting. See Lewy Dorman, op.cit., p. 153.

[175] Clarence Denman, op.cit., pp. 7-9, 159-160. Even more laudertory of Yancey's consistent adhering to principle is John W. DuBose, The Life and Times of William L. Yancey, 2 Vols. (New York: Peter Smith Publishers, 1942).

[176] Laura White, op.cit., p. 156.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]The Tuskegee Republican, October 27, November 24, 1859. The Florence Gazette, November 2, 1859; the Alabama Beacon, November 2, 1859; the Macon Republican, October 28, 1958; the Montgomery Confederation, October 27, 1859.

[2]The Clarke County Democrat, November 17, 1859.

[3]The Montgomery Mail, October 29, 1859.

[4]The Montgomery Mail, November 30, 1859; the Tuskegee Republican, December 5, 1859; the Southern Era, December 6, 1859; the Montgomery Confederation, December 7, 1859; the Montgomery Mail, December 16, 1859.

[5]The Alabama Beacon, November 21, 1859; the Florence Gazette, December 28, 1859.

[6]The Cahaba Slaveholder, November 30, 1859; the Southern Messenger, December 14, 1859; Speech of the Hon. Sydenham Moore, Demceber 8, 1859, "On John Brown and the Black Republicans" in David Brion Davis, The Slave Power Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1969), p. 93.

[7]J. L. M. Curry to A. B. Moore, January 3, 1860. Governors' Correspondence, Governor A. B. Moore, 1857-1861, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[8]The Florence Gazette, December 7, 1859; the Clarke County Democrat, December 8, 15, 1859, January 12, 19, 1860; the Southern Advocate, December 14, 1859.

[9]The Mobile Register, November 29, 1859.

[10]The Montgomery Mail, December 12, 1859; The Acts of the General Assembly, 1859-1860, p. 28.

[11]The Montgomery Mail, December 7, 1859.

[12]The West Alabamian, December 8, 1859; the Dallas Gazette, December 16, 1859.

[13]The Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, January 29, 1860; the Montgomery Mail, January 3, 1860.

[14]The Gainsville Independent, December 17, 1859.

[15]Journal of the Acts of Alabama, 1859-1860, pp. 34-39.

[16]William Garrett to Lewis Parsons, January 12, 1860. Lewis Parsons Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[17]The Montgomery Confederation, February 26, 1860.

[18]Joseph Hodgson, The Cradle of the Confederacy: Or the Times of Troup, Quitman and Yancey (Mobile: Register Publishing Office, 1876), p. 406.

[19]Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama from 1850 through 1860 (Wetumpka, Wetumpke Printing Company, 1935), p. 155.

[20]The Montgomery Advertiser, November 16, 1859.

[21]The Montgomery Confederation, December 20, 1859, January 2, 1860.

[22]The Montgomery Mail, January 3, 1860.

[23]The Montgomery Confederation, January 3, 1860.

[24]J. L. M. Curry to Governor A. B. Moore, January 3, 1859. Governors' Correspondence, Governor A. B. Moore, 1857-1861, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[25]Levi Lawler to Lewis Parsons, December 28, 1859. Lewis Parsons Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[26]The list includes: Twenty-five year old W. C. Oates, who studied law with Eufaula clique fire-eaters, E. C. Bullock and Congressman James Pugh; H. D. Clayton of Barbour County, a thirty-three year old agitator who studied law with the Shorter brothers also of the radical Eufaula clique; Thomas H. Herndon from Mobile, a thirty-two year old editor-lawyer who served in the state legislature; C. A. Battle, who was thirty-one and had also read law with Judge John Gill Shorter of the Eufaula Regency. Battle joined William L. Yancey on his northern Breckenridge speaking tour. All of this "new breed" of political outsiders, with the exception of Clayton, held few bondsmen. Lewy Dorman, op.cit., p. 155; Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols. (Chicago: S. J. Clark Publishing Co., 1921), v. IV,

pp. 1292-1293; ibid., pp. 1301-1302; ibid., Vol. III, p. 347; ibid., p. 115.

[27]The Montgomery Mail, January 12, 1860.

[28]H. L. Clay to C. C. Clay, Sr., January 19, 1860. C. C. Clay Papers. Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina. J. Withers Clay to C. C. Clay, Jr., January 6, 1860, ibid.; the Clarke County Democrat, January 19, 1860.

[29]The Clarke County Democrat, January 19, 1860.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Austin L. Venable, "The Conflict between the Douglas and Yancey Forces in the Charleston Convention," The Journal of Southern History, 8 (May, 1942), p. 234. Also see Robert Johannsen, Stephen A. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 740-742.

[32]Joseph Hodgson, op.cit., p. 407.

[33]Allen Nevins, The Emergence of Lincoln (New York: Charles Scribners and Sons, 1950), Vol. II, pp. 205, 221, 224, 227.

[34]Jeffery J. Auer, ed., Antislavery and Disunion, 1858-1861: Studies in the Rhetoric of Compromise and Conflict (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1963), p. 106; Murat Halstead, Three Against Lincoln, ed. William B. Hesseltine (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1960), p. xi.

[35]Austin L. Venable, op.cit., p. 239. Also see Johannsen, op.cit., pp. 749-759.

[36]Richard Taylor, Destruction and Reconstruction: Personal Experiences of the Late War (New York: Putnam and Sons, 1879), p. 12.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Murat Halstead, op.cit., p. 32.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid., pp. 97-100; Damon Wells, Stephen Douglas: The Last Years, 1857-1861 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1971), pp. 228-229.

[41] James Hammond to M. C. M. Hammond, July 4, 1860. James Hammond Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[42] Martin J. Crawford to Alexander H. Stephens, May 11, 1860. Alexander H. Stephens Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[43] James Hammond to M. C. M. Hammond, July 4, 1860, op.cit.

[44] Murat Halstead, op.cit., p. 120.

[45] Charleston Mercury, June 4, 1860.

[46] William L. Yancey to C. C. Clay, Jr., May 4, 1860. C. C. Clay Papers.

[47] Robert Barnwell Rhett, Jr. to William P. Miles, May 10, 1860 in Steven A. Channing, Crisis of Fear: Secession in South Carolina (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1970), p. 210.

[48] The Montgomery Advertiser, May 16, 1860.

[49] The Montgomery Mail, May 14, 1860.

[50] The West Alabamian, May 29, 1860.

[51] The Southern Advocate, May 16, 1860.

[52] The Montgomery Confederation, June 12, 1860.

[53] The Cahawba Slaveholder in the Montgomery Confederation, May 26, 1860.

[54] John E. Ashmore to Benjamin Perry, June 4, 1860. Benjamin Perry Papers. Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[55] The Montgomery Confederation, May 18, 1860.

[56] Ibid., June 8, 1860.

[57] Ibid.

[58] The Montgomery Advertiser, June 13, 1860. North Alabama Democrats sent only three of their twelve delegates to the "bolters" Convention.

[59]The Montgomery Confederation, June 7, 1860.

[60]Robert W. Johannsen, op.cit., p. 772.

[61]The Montgomery Advertiser, October 17, 1860; Damon Wells, op.cit., p. 237; William K. Scarborough, The Diary of Edmund Ruffin: Toward Independence, October, 1856-April, 1861, Vol. I (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1972), p. 431.

[62]Damon Wells, op.cit., p. 233.

[63]James Hammond to M. C. M. Hammond, July 4, 1860. James Hammond Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[64]Robert W. Johannsen, op.cit., p. 775. Benjamin Fitzpatrick to J. J. Seibels, July 9, 1860. Benjamin Fitzpatrick Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

[65]Benjamin Fitzpatrict to W. Ludlow, June 25, 1860 in Ruth K. Nuermberger, The Clays of Alabama: A Planter-Lawyer-Political Family (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1958), p. 176.

[66]William K. Scarborough, op.cit., pp. 430, 433.

[67]Joseph Hodgson, op.cit., p. 453.

[68]Clement Eaton, The Growth of Southern Civilization (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1961), p. 324.

[69]The Mobile Advertiser in the Pickins Republican, May 29, 1860.

[70]The Montgomery Mail, July 7, 1860.

[71]The Southern Advocate, June 23, 1860; the Montgomery Mail, July 19, 1860; the Autauga Citizen, July 19, 1860.

[72]James G. Randall and David Donald, The Civil War and Reconstruction (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath and Co., 1969), pp. 118, 130-131.

[73]Durwood Long, "Political Parties and Propaganda in Alabama in the Presidential Election of 1860," Alabama Historical Quarterly, 25 (Fall and Winter, 1963), pp. 121-123.

[74]The Montgomery Daily Post, July 18, 1860.

[75]Ibid.

[76]The Mobile Daily Advertiser, August 4, October 5, 9, 21, 1860; the Montgomery Mail, September 27, 1860.

[77]The Mobile Daily Advertiser, September 5, 6, 9, 1860.

[78]Jere Clemens to John Bell, October 1, 1860. John Bell Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

[79]The Montgomery Daily Post, September 7, 1860.

[80]Ibid., September 24, 1860.

[81]The Alabama State Sentinel, October 24, 1860 in Lewy Dorman, op.cit., p. 163.

[82]The Mobile Register, July 21, 1860; the Montgomery Confederation, August 14, 1860; the Southern Advocate, September 2, 1860.

[83]The Montgomery Confederation, August 23, 1860.

[84]The Montgomery Confederation, July 19, 1860; the Southern Advocate, September 19, 1860; the Montgomery Post, October 24, 1860.

[85]William L. Yancey to Beverly Mathews, August 6, 1860, William L. Yancey Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, Jr., August 25, 1860, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

[86]The Montgomery Advertiser, September 31, 1860.

[87]Ibid., October 20, 1860.

[88]Edmund Ruffin to William L. Yancey, October 29, 1860 in William K. Scarborough, op.cit., pp. 633-634.

[89]The Montgomery Advertiser, October 16, 1860.

[90]Emerson D. Fite, The Presidential Election of 1860 (New York: MacMillan Publishers, 1911), pp. 215-216.

[91]Ibid., p. 219.

[92]The Cahawba Slaveholder in the Southern Champion, August 9, 1860.

[93]The Montgomery Mail, October 24, 1860.

[94]The Democratic Watchman, July 6, 1860.

[95]The Montgomery Mail, July 23, 1860.

[96]The Democratic Watchman, July 11, 1860.

[97]The Montgomery Mail, July 11, 23, 1860.

[98]The Montgomery Mail, August 8, 1860.

[99]The Montgomery Daily Post, August 1, 1860.

[100]Donald E. Reynolds, Editors Make War (Nashville: Vanderbuilt University Press, 1970), pp. 132-133.

[101]The Autauga Citizen, June 28, 1860; the Alabama Beacon, July 27, 1860.

[102]The Montgomery Mail, August 10, 1860; the Montgomery Advertiser, August 13, 1860.

[103]The Southern Advocate, August 15, 1860.

[104]The Clarke County Democrat, August 16, 1860.

[105]The Montgomery Confederation, August 26, 1860; the Talledega Reporter in the Montgomery Mail, August 23, 1860.

[106]Governor A. B. Moore to Walker Phelan, August 30, 1860. Governors' Correspondence, Governor A. B. Moore, 1857-1861, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[107]The Autauga Citizen, August 30, 1860; the North Alabamian, August 31, 1860; the Tuscumbia States Rights Democrat, September 14, 1860.

[108]The Tuscumbia States Rights Democrat, September 14, 1860; the Clarke County Democrat, September 6, 1860.

[109]The West Alabamian, September 5, 1860.

[110]The Clayton Banner, September 27, 1860.

[111]The Montgomery Mail, September 28, 1860; the Montgomery Advertiser, October 10, 17, 1860.

[112]The Montgomery Mail, October 19, 23, 1860; the West Alabamian, October 10, 1860.

[113]The Montgomery Mail, July 20, August 11, 1860.

[114]The Cahawba Slaveholder, August 16, 1860; Harold Woodman, ed., Slavery and the Southern Economy (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1966), p. 6.

[115]Fabian Linden, "Economic Democracy in the Slave South: An Appraisal of Some Recent Views," Journal of Negro History, 31 (April, 1946), pp. 140-149; Gavin Wright, "Economic Democracy and the Concentration of Agricultural Wealth in the Cotton South, 1850-1860," Agricultural History, 54 (January, 1970), pp. 84-85.

[116]The Huntsville Democrat, October 31, 1860.

[117]The Florence Gazette, October 31, 1860.

[118]The Montgomery Advertiser, October 27, 1860.

[119]Ollinger Crenshaw, The Slave States in the Presidential Election of 1860 (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1969), pp. 250-251.

[120]The Montgomery Mail, October 28, November 7, 1860; the Auburn Sketch Book, November 2, 1860 in Crenshaw, op.cit., pp. 250-252.

[121]Governor A. B. Moore to E. C. Bullock, October 11, 1860. Governors' Correspondence, Governor A. B. Moore, 1857-1861, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama. E. C. Bullock to Governor A. B. Moore, October 22, 1860, ibid.

[122]The Montgomery Daily Post, October 3, 1860; the Selma State Sentinel, August 17, 1860; the Montgomery Confederation, November 2, 1860.

[123] S. D. Cabiness to Governor A. B. Moore, October 24, 1860. Governors' Correspondence, Governor A. B. Moore, 1857-1861. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[124] Ibid.

[125] The Montgomery Mail, October 16, 1860.

[126] Basil Manly to his son, October 20, 1860. Basil Manly Papers. University of Alabama Special Collections Department, University of Alabama Library.

[127] David R. Barbec and Milledge L. Bonham, Jr., "The Montgomery Address of Stephen A. Douglas," Journal of Southern History, 4 (November, 1939), pp. 527-529.

[128] The Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 6, 1860.

[129] Robert W. Johannsen, op.cit., p. 803.

[130] Lewy Dorman, op.cit., pp. 176-177.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Breckenridge carried south Alabama--forty-two counties--by a plurality of 9,155 votes. He garnered a total vote, in the lowcountry, of 41,981 to a combined south-central Douglas and Bell vote of 32,826. John Bell carried five central and south Alabama counties. These counties had formerly been Whig strongholds. The Bell-Everett ticket compiled 24,739 votes in lower Alabama. Ibid.

[133] The Hayneville Chronicle, November 22, 1860; Donald Reynolds, op.cit., p. 152; the Clarke County Democrat, December 6, 1860.

[134] The Southern Messenger, November 21, 1860; the Selma Reporter in the Florence Gazette, November 21, 1860; the Benton Herald, November 29, 1860.

[135] The Troy Advertiser in the Florence Gazette, November 16, 1860; the Montgomery Mail, November 21, 1860.

[136] The Montgomery Advertiser and State Gazette, December 5, 1860.

[137] Joseph Henderson to John Henderson, November 16, 1860. John Henderson Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History

Montgomery, Alabama. J. H. Clanton quoted in the Montgomery Mail, November 20, 1860.

[138] Robert W. Johannsen, op.cit., p. 807; the Montgomery Confederacy, November 28, 1860.

[139] The South Alabamian, December 1, 5, 22, 1860; the West Alabamian, November 28, 1860; the Southern Messenger, November 30, 1860; the Montgomery Post, November 19, 1860. Lincoln's victory had an electrifying effect upon some south Alabama women. A Montgomery sewing circle began making blue cockades for men's hats as a symbol that the wearer favored secession. The members also offered to supply enough badges for every male citizen so that there could be no excuse for not wearing them. A similar project was undertaken in Eufaula in Barbour County. There women stationed themselves on street corners and began distributing cockades to male pedestrians. It was reported that only one man refused a badge because he was opposed to secession. This unexpected response so infuriated the donor that she turned to a gathering crowd and denounced the man as a coward. The same Eufaula women also had become so enraged on learning that a pro-Union meeting at Florence in north Alabama condemned a local militia tax measure that they offered to pay the money themselves. They also voted to send a hoop skirt to the chairman as a symbol of his cowardice. The Eufaula Express in the Benton Herald, November 15, 1860 in H. E. Sterkx, Partners in Rebellion (Teaneck, N.J.: Farleigh Dickenson Press, 1970), pp. 27-28.

[140] The Montgomery Mail, November 15, 20, 30, 1860; the South Alabamian, December 8, 1860; the Alabama State Sentinel, November 13, 1860; the Mobile Daily Advertiser, November 16, 1860.

[141] The Montgomery Advertiser, November 21, 1860.

[142] Randell and Donald, op.cit., p. 150.

[143] The Montgomery Mail, November 7, 1860.

[144] Ibid., November 6, 13, 1860.

[145] Levi Lawler to Lewis E. Parsons, November 14, 1860. Lewis E. Parsons Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[146] John D. Phelan to The Editor, November 7, 1860 in the Autauga Citizen, November 17, 1860; the South Alabamian, November 24, 1860; the Montgomery Advertiser, November 28, 1860.

[147]The Montgomery Mail, November 3, 28, 1860; the Mobile Tribune in the Montgomery Mail, November 19, 1860; the Montgomery Advertiser, November 21, 1860.

[148]The Montgomery Confederation, December 21, 1860.

[149]The North Alabamian, November 21, 1860; Basil Manly, Jr. to Basil Manly, Sr., December 3, 1860. Special Collections Department, University of Alabama Library.

[150]Joseph Hodgson, op.cit., p. 486.

[151]Jere Clemens to J. J. Crittenden, November 24, 1860. John J. Crittenden Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[152]The Florence Gazette, November 26, 1860.

[153]The Gainsville Independent, November 23, 1860; the Autauga Citizen, November 22, 1860; the Alabama State Sentinel, November 14, 1860; the Alabama Beacon, November 16, 1860.

[154]The Autauga Citizen, November 22, 1860.

[155]Allen Nevins, op.cit., p. 388.

[156]Joseph Hodgson, op.cit., pp. 478-479.

[157]The Southern Advocate, December 11, 1860.

[158]The Tuscaloosa Independent Monitor, December 14, 1860; the West Alabamian, November 28, 1860; the Alabama Beacon, December 21, 1860.

[159]The Montgomery Advertiser, December 18, 1860; the Montgomery Mail, December 11, 1860; the Huntsville Democrat, December 5, 1860.

[160]C. C. Clay, Jr. to John Harelson, November 21, 1860 in the Montgomery Advertiser, December 12, 1860.

[161]The Huntsville Democrat, November 17, December 5, 1860.

[162]The Southern Advocate, December 12, 1860.

[163]The Montgomery Mail, December 11, 13, 1860; the Montgomery Advertiser, December 13, 1860.

[164]The Montgomery Mail, December 14, 1860.

[165]Ibid., December 17, 1860; the Dallas Gazette, December 15, 1860; the Clarke County Democrat, December 20, 1860; the Macon Republican, December 20, 1860.

[166]? to C. C. Clay, Jr., December 1860. C. C. Clay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

[167]John A. Campbell to Franklin Pierce, December 29, 1860. Campbell-Colson Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[168]The Montgomery Mail, December 19, 1860.

[169]John A. Elmore to Governor A. B. Moore, December 19, 1860. Governors' Correspondence, A. B. Moore, 1857-1861. Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[170]The Montgomery Confederation, December 21, 1860.

[171]David Clopton to C. C. Clay, Jr., December 13, 1860. C. C. Clay Papers, Manuscript Collection, Duke University Library, Durham, North Carolina.

[172]Benjamin Fitzpatrick to Lewis Parsons, January 7, 1860. Lewis Parsons Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[173]Jere Clemens to John H. Crittenden, December 25, 1860. John J. Crittenden Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[174]The Montgomery Advertiser, December 30, 1860; the Montgomery Confederation, December 29, 1860.

[175]Clarence Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Department of Archives and History, 1933), pp. 109-110.

[176]Ibid., pp. 161-162.

[177]Thomas B. Alexander, et al., "The Basis of Alabama's Ante-bellum Two-Party System," Alabama Review, 19 (October, 1966), p. 275.

[178]Statistics compiled from election figures in Appendix of Denman, op.cit., pp. 161-162.

[179]Thomas Alexander, op.cit., pp. 275-276. In the Bell counties Breckenridge voters pushed the Constitutional Unionist counties into the secessionist camp.

[180]Eigth Census of the United States, 1860, Vol. I, Population, p. 223 in Ralph Wooster, The Secession Conventions of the South (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1961), pp. 61-63.

[181]The Montgomery Post, January 9, 1861.

[182]Ralph A. Wooster, "The Alabama Secession Convention," Alabama Review, 12 (January, 1959), pp. 70-71.

[183]Jere Clemens to John J. Crittenden, December 25, 1860. John J. Crittenden Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[184]Thomas J. McClelland to his wife, January 6, 1861. Thomas J. McClelland Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[185]William R. Smith, The History and Debates of the Convention of the People of Alabama (Montgomery: White and Pfister and Co., 1861), pp. 23-24.

[186]Ibid., pp. 27-30.

[187]Ibid., pp. 31-37.

[188]Ibid., pp. 50-57.

[189]William L. Yancey to Benjamin C. Yancey, January 28, 1861, Benjamin C. Yancey Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[190]William R. Smith, op.cit., pp. 76-81.

[191]Ibid., pp. 80-95.

[192]Ibid., pp 93-94.

[193]Ibid., pp. 90-92. Another Mobilian was even more explicit. "The question then resolves itself into this, shall a Northern Army with 'Freedom to the slaves' inscribed on its banners turn our slaves loose

among us...how many million of whites would be sacrificed?" See George F. Salle to John J. Crittenden, January 15, 1861. John J. Crittenden Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.

[194]The Mobile Daily Advertiser, January 16, 1861. The Alabama Convention did not adjourn immediately. It considered amendments to the state Constitution, made provisions for military defense and for postal services and passed a resolution opposing the reopening of the African slave trade.

[195]L. R. Davis to John McClelland, January 13, 1861. Thomas J. McClelland Papers, Manuscript Collection, Alabama Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama.

[196]Thomas J. McClelland to his wife, January 14, 1861. Thomas J. McClelland Papers, ibid.

[197]A. B. Moore, A History of Alabama (University of Alabama: University Book Store, 1935), p. 421.

[198]Jere Clemens to Governor A. B. Moore, February 3, 1861. Governors' Correspondence.

[199]Allen Nevins, op.cit., p. 424.

[200]H. L. Clay to C. C. Clay, Jr., January 11, 1861. C. C. Clay Papers.

[201]James L. Pugh to William P. Miles, January 24, 1861. William P. Miles Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina Library.

[202]C. C. Clay, Jr. to ?, November 15, 1860. C. C. Clay Papers. Jefferson Davis to C. C. Clay, Jr., January 19, 1861, ibid.

FOOTNOTES TO EPILOGUE

[1]Donald B. Dood, "Unionism in Northwest Alabama through 1865" (M.A. thesis: Auburn University, 1966), pp. 31-80.

[2]Peter Kolchin, First Freedom: The Response of Alabama Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972), pp. 188-189. Also see Horace Mann Bond, Negro Education in Alabama: A Study in Cotton and Steel (New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1969).

[3]Malcolm McMillan, "William L. Yancey and the Historians: One Hundred Years," Alabama Review, 20 (July, 1967), pp. 183-185. In 1863 while debating a bill in the Senate, Yancey and Benjamin H. Hill of Georgia, a Davis supporter, became involved in a personal fracas. Hill threw a heavy glass inkstand at Yancey which landed squarely on his cheek bone and splattered his face with ink and blood. This had nothing directly to do with Yancey's death, which occurred on July 27, 1863, from natural causes. See Ibid.

[4]Thomas M. Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography, 4 vols. (Chicago: S. J. Clark Publishing Co., 1921), vol. III, pp. 357-358. Cobb accidently killed himself with his own pistol on November 1, 1864. See ibid.

[5]Ibid., pp. 848-849.

[6]Lucille Griffith, Alabama: A Documentary History to 1900 (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1972), pp. 632-635.

[7]James T. McPherson, "The Career of John A. Campbell: A Study of Politics and the Law," Alabama Review, 1 (January, 1966), pp. 58-59.

[8]Frederick C. Hainsworth and Joseph W. Kirkley, eds., The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series 4, Vol. 3 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Printing Office, 1900), pp. 343, 396, 560-561.

[9]Clarance Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery: Department of Archives and History), p. 150.

[10]Walter C. Fleming, The Civil War and Reconstruction in Alabama (New York: Columbia University Press, 1905), p. 19.

[11]William C. Harris, L. P. Walker: Confederate Secretary of War (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: Confederate Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 104-119.

[12]Lucille Griffith, op.cit., pp. 550-556.

[13]Owen, op.cit., vol. 4, p. 1398.

[14]Ibid., p. 1293.

[15]Ibid., pp. 1239-1244.

[16]Ibid., pp. 1351-1352.

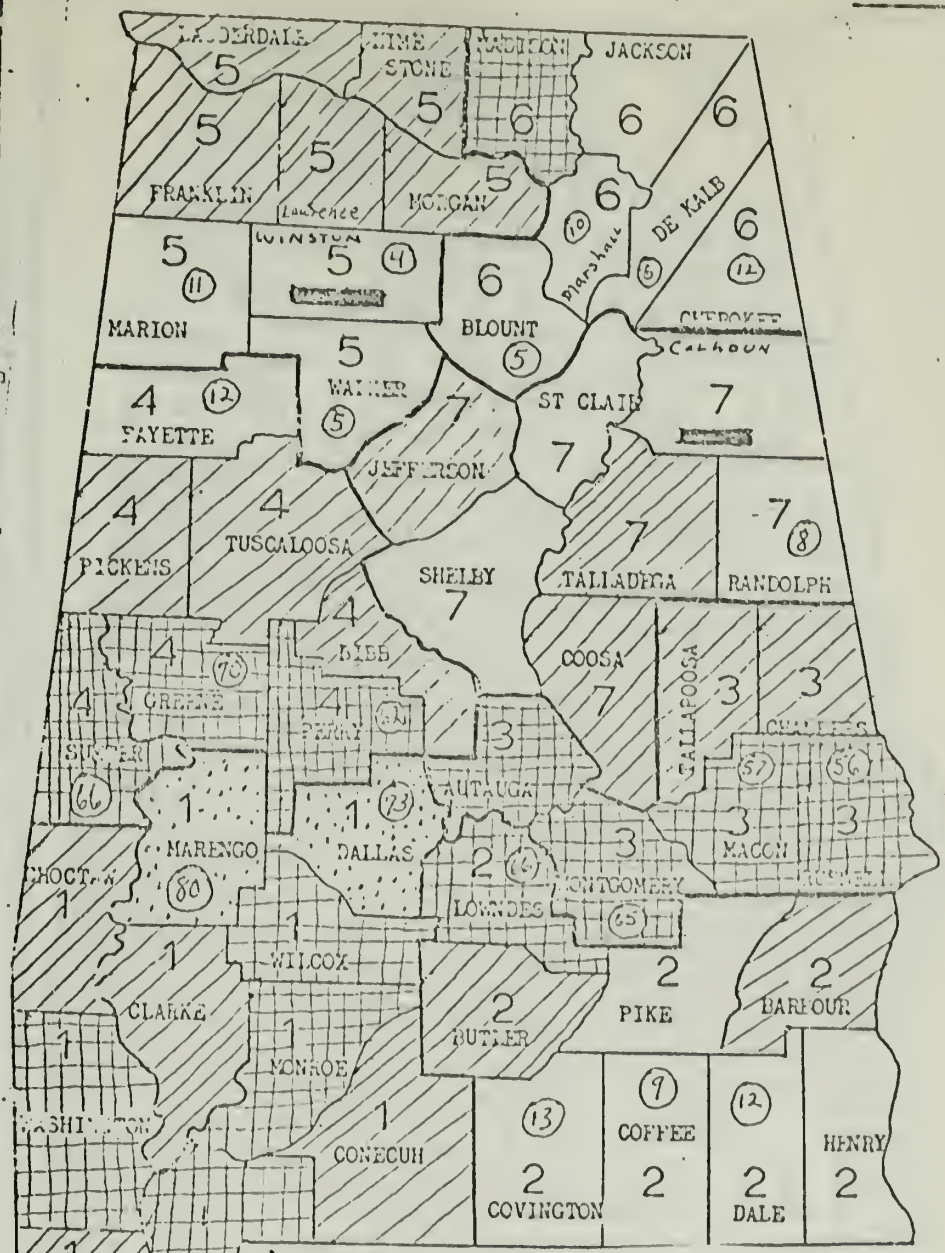
[17]Ibid., vol. 3, p. 803; vol. 4, p. 1301.

[18]Ibid., vol. 3, p. 646.

[19]Ibid., p. 839.

[20]Julia L. Keyes, "Our Life in Brazil," ed. Peter A. Brannon, Alabama Historical Quarterly, 28 (Fall and Winter, 1966), pp. 131-135.

APPENDIXES



Slaves less than 25% of the population

Slaves 25-50% of the population

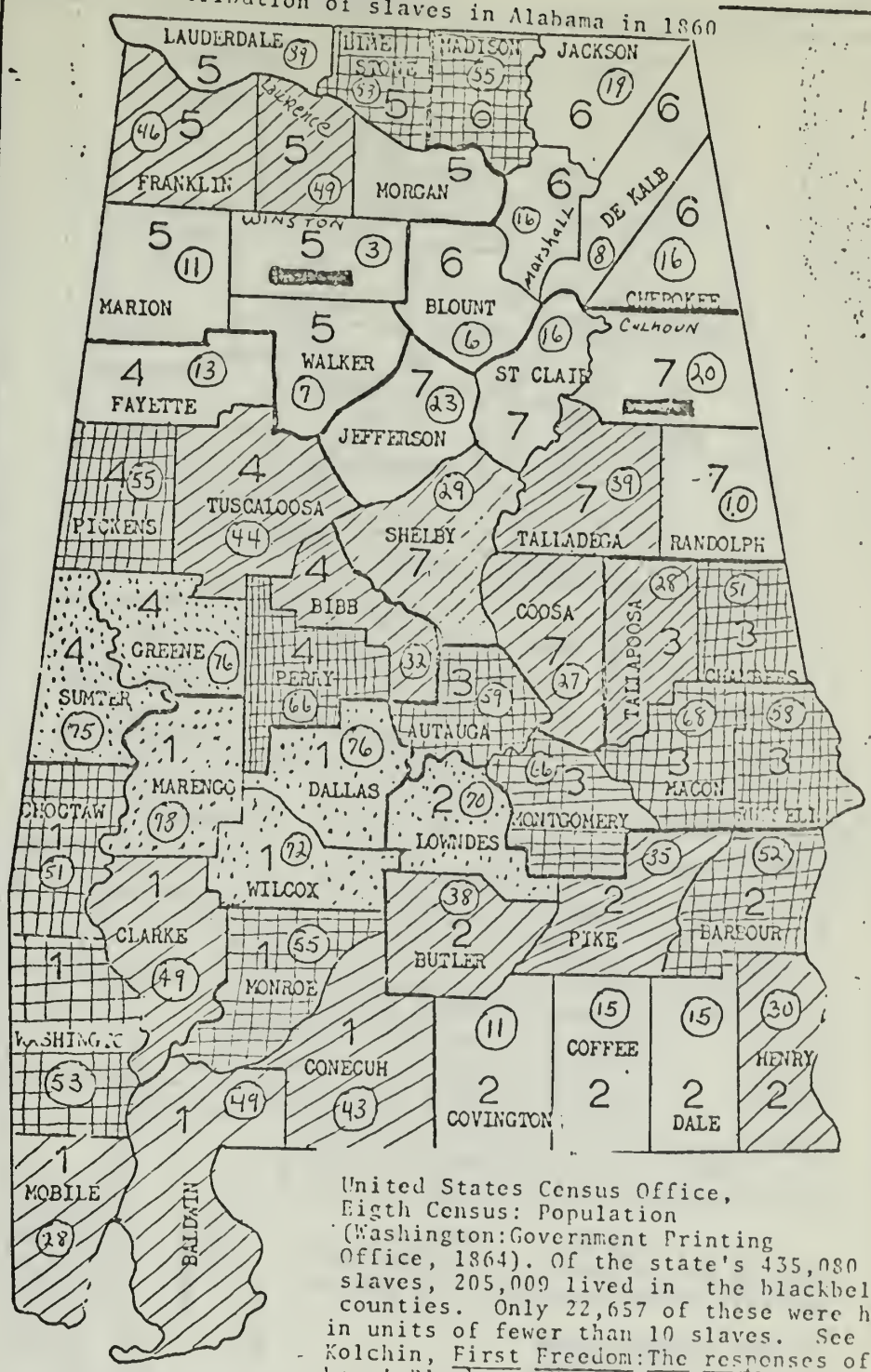
Slaves 50-70% of the population

Slaves over 70% of the population

Figures in each County represents the per-cent of slaves.

Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka, Printing Co., 1935), p. 216.

Distribution of slaves in Alabama in 1860



William Lotford, United States Census Office, Eigth Census: Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864). Of the state's 435,080 slaves, 205,009 lived in the blackbelt counties. Only 22,657 of these were held in units of fewer than 10 slaves. See Peter Kolchin, First Freedom: The responses of Alabama' Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction (Westport Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), p. 27

slaves less than 25% of the population.

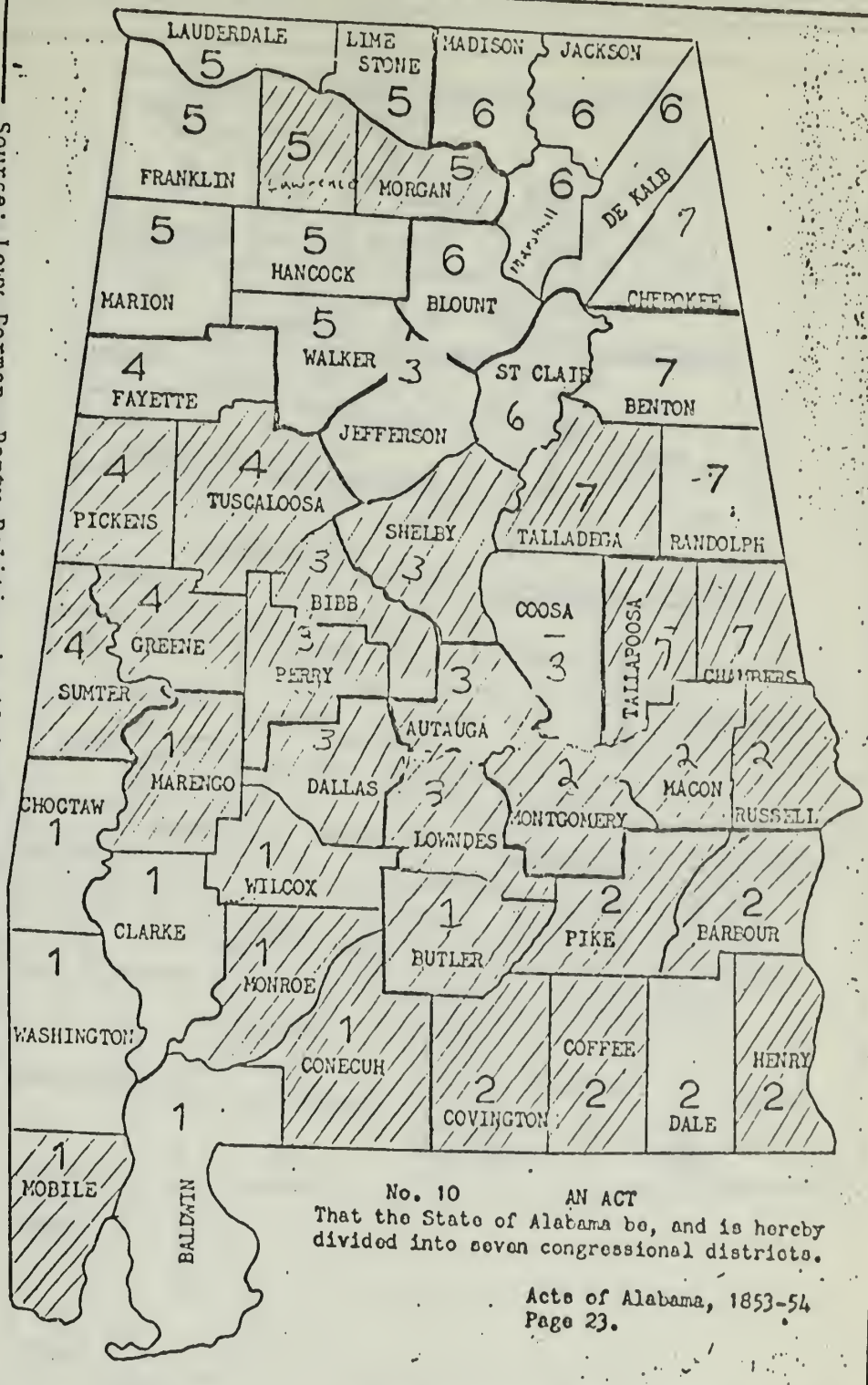
slaves 25-50% of the population.

slaves 50-70% of the population.

Slaves over 70% of the population.

Figures in each County represents the per-cent of slaves.

Presidential Election of 1848



No. 10 AN ACT
That the State of Alabama be, and is hereby divided into seven congressional districts.

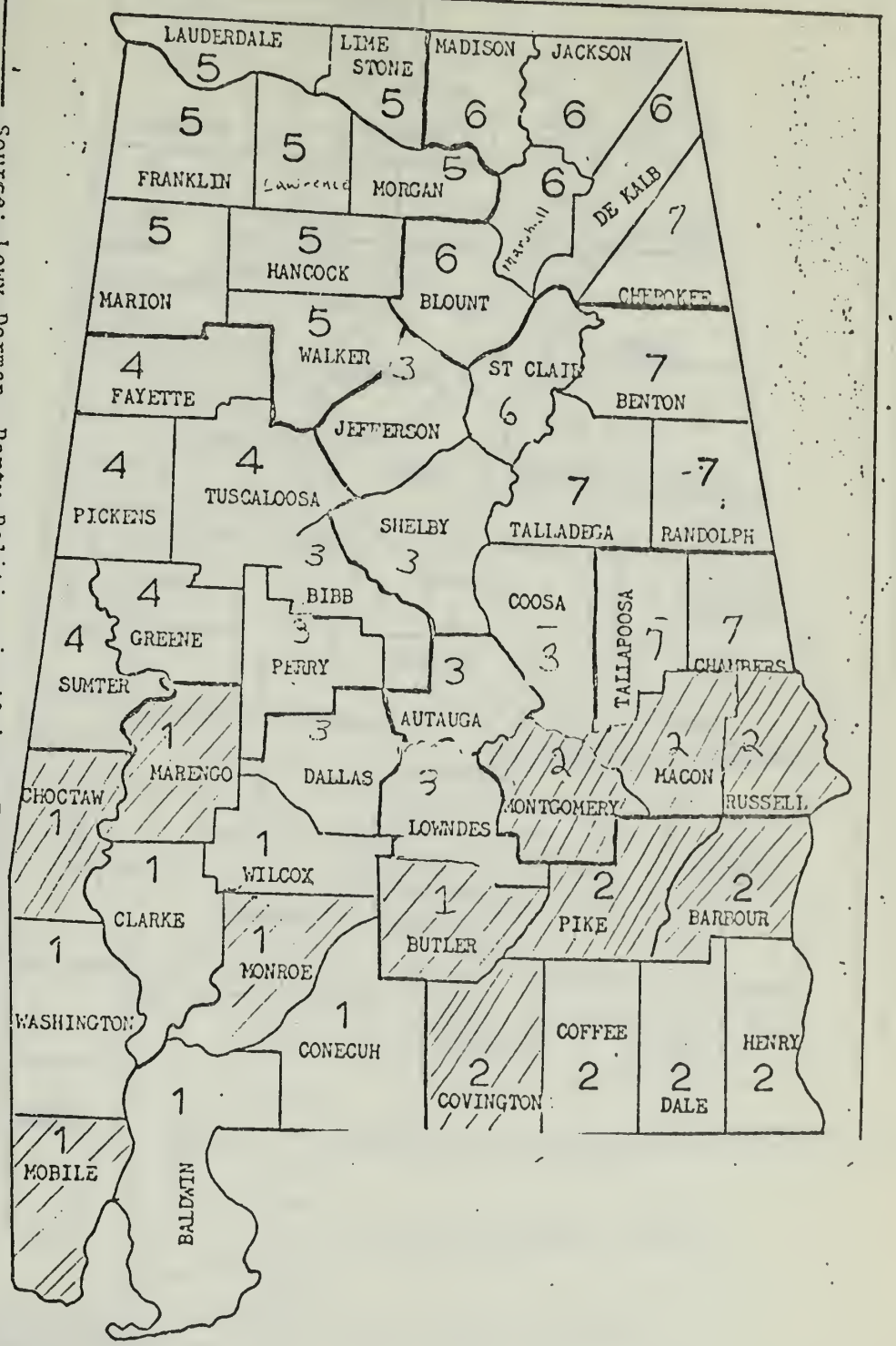
Acts of Alabama, 1853-54
Page 23.

Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 178-190.

Democratic counties

Whig counties

Congressional election of 1849: Democratic and Whig counties.

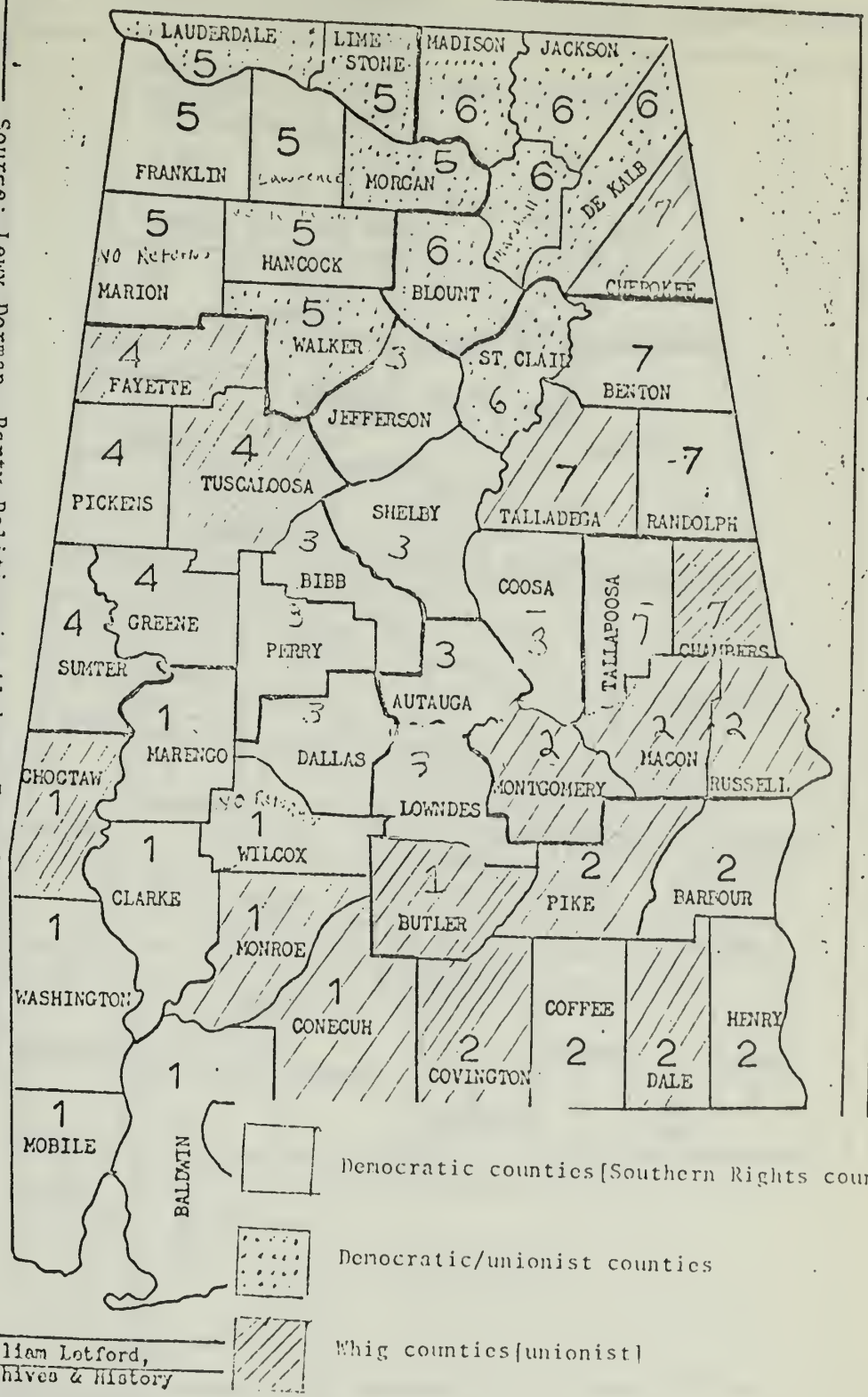


Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 178-190.

Democratic counties

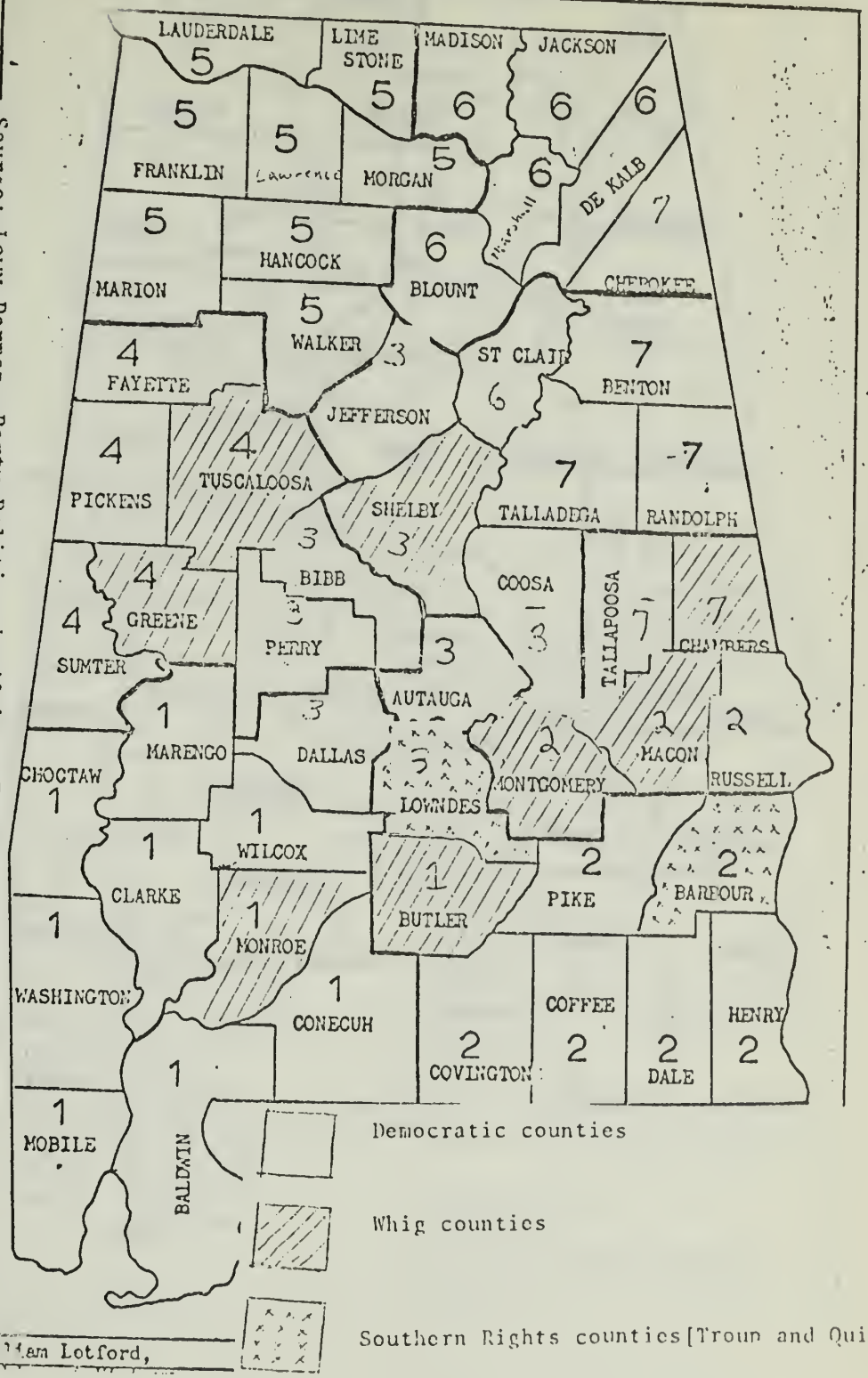
Whig counties

Congressional Election of 1851



Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 178-190.

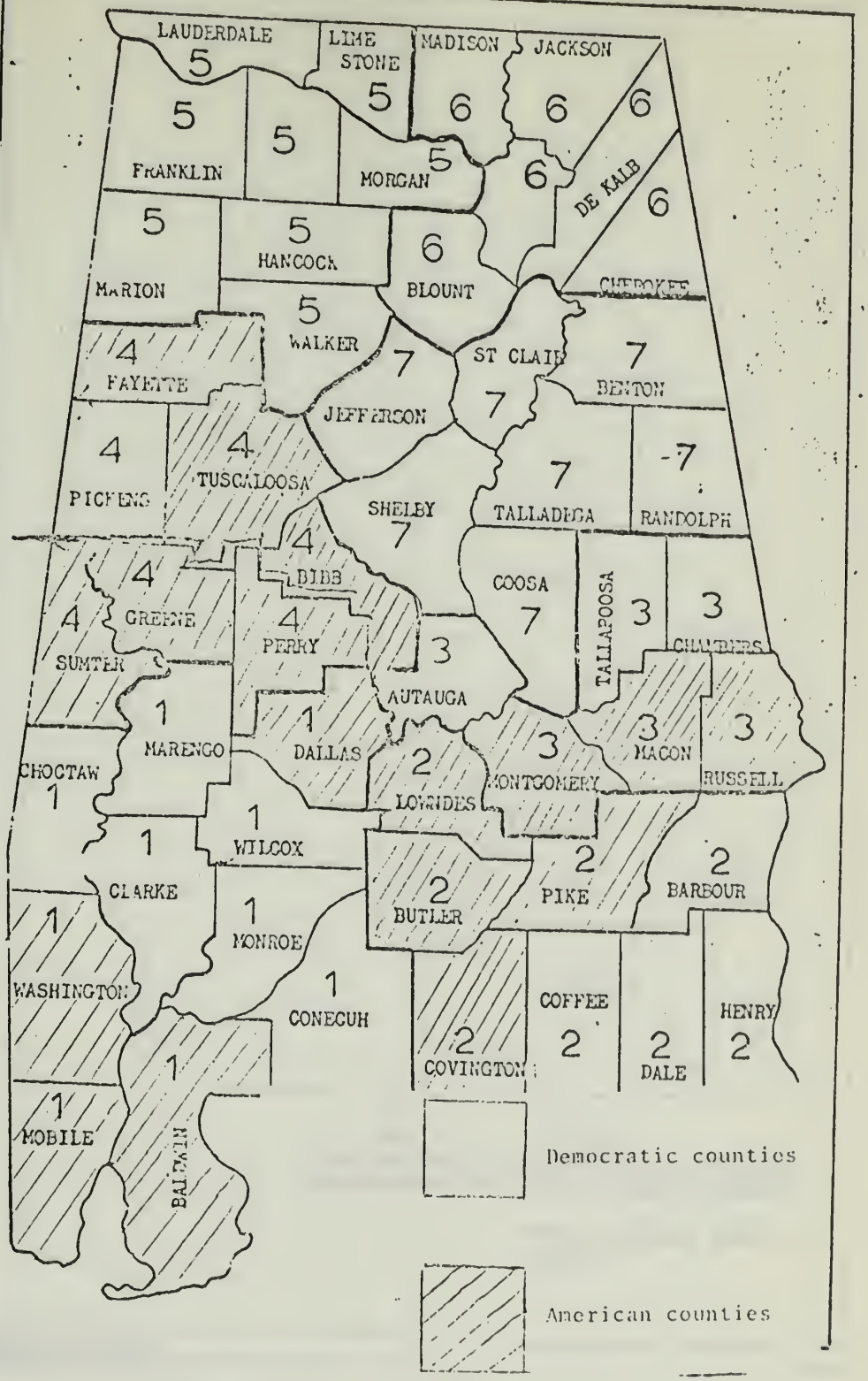
William Lotford,
Archives & History



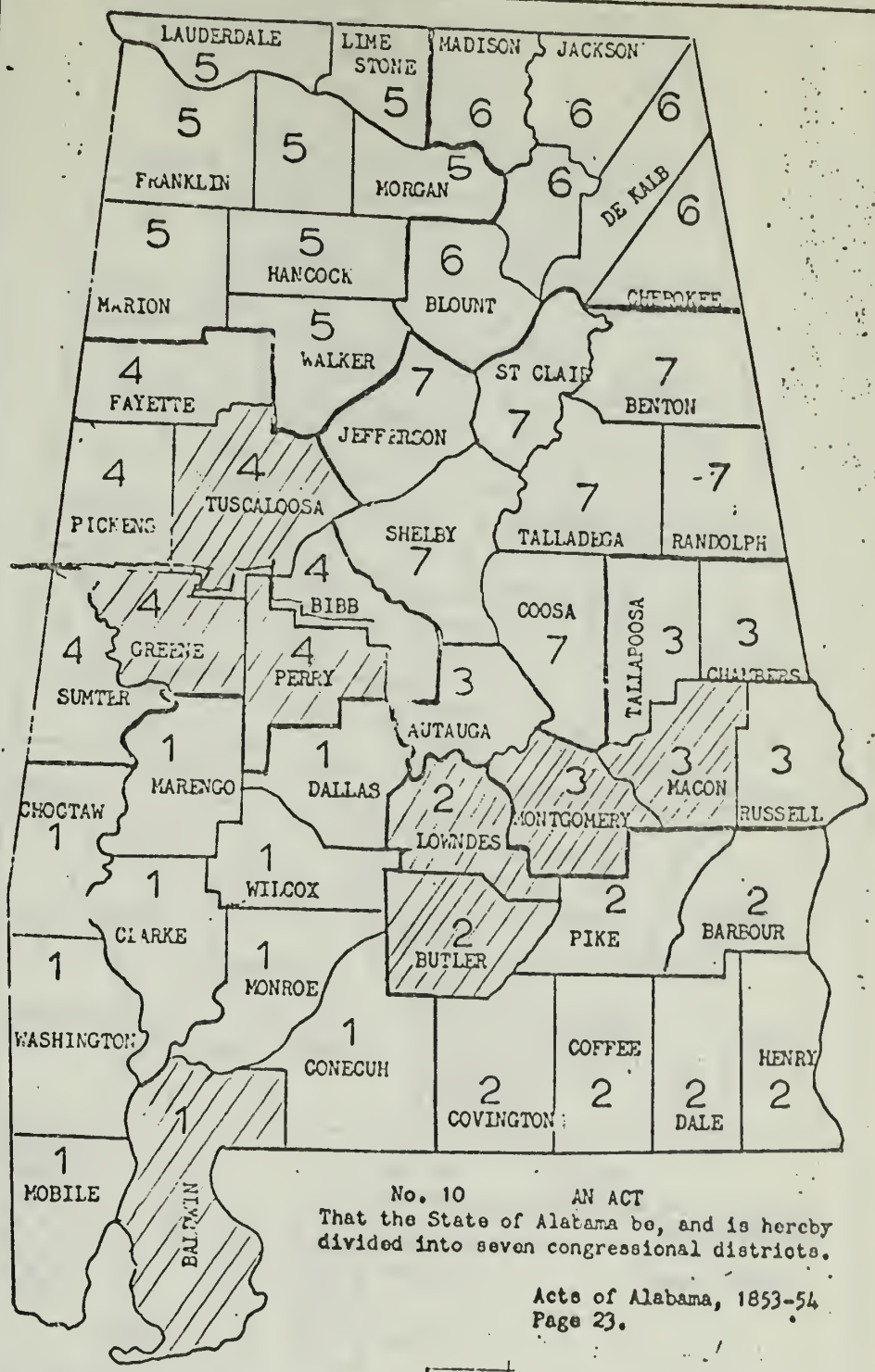
Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 176-177.

William Lotford,

Congressional Election of 1855

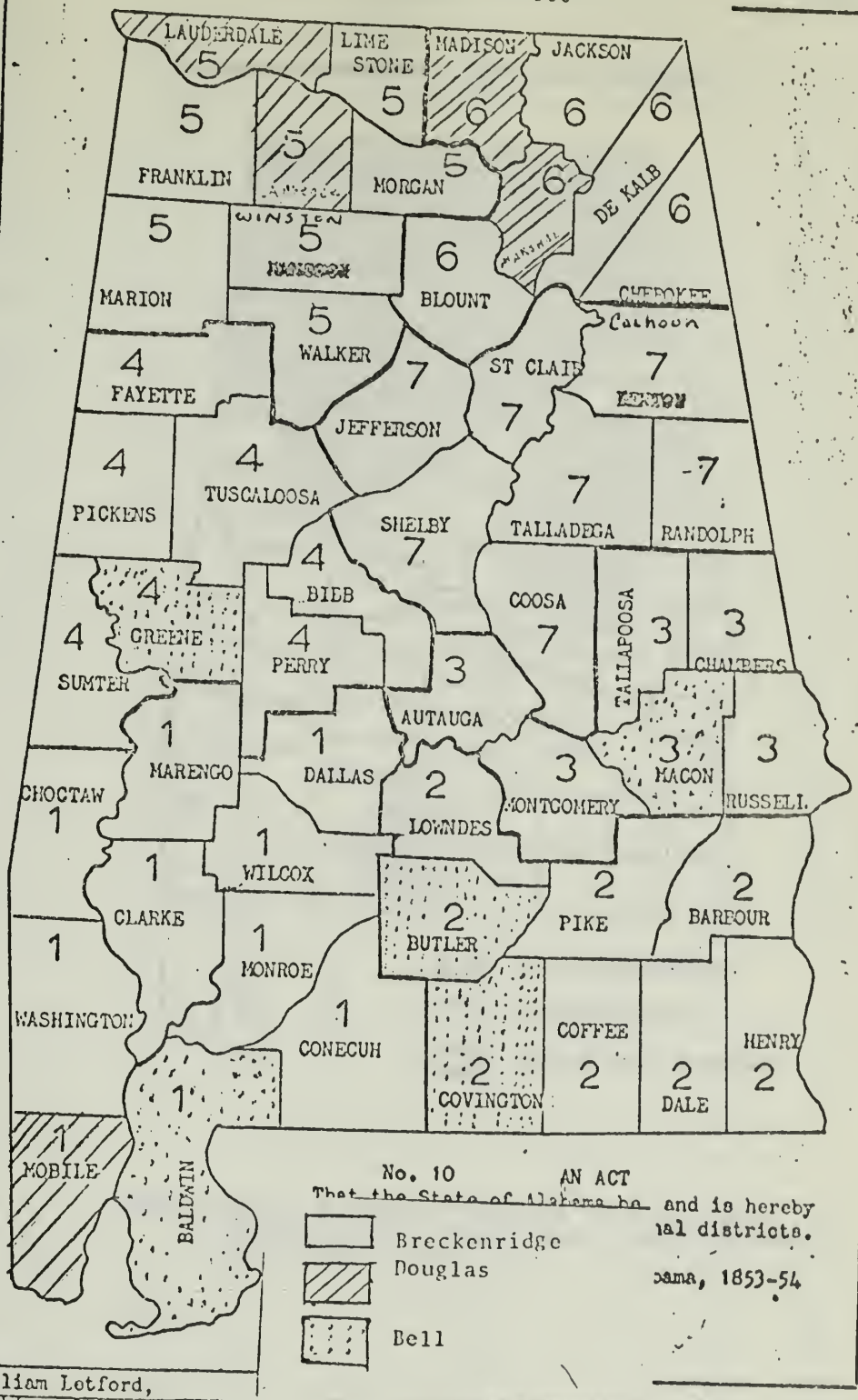


Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860 (Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935), pp. 178-190.



Source: Lewy Dorman, Party Politics in Alabama From 1850 Through 1860(Wetumpka Alabama: Wetumpka Printing Co., 1935),pp. 176-177.

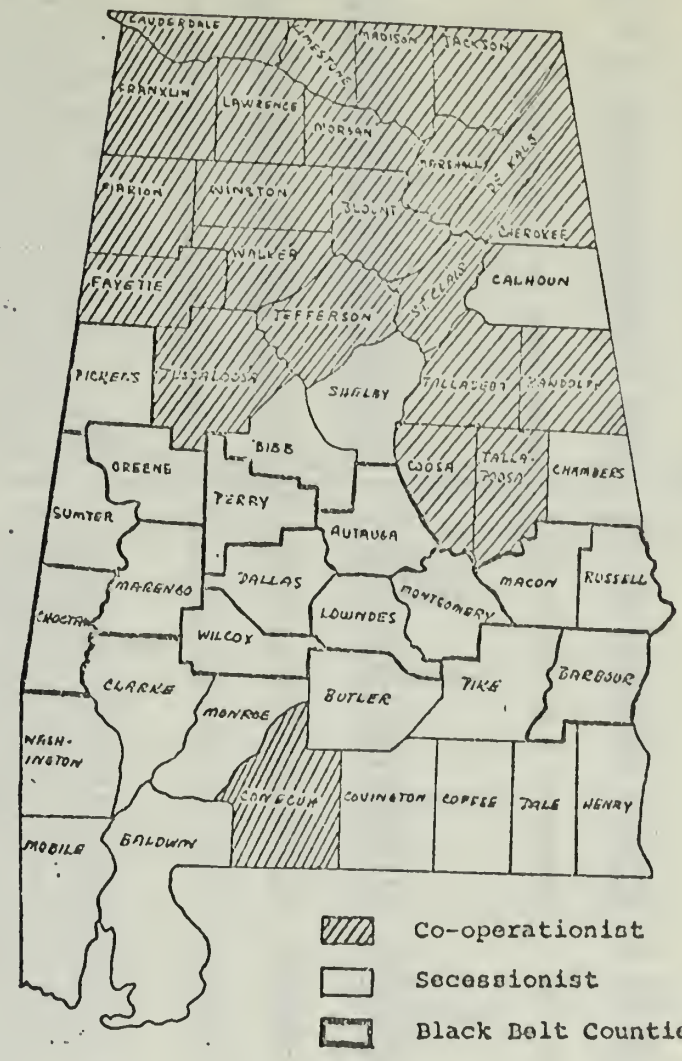
William Lotford,
Archives & History



William Lotford,
Archives & History

Source: Clarance Denman, The Secession Movement in Alabama (Montgomery Alabama: Alabama Department of Archieves and History, 1933), p. 154.

ALABAMA SECESSION CONVENTION ELECTION



Source: Donald B. Dodd, "Unionism in Northwest Alabama Through 1865"(M.A..Thesis: Auburn University, 1966), p. 2.

County	Delegate	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Slaves	Real Property	Personal Property	Vote
Autauga	George Rives	64	Va.	Planter	19	$ 6,065	$ 34,265	S
Baldwin	Joseph Silver	42	Md.	Planter	67	52,000	103,000	S
Barbour	Alpheus Baker	54	S. C.	Lawyer	38	10,000	45,000	S
	John Cochran	48	Tenn.	Lawyer-Planter	25	45,000	155,000	S
	J. W. L. Daniel	28	Ga.	Lawyer			1,000	S
Bibb	J. W. Crawford	58	Ala.	Physician	16	7,000	12,000	S
Blount	John S. Brasher	39	Ala.	Teacher		600	200	C
	W. H. Edwards	54	Ala.	Teacher			500	C
	S. J. Bolling	45	S. C.	Judge	49	120,000	30,000	S
Butler	John McPherson	60	N. C.	Farmer				S
	John M. Crook	39	S. C.	Planter	31	18,000	75,000	S
Calhoun	D. T. Ryan	49	S. C.	Farmer	13	17,000	45,000	S
	G. C. Whatley	58	Ga.	Lawyer	12	7,000	20,000	S
Chambers	W. H. Barnes	55	Ga.	Lawyer	6	7,000	14,000	S
	James F. Dowdell	41	Ga.	Farmer	13	18,000	60,000	S
	John Potter	43	Ga.	Clergyman		4,000	2,500	C
Cherokee	John P. Rawls	38	Ga.	Farmer	28	12,000	28,825	S
	H. G. Sanford	51	S. C.	Clergyman		1,000	500	C
	W. L. Whitlock	35	S. C.	Lawyer		500	300	C
Choctaw	S. E. Catterlin	49	Ohio	Lawyer	45	35,000	120,000	S
	A. J. Curtis	50	Va.	Planter	30	8,000	35,000	S
Clarke	O. S. Jewett	40	Conn.	Farmer	31	40,000	40,000	S
Coffee	G. T. Yelverton	46	N. C.	Lawyer		20,000		S
Conecuh	John Green	70	Ga.	Farmer	49	5,000	35,000	C
	Albert Crumpler	50	Va.	Farmer	26	10,000	25,000	C
Coosa	J. B. Leonard	53	Ga.	Planter	45	7,000	30,000	C
	George Taylor	61	Ga.	Planter	52	25,000	80,000	C
Covington	D. G. Davis	50	Ga.	Lawyer				S
Dale	D. B. Greech	49	Ga.	Farmer	8	5,000	8,250	S
	James McKinnie	48	N. C.	Farmer	90	20,000	82,218	S
Dallas	John T. Morgan	56	Tenn.	Lawyer	6	6,500	10,000	S
	William S. Phillips	55	Ga.	Farmer	65	30,000	71,600	S

County	Delegate	Age	Birthplace	Occupation	Slaves	Real Property	Personal Property	Vote
DeKalb	Wm. O. Winston	56	Va.	Farmer	28	10,000	30,000	C
	J. W. Franklin	36	Ala.	Minister			3,000	C
Fayette	Elliott P. Jones	40	Ala.	Lawyer-Farmer	3	4,000	5,500	C
	B. W. Wilson	31	Tenn.	Lawyer-Farmer	10	1,000	10,000	C
Franklin	John A. Steele	24	Ala.	Farmer	12	25,000	40,000	C
	R. S. Watkins	44	Va.	Lawyer	16	3,000	18,000	C
Greene	Thomas H. Herndon	31	Ala.	Lawyer	10	7,000	50,000	S
	James D. Webb	42	N. C.	Lawyer	19	7,000	20,400	S
Henry	Hasting E. Owen	42	S. C.	Merchant-Farmer	33	27,000	174,025	S
	Thomas T. Smith	40	Tenn.	Farmer	21	20,000	35,825	S
	John R. Coffee	44	Tenn.	Farmer	16	5,500	10,000	C
Jackson	William A. Hood	50	N. C.	Farmer		1,000	1,000	C
	J. P. Timberlake	41	Va.	Farmer	11	6,800	11,400	C
Jefferson	William S. Earnest	49	Tenn.	Lawyer		2,000	3,350	C
Lauderdale	Henry C. Jones	39	Ala.	Lawyer	7		7,550	C
	Sydney C. Posey	57	S. C.	Planter-Lawyer	30	20,000	34,168	C
Lawrence	James S. Clark	29	Ala.	Lawyer	1		6,375	C
	David P. Lewis	37	Va.	Lawyer	23	20,000	42,185	C
Limestone	Joshua P. Cowan	48	N. C.	Physician	16	4,000	16,000	C
	Th. J. McClellan	48	Tenn.	Farmer	18	10,000	21,580	C
Lowndes	Jas. G. Gilchrist	44	N. C.	Farmer	79	65,150	130,850	S
	J. S. Williamson	51	Ga.	Planter	98	40,000	110,000	S
Macon	*Oliver R. Blue				1			S
	*Jas. M. Foster							S
Madison	Samuel Henderson	46	Tenn.	Minister	5	3,000	4,000	S
	Jeremiah Clemens	45	Ala.	Lawyer				C
Marengo	Nicholas Davis	54	Ala.	Lawyer	13	25,000	25,000	C
	William E. Clark	42	Va.	Lawyer	22	7,000	50,000	S
Marion	L. C. Allen	27	Ala.	Factor-Merchant				C
	Winston Stedham	49	Ala.	Farmer		1,000	2,000	C
Marshall	Arthur Beard	50	Ky.	Farmer	24	35,190	49,130	C
	Jas. L. Sheffield	40	Ala.	Farmer	23	6,000	45,500	C

Mobile	John Bragg	50	N. C.	Lawyer		150,000	80,000	S
	Edmund S. Dargan	53	N. C.	Lawyer	15	30,000	50,000	S
	H. G. Humphries	35	S. C.	Cotton Factor		40,000	70,000	S
	George A. Ketchum	35	N. Y.	Physician	10	10,000	10,000	S
Monroe	Lyman Gibbons	52	N. Y.	Farmer	154	33,000	178,750	S
Montgomery	Thomas H. Watts	41	Ala.	Lawyer	179	190,000	300,000	S
	William L. Yancey	46	Ga.	Lawyer	35	27,000	50,000	S
Morgan	Jonathan Ford	47	S. C.	Farmer	7	8,000	10,000	C
Perry	James F. Bailey	47	Ga.	Judge	17	10,000	23,190	S
	William M. Brooks	38	Ala.	Lawyer	11	25,000	30,000	S
Pickens	William H. Davis	46	S.C.	Sheriff	12	1,500	14,000	S
	Lewis M. Stone	28	Ga.	Lawyer	21	12,000	34,593	S
Pike	J. A. Henderson	29	Ala.	Merchant	1	3,000	20,740	S
	Andrew P. Love	41	S. C.	Merchant	10	5,500	34,635	S
	Eli W. Starke	35	S. C.	Farmer	46	13,000	49,260	S
Randolph	George Forrester	40	Ga.	Merchant		1,500	3,000	C
	Henry M. Gay	48	Ga.	Farmer	12	10,000	12,600	C
	R. J. Wood	35	Ga.	Manufacturer	1	10,000	15,000	C
Russell	B. H. Baker	49	Ga.	Lawyer	10	5,000	16,000	S
	Ralph O. Howard	63	Ga.	Farmer	81	20,000	90,000	S
St. Clair	John W. Inzer	26	Ga.	Lawyer			2,000	C
Shelby	J. M. McClanahan	50	S. C.	Lawyer	51	15,000	75,000	S
	Geo. D. Shortridge	45	Ky.	Lawyer	11	5,000	10,500	S
Sumter	A. A. Coleman	35	S. C.	Lawyer	53	20,000	50,000	S
	A. R. Barclay	58	Tenn.	Farmer	61	15,000	56,950	C
Talladega	N. D. Johnson	31	N. C.	Merchant	7	5,000	7,000	C
	M. G. Slaughter	58	Ga.	Physician	2	250	4,000	C
	M. J. Bulger	54	S. C.	Farmer	21	3,700	21,000	C
Tallapoosa	Allen Kimball	55	N. C.	Farmer	52	8,000	42,300	C
	T. J. Russell	50	Ga.	Farmer	28	700	23,000	C
Tuscaloosa	Robt. Jemison, Jr.	58	Ga.	Planter-Mfr.	84	267,000	302,000	C
	William R. Smith	45	Ky.	Lawyer	5	8,000	3,000	C
Walker	Robert Guttery	59	Ga.	Farmer	12	51,000	13,000	C
Washington	James G. Hawkins	48	Ky.	Physician	30	2,500	33,500	S
Wilcox	Franklin K. Beck	38	N. C.	Lawyer	149	80,000	200,000	S
Winston	*C. C. Sheets							C

*Not found in manuscript census returns of 1860.

Source: Ralph A. Wooster, "The Alabama Secession Convention," Alabama Review, Vol. 12 (January, 1959).

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