

A voice from the “Aged guard of '62” of the City of Baltimore ... Published by the National Union Tract board of the aged guard of '62 of Baltimore City. Baltimore. Woods, print. [1863.

NATIONAL UNION TRACT—No. 1.

A VOICE FROM THE “ AGED GUARD OF '62 ” OF THE CITY OF BALTIMORE.

The Declaration, Resolutions and Appeal, Unanimously Adopted at their Meeting, February 27 th, 1863, Respectfully and Earnestly Addressed to “The People of the United States.”

Whereas, God, in his all-wise and righteous providence, hath brought upon these United States of America, our beloved country, the horrors and calamities of rebellion and civil war; and

Whereas, This condition of affairs has been produced by a number of officials, in high positions of honor and trust, who, through perjury, fraud, robbery, piracy and murder, have involved the nation in a multitude of difficulties, dangers and miseries.

Whereas, Also, all we have suffered, hitherto, and are likely to suffer hereafter, may be traceable to the designs and nets of wicked men in our community, who, for their own aggrandisement and emolument, are laboring to establish in our midst an aristocracy of wealth, station and family, to the prostration of the equal rights of better men than themselves, so that there shall be but two classes in our land, the rulers and the ruled; the former in unlimited control, the latter in hopeless, subjection. In this, we fear, they have the advice and co-operation of high political functionaries of Europe, who with them desire and design to overthrow the Government and free institutions of our once happy country.

Whereas, Further, all this has come upon us through the neglect on the part of multitudes of our best citizens—and through the *corruption*, on the part of political agitators—of the *elective franchise*, whereby the destinies of our great country have been committed to the management of immoral, intemperate, licentious and dishonest politicians, who themselves are managed by unprincipled speculators in stocks, currency, the natural wealth of the land, and the products of ill-requited labor.

Whereas, Again, there is in our midst, throughout the whole length and breadth of our land, a combination of wicked men, whose fell design it is to overthrow our Government; destroy our nationality; and resolve society into its original elements, bringing into the field, in dire hostility to one another, brother against brother, son against father; so that, in the confusion, contention, strife

and bloodshed, *they*, standing aloof from all danger while it lasts, may come in to gather up and divide the spoils.

2

These are they who endeavor to embarrass the Government; who raise impertinent questions on Constitution, law, State rights, and many other subjects that have no applicability in the existing state of things. When the vile Rebels fired the first gun at Sumter, they threw down the gauntlet and put out of the question altogether Constitution, law and every other consideration but that of FORCE! *That* they have selected—so let them have it to the “BITTER END!” When burglars, buccaneers, pirates and murderers, with arms in their hands, have a right to appeal to the Constitution, laws and sympathies of a civilized community, to palliate their crimes and claim immunity, then it will be proper, and *not till then*, to plead them in behalf of those in rebellion against our Government, their aiders and sympathizers.

Whereas, Lastly these unprincipled men seem fully determined, with their fellow-conspirators in Europe and their abettors at home, to drive our Government and loyal people either to succumb to their vile purposes or to stand like men on the defensive, so that neighbor and friend, brother and son shall contend in bloody strife to the destruction of the entire nation, or force us into that life or death struggle and hand-to-hand fight wherein cowards become brave, decrepid age and weak women and children become strong, and every individual is obliged to stand in his lot or die, and every condition of age, sex and color is involved in the terrible contest; therefore

We, the officers and members of the “Aged Guard of 1862,” who include in our organization individuals who have periled their lives in the support of this Government in the war of '12, who for many late years have served in the army of the United States, and whose ancestors in the old French War and the War of the Revolution have risked all of life, property and honorable standing for the establishment of our nationality, *do* hereby and herein declare ourselves, as a body of plain, unpretending men, to be entitled to respectful consideration in our claim to be heard for the rights we have purchased ourselves personally, and which were purchased for us, at great cost, by our honored ancestors; wherefore

1. *Resolved*, That we tender, most respectfully, to his Excellency, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States of America, all that is left us of life, physical strength and mental energy, with our property and available means, to aid him in the high and awful mission assigned him by Providence, in upholding this Government, sustaining the Union of these States intact, and preserving in its entirety the whole of our national domain. To which we pledge ourselves, with our hearts, our hands, our heads, our tongues, our pens and our swords.

2. *Resolved*, That we view with the deepest regret and the keenest anguish of heart the course of the Rebel sympathizers in our community, who are instructing their little ones to hate the Government, despise the Union, abhor its flag and insult its defenders. We look with horror on its legitimate consequences: securing for our posterity nothing but family feuds, sectional strife and all the calamities of 3 civil war, till it ends, for peace and quietness, in a military despotism. Indeed, the work is already begun, when men, women and children regard it as the strongest evidence they can give of their fashionable aristocracy to insult in the streets, and in the House of God itself, aged persons and those of the highest social standing for their adherence to the cause of the Union.

Here we must enter our solemn protest against the course adopted by those who have been in military authority here; but we trust and believe that day is past when a system of conciliating Rebels and snubbing loyal men prevailed. The *true* citizen was merely *tolerated*, while the *traitor* carried a high head. Men are even now going at large and uttering strong sentiments against the Government, who, if they had their just deserts, would be placed where they would be utterly ineffective for good or ill, who have forfeited all right to any protection from the laws of our country, and who can as justly claim it as the inhabitants of Japan.

3. *Resolved*, That it is a source of the deepest humiliation and grief to us that so large a portion of the religious community, including ecclesiastics of the highest standing, have manifested in a multitude of instances the most decided preference for the Rebel cause; others, to stand well with their divided congregations, have exhibited the utmost indifference, resolving the present contest into a mere question of party politics, with which they, as religious men, have nothing to do. Others, again, even ministers themselves, have taken the highest military positions among those in arms against the Government.

In this we perceive, to an alarming extent, the loss of public virtue, the utter annihilation of all moral perception, amounting to insanity or diabolic possession, or the prevalence of stern, self-willed and self-seeking hypocrisy. It is a sad reflection that a very great portion of our benevolent institutions and moneyed and other corporations, with professed religious associations, are in just such hands!

4. *Resolved*, That in this state of public affairs it becomes all lovers of their country to band together, men, women and children, of all classes of society, from one end of the land to the other—East, West, North and South to present themselves to the Government, as a levy *en masse* to be directed by it in the various ways their several capacities may admit, to put down these miserable plotters against our free institutions, whether they be Governors of States, legislators, Congressmen, or Judges on the bench; or are in any other way holding positions of influence which may give them power of extensive mischief.

5. *Resolved*, That we regard with the utmost disgust and indignation the attempt, whether it be on the part of Rebels or the pseudo, loyalists, to call in the aid of European intervention to settle our National difficulties as degrading to the American character, and likely to result in great disaster to the Governments on the whole continent.

6. *Resolved*, That we hold in utter detestation and abhorrence the principles, motives and conduct of the leaders and promoters of this wicked rebellion, their aiders, abettors and sympathizers; and will teach our descendants to execrate their names as the enemies of humanity as well as of our Government; and that they should ever be regarded as fit only to be associated in the memory of posterity with Benedict Arnold, Aaron Burr, Cataline, Absalom, Cain and Judas Iscariot, and against whom the wail of thousands of widows, the cry of innumerable orphans, the groans of multitudes of wounded and dying soldiers and the blood of hecatombs of slaughtered, *murdered* men are calling aloud unto Almighty Justice for vengeance on their guilty heads.

7. *Resolved*, That, in view of all these things, it becomes us, as a nation and as individuals, to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt us in due time. We should return to Him with penitent and contrite hearts, acknowledging our National and individual guilt, deploring the same, and imploring His mercy and forgiveness, resolving on the fullest amendment. Then, rising from our knees we should gird ourselves for the contest, and never rest till God, in His all-powerful wisdom and goodness, brings it to a righteous termination.

To this end we most earnestly entreat all able-bodied loyalists over the age of forty-five years to band themselves together with us as a *National Guard*, to put down everywhere, in every locality, city, village, or open country, every vestige of treason, to drive out of the community, whatever position they may hold, all traitors, their aiders and abettors, and not suffer the land anywhere to be polluted with their presence. All of which only to be done under the sanction, authority and direction of the Government.

We further entreat all loyal mothers, sisters and daughters to instruct the younger members of their respective families to love their country and the free institutions of the nation, and to be faithful and diligent to sustain the same, according to their ability, under all circumstances.

Indifference or neglect in these particulars is a crime against both the laws of God and man, and of humanity itself.

This declaration is put forth in defence of our rights; in veneration of our ancestors, who designed us to be a nation and "*people*," and not a mere Confederacy, and in the maintenance of the interests and happiness of our posterity. God save our country and preserve our Union!

All of which is respectfully submitted by the Committee.

Robert Piggot, D. D.

Chaplain of the Guard and Chairman of Committee.

John W. Woods,

Augustus M. Stansbury.

The above report was unanimously adopted.

Samuel Child, Captain.

Thos. W. Cutts, Orderly Sergeant.

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WM. L. WHEELER, Angent, At Levi Perry & Co's 179 *W. Baltimore-st.*

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31/15