

INDIANA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

Vol. XIII

SEPTEMBER, 1917

No. 3

The Origin and Rise of the Republican Party in Indiana from 1854 to 1860

By CHARLES ZIMMERMAN, A. M., Decker, Ind.

THE FUSION MOVEMENT

ALTHO 1852 was a year for the election of a President not much interest was taken in the campaign in Indiana. The Democrats held their State convention at Indianapolis, February 24. They endorsed the compromise of 1850 and placed a ticket in the field, headed by Joseph A. Wright and A. P. Willard. The Free Soilers were strong in northern Indiana, but not a man of their political belief was placed upon the ticket. This indicated a split in the party.

The next State convention was that of the Whigs, held February 26, at Indianapolis, in which Nicholas McCarty of Indianapolis, and William Williams of Warsaw, were placed at the head of their ticket. A platform was adopted differing but little from that of the Democrats.

Abolitionists, Wilmot Proviso Democrats, Van Burenites, and Anti-Fugitive-Slave-Law Whigs made up the Free Soil convention which met in Indianapolis, May 17, 1852. A. L. Robinson, of Vanderburg, and J. P. Millikan, of Decatur, were their candidates. At this time the Free Soilers had come to the place where they were to accept the compromise measures except the clause relating to the return of fugitive slaves.¹

Thus it will be seen that there were no great issues en-

¹Dale Beeler, "The Election of 1852." *Indiana Magazine of History*, XI, 315.

volved in the campaign. When the smoke of battle had cleared away it was seen that the Democrats had won a fruitless victory. They had elected ten congressmen, while the Whigs had elected but one, S. W. Parker, of the Fifth district. The State legislature was Democratic, there being but thirty-four Whigs elected to the House and sixteen Whigs to the Senate. The entire State ticket was Democratic.

The election had some serious effects upon the political parties. While the Democrats had won and had succeeded in quieting dissention in their own party during the campaign, they were by no means harmonious after the election. The small vote of the Free Soil party shows that it had run its course and need no longer exist as an independent organization. The Whigs, who had supported their ticket not so much from belief in the principles of the party as from opposition to the Democrats, practically went out of existence. As the *New Albany Ledger* put it, the Whig party was annihilated and could never be rallied as a political party.² Thus there were many voters in Indiana whose views were such that there was no political party existing of which they could be a member. If some fundamental issue should arise upon which these men might agree a new party could be formed which might unite the elements opposed to the Democratic party. Such an issue did arise and it is the purpose of this paper to show how these men, differing widely in their views, united themselves into a great political organization, the Republican party of Indiana.

While there was no great political principle upon which the opponents of the Democratic party could unite there was a question which was causing men of all parties some thought. Indiana had come to the point where she felt that the temperance question would have to be fought out. It was seen that the temperance law of 1853 was not drastic enough and a prohibitory liquor law was demanded.³ The Maine Law

²*New Albany Daily Ledger*, November 16, 1852.

³The Temperance Law of 1853 forbade retailing in quantities less than one gallon, unless a majority of the legal voters endorsed such action by vote; it provided that the retailer must care for drunks until sober; and that any injury done person, property or means of support made the retailer or his sureties liable for damages.

"craze" had reached the West. Realizing the evils of drunkenness the advocates of temperance proposed to remedy matters by a legislative short cut.⁴ It was said that a Maine Law would diminish taxes by lessening crime, safeguard morals, close the grog shops, protect Indiana from the rum sellers and rum drinkers driven out of other States who would come to Indiana, and, most significant of all from a political viewpoint, it was seen that all Catholics, Protestants, Whigs, Democrats, natives, and foreigners could unite in a common cause.⁵

While all were to unite in a temperance movement the advocates of a Maine Law asserted that they proposed to get such a law through the existing political parties, if possible. A resolution was passed by a temperance convention at South Bend, August 5 and 6, 1852, by which it was resolved that "we will vote only for such legislators and executive officers, without regard to political party, as will create and sustain such a law."⁶ At the State Temperance convention held at Madison, September 28, 1853, it was resolved to attempt a Maine Law by endeavoring to elect members to the General Assembly independent of party considerations.⁷ Thus it appears that if the men back of the temperance movement had any idea of forming a new political party they were careful to keep it from the public.

The temperance movement was given a decided impetus by the decision of the Indiana Supreme Court stating that that portion of the temperance Act of 1853 submitting the question of "license or no license" to the vote of the people was unconstitutional.⁸ The decision made it legal for anyone to sell liquor in any quantity. Indiana was practically without any liquor law. At Mt. Sterling, November 26, 1853, the citizens of Switzerland and Ohio counties in a joint temperance convention resolved that they did not wish to form a distinct temperance party, but they would not vote for any man who would not pledge himself to a prohibitory law.⁹

⁴G. W. Julian, *Political Recollections*, 138.

⁵*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, November 8, 1853.

⁶*St. Joseph Valley Register*, August 19, 1852.

⁷*Logansport Journal*, October 8, 1853.

⁸*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, November 29, 1853.

⁹*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, December 9, 1853.

These men seemingly were not ready for a new political party. At Indianapolis a State temperance convention was held January 11, 1854, with probably 1,100 men in attendance. A State Central Temperance Committee was organized and it was recommended that each county hold a meeting on February 22.¹⁰ An address to the people of Indiana was prepared.¹¹ How shall the crime and misery caused by intemperance be most effectually banished from our state? License laws have proved of no avail. There is but one remedy left, prohibition. Two main objections will be urged against such a law; (1) existing prejudices and the alleged pecuniary interests of those engaged in the traffic; (2) the present organization of political parties. The address made it plain to the people that it was not the intention to legislate against the private use of liquor in the home but only against the manufacture and sale of liquor. In answer to the first objection it was urged that the money invested in the liquor traffic could be turned into more profitable channels. In answer to the second objection it was stated that it was not the intention to injure the existing political parties, but that it was the intention of the temperance men to support the party that was willing to make prohibition an issue. In accordance with the address a series of resolutions, stating that no liquor law would satisfy the temperance sentiment of Indiana unless it represented the principles of "seizure, confiscation, and destruction" of liquors kept for illegal sale, was adopted. It was resolved that, attached as they were to their political parties, they would not interfere with their present organization, but that they would not support a candidate for the legislature who would not pledge himself to the above principles.¹² Thus the convention put the temperance issue squarely before the people. It is worthy of note that at this time the convention proposed to secure what it desired through the existing political parties and not by the formation of a new political organization.

County conventions held at different places over the State

¹⁰*Logansport Journal*, February 11, 1854.

¹¹*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, January 13, 1854.

¹²*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, January 13, 1854.

adopted resolutions similar to those passed by the State convention. The convention at Logansport adopted the resolutions verbatim.¹³ The Rush county convention passed stronger resolutions than those above. It asked the old parties to bring out temperance men and agreed that, in case neither party would bring out temperance men, to run independent men.¹⁴ At Laporte men of all political parties met and passed resolutions similar to those above.¹⁵ The Montgomery county convention resolved that they would not stand by the "whiskey" plank of the Democratic platform and that they would lay aside all political preference and unite their efforts in furthering the great reform.¹⁶ It was decided to nominate temperance men for the General Assembly. The Marion county convention decided upon the same course.¹⁷

What was the attitude of the people of Indiana toward this movement? As early as January, 1854, the *State Journal* published an article stating that out of 110 newspapers in the State but ten were opposed to the movement.¹⁸ From this it may be seen that the press was in favor of some move for the betterment of conditions. Of course, among the people there was a division of sentiment in regard to the matter. Many felt that this question was of such a nature that it should not be dragged into politics. They argued that it was more of a moral reform than a political question.¹⁹ There were many voters wanting a more stringent temperance law who had so long been party men that it would have been very difficult for them to support an opposition candidate no matter how strong he was for temperance.²⁰ The Democratic politicians looked upon the movement with distrust. They felt that it was an attempt to revive the Whig party by giving it a live issue. The various temperance meetings held throughout the State were looked upon by the Democratic politicians as an indication that the Whigs intended to

¹³Logansport *Journal*, February 25, 1854.

¹⁴Rushville *Republican*, March 8, 1854.

¹⁵*Weekly State Journal*, June 3, 1854.

¹⁶*Weekly State Journal*, July 1, 1854.

¹⁷*Locomotive*, June 17, 1854.

¹⁸Indianapolis *Morning Journal*, January 24, 1854.

¹⁹*State Sentinel*, January 27, 1854.

²⁰Logansport *Pharos*, January 25, 1854.

use the temperance issue as a hobby on which to ride into power.²¹ As the *State Sentinel* put it;

"If Whiggery and Abolitionism can throw in the temperance question as an auxiliary to aid them in electing a Whig legislature, they will achieve a triumph by the aid of temperance Democrats, which their political principles can never command."²²

Hence the Democrats were warned that every Democrat who assisted in the movement was transferring himself, body and soul, to the Whig party. Friends of the movement answered this opposition by stating that although most of the voters favoring the movement were Whigs and that of the newspapers in Indiana favoring it nine-tenths were Whig, it was difficult to see how the Whig party would be benefited by abstracting so many of its members.²³ The Rush county temperance convention replied to this charge by a resolution stating that the enactment of a prohibitory liquor law was not a Whig scheme but the philanthropic demand of the people without respect to party.²⁴ The Democrats would have preferred that this question be taken out of politics and settled by a direct vote.²⁵

Before the Democratic State convention met in May, 1854, it was seen that the Democrats would oppose the passage of a Maine Law. The Montgomery county Democratic convention had already resolved against "seizure, confiscation and destruction."²⁶ Yet it was evident that temperance would be an issue in the coming election. Editor M. C. Garber, of the *Madison Courier*, said:

The contest next fall, we believe, will be upon the temperance issue, for or against a prohibitory liquor law. The people appear to have taken sides on this issue; the politicians do not know exactly what to do in the premises. The Whig politicians, having nothing to lose, are on the side of a prohibition law. The Democrats, under the leadership of the *State Sentinel* prefer to have the question submitted to the people before it is made a part of the Democratic creed. The temperance men stand with the balance of power in their hands.²⁷

²¹Logansport *Pharos*, January 25, 1854.

²²*State Sentinel*, March 14, 1854.

²³Logansport *Journal*, March 4, 1854.

²⁴Rushville *Republican*, March 8, 1854.

²⁵Logansport *Pharos*, February 22, 1854.

²⁶Madison *Dollar Weekly Courier*, May 9, 1854.

²⁷Madison *Dollar Weekly Courier*, April 18, 1854.

Thus it appeared that the people had decided that they would have an expression of their sentiments on this question at the coming election. Many of them made this the first issue and never swerved from it.²⁸

While the temperance movement was growing there was growing at the same time a great political sentiment against the further extension of slavery. By a series of political compromises the status of slavery in the territories had been settled. The crowning act of this settlement had been the Compromise of 1850, which was looked upon as a final disposition of the question of slavery in the territories. Although this act only applied to the Mexican Cession and had not specifically repealed the Compromise of 1820 it had affirmed a new principle which, if sound, superseded the principle of the Missouri Compromise and was bound to reopen the whole question even though this measure was looked upon as a "finality."²⁹

That this act was so considered was seen in one of the planks of the national Democratic platform of 1852, which reads as follows:

Resolved, that the Democratic party will resist all attempts at renewing in Congress, or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question under whatever shape or color the attempt may be made.³⁰

The platform of the Democratic party in Indiana approved the compromise measures by stating that they should under no pretense be disturbed.³¹ The Whigs in their State platform made no direct reference to the slavery question, but the national Whig platform provided that the compromise measures, including the Fugitive Slave Act, should be looked upon as a final settlement of the slavery question.³² The Free Soilers stood for, "free soil, free speech, free labor, and free men." Thus it will be seen that the great majority of Indiana people looked upon the question as settled, although there was a small minority who hoped that in some way the

²⁸*State Sentinel*, October 31, 1854.

²⁹George W. Julian, *Political Reminiscences*, 136.

³⁰Stanwood, *History of the Presidency*, 182.

³¹W. E. Henry, *State Platforms*, 5.

³²Stanwood, *History of the Presidency*, 185.

question would be reopened and settled by the prevention of the further extension of slavery.

Fortunately for the minority there happened in Indianapolis an incident which brought home to Indiana people the workings of the Fugitive Slave law. There appeared at Indianapolis Pleasant Ellington, who claimed as his slave John Freeman, a respected colored citizen of that city. Ellington had the proper papers showing that Freeman was an escaped slave. Under the terms of the Fugitive Slave law there was nothing to do but turn him over to Ellington, which would probably have been done had not public sentiment been so strong that the court decided to give Freeman nine weeks to prepare a defense. He succeeded in getting men to come from Georgia to testify that he was a free man. On the day of the trial Ellington disappeared. There being a large crowd present, the meeting was turned into a rousing anti-slavery meeting.³³ Such incidents as this served to stir up a bitter hostility toward the Fugitive Slave law and any further extension of slavery. At a meeting of the Free Soilers at Logansport in September, 1853, it was resolved that they would refuse to obey the inhuman demands of the Fugitive Slave law and that J. L. Robinson, United States marshal of Indiana, should be presented, by the chairman of the meeting, with a black leather collar marked "The Ellington watch-dog, to be let at \$3.00 per day."³⁴

While Indiana was interested in the slavery question from the viewpoint of the fugitive Slave law it was also interested in the question of the further extension of slavery into the territories. At this time interest was centered in Nebraska, which had asked for admission to the Union seven times in successive years, but had not been admitted. There was but one objection, the Missouri Compromise. Under the terms of this act Nebraska must come in free. It was now intimated that the Compromise of 1820 must be repealed before Nebraska could be admitted.³⁵ By the terms of the Douglas

³³Logansport *Journal*, July 30 and September 3, 1853; G. W. Julian, *Political Reminiscences*, 133.

³⁴Logansport *Journal*, September 10, 1853. Most people thought that Robinson had been too obliging to Ellington in this matter.

³⁵Indianapolis *Morning Journal*, December 26, 1853.

Kansas-Nebraska Bill the status of slavery in the territory formerly declared free by the Missouri Compromise was to be determined by the people of the two territories. What Douglas had in mind when he introduced the bill is now a hotly disputed question.³⁶ By some it was said that as long as the principle of popular sovereignty served the interests of the South it would be obeyed but that as soon as it failed to do so another "compromise" would be made whereby the interests of the South would be maintained.³⁷ By others it was said that it was a bid for the presidency.³⁸ Still another view was that of building up a sectional party which aimed at a dissolution of the Union.³⁹

Thus the question of the power of Congress over slavery in the territories was reopened. It had been the feeling of the northern Democrats that Congress had full power over slavery in the territories and that it could either legalize or forbid the institution.⁴⁰ Many Democrats held that Congress should not exercise its power in this respect but should let the people of the territories decide the question for themselves. The attitude of the Democrats of Indiana was well expressed by the *State Sentinel* when it said:

We do not believe that there is a Democrat within the State, who, if he were a citizen of Nebraska, or Kansas, would vote to incorporate slavery among its elements. But we view the question as one involving the constitutional right of a people to make their own laws and regulate their own domestic institutions.⁴¹

From this quotation it will be seen that the Democrats of Indiana preferred to think of the Kansas-Nebraska question more in the light of an abstract question of the constitution than a concrete question of the further extension of slavery.

The reopening of this question brought dismay to the politicians.⁴² They were farsighted enough to realize that

³⁶Frank Heywood Hodder, "Genesis of the Kansas-Nebraska Act," *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin*, 1912.

³⁷Logansport *Journal*, January 28, 1854.

³⁸New Albany *Daily Ledger*, January 31, 1854.

³⁹New Albany *Daily Ledger*, May 26, 1854.

⁴⁰O. M. Dickenson, *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association*, 1913, p. 197.

⁴¹*State Sentinel*, September 8, 1854.

⁴²Logansport *Journal*, February 4, 1854.

breakers were dead ahead. To them the bill was injudicious, especially in the light of the finality propositions of the previous campaign. They feared a division of the party since the State platform of 1852 had approved the finality clause of the national Democratic platform.

When the North saw that the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was directly opposed in principle to the former method of settling the question of slavery in the territories, political compromise in Congress, the Missouri Compromise became "sacred" and must be defended at all hazards. They forgot that they had objected to its principle in the Texan question and in the case of California. In these two cases the principle of the Missouri Compromise favored the extension of slavery, not its prevention.⁴³ Now that its repeal favored the extension of slavery they opposed its repeal. In defense of the bill the Democrats argued that the principle of non-intervention by Congress left to the people, who were better qualified to judge of their own interests than Congress, the decision of questions of local interest.⁴⁴ They held that this was the position that Washington, Jefferson, and Jackson had held.⁴⁵

Its opponents fought it because it expressly repealed the Missouri Compromise and gave slavery an opportunity to extend itself into territory once declared free "forever."⁴⁶ While the bill stated that it was not its purpose to legislate slavery into Kansas and Nebraska,⁴⁷ Indiana men had considerable difficulty in seeing why a slave holder should move there unless he felt that his property would be protected.⁴⁸ Again they could not reconcile the view of the southern Democrats who stated that it was a pro-slavery measure, with that of the northern democrats who held that it neither legislated slavery into nor out of the territories.⁴⁹ From the above statements it appeared that the question, as far as Indiana was concerned, was one concerning the extension of slavery rather than a question of the principles of government.

⁴³*State Sentinel*, February 2, 1854.

⁴⁴*State Sentinel*, February 15, 1854.

⁴⁵*State Sentinel*, March 8, 1854.

⁴⁶*Rushville Republican*, May 3, 1854.

⁴⁷See Kansas-Nebraska Act.

⁴⁸*Indianapolis Journal*, April 6, 1854.

⁴⁹*Weekly State Journal*, September 16, 1854.

While the people of the State were much aroused over the Kansas-Nebraska Bill there was one set of men who were especially concerned as to their course of action in regard to it. These men were Indiana's representatives in the national congress. Whatever action they took was sure to be criticized by the friends or the opponents of the bill. It was early known that Senators Jesse D. Bright and John Pettit were in favor of it. Bright owned a plantation in Kentucky and was known to be friendly toward the slave interests. Pettit was willing to support the measure although in 1849 he had written,

That Congress has the power to prohibit the introduction of slavery where it does not exist, must be clear to everyone who has investigated the subject, and is capable of reasoning.⁵⁰

Now he was favoring a bill which took the power from Congress. As a result it was predicted that his political head would roll in the dust at the first stroke of the political ax.⁵¹ Bright's time would expire in 1858, while Pettit's term would expire in 1855. Hence Pettit was more immediately concerned than Bright.

But the congressmen were more perplexed as to their course. Since public opinion determined their chances for re-election some of Indiana's congressmen were very anxious that their constituents should know their attitude toward the bill. James H. Lane, of the Fourth district, was opposed to the bill because it, by the Clayton amendment, prevented a foreigner from voting.⁵² Daniel Mace, of the Eighth district, in a letter to the *Lafayette Courier* stated that the bill was a violation of plighted faith; that such a bill would shut out his constituents of limited means from this territory or would bring them down to the social level of a slave if they went to Kansas or Nebraska; and that, since this issue did not enter into the previous election, he would gladly resign if his action did not suit his constituents.⁵³ Ebenezer M. Chamberlain, of the Tenth district, wrote to the *Morning Journal* that

⁵⁰*Logansport Journal*, March 11, 1854.

⁵¹*Rushville Republican*, March 8, 1854.

⁵²*State Sentinel*, March 24, 1854.

⁵³*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, February 11, 1854.

the Indiana delegation was solidly against the bill which he did not think was an administration measure; and that he was going to stand by the Missouri Compromise.⁵⁴ Andrew J. Harlan, of the Eleventh district, wrote:

A question, however, has arisen of a very important character and is now pending before Congress, which makes it necessary that I should confer with my constituency as to the proper course for me to pursue.

He went on to say that he could not reconcile the Kansas-Nebraska Bill with the national Democratic platform of 1852. Further on he said:

One great objection is the bringing of slave labor in competition with the free labor and industry of my own race. The degrading and debasing consequences that naturally grow up between free and slave labor is a strong reason for my opposition.

In conclusion he said:

I respectfully desire the Democracy of my district to express themselves frankly, and invite all of my constituents to the subject without regard to political proclivities.⁵⁵

These letters showed that the congressmen were facing a situation that had not been looked for in 1852, and that they were somewhat puzzled as to their votes.

Much interest was taken by the voters in the attitude of Indiana's congressmen toward the bill. The *Morning Journal* of March 15, 1854, published the following as the probable vote of the Indiana congressmen:

For—Smith Miller, First district; William H. English, Second district; Cyrus L. Dunham, Third district; Thomas A. Hendricks, Sixth district.

Against—J. H. Lane, Fourth district; Samuel W. Parker, Fifth district; Daniel Mace, Eighth district; E. M. Chamberlain, Tenth district; A. J. Harlan, Eleventh district.

Doubtful but inclined toward the bill—John G. Davis, Seventh district; Norman Eddy, Ninth district.

This indicated that four were for the bill, five against it, and two doubtful but friendly toward it.

When it was proposed to throw the Nebraska Bill into the Committee of the Whole House the Indiana delegation split,

⁵⁴Indianapolis *Morning Journal*, February 22, 1854.

⁵⁵Logansport *Journal*, March 18, 1854.

Chamberlain, Eddy, Harlan, Lane, Mace, and Parker voting yea and Davis, Dunham, English, Hendricks, and Miller voting nay.⁵⁶ The resolution passed by a vote of 110 to 95, with 29 not voting. It was looked upon as a death blow to the measure. John D. Defrees, editor of the *Morning Journal*, said:

It will never get out of the committee and the conspirators who advocated it will retire from political life just as fast as the people can reach them.⁵⁷

We now see that Defrees had sensed the feeling of the people of Indiana and the North since we know that the people did reach them in the following election.

Aiming to cause action upon the bill a resolution was passed with a view to its immediate passage. Miller, English, Dunham, Lane, Hendricks, Davis, and Eddy voted for it. Defrees prophesied that these seven men would find if they dared to come out for re-election that they would be defeated by the people of Indiana.⁵⁸ A few days later Chamberlain, Davis, Dunham, Eddy, English, Harlan, Lane, Mace, and Miller voted yes on a resolution to end debate on the bill with Parker voting no.⁵⁹

Following is the analysis of the final vote on the bill in the House of Representatives:

	For	Against
Democrats from slave States -----	58	2
Democrats from free States -----	43	43
Whigs from slave States -----	12	7
Whigs from free States -----	0	43
Free Soilers -----	0	5
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Total -----	113	100
Northern absentees -----	9	
Southern absentees -----	11	
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Total -----	20	

Speaker Boyd, of Kentucky, did not vote. This table shows that one-half of the Democratic congressmen from the free

⁵⁶Indianapolis *Morning Journal*, April 25, 1854.

⁵⁷Indianapolis *Morning Journal*, March 24, 1854.

⁵⁸*Weekly State Journal*, May 20, 1854.

⁵⁹Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, May 23, 1854.

States voted against the bill and that the Whigs of the free States and the Free Soilers voted solidly against it.

Indiana congressmen voted as follows:⁶⁰

For—Miller, English, Dunham, Lane, Hendricks, Davis, Eddy.

Against—Parker, Mace, Harlan.

Not voting—Chamberlain, because of sickness in his family.⁶¹

While the vote was not entirely unexpected Indiana voters pondered over it. When the proposition to repeal the Missouri Compromise was first made Miller was the only Democrat known to favor the bill.⁶² On its passage but three Democrats of the State opposed it. What produced the change? It may be that the Democratic representatives were influenced by the attitude of Senator Bright, the Democrat political boss of Indiana. It may be that pressure brought to bear by the national administration wheeled some of these men into supporting the measure. Whatever may have been their reasons for their support of the measure it was soon evident that Indiana was thoroughly aroused by the passage of the act.

By the time for the meeting of the Democratic State convention on May 24, 1854, at Indianapolis, it was evident that there were two great questions to be acted upon, Temperance and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Democratic county conventions had taken a stand against the Maine Law and in favor of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. Before the day of the convention Oliver P. Morton went to Indianapolis to use his influence among the delegates against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. But Bright and his henchmen had the delegates so well under control that Morton could do nothing with them and was expelled from the convention. It seems to have been a for-gone conclusion that Bright and his men would be able to force the convention to approve the Kansas-Nebraska Bill.⁶³ When the committee on resolutions reported, it was found that the resolutions approved the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, opposed the Clayton Amendment, opposed the Maine Law, opposed the formation of a political party built upon the temperance

⁶⁰*Weekly State Journal*, May 27, 1854.

⁶¹*Weekly State Journal*, June 3, 1854.

⁶²*Weekly State Journal*, June 17, 1854.

⁶³*Wabash Weekly Intelligencer*, May 24, 1854.

question, and condemned the Know Nothings.⁶⁴ In looking over the platform it will be seen that the convention turned its back upon the platform of 1849 and that the platform was a distinct bid for support of foreigners and Catholics.⁶⁵

1. *Resolved*, That the Democrats of Indiana, fully approve of the principles of the act extending the laws of the United States over and organizing the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas.

2. *Resolved*, That we concur in the opinion that it is not properly within the jurisdiction of Congress to determine the provisions of the constitution of a state, further than to require that it be a republican form, but on the contrary, that the people do possess the right and power to adopt such form of government as they deem best suited to their views and wants; and that this right should be recognized as one of the fundamental principles of self-government.

3. *Resolved*, That this convention is distinctly opposed to that provision of the Nebraska and Kansas Bill, commonly known as the Clayton Amendment, which made a distinction between native born and foreign inhabitants, who may be residents of the territories, and feel gratified that the efforts of the Democracy have been successful in expunging that odious feature from the act.

4. *Resolved*, That intemperance is a great moral and social evil, for the restraint and correction of which legislative interposition is necessary and proper; but that we cannot approve of any plan for the eradication or correction of this evil that must necessarily result in the infliction of greater ones; and that we are therefore opposed to any law upon this subject that will authorize the searching for or seizure, confiscation and destruction of private property.

5. *Resolved*, That we regard all political organizations, based upon the single idea of temperance reform, as dangerous to the perpetuity of our republican form of government, by withdrawing the attention of the people from the great political principles upon which it is founded; and that we most earnestly appeal to our fellow Democrats, throughout the State, to adhere, in the selection of members of the legislature, to the practice of choosing such men as will make these great principles of Democratic policy, under the influence of which this country has been brought to its present elevated and prosperous condition, paramount to all other considerations.

6. *Resolved*, That we have full faith and confidence in the wisdom, patriotism and ability of Franklin Pierce, President of the United States, and that we fully approve of the principles laid down in his inaugural message, and his message to Congress, and that we most truly and cordially endorse the general policy of his administration, as carried out in conformity with the principles laid down in said message.

7. *Resolved*, That Judge Douglas of the U. S. Senate is entitled to, and receives our hearty thanks, for so ably advocating the principle of non-intervention, as contained in the Kansas and Nebraska Bill, and that we cordially endorse the action of our senators and representatives in sustaining the same.

8. *Resolved*, That the Democracy of Indiana still adhering to the constitution of the confederacy openly and avowedly condemn any organization, secret or otherwise, that would aim to disrobe any citizen, native, or adopted, of his political, civil, or religious liberty.

When a large body of citizens feel that the most urgent need of the people cannot be secured through the existing

⁶⁴Logansport *Journal*, June 24, 1854.

⁶⁵W. E. Henry, *State Platforms*, 9.

political parties it is time to organize a new party to accomplish the desired result. This was felt to be the condition in 1854 in Indiana. Out of what elements did the new party arise? It came from the elements of opposition to the Democratic party. We have seen the growth of the temperance movement and also the antagonism of the Anti-Nebraska men of Indiana toward the old party. Since opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska act was the most powerful factor in determining the new party we shall consider at this point the attitude of all who were not administration Democrats toward the stand of the Democratic party.

Although their party was practically disbanded at this time the Whigs were much aroused over this new move in the interests of slavery. They had much to say about the sacredness of the Missouri Compromise and demanded the restoration of the line of 36° 30'.⁶⁶ They believed in a protective tariff and internal improvements, were Federalistic in tendency, and were not Abolitionists, having considered the slavery question settled by the finality measures of 1850.⁶⁷ Early in 1854 it was wondered if the Whig leaders would attempt to revive their party through temperance and Anti-Nebraska sentiment.⁶⁸ This probably would have suited the Democratic leaders since it might have prevented a new party from forming.⁶⁹

Another element of opposition to the Democratic party was the Know Nothings, a secret political organization which was very hostile to the influence of the Papacy and to foreigners. They favored a twenty-one year naturalization law; held that none but native Americans should hold office; demanded stricter immigration laws and ample protection of all Protestant interests.⁷⁰ At this time the organization was headed by Godlove S. Orth (Whig), of Tippecanoe county, and J. H. Cravens (Abolitionist), of Ripley county.⁷¹ This party drew into its fold many thousands of Democrats who were not bold enough to openly abandon their party. Another effect was

⁶⁶Julian, *Political Recollections*, 136.

⁶⁷Julian, *North American Review*, CXXVI, 264.

⁶⁸Logansport *Pharos*, March 1, 1854.

⁶⁹Rushville *Republican*, June 7, 1854.

⁷⁰Rushville *Republican*, June 21, 1854.

⁷¹*State Sentinel*, September 19, 1854.

the tendency to draw attention from the real issue of the time toward the Papacy and Nativism.⁷² George W. Julian claimed that it was founded for this very purpose.⁷³ There was no possibility of the Know Nothings supporting the Democratic ticket in the coming campaign since the Democratic platform specifically condemned "any organization, secret or otherwise, that would aim to disrobe any citizen, native or adopted, of his political, civil, or religious liberty."

A third opposition party was the Free Soil party. As a national organization it had stood for legislative prohibition of slavery in the territories, immigration from Europe, and free trade.⁷⁴ It cannot be said that the Free Soilers were in favor of restoring the Missouri Compromise line because this would have meant the recognition of the principle of compromise which they opposed.

There was one more source of opposition to the Democratic party. This was the Abolitionist sentiment. Men holding this radical opinion were not numerous but were very outspoken in their views. At this time they were considered fanatics and disunionists.⁷⁵ The fact that some of them favored the Fusion movement caused many Democrats to hesitate about allying with a party which might be stigmatized as Abolitionist.

In summing up the political conditions in 1854 we may say that while there were many sources of dissatisfaction and opposition to the platform and principles of the Democratic party of Indiana there was no party in Indiana capable of uniting all the others into one great strong opposition party. Seeing this, the leaders of these elements were anxious to bring about a general coalition on the questions of the extension of slavery and temperance. Of these leaders four are worthy of notice. Henry S. Lane, of Montgomery county; John D. Defrees, the wisest, shrewdest politician of the State; Schuyler Colfax, brilliant speaker and editor of the *St. Joseph Register*; and Cyrus Allen, a politician who probably controlled Indiana south of the National Road, were strong for a

⁷²Morse, *Political Science Quarterly*, VII, 522.

⁷³Julian, *Political Recollections*, 141.

⁷⁴Julian, *North American Review*, CXXVI, 263.

⁷⁵Lew Wallace, *Autobiography* I. 240.

new party. The Kansas-Nebraska act gave them their opportunity to unite the "isms" into a new political party largely controlled by these men.⁷⁶ It is not the writer's intention to leave the impression with the reader that these men deliberately encouraged the temperance and Anti-Nebraska movements but it is his belief that they took advantage of these issues after they had arisen.

When the Democratic speakers began to prepare their campaign speeches they discovered that the Democratic party was on the defensive. Lew Wallace says that he had to meet the points of the opponents by "dodge, denial, deprecation, or begging the question."⁷⁷ The leading Democrats of the State had in 1848 expressed views that could not be reconciled with the Democratic principles of 1854. In discussing the power of Congress over slavery in the territories, Governor Whitcomb said:

Congress can, in my judgment, constitutionally prevent the introduction of slavery into these territories.

E. A. Hannegan:

I have no hesitation in saying that Congress does possess the power, under the Constitution, of prohibiting slavery in the territories of New Mexico and California, or in any other territory, whilst the common property of the confederacy.

John Law:

I should deem any prospective action of Congress on this subject, both legal and constitutional.

Robert Dale Owen:

Congress possesses the power to legislate on the subject of slavery in the territories, throughout the term of their territorial existence.⁷⁸

Graham N. Fitch:

That Congress has the power to prohibit the introduction of slavery into our territories where it does not exist, must be clear to every one who has investigated the subject and is capable of reasoning.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Lew Wallace, *Autobiography*, I, 231; *State Sentinel*, July 7, 1854, said that the leaders of the Whigs were working to affect a coalition with the Abolitionists.

⁷⁷Lew Wallace, *Autobiography*, I, 237.

⁷⁸*Terre Haute Daily Express*, August 5, 1856.

⁷⁹*Weekly State Journal*, September 9, 1854.

William J. Brown, Editor of *State Sentinel*:

I am a representative from a free State, and have always been opposed to the extension of slavery, and believe that the Federal government should be relieved from the responsibility of slavery, where they have the constitutional power to abolish it.⁸⁰

Not only did the speakers have such statements as those above to meet, but they were confronted with the State Democratic resolutions of January 8, 1849, which declared:

That the institution of slavery ought not to be introduced into any territory where it does not now exist.

That, inasmuch as California and New Mexico are in fact and in law free Territories, it is the duty of Congress to prevent the introduction of slavery within their limits.⁸¹

The fact of the matter was that the endorsement of the Kansas-Nebraska act by the Democratic State convention could not be harmonized with the stand taken by the leaders and the party in former years.

The two planks in the State Democratic platform which caused the most dissatisfaction were the endorsement of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the opposition to the Maine Law. Many were opposed to one or the other of these planks and possibly more were opposed to both of them.⁸² It seemed to many Democrats that the leaders of the party had come to the place where they wanted the voter to vote for a set of officers who were to settle the questions before the public in accordance with the views of the party leaders. These men, however, felt that "bossism" must go and that they must elect men who favored restoration of the Missouri Compromise, no more slave States, and real popular sovereignty.

"What say you, Democrats, Whigs, Free Soilers and everybody else who wants honesty and freedom, and don't want office?"⁸³

When the full effect of the Democratic State platform dawned upon the Indianians a serious question loomed up before them.

⁸⁰*Weekly State Journal*, October 7, 1854.

⁸¹*Weekly State Journal*, June 3, 1854.

⁸²*Rockport Planter* in *Weekly State Journal*, June 10, 1854.

⁸³"An old Jacksonian Democrat," in *Weekly State Journal*, April 17, 1854.

"Will the Democrats of the State swallow the dose prepared for them by the leaders at the Indianapolis convention"?⁸⁴

Undoubtedly sentiment was against the action of the State Democratic convention. The editor of the *Logansport Journal* wrote that the people knew that Democratic sentiment was violated by the convention which was controlled by Bright, Fitch, and "watch-dog" Robinson.⁸⁵ The editor of the *Rushville Republican* wrote that he had made a diligent canvass among his friends on the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and that he neither saw nor heard of a single man in the county who was favorable to its repeal.⁸⁶ Would party discipline be able to keep the Democrats in the organization or not? Could a man who had been a Democrat up to 1849 now support the party? These were questions that had to be settled.

Not long after Douglas had introduced his Kansas-Nebraska Bill S. W. Ritchey, of Johnson county, wrote a letter to the *Morning Journal* in which he suggested that meetings be held in every county and every town of Indiana to express disapproval of the bill.

"The spirit of Righteousness, Freedom, and Temperance, is one spirit, and that of Wickedness, Slavery, and Drunkenness is the other".⁸⁷

Following this suggestion meetings were held at different places to discuss the "outrages." At Logansport, March 4, 1854, a meeting was held for the purpose of having a free and honest expression of opinion on the bill, but it so happened that the politicians warded off such an expression and succeeded in getting the meeting adjourned to meet on March 8, 1854, when a noisy meeting was held but no resolutions were passed.⁸⁸ An Anti-Nebraska meeting was held at Noblesville, in which members of all parties passed resolutions protesting against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and instructing Mr. Harlan to vote against any attempt to do so.⁸⁹ May 13, at West Union, the establishment of slavery in the

⁸⁴*Rushville Republican*, June 7, 1854.

⁸⁵*Logansport Journal*, June 3, 1854.

⁸⁶*Rushville Republican*, June 21, 1854.

⁸⁷*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, February 9, 1854.

⁸⁸*Logansport Journal*, March 11, 1854.

⁸⁹*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, May 20, 1854.

territories by Congress was protested and the politicians were censured for attempting to do so.⁹⁰ At the regular meeting of the Free Democratic Association of the State in May it was resolved that the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act was an insult to the American people; that a prohibitory law should be enacted; and that a State convention be held for the purpose of combining all the elements of opposition to the act.⁹⁰ (a) At Lafayette Representative Mace explained his vote on the Kansas-Nebraska Act and resolutions were passed repudiating the principles adopted by the State Democratic convention; demanding a restoration of the Missouri Compromise line; and calling for conventions, State, congressional, and county.⁹¹ At Indianapolis Mr. Mace addressed a large meeting of Anti-Nebraska Democrats with Jacob P. Chapman as chairman. Here it was resolved that during the administration of Monroe, Adams, Jackson, Van Buren, Harrison, Polk, and Taylor the Missouri Compromise was a "finality";

that when well established party creeds are violently departed from, and great moral questions placed at issue we will remain untrammelled by party appliances or nominations, and sustain such men and measures as will best illustrate and carry out true principles; that the late Democratic Convention misrepresents a large majority of the voters of the State; and that county and congressional meetings be held in which free expression of opinion may be had on the measures necessary in this crisis.⁹²

June 9, at Greensburg, the Anti-Nebraska Democrats bolted the regular convention and resolved that the non-intervention and the temperance planks of the late State convention were put through by "demagogues, slaveholders, and whiskey politicians."⁹³ The call for Hendricks county invited every "true" Democrat who endorsed the Baltimore platform, opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, and desired the suppression of the liquor traffic to meet at Danville, June 17. An address was issued to the public of which the following is an extract:

⁹⁰*Weekly State Journal*, May 20, 1854.

(a) *Indianapolis Daily Journal*, May 29, 1854.

⁹¹*Rushville Republican*, June 7, 1854.

⁹²*Weekly State Journal*, June 3, 1854.

⁹³*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, June 21, 1854.

Democrats, Arouse! Those who aspire to be our leaders have betrayed us at the late packed convention; leaving the oldest cherished principles of Democracy, for which we have so long and triumphantly battled, they have attempted to bind us to the slave driver of the South and the rum-seller of the North. Shall we submit to this gross imposition? Let the answer ring, never! never!⁹⁴

The first county convention was held at Madison, June 13, in which J. A. Hendricks and M. C. Garber, prominent Democrats, took part. It recommended a State Convention for July 13, 1854, and held that the Kansas-Nebraska Act was in direct opposition to the principles of the "Fathers of the Republic," and that it was in direct violation of the Democratic platform of 1852. This meeting was considered by the editor of the *Weekly State Journal* as the beginning of the "movement."⁹⁵

Since the "Old Line" Democrats had been asserting that the movement was an attempt on the part of the Whigs to revive their defunct party it was the policy of the Whig leaders to wait for some Anti-Nebraska Democrat to issue a call for a State mass meeting. This would tend to make the movement appear Democratic, not Whig.⁹⁶ Jacob P. Chapman, editor of the *Chanticleer*, and an independent Anti-Nebraska candidate for Congress from the Sixth district, has the honor of issuing the call in his paper, June 15. He announced that a meeting would be held in Indianapolis, July 13, to adopt such measures as may be deemed proper to meet the present crisis.⁹⁷ It is significant to note that the meeting was called for July 13, the anniversary of the Ordinance of 1787, which devoted the Northwest Territory to freedom. Four days later appeared a call for a State convention signed by sixty-eight men of Floyd, Parke, Ripley, and Dearborn counties.⁹⁸ The men signing the call were mostly Democrats, seventeen Whigs, and two Free Soilers.⁹⁹

About the same time there appeared in the Brookville *American* the following:

⁹⁴Logansport *Journal*, June 24, 1854.

⁹⁵*Weekly State Journal*, June 17, 1854.

⁹⁶Hollister, *Life of Colfax*, 73.

⁹⁷Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, June 16, 1854.

⁹⁸Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, June 19, 1854.

⁹⁹Rushville *Republican*, June 21, 1854.

That the freemen of Indiana must hold a convention to agree upon the measures to be adopted to resist the demands of slavery, is beyond question. We would suggest that it be held in Indianapolis on Thursday the 13th of July, the anniversary of the adoption of the Ordinance of 1787.¹⁰⁰

Public sentiment was expressed in the meetings being held in various places. A county convention of Henry county, June 3, put a ticket in the field, called a congressional convention for July 6, at Cambridge City, approved the course of Parker, Harlan, and Mace, and demanded a prohibitory law.¹⁰¹ A call was sent out from the citizens of Wayne county, regardless of party names, to meet at Dublin, June 23, to effect an organization of the friends of free territory.¹⁰² The *Mississinewa Gazette* had a call signed by sixty Democrats for a meeting, to be held at Marion, June 24, of all Democrats opposed to the "infamous" Nebraska Bill.¹⁰³ At Noblesville, June 24, Democrats, Free Soilers, and Whigs decided not to support any man who was not openly against the Kansas-Nebraska act and urging all to attend the mass meeting at Indianapolis, July 13.¹⁰⁴ Sixty-five Democrats of Wabash county issued a call for a mass meeting for June 10

to express their sentiments, independent of party dictation and in such terms that wrong doers and endorsers of the infamy of the Nebraska Bill, may understand and fear * * * Let all come. The Democracy of Wabash county know, and fear no power that can make them countenance wrong, they work in no party traces, under the lash, and swallow no bitter pill compounded by political quacks.¹⁰⁵

At Lafayette, July 1, it was resolved to abandon former party ties and support only Anti-Nebraska men and that ministers should speak their sentiments from the pulpit regardless of political consequences.¹⁰⁶

From these calls and resolutions it appears that there was intense hostility to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; that this act was looked upon as one pushed through by the politicians and not demanded by the people; that a

¹⁰⁰Rushville *Republican*, June 21, 1854.

¹⁰¹*Weekly State Journal*, June 17, 1854.

¹⁰²*Weekly State Journal*, June 24, 1854.

¹⁰³*Weekly State Journal*, June 24, 1854.

¹⁰⁴*Weekly State Journal*, July 1, 1854.

¹⁰⁵*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, June 6, 1854.

¹⁰⁶*Weekly State Journal*, July 8, 1854.

prohibitory law was demanded; that the State Democratic convention drafted a platform that suited the leaders but not the rank and file of the Democratic party; that this platform did not represent the true principles of the Democratic party; that Democrats seemed to be the leaders of the movement; and that men were ready to lay aside their old political affiliations and attempt to secure what they wanted through a new political organization.

One of the most widely read addresses on the Kansas-Nebraska Act was that issued by the members of Congress who had voted against the Nebraska Bill. This address gave a discussion of the slavery question from 1783 to the present time, showing the increasing demands of the South and asking if the North was willing to make a complete submission to their demands.¹⁰⁷

As the day of the State convention approached the interest grew more intense. The hoped for coalition seemed about to become a reality. Men came into Indianapolis in all kinds of conveyances from all directions. It was estimated that there were ten thousand present when the meeting opened. On the night before the meeting a preliminary meeting was held in Washington Hall with Jacob P. Chapman of Marion county as chairman. Chapman gave as his reason for being in opposition to his party the fact that he did not feel that it was the purpose of real democracy to extend slavery. Schuyler Colfax, S. S. Harding, Henry S. Lane, Judge J. W. Wright, and Reuben A. Riley also addressed the meeting.¹⁰⁸

Such a political gathering as the one J. P. Chapman faced when he called this one to order on the courthouse lawn had never been seen in the State of Indiana. Men of all politics were there, many of whom had for years been prominent in Democratic meetings but who now were ready to repudiate the present position of the Democratic party.¹⁰⁹ These men were tired of the dictation of Bright and his friends and were now ready to do their own thinking.¹¹⁰ Know Nothings, Free Soilers, and a few Abolitionists were on hand. Every element of

¹⁰⁷*Weekly State Journal*, July 8, 1854.

¹⁰⁸*Weekly State Journal*, July 15, 1854.

¹⁰⁹*Logansport Journal*, July 22, 1854.

¹¹⁰*Rushville Republican*, July 19, 1854.

opposition to the Democratic party was present. The honor of being the president of the meeting fell to Thomas H. Smith of Ripley county who, after being introduced by M. C. Garber of Jefferson county, made an address the tenor of which was that the masses were ready to pursue their own ideas of right rather than obey the dictates of the party leaders. He took the ground that the majority of the Democrats were opposed to the present attitude of the party. He also appealed to the Ordinance of 1787 which devoted the Northwest Territory to freedom. Henry S. Lane, Rev. George B. Jocelyn, and H. L. Ellsworth also addressed the meeting. In the afternoon J. A. Hendricks, and ex-Governor Bebb of Ohio spoke. At the conclusion of Bebb's speech the committee on resolutions brought in their report, the first platform of the People's Party of Indiana.¹¹¹

They drafted a platform opposing the extension of slavery, demanding the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line, urging the passage of a "judicious, constitutional and efficient prohibitory law," and condemning the attacks that have been made by the Democrats upon the Protestant ministry.¹¹²

¹¹¹Logansport *Pharos*, July 19, 1854. Following is the committee on Resolutions: First district, A. L. Robinson, Abolitionist; Second district, T. H. Pucker, Whig; Third district, J. A. Hendricks, Democrat; Fourth district, Dr. E. B. Collins, Temperance; Fifth district, G. W. Julian, Abolitionist; Sixth district, W. J. Peaslee, Know Nothing; Seventh district, J. P. Yancey, Know Nothing; Eighth district, O. L. Clarke, Whig; Ninth district, W. J. Walker, Whig; Tenth district, T. J. Harris, Whig; Eleventh district, C. D. Murray, Whig.

¹¹²W. E. Henry, *State Platforms*, 10.

Whereas, We the freemen of Indiana, without respect to party, and actuated by a common devotion to our republic and a common reverence for its founders, have assembled ourselves together in the commemoration of the passage of the Ordinance of July 13, 1787, consecrating the N. W. Territory to freedom and *whereas*, the unanimous adoption of said Ordinance, by the representatives of all the States in the Union, at that date, clearly evinces that opposition to the extension of slavery, to the extent of constitutional power, was the fixed policy of our fathers; and, *whereas*, we regard the recent repeal of the 8th section of the Missouri Compromise, as a gross and wanton violation of the faith of the Union, plighted to a solemn compact, restricting the extension of slavery. Therefore, *Resolved*, That we are uncompromisingly opposed to the extension of slavery; and further, that we utterly deprecate and repudiate the platform of principles adopted by the self-styled Democratic convention on the 24th day of May last, endorsing and approving the Kansas-Nebraska iniquity.

Resolved, That we will waive all former party predilections, and, in concert, by all lawful means seek to place every branch of the federal government in the hands of men who will assert the rights of freedom, restore the Missouri Compromise, and refuse, under all circumstances, to tolerate the extension of Slavery into territories secured to freedom by that compromise.

Resolved, That we regard intemperance as a great political, moral and

The first two planks of this platform were put in for the Free Soilers and the Anti-Nebraska Democrats. The third satisfied the temperance men, while the last was evidently a bid for the vote of the Protestant churches, especially the Methodist.

There was no Know Nothing plank in the platform probably due to the fact that since the organization was not well thought of it would not have been good policy for an opposition party to put in a Know Nothing plank. The temperance plank did not openly stand for "search, seizure, and destruction," being so worded, however, that it could be so interpreted. It seems as though the convention feared to declare for a "Maine Law" because many Anti-Nebraska men were opposed to a "Maine Law".¹¹³ Truly may it be said that this platform was a "fusion" affair.

George W. Julian made a minority report in favor of restricting, discouraging, and denationalizing slavery, so far as it could constitutionally be done; opposing the repeal of the Missouri Compromise as a link in the great effort to nationalize slavery and urging that the repeal of the Missouri Compromise by "southern politicians and northern traitors" released the North from its duty of acquiescing in and obeying the Compromise of 1850.¹¹⁴ He also introduced a resolution stating that

we are in favor of a law that will effectually prohibit the manufacture and traffic in intoxicating drinks as a beverage.¹¹⁵

These resolutions were voted down, being looked upon as too radical.

When the nominating committee made its report it was social evil, a legitimate subject of legislation, and that we are in favor of the passage of a judicious, constitutional and efficient prohibitory law, with such penalties as shall effectually suppress the traffic in intoxicating liquors as a beverage.

Resolved, That we utterly condemn the abusive attacks which have recently been made, from various quarters, on the Protestant ministry of the country. We cherish with gratitude, and pleasure, the memory of their patriotic zeal in the Revolutionary struggle, and we recognize in the ministry of the country the worthy sons of such illustrious sires.

¹¹³*State Sentinel*, July 22, 1854.

¹¹⁴*State Sentinel*, July 25, 1854.

¹¹⁵*State Sentinel*, July 22, 1854.

found that in accordance with the thought¹¹⁶ of the leaders of the fusion movement, three Democrats and two Whigs were put on the ticket.¹¹⁷

The *State Sentinel* introduced the Free Soil Maine Law ticket as follows:

E. B. Collins, Free Soil, Maine Law, Know Nothing.
H. E. Talbott, Maine Law, Know Nothing.
W. R. Nofsinger, Free Soil, Maine Law.
S. B. Gookins, Whig, Free Soil, Maine Law.
Caleb Mills, Whig, Free Soil, Maine Law.¹¹⁸

In such a movement it is always necessary to satisfy to some extent each of the combining elements. The Free Soilers were satisfied although they had no men upon the ticket. The Whigs got all they expected and surrendered no principle of their party. The temperance men were satisfied with the attitude of the platform toward the Maine Law. The Democrats were pleased because they felt that they were standing on the principles of the founders of their party and were no longer controlled by the Bright crowd.¹¹⁹ J. P. Chapman thought that the nomination of a State ticket was a mistake. He criticized the temperance plank in the platform as being too indefinite. According to his view he would have made the fight on the national representatives and on the members of the State legislature which was to choose a successor to Senator Pettit.¹²⁰

The day before the People's mass meeting of July 13, 1854, the *Sentinel* stated that it would be a meeting of Whigs, Free Soilers, Abolitionists, Native Americans, and Democrats who had been disappointed by not getting office. The editor said that it was really a Whig meeting supported by two great auxiliaries, Native Americanism and Abolition; that this meeting would contain more political curiosities than have ever been assembled for political purposes.¹²¹ On the 13th

¹¹⁶*Weekly State Journal*, July 15, 1854.

¹¹⁷*Weekly State Journal*, July 15, 1854. Secretary of State, E. B. Collins, Dearborn county, Democrat; Auditor, H. E. Talbott, Putnam county, Democrat; Treasurer, W. R. Nofsinger, Parke county, Democrat; Judge Superior Court, S. B. Gookins, Vigo county, Whig; Superintendent of Schools, Caleb Mills, Whig.

¹¹⁸*State Sentinel*, July 25, 1854.

¹¹⁹*Logansport Journal*, July 22, 1854.

¹²⁰*Chapman's Chanticleer*, July 20, 1854.

¹²¹*State Sentinel*, July 12, 1854.

of July the *Sentinel* declared that all the broken down hacks in politics who felt that they had been abused by the people had met to enliven the corpse of Whiggery with the breath of Abolitionism. "Nobody believes that the jarring elements of the so-called People's mass meeting can ultimately combine".¹²² According to the editor of the *Sentinel* the People's mass meeting was

composed of all the odds and ends of society, politics and religion. Abolitionism, Know-Nothingism, hypocrisy, and bad liquor formed such a compound of villainous smells as never offended nostril.¹²³

It was widely believed by the Democrats that the People's mass meeting had been planned at Washington by Giddings, Chase, Seward, and other Abolition leaders¹²⁴ and that the movement was an attempt, on the part of the Whig leaders, to transfer the Whigs to the Abolitionists.¹²⁵ As to its direct effect upon the Democratic party they could see but one, a split in their party.¹²⁶

Two days before the opening of the People's convention the Know Nothings met in council in the Masonic Hall at Indianapolis. Being a secret society the purpose of this meeting was not made public although it was thought that some move toward fusion would be made since there were so many disgruntled Democrats in the organization. In this secret conclave a ticket was nominated which was put before the People's convention and renominated July 13, 1854.¹²⁷ George W. Julian asserted that this was true as did David Turpie when he said:

The opposition was at that time called the People's party, but the nominations, the active organization and movements of the party, were all controlled by a clandestine association within its lines known as the Order of Native Americans, commonly called Know Nothings.¹²⁸

There seems to be no doubt that the Know Nothings took part in the People's convention and put their ticket through. This put the stigma of Know Nothingism upon the new party.

¹²²*State Sentinel*, July 13, 1854.

¹²³*State Sentinel*, October 26, 1854.

¹²⁴*New Albany Daily Ledger*, June 17, 1854.

¹²⁵*New Albany Daily Ledger*, June 17, 1854.

¹²⁶*State Sentinel*, July 26, 1854.

¹²⁷*State Sentinel*, July 27, 1854.

¹²⁸Turpie, *Sketches of My Own Times*, 153.

The *Democratic Pharos* described the mass meeting by saying that the ticket nominated by the Know Nothings the day before was named; that Abolitionism preponderated numerically; that the Know Nothings presided and ruled; that Whiggism applauded; and that Maine Lawism stood in the background faintly assenting.¹²⁹

The attitude of the Democrats toward the new party was well illustrated by the following incident. When it was seen that a monster crowd was coming to Indianapolis a committee was appointed to select a place for the meeting. These men approached Gordon Tanner, State librarian, and asked for the use of the Statehouse yard. Tanner replied after due deliberation, by a letter addressed "To the committee appointed by the Abolition-Freesoil-MaineLaw-NativeAmerican-Anti-Catholic-AntiNebraska party of Indiana".¹³⁰ During the campaign the "Old Line" Democrats stigmatized the Fusionists as Abolitionists, Maine Law Men, and Know Nothings, these terms being more or less odious to the citizens of the State.

When it was seen that a new party might be formed the *State Sentinel* stated that Temperance, Free Soil, Abolition, and Native Americanism would be the elements of the new party.¹³¹ It went on to say that the principal and important object of the convention which was to meet in Indianapolis was to nominate men opposed to the Nebraska Bill and in favor of the principles of the Free Soilers around which the party was to be built with the aid of the temperance men.¹³²

The *Greensburg Press* (Whig) said:

We are in favor of a new party—the People's party, and our motto, "Search, seizure, confiscation and destruction" to all political hucksters and soulless doughfaces.¹³³

J. L. Robinson at Rushville characterized the Fusion party as one gotten up to remodel the old Whig party by adopting new principles.¹³⁴

George W. Julian characterized it as a "mere political com-

¹²⁹*Logansport Democratic Pharos*, July 19, 1854.

¹³⁰*Weekly State Journal*, July 15, 1854.

¹³¹*State Sentinel*, February 22, 1854.

¹³²*State Sentinel*, February 23, 1854.

¹³³*State Sentinel*, March 23, 1854.

¹³⁴*Rushville Republican*, Aug. 30, 1854.

bination" in which the members were hopelessly divided on every question except slavery. He also said that anyone would have been laughed at who thought that this was to be a permanent organization since it was not thought possible to harmonize the differences of the individual members.¹³⁵ He also said that the party subordinated every principle to its desire for political success.¹³⁶

Members of the new party in speaking of the People's party explained its origin by saying that men of all parties and of no party had laid aside political bias and entered the campaign to preserve one of the great fundamental principles of the founders of the government.¹³⁷ From this it appears that the members of the new party were anxious to have it understood that they were acting from principle and that the Democratic party had left them rather than that they had left the party.

The two leading questions that confronted the voter were the extension of slavery and the liquor question. The Democrats maintained that they were not a pro-slavery party but that they believed in the principle of permitting each citizen who lives in a territory to say whether or not slavery shall exist there when statehood is reached. It was their contention that this view was thoroughly democratic and that, by its adoption, the people would determine the conditions under which they should live. In regard to the Nebraska act they stoutly maintained that climatic and geographical conditions had already determined that slavery could not exist in Kansas and Nebraska. As to temperance it was asserted that they deplored the evils of intemperance but were unalterably opposed to the principle of "search, seizure, confiscation, and destruction" of the Maine Law since such a law was clearly unconstitutional, impracticable, and not supported by the teachings of the Bible.¹³⁸

The People's party was hostile to any law which would give the South an opportunity to extend slavery. Although the Kansas-Nebraska act specifically stated that it was not its pur-

¹³⁵Julian, *North American Review*, CXXVI, 266.

¹³⁶Julian, *American Historical Review*, IV, 313.

¹³⁷Logansport *Journal*, Sept. 9, 1854.

¹³⁸*Weekly State Journal*, Sept. 20, 1854.

pose to legislate slavery into Kansas and Nebraska yet it gave the slaveholder an opportunity to vote for the extension of his system and for this reason was bitterly opposed by the members of the People's party. The stand of these men on temperance was for prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors. They did not propose to prevent the use of liquor in the home as long as it was not sold there.¹³⁹ From this discussion it will be seen that the two parties were diametrically opposed on the issues before the voters of Indiana.

As is usually the case when a man has the stamina to leave his former political associates and become a member of a new party, the Anti-Nebraska Democrats were looked upon as renegades and traitors and were often read out of the party. This fate befell W. J. Peaslee of Shelby county, James Ritchey of Johnson county, J. P. Chapman and Lucien Barbour of Marion county at the hands of the Democratic convention of the Sixth congressional district. The resolutions which placed these men without the Democratic party were designated by Editor Defrees as the "Bull of Ex-communication".¹⁴⁰

The interest in the campaign seemed to center in the congressional elections and in the selection of State legislators. Since Senator Pettit's term would expire in 1855 the next legislature would select his successor. Pettit was anxious to succeed himself in spite of the fact that his utterances on the power of Congress over slavery in the territories were in flat contradiction to each other. In order to secure his election it was necessary to have a Democratic majority in each House of the State legislature. Hence he stumped the State.

In the First district Smith Miller was renominated by the Democrats. Against him was nominated Samuel Hall by the People's convention. In the Second district W. H. English was opposed by Thomas C. Slaughter, a Know Nothing. In the Third district Colonel J. A. Hendricks came out for the Fusion nomination but retired in favor of George G. Dunn. Cyrus L. Dunham was again nominated by the Democratic convention. Since all three of these districts were in the southern part of Indiana and were strongly Democratic the party leaders felt safe in running men who had voted for the

¹³⁹Madison *Dollar Weekly Courier*, Oct. 11, 1854.

¹⁴⁰*Weekly State Journal*, August 12, 1854.

Kansas-Nebraska act as Miller, English, and Dunham had done.

James H. Lane of the Fourth district, who had at first opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill but had voted for it, decided on account of ill health to retire. His opponents claimed that he had seen defeat staring him in the face and that this was the real reason for his decision.¹⁴¹ W. S. Holman was put up by the Democrats to succeed Lane. The People's candidate was William Cumback, a Know Nothing, who had been a delegate to the Democratic State convention and had been read out of the party because he would not endorse its platform. In the Fifth district S. W. Parker refused to run again saying that he had had all the public life that he cared for. David P. Holloway, a former Whig, was the nominee. In the Sixth district Jacob P. Chapman announced his candidacy as an independent candidate but after the formation of the People's party in July withdrew in favor of whomever might be nominated.¹⁴² Lucian Barbour, who was accused of being a Know Nothing, was the Fusion candidate,¹⁴³ while Thomas A. Hendricks, who had voted for the "Nebraska iniquity" was chosen by the Democrats. In the Seventh district John G. Davis was renominated by the Democratic convention, his opponent being Harvey D. Scott, a Know Nothing. In the Eighth District Daniel Mace, who had voted against the "Nebraska Swindle", was chosen as the nominee of the People's party. The "Old Line Democracy" ran James Davis. In the Ninth district Schuyler Colfax, a Know Nothing, ran against Norman Eddy, a supporter of the Kansas-Nebraska act. In the Tenth district Samuel Brenton was pitted against E. M. Chamberlain who now "acquiesced". In the Eleventh district since the Free Soilers held the balance of power the People's party had to put up John U. Pettit, a Van Buren Free Soiler.¹⁴⁴ His opponent was James R. Slack. A. J. Harlan, who had voted against the Kansas-Nebraska Bill but now "acquiesced", lost the support of the Anti-Nebraska men and was not renominated.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹*Weekly State Journal*, July 8, 1854.

¹⁴²*Weekly State Journal*, June 10, 1854; August 12, 1854.

¹⁴³*State Sentinel*, August 4, 1854.

¹⁴⁴*Weekly State Journal*, Sept. 2, 1854.

¹⁴⁵*State Sentinel*, July 7, 1854.

Since the temperance and slavery questions were more or less of moral questions the Methodists of Indiana took a very active part in the campaign. In the conferences it was resolved to work for a prohibitory law and to support no man who would not pledge himself to vote for the restoration of the Missouri Compromise.¹⁴⁶

During the agitation which swept over the country after the introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill a petition, signed by 3000 New England clergymen, protesting against the bill as a great moral wrong, as a breach of faith and as a measure dangerous to the peace and the safety of the Union was presented to Douglas.¹⁴⁷ This angered Douglas and caused him to denounce bitterly the signers of the petition. These preachers were much abused by the Democrats on the ground that preachers ought to preach, and not mix in politics.¹⁴⁸ It was suggested that it would be interesting to know how many of these men had been accused or convicted of crimes against the divine, the moral, or the statutory code; how many of them had been in prison; how many had run away with other men's wives; how many had been guilty of seduction; and how many were addicted to the drink habit.¹⁴⁹ John L. Robinson stumped the State denouncing these men as Know Nothings. Because of the activity of the Protestant ministers in behalf of the People's party Robinson called them "itinerant vagabonds".¹⁵⁰ At New Albany in explaining this expression Robinson said that he meant only those Methodist lecturers who wandered from courthouse to courthouse denouncing all who did not agree with them.¹⁵¹ He showed his appreciation of temperance lecturers by calling them "vagabond lecturers."¹⁵² Democratic papers seriously objected to the part taken by the Protestant ministers in the campaign.

When the Democrats realized that they had a serious fight on hand and that their prospects for success were not encouraging they appealed to their former enemies, the Whigs, to

¹⁴⁶*State Sentinel*, July 30, 1854; August 24, 1854.

¹⁴⁷*New Albany Daily Ledger*, March 30, 1854.

¹⁴⁸*New Albany Daily Ledger*, March 30, 1854.

¹⁴⁹*New Albany Dailey Ledger*, April 1, 1854.

¹⁵⁰*Rushville Republican*, May 30, 1854.

¹⁵¹*New Albany Daily Ledger*, June 22, 1854.

¹⁵²*Wabash Weekly Intelligencer*, June 21, 1854.

unite with them in defeating the Abolitionists. It was argued that Webster and Clay, if living, would not be found in the new party and that there were no questions at issue between national Whigs, who had represented the principles of non-intervention, and the Democratic party.¹⁵³ Young Whigs were advised to consider well the effect that affiliating with the People's party, a party which could never survive, would have upon their future political prospects.¹⁵⁴

During the campaign the Know Nothings under the leadership of Codlove S. Orth of Lafayette undoubtedly played a considerable part. While the principles of the organization were said to be opposition to foreigners and to Catholicism the Democrats thought that the organization was a society which had been organized for the purpose of destroying the Democratic party.¹⁵⁵ They maintained that it was composed of every kind of opponents of the Democratic party¹⁵⁶ and that its influence was pernicious since it controlled every election which came off.¹⁵⁷ The Democrats were very hostile to the Know Nothings.

What did the election mean to Indiana? A few days before the election the *Sentinel* came out with a stirring appeal to the members of the Democratic party when it said;

Democrats, you are battling for your country, for the Constitution, for the holy and blessed Union which our fathers made, for Popular Sovereignty and Popular Rights, for Civil and Religious Liberty, for the glorious cause of National Democracy, the prayers and benedictions of patriotism and downtrodden humanity are being poured forth for your success. On! Freemen! On to Victory!¹⁵⁸

When the campaign had closed and the vote was counted the People's party had elected the State ticket by about thirteen thousand.¹⁵⁹ The next State legislature was to have a Senate of 26 Democrats and 24 Fusionists and the House of Representatives was to have 43 Democrats and 57 Fusionists.¹⁶⁰ On join ballot the Fusionists would have a majority

¹⁵³*State Sentinel*, Sept. 21, 1854.

¹⁵⁴*State Sentinel*, June 3, 1854.

¹⁵⁵*State Sentinel*, Sept. 19, 1854.

¹⁵⁶*State Sentinel*, Sept. 21, 1854.

¹⁵⁷*Rushville Republican*, Oct. 18, 1854.

¹⁵⁸*State Sentinel*, Democratic Platform, Oct. 7, 1854.

¹⁵⁹*State Sentinel*, Oct. 26, 1854.

¹⁶⁰*State Sentinel*, Oct. 26, 1854.

of 12. In the national House of Representatives Miller and English were Democrats while Dunn, Cumbach, Holloway, Barbour, Scott, Mace, Colfax, Brenton, and Pettit were Fusionists.¹⁶¹

The Democrats attributed their defeat (1) to the Anti-Nebraska "Humbug" which took thousands of Democrats away from the party; (2) to the Democratic attitude on temperance. In the eyes of the Democrats the temperance issue was brought out by the Fusion politicians solely for the purpose of gaining the support of temperance Democrats, by thousands of whom it was made the first issue.¹⁶² (3) to the Know Nothings who were largely disgruntled Democrats.¹⁶³

The Fusionists attributed their success (1) to the desire of the people to teach their representatives that the people's will on the questions before the public was to be obeyed;¹⁶⁴ (2) to the fact that the people of Indiana were tired of the corruption of the Democratic party;¹⁶⁵ (3) to the feeling of many Democrats that the State Democratic convention was "packed" and that its platform did not represent the will of the Democratic party;¹⁶⁶ (4) to the slavery and temperance planks of the State Democratic platform. In commenting upon the election Editor M. C. Garber, of the *Madison Courier*, stated that the Know Nothings had but little to do with the defeat of the Democrats since the Know Nothings were the weakest element in the election.¹⁶⁷

In general the Democrats looked upon their defeat with the feeling that

Democracy was defeated, not by a political association sustained by definite principles, but by a mere combination of factions, leagued for the first time with no particular object, each preserving its own crude idea of right, and all submitting to the co-operation of each other, with the hope that something might grow up upon which all could cling, and around which each could rally and form a permanent party.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶¹*Daily Journal*, Jan. 4, 1855.

¹⁶²*State Sentinel*, Oct. 31, 1854.

¹⁶³*State Sentinel*, Oct. 14, 1854.

¹⁶⁴*Logansport Journal*, Oct. 21, 1854.

¹⁶⁵*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 21, 1854.

¹⁶⁶*Madison Dollar Weekly Courier*, Nov. 7, 1854.

¹⁶⁷*Madison Dollar Weekly Courier*, Nov. 7, 1854.

¹⁶⁸*Rockport Democrat*, Oct. 17, 1855.

Of the new party which had been formed Berry R. Sulgrove, editor of the *Indianapolis Journal*, wrote:

It is evident to everyone that there has silently arisen, and is now forming all over the country, a great Republican party. It has thrown aside the shackles and the prejudices, that, engendered year after year, have so long held men trammelled by old party names merely. It arises from considerations higher and more important than party ties. It comes from the reason and sober judgment of the people.

Its advent is witnessed on the one hand by rejoicing. Those who look to the purity and permanence of our institutions, hail it as the harbinger of good. But on the other side its coming is seen with terror and dismay. That class of men among us who live only by political huckstering, who feed on official pay, who can see no means of personal maintenance for themselves out of office, who have neither the industry nor will to earn their daily bread by common means, who know that the people who make this new party, the Republicans of the country, will weigh them in the balance and will "find them wanting", these fear and dread and curse this new organization. No denunciation of it is too broad, no curse of it too deep, no epithet too revolting for them to apply to it. Fusion, mongrel, renegade, traitor, abolitionist, and others without number, are the terms they see proper to use, when designating it. It and its men receive no courtesy at their hands, and they stop not at the lowest depths of reviling. High officers of the government, men for whom many of us voted, men whom we placed in power and in office, now use that power and place to give force to their efforts to throw obloquy upon us. In this free government we may not be freemen, we are not allowed the right to think and vote with freedom and as we please, unless we vote money into their pockets, and power and office into their hands. We must be what they call Democrats or we must be covered with revilings.

All this under the name of Democracy, as they pretend. Day after day and week after week these men, senators, governors, congressmen, mail agents, postmasters, office holders of every class, peregrinate from county to county, to mislead and deceive the people. * * * They outrage right and justice and morality and freedom, but claim immunity and exaltation, because they belong to the party. The party, they say, must be sustained, even though liberty perish.¹⁶⁹

One of the most noticeable facts about the election was the activity of the young men in behalf of the People's party. It was estimated that nine-tenths of all the native-born young men of Indianapolis voted for the People's ticket. The Fusionists rejoiced at this as it indicated strength and stability for the new party.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹*Weekly State Journal*, Sept. 16, 1854.

¹⁷⁰*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 21, 1854.

In discussing the composition of the new party Editor Gregg, of the *New Albany Tribune* gave the following estimate:¹⁷¹

Whigs -----	80,000
Democrats -----	10,000
Free Soilers -----	8,000
<hr/>	
Fusion -----	98,000

If this estimate be true it is evident that the Whigs formed the main portion of the People's party.

November 1, 1854, was set as the day upon which the people of Indianapolis should celebrate the glorious victory over the "Old Line Democracy" at Indianapolis. A large good natured crowd assembled that day with Thomas Smith of Ripley county, as chairman of the meeting. H. S. Lane, S. W. Parker, O. P. Morton, Mr. Galloway of Ohio, Reuben A. Riley, and Godlove S. Orth were the speakers. These men expressed the desire of perpetuating the People's party and also the desire of all to forget the past political affiliations and further the movement. Freedom, temperance, and pure elections should be the watchwords of the new party.¹⁷² During the afternoon it was resolved that the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Ordinance of 1787, and the resolutions of the 13th of July were long enough and broad enough for the whole American people to stand upon.¹⁷³ This was a wise move since the members of the People's party differed so much in their views that any new resolution would have probably tended to divide rather than unite the members of the new party.

FIRST REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

When the State legislature assembled in January, 1855, both Democrats and Fusionists had hopes of electing one of their party to the United States Senate as a successor to Senator John Pettit. Realizing that the majority of 12 was too much to overcome, the Democrats put off the election until

¹⁷¹*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 21, 1854.

¹⁷²*Weekly State Journal*, Nov. 4, 1854.

¹⁷³*Logansport Journal*, Nov. 18, 1854.

February 22, 1855.¹ The Democratic Senate chose Isaac Blackford for the United States Senate. The House refused to choose Blackford but invited the Senate into a joint convention for the purpose of selecting a United States senator. The Senate declined and the session closed without any man being selected. A Democratic senate, which believed in popular sovereignty, had refused to obey the will of the people.²

Since the Supreme Court of Indiana had decided that the liquor law of 1853 was unconstitutional it fell upon the State legislature of 1855 to draft a new law. A bill was passed in the Senate by a vote of 29 to 18 and sent to the House where it was passed by a vote of 55 to 43. In the Senate seven Democrats voted for the bill.³ This act prohibited the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage and was very much like the Maine Law.⁴

The People's party again assembled July 13, 1855, for the purpose of further organizing their party.⁵ By this time it had become apparent that the slavery issue was the big question although temperance and anti-catholicism were still prominent.⁶ Fully as many were present as at the mass meeting of July 13, 1854. Not only was the attendance large but the best of harmony was prevalent.⁷ Charles H. Test, Morton, Lane, Colfax, and Henry Wilson of Massachusetts were the main speakers.⁸ A platform was adopted reaffirming the first three planks of the platform of 1854, condemning the Kansas policy of the national administration, asking for a fair trial of the prohibitory liquor law, and demanding that the franchise be limited to native or naturalized citizens of the United States.⁹ In discussing these resolutions Editor M. C. Garber said, "All that the Republican party asks now was contended for by the Democratic party in 1849."

The Know Nothings held their State council July 11-12, 1855, at Indianapolis, probably expecting to control the

¹*Democratic Pharos*, Jan. 24, 1854.

²*Rushville Republican*, March 14, 1855.

³*State Sentinel*, Feb. 10, 1855.

⁴*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Feb. 9, 1855.

⁵*Logansport Journal*, June 30, 1855.

⁶Russel M. Seeds, *History of the Republican Party in Indiana*, 24.

⁷*Rushville Republican*, July 18, 1855.

⁸*Logansport Journal*, July 21, 1855.

⁹*Logansport Journal*, July 21, 1855.

Fusion meeting of July 13. The Council demanded the restoration of the Missouri Compromise, strongly endorsed the prohibitory liquor law of Indiana, and declared that the State constitution should be so amended as to permit only citizens of the United States to vote.¹⁰ A comparison of the resolutions of both conventions shows that there was but little difference between the views of the two parties. In fact the Republicans openly said that there was no reason why the Know Nothings should not become Republicans and that they longed to see the day when Republicans and Know Nothings stood on a truly American platform.¹¹

A test of the liquor law was made by Beebe, an Indianapolis liquor seller. The case was carried to the Supreme Court of Indiana where it was decided that the law was constitutional in prohibiting the sale but not the manufacture of liquor.¹² As a result of this decision a convention was called to meet February 22, 1856, at Indianapolis to consider what should be done to further the cause of temperance in Indiana.¹³ John W. Dawson of Allen county, John D. Defrees and A. L. Robinson were prominent members of the convention which resolved that the friends of temperance should be requested not to support any candidate who was against a prohibitory law and recommending that the friends of temperance organize in every portion of the State.¹⁴ Democrats did not have a very kindly feeling toward this convention owing to the tendency of the members of the Democratic party to look upon the temperance movement as a mere "tender to the Fusion movement". They thought that the Know Nothings would rule this convention as they had done in the People's convention of 1854.¹⁵

Feeling that the combination of "ungodly, unholy, and contemptible" "isms" might have been defeated in 1854 if the Democrats had held their convention earlier, the "Old Liners" met at Indianapolis January 8, 1856, in a State convention for the purpose of making a platform, nominating a State

¹⁰Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, July 14, 1855.

¹¹Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, July 11, 1855.

¹²Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, January, 1856.

¹³Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, Jan. 24, 1856.

¹⁴Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, Feb. 23, 1856.

¹⁵*State Sentinel*, Feb. 9, 1856.

ticket, and organizing for the coming campaign.¹⁶ The convention was well attended and was as harmonious as most political conventions are.¹⁷ A. P. Willard of New Albany was the choice for governor with John C. Walker of Laporte county for lieutenant-governor. The resolutions committee reported a platform approving the principle of the Kansas-Nebraska act, condemning the Know Nothings, opposing the principle of the last prohibitory law of Indiana, approving the continuance of the present naturalization laws, favoring Jesse D. Bright for President, and upholding the Monroe Doctrine.¹⁸ This platform made the Kansas-Nebraska act and a prohibitory law the main issues of the coming contest.

That the Democrats proposed to win was seen in the action of the State Central Committee in asking Mr. Walker to resign because of ineligibility, there being some question as to his age qualifications.¹⁹ The real reason for the change was the desire of the State Central Committee to strengthen the ticket by putting on it an Old Line Whig, Abram A. Hammond of Vigo county.²⁰

It was unfortunate for the Democrats that the attitude of the party toward the slavery question had not been the same at all times. The national Democratic convention of May, 1848, by a vote of 216 to 36, had refused to pass a resolution making "non-intervention by Congress" the true doctrine of the party.²¹ The Indiana delegation in the convention voted as a unit against the resolution.²² We have already noted the State Democratic resolutions of January, 1849, as stating that Congress had the right to and ought to prevent the spread of slavery to the territories. In justice to the Democrats it should be said that the resolutions of 1849 did not express the position of the mass of the party but these resolutions were the work of the party leaders who did so as a matter of "expediency".²³

The Methodist church of Indiana was hostile to the Demo-

¹⁶Rockport *Democrat*, Nov. 3, 1855.

¹⁷*State Sentinel*, Jan. 16, 1856.

¹⁸*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Jan. 9, 1856.

¹⁹*State Sentinel*, April 19, 1856.

²⁰*Logansport Journal*, April 26, 1856.

²¹*Madison Dollar Weekly Courier*, July 16, 1856.

²²*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, May 29, 1856.

²³*Logansport Democratic Pharos*, July 2, 1856.

cratic party because of its stand on the slavery question. At the Northern Indiana Conference in September, 1853, a stand was made against slavery by resolving that it was the duty of the Church to seek by all peaceable as well as reasonable means the removal of slavery from the entire country.²⁴ At the Greensburg Quarterly Conference in August, 1854, it was resolved not to support any man for Congress who would not pledge himself to restore the Missouri Compromise line and that the extension of slavery over free territory would be a disgrace to our government.²⁵ At the General Conference of May, 1856, a decided stand was taken against slavery by resolving that slave-holders must emancipate their slaves or lose membership in the Methodist church.²⁶

Another element of opposition to the extension of slavery was the German population of the State. Most of those who had come before 1848 were Democrats while those who had come over because of the Revolution of 1848 believed in freedom.²⁷ In 1856 there were probably 60,000 Germans here.²⁸ They were located in Adams, Allen, Decatur, Dubois, Elkhart, Floyd, Knox, Laporte, Marion, Posey, Tippecanoe, Vanderburg, Vigo, Warrick, and Wayne counties. Those who had come because of the Revolution of 1848 had a sort of a sentimental fervor for liberty. Since they and their fathers had suffered under the political tyranny of their own land they had the feeling that the territories of this Union ought to be dedicated to freedom in order that they might become a refuge for their brethren yet in Germany.²⁹ Hence they were hostile to the Kansas-Nebraska act because it seemed to be a pro-slavery measure and also, because of the Clayton amendment, aliens could not vote or hold office in these territories.³⁰ It was estimated that twenty thousand political pamphlets in German were scattered over Indiana during the first four months of 1856.³¹ The Democrats appealed to them not to support the People's ticket because it was being supported by

²⁴Madison *Dollar Weekly Courier*, Oct. 8, 1853.

²⁵*Weekly State Journal*, Aug., 26 1854.

²⁶*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, May 29, 1856.

²⁷*State Sentinel*, April 20, 1860.

²⁸Census of 1860, page 130, gives 66,705 in 1860.

²⁹Chapman's *Chanticleer*, March 9, 1854.

³⁰*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, March 10, 1854.

³¹*State Sentinel*, April 30, 1856.

the Know Nothings who were the enemies of foreigners.³² The Fusionists met the argument of the Democrats by showing the Germans that slavery was the enemy of free labor and that the only way the German could protect himself against slavery was by voting against its extension.³³ So important was the vote of the Germans that the *Detroit Free Press* said that it was the German vote which won for the Republican party.³⁴

After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act people began to move into Kansas. By 1860 this territory had a population of 107,204, most of whom had come from the Old Northwest.³⁵ At this time there were living in Kansas 9,945 people who were born in Indiana.³⁶ So prominent were Indiana men in Kansan affairs that 34 out of 80 members of the State legislature were from the Hoosier State.³⁷

In spite of the efforts of the northern men the territorial legislature had passed some severe pro-slavery laws. Assisting runaway slaves was made punishable by death and all were forbidden to say, write, print, or introduce any printed book denying the right to hold slaves in Kansas. Violation of this law was punishable by two years of hard labor in prison.³⁸ The election law of August 16, 1855, permitted every white male citizen of the United States over twenty-one years of age to vote if he presented a receipt showing that he had paid one dollar poll tax.³⁹ This act seems to have been passed for the special purpose of permitting men from the border States to vote in Kansan elections.

After the opening of the territory Missourians and Arkansans moved over into it. They hoped that Kansas would adopt the institutions of Missouri and proposed to help her to do so.⁴⁰ Their purpose was well shown in the Westport, Missouri, resolutions which declared that they wanted to take their property into Kansas peaceably but that, having heard

³²*State Sentinel*, July 26, 1856.

³³*Indianapolis Morning Journal*, July 3, 1856.

³⁴*State Sentinel*, April 20, 1860.

³⁵W. O. Lynch, *Indiana Magazine of History*, XI, number 1.

³⁶Census of 1860, page 166.

³⁷*New Albany Weekly Ledger*, May 21, 1856.

³⁸*Terre Haute Daily Express*, Sept. 4, 1856.

³⁹*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Aug. 17, 1855.

⁴⁰*Weekly State Journal*, Aug. 17, 1854.

that organized bands were being sent into Kansas, they wished to notify them that they would be met with the "last argument".⁴¹ This clearly indicated that the citizens of Missouri intended to secure Kansas as a slave State. Not only did the people of Missouri pass resolutions such as these but they kept up a continued agitation for the avowed purpose of preventing anyone going into Kansas who was unfriendly to slavery.⁴²

Indiana newspapers printed much telegraph news from Kansas and also published many letters from former Indians urging their friends to move to Kansas. These writers usually stated that unless northerners came to the rescue Kansas would become a slave territory.⁴³ Not only did they write back to Indiana for help but James H. Lane, who had voted for the Kansas-Nebraska act and had gone to Kansas to live, came back to Indiana to reveal the true condition of affairs there.⁴⁴ What Kansas wanted was well shown by the following prayer of Rev. E. B. Foster, of Lawrence, Kansas, when he prayed:

"O, Lord: we pray thee that the freemen of the North, East, and West, may squat in Kansas, and drive out the border ruffians. This is one thing we ask for Christ's sake. Amen!"⁴⁵

Hearing that the border ruffians were contemplating an invasion of Kansas and feeling that they were unable to meet it, James H. Lane, chairman of the executive committee of Kansas territory, and Governor-elect Robinson wrote a letter to Gov. Joseph A. Wright of Indiana asking him to take some steps to prevent the threatened invasion. Governor Wright answered that it was the policy of Indiana to let the people of the territory settle these questions as best they could. This answer did not please the anti-slavery men of the State who felt that something ought to be done to protect the anti-slavery men of Kansas against the slavery men of Missouri who were there only to control the elections.⁴⁶

⁴¹*Weekly State Journal*, June 24, 1854.

⁴²*Weekly State Journal*, Aug. 28, 1856.

⁴³*Weekly State Journal*, Jan. 17, 1856.

⁴⁴*Logansport Journal*, May 31, 1856.

⁴⁵*Rockport Weekly Democrat*, July 26, 1856.

⁴⁶*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Feb. 16, 1856.

The attitude of the President toward Kansas was clearly expressed in his message of January 24, 1856, in which he declared the acts of the territorial legislature legal and urged the enacting of a law that would enable Kansas to form a State constitution when it had sufficient population.⁴⁷ This message indicated that the administration was going to help make Kansas a slave State.

As a result of the appeals from Kansas for assistance and the attitude of the national administration toward Kansas many meetings were held in Indiana at which money was raised to send to Kansas.⁴⁸ At a meeting on January 5, 1856, at Indianapolis a memorial to Congress was drawn urging that such legislation be enacted as would enable Kansas to secure the government to the bona fide residents or that Congress take charge of the territory.⁴⁹ At a second meeting held in Indianapolis in February, 1856, a committee of three was appointed to receive money which was to be sent to Kansas or used in buying Sharpe's rifles. Copies of these resolutions were sent to Indiana's congressmen and also to President Pierce.⁵⁰

The Kansan situation seemed serious to the "Free Democrats" whose executive committee of the State association of the free democracy issued a call for all anti-slavery persons to meet in Indianapolis February 21, 1856, for the purpose of uniting all opponents of the slavery propagandism of the "Old Liners" and present national administration. It was thought that the friends of freedom should council before the proposed People's convention in May.⁵¹ A. L. Robinson, of Evansville, was made chairman of the meeting. It was decided to meet in the People's convention of May 1, 1856, not as Free Democrats but as a part of the people, desiring the reform of great abuses and the return to the policies of the Fathers of the Republic.⁵² Acting upon Henry Ward Beecher's famous sentence, "Sharpe's rifles are better than Bibles",⁵³ Judge J. W. Wright of Logansport introduced a

⁴⁷Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 353.

⁴⁸*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Feb. 21, 1856.

⁴⁹*Weekly State Journal*, Jan. 10, 1856.

⁵⁰*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Feb. 25, 1856.

⁵¹*Weekly State Journal*, Jan. 31, 1856.

⁵²*Indianapolis Daily Journal*, Feb. 22, 1856.

⁵³*State Sentinel*, June 11, 1856.

resolution for a committee of seven men "to raise money, purchase arms, and equip men to go immediately to Kansas."⁵⁴ These seven men were Dr. Ritchey of Johnson county, Ovid S. W. Butler of Marion county, Judge Wright, A. C. Stevenson of Putnam county, Calvin Fletcher of Marion county, Henry S. Lane of Montgomery county, and James H. Lane of Ripley county. It was further resolved that the people of the different counties raise money to be placed at the disposal of this committee of seven.⁵⁵

In the *State Journal* was published a letter from Judge J. W. Wright from which the following extracts are taken:

If a contest with arms comes off in Kansas hundreds of Hoosiers will be there, and money can be furnished to any amount, and after it is over every aider and abettor to the ruffians in Indiana, will be shipped South and delivered over to their masters.

Persons wishing to emigrate to Kansas as actual settlers and desirous of procuring Sharpe's rifles can be supplied in a few days by addressing me at Logansport, or at the Bates House in Indianapolis.

The decree has gone forth that Kansas has to be free.⁵⁶

With the people of the State intensely interested in the situation in Kansas a more systematic campaign was planned by the leaders of the new party. As early as December 18, 1855, the Fusion editors met at Indianapolis with Milton Gregg of the *New Albany Tribune*, a Know Nothing, as president. Here it was decided to endorse the People's platform of 1854 as containing all that was necessary on the issues before the people of the State. Significant among its recommendations were those advocating a mass meeting of the people in May and urging that each county organize itself thoroughly for the coming campaign.⁵⁷ In carrying out this last recommendation the Fusion newspapers began to urge the organization of the counties by the selection of county, township, and district committees which were to keep in touch with the State Central Committee.⁵⁸ These committees were to send out the best speakers obtainable and were urged to see that genuinely Republican delegates were chosen for

⁵⁴Logansport *Democratic Pharos*, March 19, 1856.

⁵⁵Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, Feb. 22, 1856.

⁵⁶*Weekly State Journal*, Feb. 28, 1856.

⁵⁷Indianapolis *Daily Journal*, December 19, 1855.

⁵⁸*Weekly State Journal*, February 21, 1856.

the State convention and that they came to Indianapolis for the convention.⁵⁹ Republican clubs and people's clubs were formed representing the principle of no interference with slavery by Congress where it already exists and no slavery in the territories.⁶⁰

Following the suggestions of the editors, the State Central Committee issued a call for a mass convention of the People's party of the State of Indiana at Indianapolis on the first day of May, 1856. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the unconstitutional efforts of the government to extend slavery into territory once made free by that compromise, the evident intention of the government to nationalize slavery, threats of disunion, and the condition of the State due to intemperance and heavy taxation required the careful consideration of the people in a mass convention.⁶¹ Of this call the *Sentinel* said that it was "the most impudent and unblushing tissue of distorted facts that has ever been presented to the people of the State; abounding with all manner of misrepresentation".⁶² It was further asserted that this call was in harmony with the Fusion program which approved of the State temperance convention of February 22, 1856, favored the reorganization of the Know Nothing Councils, and provided for a People's mass meeting.⁶³

Owing to the early date of the State convention not many county meetings were held before May 1, 1856. On March 6, the Madison county Republicans resolved to organize by county and townships and to meet April 19 to draft a platform.⁶⁴ At this meeting it was resolved that slavery should not be interfered with where it already existed but that the Republicans were opposed to its further extension.⁶⁵ On March 8 the Jefferson county Republicans resolved to resist by all constitutional means the extension of slavery into the territories.⁶⁶ On April 26 the Republicans of Marion county resolved that they would resist the introduction of slavery

⁵⁹*Weekly State Journal*, April 24, 1856.

⁶⁰*Weekly State Journal*, April 3, 1856.

⁶¹*Weekly State Journal*, Jan. 31, 1856.

⁶²*State Sentinel*, Jan. 26, 1856.

⁶³*State Sentinel*, Jan. 28, 1856.

⁶⁴*Weekly State Journal*, March 20, 1856.

⁶⁵*Weekly State Journal*, May 1, 1856.

⁶⁶*Weekly State Journal*, March 13, 1856.

into the territories in accordance with the State Democratic doctrine of 1849 and that Kansas should be admitted immediately as a free State.⁶⁷

Much interest was taken in the choice of a man to head the State ticket. O. P. Morton, H. S. Lane, S. W. Parker, Daniel Mace, Schuyler Colfax, D. D. Pratt of Cass county, O. H. Smith of Marion county, and Judge Otto of Floyd county were mentioned.⁶⁸ Morton refused to become a candidate thinking that some other man could better serve the interests of the people in that office.⁶⁹

On the first day of May, 1856, a crowd, estimated at from 30,000 to 55,000 people, assembled from all parts of the State.⁷⁰ H. S. Lane was selected as president.⁷¹ Lane expressed his views by saying that the first great issue to be settled was that of the extension of slavery, that the admission of Kansas had to be settled, that President Pierce was ready to put down free men in Kansas who were fighting for free speech, free press, and free institutions. Lane showed that opposition to the extension of slavery did not mean Abolition. He eulogized the temperance law of 1854 and urged that no foreigner be permitted to vote until naturalized. Of this speech the *Sentinel* of May 2, 1856, remarked that Lane said the object of the convention was to unite all the factions of the Fusionists into a party whose leading principle was opposition to the further extension of slavery.

John A. Matson of Putnam county nominated Oliver P. Morton for Governor. The sentiment of the convention was for Morton as was shown by the fact that he was nominated by acclamation. In the afternoon Morton addressed the convention advocating the immediate admission of Kansas

⁶⁷*Weekly State Journal*, May 1, 1856.

⁶⁸*Logansport Journal*, Feb. 2, 1856; *Weekly State Journal*, Feb. 21, 1856.

⁶⁹*Weekly State Journal*, Jan. 31, 1856.

⁷⁰*Logansport Journal*, July 19, 1856.

⁷¹*Weekly State Journal*, May 8, 1856. The vice-presidents were: First district, J. T. Embree, Gibson county; Second district, Milton Gregg, Floyd county; Third district, J. V. Buskirk, Monroe county; Fourth district, George P. Buell, Dearborn county; Fifth district, Miles Murphy, Henry county; Sixth district, J. Ritchey, Johnson county; Seventh district, Levi Sidwell, Parke county; Eighth district, H. L. Ellsworth, Tippecanoe county; Ninth district, J. W. Wright, Cass county; Tenth district, T. R. Dickenson, Dekalb county; Eleventh district, Isaac Vandevanter, Grant county. The Secretaries were: John R. Cravens, Jefferson county; B. R. Sulgrove, Marion county; W. M. French, Clark county; William Millikan, Laporte county.

as a free State and denying the right of any foreigner to vote before naturalization. His position on the slavery question was opposition to the further extension but no interference with it where it was already established.

There was some confusion when Mr. R. M. Hudson of Vigo county objected to the appointment of delegates to the national Republican convention of June 17, 1856. He claimed that delegates should not be appointed since this was not a Republican convention. Hudson, who was a Know Nothing, felt that the Fusionists did not dare to act against the wishes of the Know Nothings since they were strong in southwestern Indiana.⁷² David Kilgore, who was an older Know Nothing than Hudson, said that they had better send delegates to the Philadelphia convention on June 17, 1856, in order that candidates might be chosen for whom all could vote. In his view Americanism could wait while the Kansas question could not.⁷³ A compromise was arranged whereby six delegates from the State at large and three from each congressional district were selected. H. S. Lane, John D. Defrees, William M. Dunn, Judge Wright, Godlove S. Orth, and Charles H. Test were chosen to go to Philadelphia as representatives to the "People's" national convention of June 17, 1856.⁷⁴

After the selection of these delegates James H. Lane was called for and responded by a vivid description of the real conditions as they were in Kansas. He maintained that the interference of the Missourians in Kansan affairs was the root of the trouble there. He closed his speech with a recital of the brutal treatment of the free State men by the border ruffians.

⁷²*Logansport Democratic Pharos*, May 14, 1856.

⁷³*New Albany Daily Ledger*, May 6, 1856.

⁷⁴*Seeds, History of the Republican Party in Indiana*, 25. The delegates from the congressional districts were: First district, Willard Carpenter, Vanderburg; Andrew Lewis, Warrick; William M. Morrison, Warrick. Second district, (To be decided in Convention). Third district, J. J. Cummings, Jackson; William Sharp, Jennings; M. C. Garber, Jefferson. Fourth district, George P. Buell, Dearborn; J. H. Farquahar, Franklin; Thomas Smith, Ripley. Fifth district, Jacob B. Julian, Wayne; M. L. Bundy, Henry; B. F. Claypool, Fayette. Sixth district, J. S. Harvey, Marion; James Ritchey, Johnson; Joseph S. Miller, Hendricks. Seventh district, George K. Steele, Parke; Daniel Sigler, Putnam; B. A. Allison, Owen. Eighth district, James Nelson, Montgomery; R. C. Gregory, Tippecanoe; William Bowers, Boone. Ninth district, D. G. Rose, Miami; D. R. Bearrs, Miami; T. H. Binghurst, Cass. Tenth district, J. C. Power, Kosciusko; John Mitchell, Noble; Samuel Hanna, Allen. Eleventh district, J. D. Connor, Wabash; C. D. Murray, Howard; Isaac Vandevanter, Grant.

At the conclusion of Lane's speech the Committee on Resolutions brought in the following report:

The people of Indiana consisting of all who are opposed to the policy of the present federal administration, assembled in convention at the capital of the State, now submit to the people the following platform of principles:

Resolved, That we are uncompromisingly opposed to the extension of slavery; and that we utterly repudiate the platform of principles adopted by the self-styled Democratic convention of this State endorsing and approving the Kansas-Nebraska iniquity.

Resolved, That we will resist by all proper means the admission of any slave state into this Union formed out of the territories secured to freedom by the Missouri Compromise, or otherwise.

Resolved, That we are in favor of the immediate admission of Kansas as a free State.

Resolved, That we are in favor of the naturalization laws of Congress with the five years' probation, and that the right of suffrage should accompany and not precede naturalization.

Resolved, That we believe the General Assembly of the State have the power to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and that we are in favor of a constitutional law which will effectually suppress the evils of intemperance.

In considering the platform it will be noted that the People's party was an opposition party and that it opposed the extension of slavery. It went a little further than the platform of 1854, which declared against the admission of any more slave States out of territory made free by the Missouri Compromise by adding "or otherwise".⁷⁵ The plank on "Naturalization" was made to satisfy both the Germans and the Know Nothings. The Germans had declared that they would not support the Republicans unless the party went on record as being opposed to any change in the naturalization laws.⁷⁶ The Know Nothing element was opposed to the provision in the State constitution giving the foreigner the right to vote after one year's residence in the United States, six months in Indiana, and the making of his declaration of intention. The plank on intemperance was similar to that of 1854. In commenting upon this plank the *Rockport Weekly Democrat* of May 31, 1856, said:

⁷⁵*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, May 9, 1856.

⁷⁶*Weekly State Journal*, May 8, 1856.

"We know of no set of men outside of the Know Nothing, nigger worshipping editors of the Republican party and their gang of rot gut suckers, who need the protecting arm of a prohibitory law, to save them from drunkards' graves."

Later it designated the People's party as the "Woolly-headed Abolition, proscriptive Know Nothing, prohibitory Maine-Law party".⁷⁷

Near the close of the convention the following ticket was nominated:

Governor, O. P. Morton, Wayne county; Lieutenant Governor, Conrad Baker, Vanderburg county; Secretary of State, John W. Dawson (Know Nothing), Allen county; Treasurer of State, William R. Nofsinger, Parke county; Auditor of State, E. W. H. Ellis, Marion county; Superintendent of Public Instruction, John L. Smith,⁷⁸ Boone county; Attorney General, James H. Cravens, Ripley county; Reporter of Supreme Court, John A. Stein, Tippecanoe county; Clerk of Supreme Court, John A. Beal, Miami county.

The opponents of the People's party criticized the ticket by saying that Morton was a Know Nothing. Morton denied the charge. Editor Gregg of the *New Albany Tribune* said that Morton was a member of the order in 1854 and emphasizes his statement by asserting that he was in a position to know.⁷⁹ It was further asserted that the Fusion ticket was made up of men who suited the temperance element.⁸⁰

It will be noted that the new party again went into the campaign as the People's party. Lane, Morton and other leaders of the party were in favor of assuming the name Republican but the Know Nothings, many Anti-Nebraska Democrats, and some of the "Old Line Whigs" were not yet ready to take on that name.⁸¹ This led George W. Julian to say that in his own State the name Republican was repudiated. He characterized the People's party as a "combination of weaknesses instead of a union of forces".⁸² During the campaign Julian came out in opposition to the People's party. He wrote:

⁷⁷*Rockport Weekly Democrat*, July 26, 1856.

⁷⁸Smith declined and Charles L. Barnes of New Albany was chosen.

⁷⁹*New Albany Tribune*, May 27, 1856. Gregg was a Know Nothing.

⁸⁰*Logansport Democratic Pharos*, Sept. 3, 1856.

⁸¹Seeds, *History of the Republican Party in Indiana*, 24.

⁸²Julian, *Political Recollections*, 155.

The Know Nothings of this State, by assuming the name of People's party, have had things considerably their own in Indiana for sometime past.

The proceedings of the convention, generally, must have been disgusting to any looker-on having the anti-slavery cause at heart.

With one exception I cannot find of the entire batch of candidates, electors, and delegates, a single man who can be said to be an anti-slavery man.

What is the present duty of men who can support neither of the two pro-slavery tickets in the field? I answer let them do everything in their power, by honorable means, to overwhelm the ticket of the People's party with an inglorious defeat.⁸³

From these quotations it will be noted that the platform did not suit the radicals like Julian.

Not only was the State interested in State politics but there was much interest in national politics due to the fact that the questions before the people were national rather than local. While many of the States had State organizations which were opposed to the administration's policy there was no national organization of these State parties. To effect such an organization a call was issued in the name of the Republican State chairman of nine States, including Indiana, for an informal convention at Pittsburg, February 22, 1856. This convention was to draft plans for the organization of a permanent Republican party and provide for a convention which should nominate candidates for president and vice-president.⁸⁴ George W. Julian, chairman of the Committee on Organization, reported a plan of organization, providing for a national executive committee of one from each State, a national convention to meet June 17, 1856, and recommended the appointment of State and county committees and the formation of clubs in every town and township throughout the land.⁸⁵ William Grose was designated as the member from Indiana of the National Executive Committee.

This National Executive Committee met in Washington on March 27, 1856, and after the committee had spent two days in wording it so as not to offend anyone a call was issued asking all who opposed

the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the policy of the administration, the extension of slavery into the territories, the admission of Kansas as a free

⁸³*Terre Haute Daily Express*, June 3, 1856.

⁸⁴Frances Curtis, *The Republican Party*, I, 250.

⁸⁵*Weekly State Journal*, Feb. 22, 1856.

State, and the restoration of the action of the federal government to the principles of Washington and Jefferson .

to send three delegates from each congressional district and six at large to the national convention at Philadelphia on June 17, 1856.⁸⁶

Indiana sent a full delegation to this convention of which H. S. Lane was chosen president. His speech of acceptance amazed the easterners, who did not know that Indiana possessed a man of such oratorical ability. A platform was adopted denying the authority of Congress or any territorial legislature to legalize slavery in any territory, declaring that it was the duty of Congress to prohibit in the territories those twin relics of barbarism, polygamy and slavery; and declaring that Kansas should be immediately admitted.⁸⁷ It is worthy of note that nothing was said about the Missouri Compromise. J. C. Fremont of California and William L. Dayton of New Jersey were nominated for president and vice-president.⁸⁸

Of this platform George W. Julian said:

I think I can stand on it, and without doing much violence to its language, preach the whole anti-slavery gospel. The restoration of the Missouri Compromise line is finally gathered among the defunct political humbugs of the day.⁸⁹

W. L. Garrison said:

As between the three rival parties, the sympathy of every genuine friend of freedom must be with the Republican party, in spite of its lamentable shortcomings.⁹⁰

Such utterances as these gave the Democrats the chance to designate the Republican party as an Abolitionist and disunionist party.

John D. Defrees, chairman of the State Central Committee, issued a call for all people regardless of all past political differences who were opposed to the extension of

⁸⁶*Weekly State Journal*, April 10, 1856.

⁸⁷*Weekly State Journal*, June 26, 1856.

⁸⁸Indiana voted 21 for McLean to 18 for Fremont on first ballot but solidly for Fremont on second ballot.

⁸⁹*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, July 8, 1856.

⁹⁰*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, Sept. 23, 1856.

slavery to territory made free by a sacred compromise, to meet July 15, 1856, at Indianapolis, to ratify the nominations to be made at Philadelphia, on the 17th of June.⁹¹ Evidently Defrees thought that the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line was to be the great issue in the contest. Much enthusiasm was displayed at this meeting, which was addressed by H. S. Lane, Mr. Elliot, of Kansas; Mr. Ludvigh, of Baltimore; Conrad Baker, P. A. Hackleman, S. S. Harding, and Mr. Marsh, of Ohio.⁹² Little was done here besides ratifying the nominations of Fremont and Dayton.

By the latter part of 1855 it was seen that the Know Nothings were losing their power. The fact that their organization was a secret one and the odium attached by the public to the name Know Nothing was putting their lodges out of existence.⁹³ Although decreasing rapidly they were a factor in the campaign, it being estimated that there were 50,000 Know Nothings in Indiana at the opening of the campaign.⁹⁴ If the Know Nothings decided to run a State ticket, the defeat of the Republican party was certain. If they fused with the Republicans the Know Nothing party as an organization would disappear. This was the problem confronting the leaders of these two parties.

The slavery question was dividing the Know Nothings into two sections, an anti-slavery section and a pro-slavery section, which struggled for the control of the Know Nothing National Council at Philadelphia, on June 5, 1855. For more than a week the conflict over slavery continued, it being resolved that congress had no power to prohibit slavery in the territories or abolish it in the District of Columbia and that the existing laws should be maintained. This platform definitely put the party on record as favoring the South on this question. In company with the northern division of the party, Indiana's delegates, Schuyler Colfax, Will Cumback, Godlove S. Orth, J. L. Harvey, F. D. Allen, J. R. M. Bryant, and Thomas C. Slaughter withdrew from the convention.⁹⁵ Those who supported the "bolters" would

⁹¹*Weekly State Journal*, June 12, 1856.

⁹²*Weekly State Journal*, July 17, 1856.

⁹³*Rockport Democrat*, Dec. 8, 1855.

⁹⁴Carl Fremont Brand, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Indiana*, 115.

⁹⁵*State Sentinel*, June 21, 1856.

probably drift into the Republican party because of their opposition to the extension of slavery.

The same kind of a struggle occurred in the Know Nothing National Council at Philadelphia on February 18, 1856. Here a platform was made which approved the enforcement of existing laws until repealed or declared null and void.⁹⁶ This seemed to be an acquiescence in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. On the 22nd of February the Council resolved itself into a nominating convention. A resolution was offered that

this Convention has no authority to prescribe a platform of principles, and we will nominate no candidates for president and vice-president who are not in favor of interdicting the introduction of slavery north of 36° 30'.

This motion was tabled: 141 yeas to 59 nays. As the balloting was about to commence delegates from seven States seceded. Millard Fillmore, of New York, and Andrew Jackson Donaldson, of Tennessee, were nominated by the remaining delegates.⁹⁷ Indiana's delegates, Sheets, Phelps, and Sol Meredith did not secede. These seceding States went into a North American convention the latter part of June and nominated J. C. Fremont and W. F. Johnson, of Pennsylvania.⁹⁸ Johnson declined in favor of Dayton, making the Republican and North American tickets the same.⁹⁹

Would the Americans take part in the People's convention of May 1, 1856? Milton Gregg, of the *New Albany Tribune*, stated that the American party was a stronger Anti-Nebraska party than the Republicans.¹⁰⁰ William Sheets, president of the executive committee of the American party, issued a call to members of the organization urging the members of the American party to co-operate with any party to end the misrule of the present administration and to restore the Missouri Compromise line. The executive committee called upon the members of the American party to send a full delegation to the People's convention on

⁹⁶*Weekly State Journal*, March 6, 1856.

⁹⁷*Weekly State Journal*, Feb. 28, 1856.

⁹⁸*Weekly State Journal*, June 26, 1856.

⁹⁹*Weekly State Journal*, Sept. 11, 1856.

¹⁰⁰*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, March 18, 1856.

May 1, 1856.¹⁰¹ This call disappointed the Republicans, many of whom desired the participation of the Know Nothings in this convention as individuals, but not as members of the American party.¹⁰²

The State convention of the American party met in Indianapolis on July 16, 1856. The big question to be decided was whether or not the party should run an independent electoral ticket. R. W. Thompson was made chairman of the meeting. Amid much confusion it was decided that it was inexpedient to put out a State or congressional ticket, to support Fillmore and Donaldson, and to pledge themselves to prevent the success of the Democratic party since it had surrendered itself to the extension of slavery. A resolution supporting the People's State ticket was voted down. Mr. Hudson and Mr. French of Clark county thought that it was the duty of the Americans to support the People's State ticket since they had taken part in the People's State convention. Both these men said that unless the convention supported the People's State ticket that they would desert Fillmore for Fremont. The *Journal* seemed to think that the result of this meeting would be a loss of one-half of the strength of the American party in Indiana.¹⁰³

This division of opinion in the convention was foreshadowed by the attitude of the State papers toward the Fillmore movement. Many papers which had endorsed Fillmore before the nomination refused to support him. Three weeks after the nomination of Fillmore there were but few straight out Fillmore papers in the State. The *Paoli Constitutionalist*, the *Washington Telegraph*, the *Rising Sun Visitor*, the *Evansville Journal*, the *Vincennes Gazette*, and a few others were still supporting the American ticket.¹⁰⁴ On June 9, 1856, the *Sentinel* said that every Know Nothing paper in Indiana but one was supporting the Republican State ticket. The *Corydon Argus* went over to Fremont on the slavery issue.¹⁰⁵ The *Rockford Herald* argued that the

¹⁰¹*Weekly State Journal*, April 3, 1856.

¹⁰²*Weekly State Journal*, April 10, 1856.

¹⁰³*Weekly State Journal*, July 24, 1856; *Terre Haute Daily Express*, July 22, 1856.

¹⁰⁴*Weekly State Journal*, March 13, 1856.

¹⁰⁵*Weekly State Journal*, July 10, 1856.

American vote in Indiana would decide between Fremont and Buchanan, and that it was the duty of the Americans to support Fremont.¹⁰⁶ The *Vincennes Gazette* had the following lines:

Is it politic to divide upon Fillmore and Fremont while the Old Liners unite upon Buchanan, and by our division, carry the State for their ticket? Is there any reason or sense in such a course? Every one will answer that there is not. Therefore it is the supremest folly and weakness in the American party doggedly and determinedly to adhere to their favorite candidate.¹⁰⁷

The *Terre Haute Daily Express* turned to Fremont because Fillmore had not stated his views on the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line and the further extension of slavery into the territories.¹⁰⁸ From these statements it is evident that many members of the American party were not satisfied with Fillmore because of his silence on the great question of the day, the extension of slavery.

There was great interest in the campaign. The large masses attending the political meetings gave evidence that political excitement was very high.¹⁰⁹ O. P. Morton, H. S. Lane, Caleb B. Smith, of Ohio; William Grose, Conrad Baker, S. W. Parker, W. J. Peaslee, Cassius M. Clay, of Kentucky; Godlove S. Orth, H. W. Ellsworth, George W. Julian, Will Cumback, J. A. Hendricks, David Kilgore, Daniel Mace, H. E. Talbot, Reuben A. Riley, and Lucian Barbour were some of the prominent Republican speakers. Among the Democratic speakers were Joseph A. Wright, A. P. Willard, Jesse B. Bright, J. L. Robinson, T. A. Hendricks, D. W. Voorhees, David Turpie, G. N. Fitch, C. L. Dunham, William H. English, and Joseph E. McDonald. The Republican speakers dwelt much upon "Free Press, Free Speech, Free Labor, Free States and Fremont." The Democratic speakers represented the Republican party as championing "Free Niggers, Free Dirt, Free Fight, Free Whiskey, Fremont, and Freedom."¹¹⁰ Fremont was charged with being a Catholic in spite of the fact that he had been nominated for President by the North Americans.¹¹¹ Statements of many of

¹⁰⁶*Weekly State Journal*, July 10, 1856.

¹⁰⁷*Terre Haute Daily Express*, Aug. 1, 1856.

¹⁰⁸*Terre Haute Daily Express*, Oct. 10, 1856.

¹⁰⁹*Indianapolis Locomotive*, July 19, 1856.

¹¹⁰*Democratic Herald*, March 29, 1860.

¹¹¹*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, Sept. 3, 1856.

the leading Southerners to the effect that disunion would follow the election of Fremont were widely circulated in Indiana.¹¹²

The greatest Republican meeting of this campaign was that held at Tippecanoe Battle Ground, October 1, and 2. In spite of the cold and the snow the *Journal* estimates that there were 80,000 followers of freedom present. Daniel Mace was made president. Cassius M. Clay, Morton, Julian, H. S. Lane, Fred Hauserick, J. H. Hull, and C. D. Murray were the speakers. Banners and streamers bearing mottoes representing the principles of the Republican party were seen in abundance. The two days' session ended with a grand display of fireworks.¹¹³

The State election occurred October 14, 1856. Morton was defeated by Willard by 5,842 votes.¹¹⁴ The State legislature was as follows:

Senators holding over, Democrats, 12; Republican, 13. Senators elected, Democratic, 11; Republican, 14. Total, Democratic, 23; Republican, 27. House of Representatives, Democratic, 63; Republican, 35; American, 2.¹¹⁵

In the national election which occurred November 4, 1856, Buchanan received 118,672 votes, Fremont 94,376, and Fillmore 22,386.¹¹⁶ Buchanan got 1910 votes more than Fremont and Fillmore together. The following was the result of the congressional election:

	Majority
First district, James Lockhart (Dem.)-----	4770
Second district, W. H. English (Dem.)-----	2650
Third district, James Hughes (Dem.)-----	1516
Fourth district, James B. Foley (Dem.)-----	1453
Fifth district, David Kilgore (Rep.)-----	3949
Sixth district, James M. Gregg (Dem.)-----	947
Seventh district, J. G. Davis (Dem.)-----	1608
Eighth district, James Wilson (Rep.)-----	230
Ninth district, Schuyler Colfax (Rep.)-----	1036
Tenth district, S. V. Brenton (Rep.)-----	710
Eleventh district, J. U. Pettit (Rep.)-----	792 ¹¹⁷

¹¹²*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 2, 1856; *Terre Haute Daily Express*, Aug. 7, 1856; *Logansport Journal*, Aug. 23, 1856.

¹¹³*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 9, 1856.

¹¹⁴*Weekly State Journal*, Dec. 4, 1856.

¹¹⁵*Terre Haute Daily Express*, Nov. 17, 1856.

¹¹⁶*Weekly State Journal*, Nov. 27, 1856.

¹¹⁷*Weekly State Journal*, Nov. 13, 1856.

A comparison of this election with that of 1854 shows that the Democrats had gained four congressmen from the Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Seventh Districts. This gave the Democrats six congressmen to the Republican's five. It will be noted that the Democratic congressmen were from the southern part of Indiana, while the Republicans were elected from the northern part and the Fifth District.

What caused the defeat of the People's party? The *Terre Haute Express* charged the Fillmore men with voting for the Democratic ticket.¹¹⁸ The *Journal* accused the Americans of supporting the Democratic ticket,¹¹⁹ charged 8,000 illegal Democratic votes,¹²⁰ and accused the foreigners of staying at home for fear that the success of the Republicans would mean a prohibitory law. George W. Julian gave two reasons for the defeat, the refusal of the Know Nothings to unite with the People's party and the inability of the Republicans to rally the Whigs.¹²¹ The Americans denied the charge of supporting the Democratic ticket. The *New Albany Weekly Tribune* asserted that nineteen-twentieths of the Fillmore men voted for Morton. It further stated that a comparison of the 46 counties in northern Indiana with the vote of 1854 gave a Republican loss of 7,000 votes. In these counties there were not more than 500 Americans.¹²² Later the editor stated that the cause of the defeat was the advancement of the leaders of the Republican party from the restoration of the Missouri Compromise line to an attack on the institution of slavery.¹²³ Editor Garber, of the *Madison Courier*, gave as the cause of the defeat the inefficiency of the leaders and the attempt to coalesce with the Americans.¹²⁴

The charge of the Republicans that the Americans defeated Morton does not seem to be borne out by a comparison of the votes cast in October and November. Willard got 691 votes less than Buchanan, while Morton got 17,763

¹¹⁸*Terre Haute Daily Express*, Oct. 18, 1856.

¹¹⁹*Weekly State Journal*, Oct. 30, 1856.

¹²⁰*Weekly State Journal*, Feb. 27, 1860.

¹²¹Julian, *Political Recollections*, 155.

¹²²*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, Oct. 22, 1856.

¹²³*New Albany Weekly Tribune*, Nov. 12, 1858.

¹²⁴*Madison Courier*, Jan. 27, 1858.

votes more than Fremont. This would seem to indicate that Morton must have gotten the support of the greater portion of the Fillmore men. In twenty counties of southern Indiana, where the American vote was appreciable, Willard got 25,770, Buchanan, 26,521; Morton, 18,431; Fillmore, 12,471, and Fremont, 6,516 votes.¹²⁵ The joint vote of Fremont and Fillmore is 18,987, being 556 more than Morton got.

What did the election decide? The issue was the extension of slavery. On the face of the returns Indiana had decided that slavery should be extended into the free territories; that the people of this State decided against free speech, free press, free labor, and free territory; that the struggle for Kansas should continue; that Indiana was ready to submit to the demand of the South; that the constitution carried slavery into the territories.¹²⁶

¹²⁵*Weekly State Journal*, Nov. 20, 1856.

¹²⁶*Weekly State Journal*, Nov. 6, 1856.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)