

[244] RESOLUTION NO. 16.

COMPROMISE MEASURES.

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS in reference to the compromise measures passed by the congress of the United States.

Whereas, the congress of the United States at its last session adopted a series of acts known as the compromise measures, and whereas there has been manifested throughout portions of the north and south a disposition to set a portion of said acts at defiance, and thereby declare open resistance to the power of the government and its laws: and whereas, in view of our duty to the government and for the purpose of showing to all portions of the Union our firm and unyielding devotion to its cause and its institutions, we deem it proper to make some public demonstration of our views and feelings: therefore,

Resolved,

Constitution of U. S. must be obeyed. That in the opinion of this general assembly "the constitution of the United States is a compact, a fundamental treaty," and that in order to our continued prosperity and happiness, that constitution and the laws of the land must be respected and obeyed.

Resolved,

Will not countenance "higher law" doctrine. That we will give no countenance or aid to those north or south, who set up "their own rule of conduct," in opposition to, and as being higher than the constitution, and while we would give the largest latitude to thought, speech and action; yet such an avowal we regard as meriting unmixed condemnation, its inevitable tendency being hazardous to that Union which we hereby declare ourselves bound to maintain by any and all means in our power.

Resolved,

Duty of good citizens. That whatever may be the opinions of individuals as to the policy or details of said compromise measures, yet it is the duty of every good citizen to conform to their requisitions and carry them out in good faith, seeking their modification or repeal if such should be necessary, in the manner contemplated by the constitution and laws.

Resolved,

Constitution our guide. That the constitution should be our guide, "and in questions of doubt we should look for its interpretation to [245] the judicial decisions of the tribunal which was established to expound it and to the usages of the government, sanctioned by the acquiescence of the country;" that "all its provisions are equally binding," that it is the will of the people expressed in the most solemn form," that no pretence of utility, no honest conviction even of what might be expedient can justify "the assumption of any power not granted" or the violation of its provisions, and that we deem it our first duty not to "invade its requirements or nullify its commands."

Resolved,

Duty of secretary. That the secretary of state is hereby directed to forward a copy of these resolutions to the governors of each state and territory and to each of our senators and representatives in congress.

Approved, January 23d, 1851.