The Confederate Peace Resolutions and Negotiations of 1864 – 1865

by Jack L. Dickinson, CMH
Rosanna Blake Confederate Collection
Marshall University Special Collections Dept.
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INTRODUCTION

As the American Civil War of 1861 – 1865 ground on into 1864 there was continuing pressure within both the North and the South to negotiate some kind of peace settlement. There were factions within both governments that were adamant that peace negotiations should be pursued at any cost. There were peace overtures and the “Peace Commission” of 1861 which obviously failed. Alexander Stephens mentioned in his post-war account that there was a proposed peace conference in 1863, which did not occur. Critics on both sides maintained that the enemy did not want peace. This was obviously not true. But on the Confederate side, the majority of representatives in the Congress and Senate maintained that they were fighting for their independence and that independence would not be compromised. Nevertheless, the peace resolutions made public by the Confederate House of Representatives show that the Confederacy did desire peace.

What has been put together here are documents from two sources: one is the set of six peace resolutions printed by the Confederate House of Representatives that are part of the Confederate imprints in the Rosanna Blake Collection at Marshall University. (Parrish & Willingham numbers: 745, 746, 747, 750, 788 and 817) The other source consists of excerpts from the published volumes entitled: “Journal of the Congress of the Confederate States of America, 1861-1865” published by the Government Printing Office under order of the U.S. Senate in 1905. (catalog#: JK 9803 .A4)

What we have assembled here is the chronological progression as recorded in the “Journal” with links to the images of the six peace resolutions that are the Confederate imprints.

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THE HAMPTON ROADS CONFERENCE

The resolutions and negotiations culminated in the Hampton Roads Conference, which was an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate an end to the Civil War. On February 3, 1865, near Fort Monroe, off Hampton Roads, Va., aboard the ship *River Queen*, President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of State William H. Seward, representing the United States government, met with Vice President Alexander H. Stephens, Senator Robert M. T. Hunter, and Assistant Secretary of War John A. Campbell, representing the Confederate States of America. This meeting was partially the result of a suggestion by Francis P. Blair to Lincoln that both sides cease fighting and join forces against Napoleon III’s troops in Mexico. The enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine was to be used to justify the attack on the French in Mexico. Blair then made two trips to Richmond to set up the conference with Jefferson Davis. It was agreed beforehand that no written memorandum would be made of the proceedings, so the only existing accounts are those recorded from memory, after the fact.

The conference lasted for four hours, but no agreements were reached concerning peace. Cigars were passed about by a servant. According to Alexander Stephens after the war, President Lincoln immediately dismissed Francis P. Blair with the comment: “Whatever he [Blair] said was of his own accord, and without authority from me.” (Stephens, WBTS, Vol II, 600) President Lincoln dominated the proceedings. Hunter proposed an armistice, which was rebuffed by Lincoln. Lincoln rejected the independence of the Confederacy and insisted on reunion as the only option. The question of “Western Virginia” was also discussed, and Lincoln stated that if any settlement were reached, it would remain a separate state of the Union. [West Virginia] The only positive action was an informal agreement to resume an exchange of prisoners. The Confederate commissioners immediately returned to Richmond at the conclusion of the conference.

It has been stated by historians that neither Lincoln nor Seward ever published an account of the meeting. Stephens stated in his post-war account of the conference that “It was not intended in its origin or objects to bring about direct negotiations for Peace.” (Stephens, WBTS, Vol II, 577) And it did not. He related that upon their return to Richmond, “everyone was disappointed.”

Most significant is the “Joint Resolution” that was written as a result of the meeting and discussed in the Confederate House on Feb. 20, 1865, after the Hampton Roads Conference.
Mr. Turner also under a suspension of the rules, introduced the following resolution, viz:

Resolved, That the President of the Confederate States, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, be, and he is hereby, requested to appoint thirteen commissioners, one from each of the Confederate States, to tender to the Government of the United States a conference for negotiating an honorable peace; and failing in this, the commissioners be instructed to use all proper efforts to obtain an immediate exchange of prisoners; and if possible, to come to such understanding with the enemy regarding the future conduct of the war as may tend, in some degree, to mitigate its horrors and atrocities. [Confederate Imprint W745]

Mr. Barksdale offered the following amendment (in the nature of a substitute) to the resolution of Mr. Turner:

Whereas the people of the Confederate States, having been compelled by the people of the nonslaveholding States to dissolve their connection with those States and to form a new compact in order to preserve their liberties; and

and Whereas the efforts made by the Government of the Confederate States immediately on its organization to establish friendly relations between it and the Government of the United States having proved unavailing by reason of the refusal of the Government of the United States to hold intercourse with the commissioners appointed by this Government for that purpose;

and Whereas the Government of the United States having since repeatedly refused to listen to propositions for an honorable peace, and having declared to foreign nations in advance that it would reject any offer of mediation which they might be prompted to make in the interests of humanity for terminating the war, and thus having manifested their determination to continue it with a view to the reduction of the people of these States to degrading bondage or to their extermination: Therefore, be it

Resolved, That while we reiterate our readiness to enter upon negotiations for peace whenever the hearts of our enemies are so inclined, we will pursue without faltering the course we have deliberately chosen, and for the preservation of our liberties we will employ whatever means Providence has placed at our disposal.

Resolved, That the mode prescribed in the Constitution of the Confederate States for making treaties of peace affords ample means for the attainment of that end whenever the Government of the United States abandon their wicked purpose to subjugate them and evince a willingness to enter upon negotiations for the termination of the war. [Confederate Imprint W747]
The resolution of Mr. Turner, “tendering negotiations for peace and a mitigation of the horrors of the war.”

Pending which, Mr. Cluskey moved to reconsider the resolution of the Senate in relation to a recess.

Monday, Dec. 19, 1864 (p.363)
The House resumed the consideration of the unfinished business, viz:
The resolution of Mr. Turner, “tendering negotiations for peace and a mitigation of the horrors of the war.”

Mr. McMullin submitted the following amendment to the amendment of Mr. Barksdale (in the nature of a substitute):

"Strike out the whole of the same and insert in lieu thereof the following, viz:

“Whereas according to the Declaration of Independence of the United States and the Constitution of the Confederate States, the people of each of said States, in their highest sovereign capacity, have a right to alter, amend, or abolish the government under which they live, and establish such other as they may deem most expedient; and

“Whereas the people of the several Confederate States have thought proper to sever their political connection with the people and Government of the United States, for reasons which it is not needful here to state; and

“Whereas the people of the Confederate States have organized and established a distinct government for themselves: and

“Whereas because the people of the Confederate States have thus exercised their undoubted right in this respect, the people and Government of the United States have thought proper to make war upon them; and

“Whereas there seems to be a difference of opinion on the part of the respective Governments and people as to which of the contending parties is responsible for the commencement of the present war: Therefore,

“Resolved, That whilst it is not expedient, and would be incompatible with the dignity of the Confederate States, to send commissioners to Washington City, for the purpose of securing a cessation of hostilities, yet it would be in the judgment of this body, eminently proper that the House of Representatives of the Confederate States should dispatch, without delay, to some convenient point, a body of commissioners, thirteen in number, composed of one representative from each of said States, to meet and confer with such individuals as may be appointed by the Government of the United States, in regard to all the outstanding questions of difference between the two Governments, and to agree, if possible, upon the terms of a lasting and honorable peace, subject to the ratification of the respective Governments and of the sovereign States respectively represented therein.” [Confederate Imprint W746]

Mr. McMullin moved to refer the whole subject to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.
Mr. H. W. Bruce called the question; which was ordered, and the motion to refer prevailed.
Resolved, That in the opinion of this House, the people of the United States know full well that the people of the Confederate States are, and have always been, willing to make peace with them on fair and honorable terms, based upon the independence of the Confederate States—the only basis on which the latter will consent to a peace—and that is, therefore, now useless for the latter to make further direct overtures of peace to the former. [Confederate Imprint W750]

Tuesday, Jan. 10, 1865 (p.441)
(Secret session)
Mr. Gilmer, by consent, introduced a joint resolution “in favor of independence and peace;” which was read a first and second time and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Wed., Jan. 11, 1865 (p.442)
Mr. Miles submitted the following series of resolutions; which were referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

Resolved, That all attempts to make peace with the United States by the action or intervention of the separate States composing this Confederacy are unauthorized by the Constitution, in contravention of the supreme law of the land, and therefore “revolutionary.”

Resolved, That we, the Representatives of the people of the Confederate States, are firmly determined to continue the struggle in which we are involved until the United States shall acknowledge our independence; and to this determination, with a firm conviction of the justice of our cause and an humble reliance upon the Supreme Ruler of nations, we do solemnly and faithfully pledge ourselves.

Thur., Jan. 12, 1865 (p.451)
(Secret session)
Mr. Orr, by consent, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, reported the following resolutions:

(1) Resolved, That the independence of the Confederate States of America, based upon the constitutional compact between the sovereign States composing the Confederacy and maintained through nearly four years of gigantic war, justly claims from their former associates and from the world its recognition as a rightful fact.

(2) Resolved, That we hail with gratification the just and sound sentiment manifested by a large portion of the people of the United States since the last session of our Congress, that all associations of these American States ought to be voluntary and not forcible, and we give a hearty response to their views and wishes for a suspension of the present conflict of arms, and an appeal to the forum of reason, to see if the matters in controversy can not be properly and justly adjusted
by negotiation without the further effusion of blood.

(3) Resolved, That being wedded to no particular or exclusive mode of initiating or inaugurating negotiations looking to a peaceful settlement and adjustment of the questions now in issue between the United States and the Confederate States, it is the judgment of this House that if it should be more agreeable to the Government and people of the United States, or even a large and respectable portion of them, that the question should be submitted to the consideration of commissioners from each State, one or more, in the character of a convention of all the States, than to plenipotentiaries appointed in the usual way, then such a plan of initiating negotiations should be acceded to, or proposed on our side, such convention being acceded to or proposed as an advisory body only; the commissioners or delegates to it, being authorized by the treaty-making power of each Government, respectively, not to form any agreement or compact between States, but simply to confer, consult, and after freely entertaining and hearing all propositions and suggestions, to agree, if possible, upon some plan of peace, to be proposed by them to their respective Governments. The mode of inaugurating negotiations, in the opinion of this House, would be relieved of all possible constitutional objections by the consent of the proper constitutional authorities of the two Governments. With such consent the proposed delegates would act, in any view of the subject, as commissioners appointed in any other way, to negotiate for peace, and whatever they might agree upon or propose would be subject to the approval or disapproval of the two Governments, respectively.

(4) Resolved Inasmuch as the authorities at Washington have heretofore rejected all formal offers for a free interchange of views looking to negotiations made by our authorities, and as we deem it a high duty not only to our gallant citizen soldiers in the field, but to the whole body of our people, as well as to our duty to the cause of humanity, civilization, and Christianity, that the chosen representatives of the people of the several States of the Confederacy upon this floor should omit or neglect no effort in our power to bring about negotiations, if possible: Therefore,

(5) Be it further resolved, That the President of the Confederate States be informed of these resolves, and that he be requested to grant permission to three persons to be selected by this House (the members from each State voting in such selection by States, and a majority of all the votes being necessary to a choice in each case) to cross our lines, who shall immediately proceed to ask, and obtain, if possible, an informal interview or conference with the authorities at Washington, or any person or persons who may be appointed by them to meet the persons so sent on our side, to see if any such plan of inaugurating negotiations for peace, upon the basis above set forth, can be agreed upon; and if not, to ascertain any other or what terms, if any, of a peaceful settlement may be proposed by the authorities at Washington; and the said commissioners shall be authorized to bring into view the possibility of cooperation between the Confederate and United States in maintaining the principles and policy of the Monroe doctrine in the event of a prompt recognition of the independence of the former by the Government of the latter, and to report the result of their efforts and action to the President and to this House; and should this effort fail, we shall have the consolation of knowing that we, in our high and responsible trust, have done our duty. We shall have given assurance to our people that we have done all that we, in our position and capacity, can do to end the strife upon just and honorable principles, and the rejection of the overture by the President of the United States will afford additional evidence to the people of these States that he is waging this unnatural war not for peace or the good of his country, but for the purposes of the most unholy ambition, while it will demonstrate to our people that his object as to them is nothing short of an unconditional subjugation or extinction.

Mr. Orr moved that the resolutions be postponed until Saturday next, made the special order for that day at 12 o’clock, and printed.

Thurs., Jan. 19, 1865 (p.466)
Mr. Branch, under a suspension of the rules, introduced certain joint resolutions adopted
by the legislature of Texas, strongly condemning all separate State negotiations for peace;
which, on motion of Mr. Branch, were laid upon the table and ordered to be printed.

[Note: the following resolution by Mr. Branch is not printed in the proceedings recorded
in the Journal:

WHEREAS, among the political parties of the United States the question of a re-union of
those States with those of the Confederacy is being agitated, and in order to promote such re-
union it is urged that delegates be chosen from each of the States in the Confederacy and in
the Union, to meet in Convention to reform the Constitution of the United States, which
proposition is coupled with the quasi pledge, that such amendment shall be made to the
Constitution as will forever guarantee the institution of African slavery in the States in this
Confederacy; and, Whereas, it is possible that the political party in the United States
advocating that proposition may prevail at the approaching election in choosing the Executive
of that Government, and that consequently the foregoing proposition may be attempted to be
made to the States of the Confederacy; Now, we of the State of Texas, believing that it is
proper to meet such proposition in advance, have resolved as follows:

Resolution 1st. Be it Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Texas, That neither
the above proposition nor any other can be made to the people of this State by the United
States or any other foreign people, the government of the Confederate States being the only
organ of the States in the Confederacy, for the transaction of business with foreign nations,
and such proposition, if made at all, must be made to the government of this States, and, if
made to the government of this State, will not be entertained.

Resolution 2nd. That we recognize in that proposition no good faith, but merely an
insidious policy, to “divide and conquer;” a policy through which it is hoped to detach some
of the States from the Confederacy, thereby to weaken and demoralize the rest. To accomplish
this an appeal is made to our love of property, which as it is the all prevailing motive to the
actions of the people of the North, they supposed would control our conduct.

Resolution 3rd. That it will be well for the people of the North to understand, even at
this late day, that the Southern States did not secede from the Union upon any question such
as the mere preservation of the slave property of their citizens. But, that being free and
sovereign States, they were resolved to preserve their freedom and their sovereignty. They
were free to govern themselves as they, and not others, saw fit. They were free to change their
government, to erect a new one, and to make whatever alliances they should chose. And after
nearly four years of arduous war, these States are still unwavering in their resolution to
preserve their freedom and their sovereignty, without which all else is valueless.

Resolution 4th. That could the present war and all its horrors be blotted out of our
memories, our past experience while in the Union would warn us from any re-union with the
people of the North. A written Constitution adopted by our ancestors and theirs, which
contained plainly worded guarantees of the rights of all was by them and their sworn
Representatives, deliberately and persistently violated to our injury; and finally after years of
discussion when the question was understandingly before the people at large, they elected a
Chief Magistrate with the purpose that he should destroy our liberties in disregard of the
Constitution which he had sworn to support; thus exhibiting an instance of radical and
widespread national depravity, to the honor of human nature, never exhibited in the world
before.
Resolution 5th. But we could not if we would, banish from our memory the inhumanities of this war. Our enemies have repudiated every principle of civilized warfare. They have withdrawn their felons from Jails and Penitentiaries, have recruited from the scum of Europe, and armed our own slaves, in order to procure an army sufficiently atrocious for their purpose; and this army has been launched upon us with the declared object of our extermination. Poisoned weapons have been manufactured and used. Exchange of prisoners has been refused until the success of our armies extorted a cartel, and the terms of this have been violated by them whenever the varying fortune of the field made it apparently advantageous to do so. Our countrymen when captured have been removed to rigorous climes, and subjected to every hardship, that thus they might be destroyed. Non-combatants have been murdered. Indiscriminate onslaught has been made upon tottering age and tender youth. Our chaste and defenseless women have been submitted to outrage worse than death. Peaceful villages have been bombarded, and happy homes plundered and burnt. Whole populations have been removed and bandaged to Northern masters. Desolation has marched with their armies. Religious services have been prohibited to ministers of the gospel of peace have been incarcerated and silenced, and sacrilegious hands have been laid upon our sacred alters. Lying to themselves, and pretending to the rest of the world that they are fighting the battle of freedom for four millions of happy and contented negroes, they are attempting the enslavement of eight millions of freemen. With devilish mockery of philanthropy, they have deluded and dragged these negroes from their comfortable homes to use them as screens from our weapons in the day of battle, and they have sent them by thousands to painful death by neglect, exposure and starvation. Words cannot express the malignity in their hearts of the atrocity of their deeds, exceeding as they do all that was ever conceived by men from the Scythian down to the Comanche. Nor has this been the conduct of an unbridled soldierly merely. Those officers of their army who have surpassed the rest of the infamous, in infamy, have been rewarded with promotion by their Government. Nor has their Government been alone in identifying itself with these crimes. The people of the North have never failed, when the opportunity was presented, to render ovations to the most transcendent among the criminals, while their press has been constant in its laudation and their orators and preachers have cried out “well done.” Army, government, and people, have united to make the name of Yankee, suggestive as it was before of fraud, now the synonym of barbarism and baseness.

Resolution 6th. By the just pride of the manhood and the virtue which we claim as individuals and as a people; by the divine command which warns us not to walk in the way with the wicked; by the memory of our murdered dead; by the sight of the bereaved mothers, widows, sisters, daughters and orphans in our land; by the heart brokenness of trampled virtue; and by our desolated hearths, we are forbidden to admit a thought of further association with the people of the North. Our heroic soldiers, the living, and the martyred dead, forbid it; and our trust in God forbids it.

Resolution 7th. We declare that we are earnestly desirous of peace, but we say no less distinctly that it must be coupled with our independence. And if the people of the United States be really disposed to terminate the war, they will best prove that disposition by making their proposition to the Government of the Confederate States, which alone can entertain it.

Resolution 8th. That a copy of these resolutions be transmitted to the President of the Confederate States, to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress, and to the Governor of each State in the Confederacy.

Approved, November 12, 1864.
STATE OF TEXAS,
Department of State.

I, Robert J. Townes, Secretary of State of the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original, now on file in my Department. In testimony whereof, I have hereunto signed my name and caused the Seal of my Department to be affixed, at Austin, this 15th day of November, A. D., 1864. R. J. Townes. [Confederate Imprint W788]

Mon., Jan. 23, 1865 (p.481)
Mr. J. T. Leach submitted the following series of resolutions:

Therefore, for the purpose of averting, if possible, the further horrors of this bloody fratricidal strife...appeal to the President and Senators to appoint such number of commissioners... to offer an armistice to the Federal authorities preparatory to negotiations for peace.

On motion of Mr. Atkins, the resolutions were referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mon., Jan. 30, 1865 (p.516)
Mr. DeJarnette introduced A joint resolution “ constituting a basis for negotiations for peace;” which was read a first and second time and referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mon., Feb. 6, 1865 (p.545)
The Chair laid before the House a message from the President; which was read as follows, viz:

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Confederate States of America:

Having recently received written notification which satisfied me that the President of the United States was disposed to confer informally with unofficial agents that might be sent by me with a view to the restoration of peace, I requested the Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, the Hon. R. M. T. Hunter, and the Hon. John A. Campbell to proceed through our lines and to hold a conference with Mr. Lincoln, or such persons as he might depute to represent him.

I herewith submit for the information of Congress the report of the eminent citizens above named, showing that the enemy refused to enter into negotiations with the Confederate States, or any one of them separately, or to give to our people any other terms or guarantees than those which a conqueror may grant, or to permit us to have peace on any other basis than unconditional submission to their rule, coupled with the acceptance of their recent legislation, including an amendment to the Constitution for the emancipation of all the negro slaves, and with the right on the part of the Federal Congress to legislate on the subject of the relations between the white and black population of each State.

Such is, as I understand, the effect of the amendment to the Constitution which has been adopted by the Congress of the United States.

JEFFERSON DAVIS
On motion of Mr. Perkins, the message and accompanying documents were referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed.

Mon., Feb. 20, 1865 (p.606)

Under a suspension of the rules, Mr. Perkins, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to whom had been referred the President’s message and accompanying documents on the subject of the recent peace commission, reported back the same with the recommendation that they do lie upon the table; which was agreed to.

Mr. Perkins, from the same committee, reported a joint resolution “expressing the sense of Congress on the subject of the late peace commission;” which was read a first and second time.

[Note: Note: the following resolution by Mr. Perkons is not printed in the proceedings recorded in the Journal:

Whereas the Congress of the Confederate States have ever been desirous of an honorable and a permanent settlement, by negotiation, of all matters of difference between the people of the Confederate States of America and the government of the United States, and to this end provided, immediately on its assembling at Montgomery in February 1861, for the sending of three commissioners to Washington to negotiate friendly relations on all questions of disagreement between the two governments on principles of right, justice, equity and good faith: And whereas these having been refused a reception, Congress again, on the 14th of June 1864, adopted and published a manifesto to the civilized world, declaring its continued desire to settle without further shedding of blood, upon honorable terms, all questions at issue between the people of the Confederate States and those of the United States, to which the only response received from the Congress of the United States has been the voting down, by large majorities, all resolutions proposing an amicable settlement of existing difficulties: And whereas the President has communicated to this House, that in the same spirit of conciliation and peace, he recently sent Vice-President Stephens, Senator Hunter and Judge Campbell, to hold conference with such persons as the government of the United States might designate to meet them: And whereas those eminent citizens, after a full conference with President Lincoln and Secretary Seward, have reported that they were informed explicitly that the authorities of the United States would hold no negotiation with the Confederate States, or any of them separately; that no terms, except such as a conqueror grants to the subjugated, would be extended to the people of these states and that the subversion of our institutions, and a complete submission to their rule, was the only condition of peace:

Therefore,

Resolved by the Congress of the Confederate States of America, That while Congress regrets that no alternative is left to the people of the Confederate States but a continuance of the war, or submission to terms of peace alike ruinous and dishonorable, it accepts, in their behalf, the issue tendered them by the authorities of the United States government, and solemnly declares that it is their unalterable determination to prosecute the war with the United States until that power shall desist from its efforts to subjugate them, and the independence of the Confederate States shall have been established.

Resolved, That the Congress has received with pride the numerous noble and patriotic resolutions passed by the army; and in the gallant and unconquered spirit which they breathe, coming from those who have for years endured dangers and privations, it sees unmistakable
evidence that the enthusiasm with which they first dedicated their lives to the defense of their country is not yet extinct, but has been confirmed, by hardships and suffering, into a principle of resistance to northern rule, that will hold in contempt all disgraceful terms of submission; and for these expressions in camp, as well as for their noble acts in the field, our soldiers deserve, and will receive the thanks of the country.

Resolved, That the Congress invites the people of these States to assemble in public meetings, and renew their vows of devotion to the cause of independence; to declare their determination to maintain their liberties; to pledge themselves to do all in their power to fill the ranks of our army; and to provide for the support of the families of our soldiers; and to cheer and comfort, by every means, the gallant men who for years, through trials and dangers, have vindicated our rights on the battle field.

Resolved, That, confiding in the justice of our cause, aided and sustained by the God of battles; in the valor and endurance of our soldiers, and in the deep and ardent devotion of our people to the great principles of civil and political liberty, for which we are contending, Congress pledges itself to the passage of the most energetic measures, to secure our ultimate success.[Confederate Imprint W817]

The question being on postponing the joint resolution and placing it on the Calendar, it was decided in the negative.

Mr. Carroll moved the previous question; which was not ordered.

The morning hour having expired,

Mr. H. W. Bruce moved that the Calendar be postponed until the bill under consideration be disposed of; which motion prevailed.

Mr. McMullin submitted the following amendment:

After word “cause” in first line, fourth resolution, insert the words “aided and sustained by the God of Battles;”

Which was agreed to.

Mr. Gilmer submitted the following amendment:

At the end of the joint resolution add the following:

“Resolved further. That notwithstanding all this, we believe that the Confederate States would consent and agree to the following:

“First. That there be a separation between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America, each one perfectly free and independent of the other, the right of navigation, trade, transit, etc., properly and fairly agreed on and settled.

“Second. That an American diet be created, to which each party shall be at liberty to send delegates, each being its own judge as to the number and manner of electing them, and each party paying all its own expenses.

“Third. The privileges of this diet to be clearly and definitely defined and settled.

“Fourth. In the diet there shall be but two votes, one by the delegates of the United States of America and one by the Confederate States of America, and the acts of this body to be binding only on the parties when ratified by the House, Senate, and President of each.
“Fifth. In settling the boundary, let the States of Kentucky and Missouri determine for themselves by a free and fair vote of their people, bona fide resident in their respective States at the commencement of hostilities.” [Confederate Imprint W817d]

On motion of Mr. Gilmer, the joint resolution and amendment were ordered to be printed.

Fri., Feb. 24, 1865 (p.646)  
(Secret session)  
The House being in secret session,  
Proceeded to the consideration of the joint resolution “expressing the sense of Congress on the late peace commission.”

[Note: Note: the following resolution is not printed in the proceedings recorded in the Journal:

JOINT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress on the subject of the late Peace Commission

Whereas the Congress of the Confederate States have ever been desirous of an honorable and a permanent settlement, by negotiation, of all matters of difference between the people of the Confederate States of America and the government of the United States, and to this end provided, immediately on its assembling at Montgomery in February 1861, for the sending of three commissioners to Washington to negotiate friendly relations on all questions of disagreement between the two governments on principles of right, justice, equity and good faith: And whereas these having been refused a reception, Congress again, on the 14th of June 1864, adopted and published a manifesto to the civilized world, declaring its continued desire to settle without further shedding of blood, upon honorable terms, all questions at issue between the people of the Confederate States and those of the United States, to which the only response received '16 from the Congress of the United States has been the voting down, by large majorities, all resolutions proposing an amicable settlement of existing difficulties: And whereas the President has communicated to this House, that in the same spirit of conciliation and peace, he recently sent Vice-President Stephens, Senator Hunter and Judge Campbell, to hold conference with such persons as the government of the United States might designate to meet them: And whereas those eminent citizens, after a full conference with President Lincoln and Secretary Seward, have reported that they were informed explicitly that the authorities of the United States would hold no negotiation with the Confederate States, or any of them separately; that no terms, except such as a conqueror grants to the subjugated, would be extended to the people of these states and that the subversion of our institutions, and a complete submission to their rule, was the only condition of peace: Therefore,

Resolved by the Congress of the Confederate States of America, That while Congress regrets that no alternative is left to be people of the Confederate States but a continuance of the war, or submission to terms of peace alike ruinous and dishonorable, it accepts, in their behalf, the issue tendered them by the authorities of the United States government, and solemnly declares that it is their unalterable determination to prosecute the war with the United States until that power shall desist from its efforts to subjugate them, and the independence of the Confederate States shall have been established.
Resolved, That the Congress has received with pride the numerous noble and patriotic resolutions passed by the army; and in the gallant and unconquered spirit which they breathe, coming from those who have for years endured dangers and privations, it sees unmistakable evidence that the enthusiasm with which they first dedicated their lives to the defense of their country is not yet extinct, but has been confirmed, by hardships and suffering, into a principle of resistance to northern rule, that will hold in contempt all disgraceful terms of submission; and for these expressions in camp, as well as for their noble acts in the field, our soldiers deserve, and will receive the thanks of the country.

Resolved, That the Congress invites the people of these States to assemble in public meetings, and renew their vows of devotion to the cause of independence; to declare their determination to maintain their liberties; to pledge themselves to do all in their power to fill the ranks of our army; and to provide for the support of the families of our soldiers; and to cheer and comfort, by every means, the gallant men who for years, through trials and dangers, have vindicated our rights on the battle field.

Resolved, That, confiding in the justice of our cause, aided and sustained by the God of battles; in the valor and endurance of our soldiers, and in the deep and ardent devotion of our people to the great principles of civil and political liberty, for which we are contending, Congress pledges itself to the passage of the most energetic measures, to secure our ultimate success.

ADMENDMENT OFFER BY MR. GILMER

"Resolved further. That notwithstanding all this, we believe that the Confederate States would consent and agree to the following:

"First. That there be a separation between the United States of America and the Confederate States of America, each one perfectly free and independent of the other, the right of navigation, trade, transit, etc., properly and fairly agreed on and settled.

"Second. That an American diet be created, to which each party shall be at liberty to send delegates, each being its own judge as to the number and manner of electing them, and each party paying all its own expenses.

"Third. The privileges of this diet to be clearly and definitely defined and settled.

"Fourth. In the diet there shall be but two votes, one by the delegates of the United States of America and one by the Confederate States of America, and the acts of this body to be binding only on the parties when ratified by the House, Senate, and President of each.

"Fifth. In settling the boundary, let the States of Kentucky and Missouri determine for themselves by a free and fair vote of their people, bona fide resident in their respective States at the commencement of hostilities." [Confederate Imprint W817]

Mr. Blandford withdrew his demand for the previous question.

Mr. Barksdale moved to postpone indefinitely the further consideration of the joint resolution and amendment.

Upon which Mr. Perkins demanded the yeas and nays:

Which were ordered,

And are recorded as follows, viz: Yeas-------24, Nays-------45.


So the motion to postpone indefinitely was not agreed to.
The main question was ordered, and the question being upon agreeing to the amendment of Mr. Gilmer to the joint resolution,
Mr. Marshall demanded the yeas and nays thereon;
Which were ordered,

And are recorded as follows, to wit: Yeas-------13, Nays--------53


So the amendment was not agreed to.
The question recurring on ordering the joint resolution to be engrossed for a third reading,
Mr. Gaither demanded the yeas and nays thereon;
Which were ordered,

And are recorded as follows, to wit: Yeas----------58, Nays--------1


Naye\text{\textbf{s}}: J. T. Leach.

So the joint resolution was engrossed and read a third time.
The question recurring on the passage, and being put,
Shall the bill pass?
Mr. J. T. Leach demanded the yeas and nays thereon;  
Which were ordered,  

And are recorded as follows, to wit: Yeas-------62, Nays--------1  

Yeas: Anderson, Atkins, Barksdale, Batson, Baylor, Blandford, Boyce, Bradley, Branch,  
Bridgers, Eli M. Bruce, Horatio W. Bruce, Carroll, Chrisman, Clark, Clopton, Cluskey,  
Colyar, Conrad, Conrow, Dickinson, Dupré, Ewing, Farrow, Gaither, Garland, Gholson.  
Gilmer, Goode, Gray, Hanly, Hartridge, Hatcher, Herbert, Hilton, Johnston, Keeble, Lyon,  
Machen. Marshall, McCallum, McMullin, Menees, Miles, Miller, Moore. Perkins, Pugh,  
Rogers, Russell, Sexton, Simpson, J. M. Smith, W. E. Smith, Snead, Staples, Swan, Triplett,  
Villeré, Wilkes, Witherspoon, and Mr. Speaker.  
Nays: J. T. Leach.  

So the joint resolution was passed, and the title was read and agreed to.  
On motion of Mr. Sexton, the injunction of secrecy was removed from the joint resolution and  
the vote by which the same was passed.  

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