

clime point with admiration to our institutions. Shall we, then, at the moment when the people of Europe are devoting all their energies in the attempt to assimilate their institutions to our own, peril all our blessings by despising the lessons of experience, and refusing to tread in the footsteps which our fathers have trodden? And for what cause would we endanger our glorious Union? The Missouri compromise contains a prohibition of slavery throughout all that vast region extending twelve and a half degrees along the Pacific, from the parallel of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes, to that of forty-nine degrees, and east from that ocean to and beyond the summit of the Rocky mountains. Why, then, should our institutions be endangered because it is proposed to submit to the people of the remainder of our newly acquired territory lying south of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes, embracing less than four degrees of latitude, the question whether, in the language of the Texas compromise, they "shall be admitted (as a State) into the Union with or without slavery." Is this a question to be pushed to such extremities by excited partizans on the one side or the other, in regard to our newly acquired distant possessions on the Pacific, as to endanger the union of thirty glorious States which constitute our confederacy? I have an abiding confidence that the sober reflection and sound patriotism of the people of all the States will bring them to the conclusion, that the dictate of wisdom is to follow the example of those who have gone before us, and settle this dangerous question on the Missouri compromise, or some other equitable compromise, which would respect the rights of all, and prove satisfactory to the different portions of the Union.

Holding as a sacred trust the executive authority for the whole Union, and bound to guard the rights of all, I should be constrained, by a sense of duty, to withhold my official sanction from any measure which would conflict with these important objects.

I cannot more appropriately close this message than by quoting from the farewell address of the father of his country. His warning voice can never be heard in vain by the American people. If the spirit of prophecy had distinctly presented to his view, more than a half century ago, the present distracted condition of his country, the language which he then employed could not have been more appropriate than it is to the present occasion. He declared:

"The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cher-

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