

a folly; would rest a public execration that would never let them see power while the popular memory lasted; and Whigs and Whig principles, a conservative moderation, justice, and prudence, would take a long possession of the people's confidence and affection. Such, sir, would be the consequences of a war for such an object and under such circumstances—so unprovoked, so impolitic, and so certain to be calamitous. For the Whigs, *as a party*, such a war would accomplish every thing, but at a cost to the country too terrible for any Whig ever to desire. If you will thus put us into power, it must be in spite of all we can do. God preserve us from an ascendancy purchased so dear! We can wait until milder means shall effect the same great end. To the Whigs, then, this question is above *all* party. To the credit of the country this question was long above *all* party. For more than twenty-five years no party consented to look on it in any but a national light; nay, from its very rise, from the foundation of our claim in that quarter, no Administration nor any party had ever attempted to make of it any but an American question. But, when assembled at Baltimore, a certain celebrated convention, which (to use the language of one of its members) "was organized by faction and governed by demagogues," (I use the words of the Senator from North Carolina—Mr. HAYWOOD—addressed to us the other day,) then and there for the first time this national controversy was seized by party, made to receive its stamp and its spirit, and pushed to extravagance, in order that, by this very impress of ultraism and of violence, it might seem to be more distinctly their own, and none but their own. And why was this done? Through an extreme party necessity, as the last desperate stake of a party that had played away every thing it could beg or borrow. On all of the old and legitimate questions they saw they were beaten and overthrown, and they knew they must force new issues, upon which excitement and humbuggery had not been exhausted, or that they were gone. The domestic questions—those of internal administration, the only proper ones between parties—had been used to excite and delude the people, until these could excite and delude no longer; it was necessary then to call to their aid still stronger stimulants, such as all before had shrunk from employing—questions of foreign policy, that the most disloyal had never before dared to endanger and corrupt, by committing them to the bad influences of party, and the divisions it must breed. To create those very divisions was their object—to produce distractions about national questions, which they could no longer raise about domestic ones. An excitement was their last hope. Without it their defeat was certain; with it, at whatever cost to the country, they might still succeed.

In this manner and for these motives came to be adopted by this memorable convention the more remarkable resolution that our title to the whole of Oregon was "clear and unquestionable." The time of its passage was not less singular than its other attendant circumstances. It was, as the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MILLER) has observed, introduced and carried on the third day of the convention, before breakfast, after the departure from Baltimore of more than a majority of the convention. As to the hour, I cannot agree with the Senator from New Jersey, that it was ill chosen. At no other had such discretion reigned in the proceedings; it was well, then, to do one thing at a discreet if an unusual time of day; and judicious to have the actors at least sober, if the resolutions were not.

This, sir, was the first time that into the present controversy party views were introduced, and, as I have said, studiously introduced at an inopportune time, before an unfit body, in an exaggerated and inflammatory form of assertion, for the purpose of compelling the opposition of prudent and right-thinking men, in the hope that such would prove to be the minority. This, as every body knows, was the entire origin of that declaration which President Polk thought himself

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