

THE SOUTH AND THE MEXICAN WAR

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Lowe, Billie Lynne Owens, The South and the Mexican War. Master of Arts (History), December, 1970, 164 pp., bibliography, 52 titles, appendixes.

The slavery issue has long clouded the historical treatment of the Mexican War. The sequence of events over a short period of time--the annexation of Texas, the hostilities with Mexico, the dispute between North and South over disposition of the territory acquired through the war, and the Civil War--created a climate of opinion which resulted in affixing a label of "slave power conspiracy" to the Mexican War.

But this interpretation presupposes that the annexation of Texas was the sole or primary cause of the Mexican War and that the South almost solidly desired the war, supported the war legislation, and sought territorial acquisitions as the result of the war. Twentieth century historians have disagreed that the annexation of Texas alone caused the war, recognizing the role of Mexico's misdeeds and belligerence toward the United States and of the interest of expansion-minded Americans in Mexican territory other than Texas.

A survey of the votes and debates on the major war legislation, as recorded in the Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, the Journal of the

Senate of the United States of America, and The Congressional Globe, reveals that the Southern congressmen did not unanimously support the war. Many Democrats, particularly the Southwesterners, revealed strong expansionist sentiments; but the Southern Whigs did not share their enthusiasm for the war or for territorial acquisitions, nor did Democratic Senator John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina and some of his Democratic friends from the Southeast. A majority of the Southern Whig congressmen favored disavowing all territorial indemnity; Calhoun made a slight concession to the expansionist fever in the country, but he wanted to limit drastically the amount of territory acquired through the war, preferring only Upper California, which he believed would not sustain slave labor.

Southern newspapers and the published correspondence and memoirs of Southern politicians provide additional evidence of the attitude of Southerners toward the war without appreciably altering the pattern shown by the members of Congress. Some Whig papers, such as the Arkansas State Gazette of Little Rock, took a more moderate stand on the war and territorial acquisitions than most Southern Whig congressmen, indicating that some degree of pro-war sentiment and expansion fever probably existed among Southern Whigs. Calhoun's newspaper organ, The Charleston Mercury, and two volumes of Calhoun's correspondence published under the auspices of the American Historical Association are

particularly valuable sources for studying Calhoun's views and for assessing the strength of support for his anti-war stand among Southerners. The published diary of President James Knox Polk and published correspondence of several other Southern politicians provide less rich but still valuable sources of information about the political attitudes toward the war.

Justin Harvey Smith's two-volume history of the Mexican War provides a thorough study of both the political and military aspects of the war. Frederick Merk's Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation relates Manifest Destiny sentiment in the United States to the war. Two articles examine in depth the attitude of Southerners toward the war, Chauncey S. Boucher's "In Re That Aggressive Slavocracy" and John D. P. Fuller's "The Slavery Question and the Movement to Acquire Mexico."

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THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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Denton, Texas

December, 1970

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INTRODUCTION

The slavery issue has long clouded the historical treatment of the origin and purposes of the Mexican War. Many who experienced the war believed it to be solely the result of the annexation of Texas; therefore, they reasoned, it was a war to extend, perpetuate, and strengthen the peculiar institution of slavery.¹ Charges early in the war that the slave powers were now seeking more territory for the extension of slavery,² the polarization of opinion created by the Wilmot Proviso, which would have prohibited slavery in any territory acquired as a result of the war, and the ensuing dispute over disposition of the newly acquired territory, followed in a decade by the complete disruption of the Union, combined to fasten a label of "slave power conspiracy" on the Mexican War for more than half a century.

In a work first published in 1892, James Ford Rhodes, a prominent early historian, still promulgated the antislavery interpretation of the war:

¹The Boston Recorder, June 4, 1846; The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1846), p. 824 (remarks by Charles Hudson); ibid., App., p. 644 (Joshua Giddings); ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), p. 353 (David Wilmot).

²James Russell Lowell, The Biglow Papers, 2d ed. (New York, n.d.), p. 86; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1106 (Caleb Smith).

Mexico was actually goaded on to the war. The principle of the manifest destiny of this country was invoked as a reason for the attempt to add to our territory at the expense of Mexico.³

In support of this view, he quoted Hosea Biglow's charge that the Southerners were after "bigger pens to cram with slaves."⁴ Having acquired Texas, Rhodes asserted, they now wanted New Mexico and California.⁵ He attributed Democratic losses in the 1846 congressional elections to the people's deep-seated conviction that the Democratic president, James Knox Polk, had unjustly started the war, with the paramount object of adding more slave territory to the Union.⁶ He did not attempt to explain Democratic losses in the South in those same elections.

After the turn of the century, more just and balanced histories of American relations with Mexico appeared. These works generally placed a share of the blame for the war on Mexico and recognized the influence of the expansionist sentiment throughout the United States, depreciating the "slave power conspiracy" theme. George Lockhart Rives, an early historian of American-Mexican relations, conceded that feeling against the extension of slavery would probably have rendered a war with Mexico unpopular even in the Northwest,

³ James Ford Rhodes, History of the United States, 7th ed., 8 vols. (New York, 1910), I, 87.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid., I, 91.

where desire for territorial expansion ran high, if Mexico had not attacked an American force first; but he doubted that the South, any more than other sections of the country, desired war prior to the clash between Mexican and American forces on the Rio Grande.⁷ Justin Harvey Smith, the foremost historian of the Mexican War, argued that, contrary to the United States goading Mexico into war, the war came to pass as logically as a thunderstorm, and as inevitably.⁸ It was, he said, a war of conquest perhaps, but not a war for conquest; the United States simply had to require a territorial cession as the only means of obtaining her just claims against Mexico.⁹

In 1921, Chauncey Samuel Boucher, an authority on the South, particularly South Carolina, presented the opposite extreme of Rhodes's position in an article which not only absolved the South of any conspiracy for conquest in the war with Mexico, but also cast doubt on the South's unanimity in desiring the annexation of Texas. In fact, he mentioned only one outstanding Southern expansionist, Polk's Secretary of

⁷George Lockhart Rives, The United States and Mexico, 1821-1848, 2 vols. (New York, 1913), II, 131.

⁸Justin H. Smith, The War with Mexico, 2 vols. (New York, 1919), II, 310.

⁹Ibid., pp. 322-23.

the Treasury, Robert John Walker of Mississippi, whom he did not consider aggressively proslavery.¹⁰

Recent histories tend to reinforce the balanced view of the war, although some still engage in sweeping, and insupportable, generalizations. A 1960 text inaccurately pictures Northern and Northwestern Democrats and Whigs joining in opposition to the war because of antislavery sentiments, while Southern Whigs joined Southern Democrats in support of the administration's war policy.¹¹ In 1956, Ray Allen Billington, an authority on the period of westward expansion, echoed Boucher's view that the Southerners did not unanimously desire annexation of Texas, stating that desire to extend slave territory did not necessarily motivate those who did want Texas.¹² Billington averred that support for the Mexican War declined proportionately with distance from the conflict; support was strongest in the Southwest and Northwest and weakest in the mid-Atlantic and New England states.¹³ However, he took an extreme position in his emphasis of the expansionist movement. By the autumn of 1847, he said,

¹⁰Chauncey S. Boucher, "In Re That Aggressive Slavocracy," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, VIII (June, 1921), 13-79.

¹¹Dumas Malone and Basil Rauch, Crisis of the Union, 1841-1877 (New York, 1960), p. 22.

¹²Ray Allen Billington, The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860, Harper Torchbooks ed. (New York, 1962), p. 153.

¹³Ibid., p. 175.

scarcely a newspaper in the land was demanding anything less than the absorption of every inch of Mexico, while in the midwinter congressional session of 1847-48 virtually every Democrat was baying at the "All Mexico" moon.¹⁴ Some very notable exceptions brand this statement an exaggeration.

The truth must lie somewhere between the extremes presented by these various historians. Southerners were no more reticent than other Americans in airing their views of the war. The congressmen who deliberated upon the war legislation had ample opportunity to express their opinions, by vote and by voice; and The Congressional Globe and the public press recorded and disseminated their views. Newspapers which did not have the organization to present extensive news coverage of the war operations freely indulged in editorializing and commentary to fill their columns. As newspapers were still in the free-wheeling stage of journalism, these commentaries left little doubt of the editors' attitude toward the war. Too, during this period the financially comfortable political faction of any size had its own news organ, official or unofficial, which sometimes gave added dimension to the statements of political figures. A third avenue for exploration lies in the extensive correspondence conducted by public men in this era before the telephone and easy transportation made frequent private

¹⁴Ibid., p. 191.

communications possible. Those letters which have survived reinforce public statements made by political figures and sometimes reveal opinions which ordinarily might never have been publicly expressed. In addition, this correspondence reveals the attitudes of the politicians' constituents and friends which might have influenced their stand on the war issue in Congress.

A sampling of these sources should provide some answers to pertinent questions regarding the South's role in the Mexican War. It should reveal to some degree whether Southerners uniformly supported the war, whether their support arose from an expansionist sentiment or a desire to extend the area of slavery, whether any strong opposition to the war existed in the South, and why they supported or opposed it.

CHAPTER I

CONGRESS: SOUTHERNERS AND THE WAR BILLS

On May 11, 1846, President James Knox Polk informed Congress of an attack by the Mexican army on General Zachary Taylor's small force of Americans stationed on the left bank of the Rio Grande. He asked Congress to recognize the existence of war and to place at his disposal the means of prosecuting the war vigorously.¹

In spite of the patriotic fervor with which most Americans reacted to this news, opposition to a war with Mexico developed quickly. Although Congress responded to the President's war message with near unanimity, dissatisfaction and distress lay just below the surface. In the debate on the declaration of war, Southern congressmen expressed opinions which varied drastically from their votes for the war bill; and subsequently they did not always act consistently or unanimously in support of the war legislation.

Democrats from Georgia, Virginia, Florida, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Texas joined other Democrats from the North

¹The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1846), pp. 782-83.

in urging prompt and vigorous retaliation against Mexico.² But some Southern Democrats, as well as Whigs from North and South, demurred. In the Senate, John Caldwell Calhoun, South Carolina Democrat, led the dissident forces.³ Upon learning of the hostilities, he devised a strategy by which he hoped to avert war. He hoped to convince Congress that a state of hostilities, not war, existed and that they could authorize an armed force for defense without declaring war.⁴ John Middleton Clayton of Delaware, Willie Person Mangum of North Carolina, and other Southern Whigs attempted to help

²Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 792 (remarks by Linn Boyd, William H. Brockenbrough, and Jacob Brinkerhoff), p. 793 (Hugh A. Haralson), pp. 785, 799-801 (Lewis Cass), pp. 783, 795 (William Allen), pp. 784-86, 788 (Ambrose H. Sevier), pp. 798-99 (Sam Houston), pp. 801-802 (James D. Westcott), App., p. 902. This chapter principally concerns actions of the Whig and Democratic parties as a whole; names of individuals will appear in the text only when they are important to the text of this or a later chapter, or for the sake of clarity. For convenience, names of individuals will appear in the footnotes in citations of The Congressional Globe, except the Appendix, where no identification of the speaker is necessary.

³As Secretary of State in the previous administration, Calhoun had played an important role in the annexation of Texas. However, he did not believe the Mexican War resulted from the annexation of Texas; he blamed Polk's imprudent and unconstitutional actions in trying to claim the Rio Grande as the Texas boundary after Congress had purposely left the boundary question open for a negotiated settlement with Mexico. Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), pp. 498-501.

⁴Calhoun, Washington, to Andrew P. Calhoun, May 14, 1846, J. Franklin Jameson, editor, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1899, 2 vols. (Washington, 1900), II, 690-91; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 785, 796.

Calhoun.⁵ Some Southern Whigs, however, expressed sentiments which must have gratified the pro-war Democrats; Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Henry Johnson of Louisiana agreed that war did exist, largely by the act of Mexico.⁶

For a time, Calhoun's strategy seemed to be succeeding in the Senate,⁷ but his friends in the House of Representatives could not sustain him. Two South Carolina Democrats, Isaac Edward Holmés and Robert Barnwell Rhett, followed his plan, aided by Virginia Democrat Thomas Bayly and Whigs Meredith P. Gentry of Tennessee and Garrett Davis of Kentucky;⁸ but the pro-war Democrats quickly overwhelmed them. They not only passed a measure providing men and money for defense, but also attached to it a preamble stating that war existed by the act of Mexico.⁹ The Whigs later would denounce this statement; but in a preliminary House vote, when they could have voted for an alternate measure which did not include the preamble, ten Whigs from the South and seven from the North joined a majority of the Democrats

⁵Ibid., pp. 796-97; see also pp. 801 (John M. Berrien) and 784 (James T. Morehead). Although not strictly a Southern state, Delaware historically had ties with the South and was still considered a semi-Southern state.

⁶Ibid., pp. 799, 803.

⁷Ibid., pp. 784-88.

⁸Ibid., pp. 792-95; Calhoun, Washington, to Andrew P. Calhoun, May 14, 1846, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 690-91.

⁹Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 792-93, 796-97.

to pass the measure containing the preamble.¹⁰ Most of these Whigs came from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania; some Whigs from these states subsequently tended to be "softer" on the war than most of their Whig brethren. On the other hand, twelve Democrats from South Carolina, Virginia, and Alabama, where Calhoun's influence was strong, joined two Northern Democrats and most of the Whigs in voting against the controversial preamble.¹¹

The House rejected by large majorities amendments to the war bill offered by two Northern Whigs which implied condemnation of the President for sending an army to the Rio Grande in the first place. The House did not record the votes on these amendments, but the most popular one drew only twenty-seven votes. The House then passed the war bill, with only fourteen Northern Whigs opposing it.¹²

With the House's precipitate action to bolster them, pro-war Democrats in the Senate the next day overrode the dissenters to pass the House's war bill, preamble and all. The Whigs made several efforts to strike the preamble from

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 792-93.

¹¹Ibid. A letter to Calhoun from Robert G. Scott, Richmond, April 27, 1845, identifies the entire Virginia delegation as Calhoun's "best and strongest friends," and Scott expected the delegation to act with Calhoun during the Twenty-Ninth Congress. Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1032-34.

¹²House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 796-97; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 793-94.

the bill, or at least soften it; but Whigs Spencer Jarnagin of Tennessee, Henry Johnson of Louisiana, and Reverdy Johnson of Maryland voted with the Democratic majority against striking the preamble, while Calhoun and George McDuffie of South Carolina voted with the Whigs.¹³

Compelled to vote for the preamble if they voted for supplies to prosecute the war, most Whigs voted for the bill, although several registered a protest; and Calhoun, Georgia Whig John Macpherson Berrien, and a Northern Whig refused to vote at all. Senator Thomas Clayton, Whig of Delaware, was the only Southerner in either house to vote with the handful of Northern Whigs against final passage of the war bill.¹⁴

After Congress had approved the war, by vote if not by sentiment, Calhoun's coterie of dissenting Democrats drifted away, and for a while most of the Whigs became debating doves and voting hawks. They sniped at the administration, cast their votes to delay war measures, and sought vigilantly to limit the administration's power, especially the federal patronage; but they voted for the war measures. The Whigs from New England, some from the mid-Atlantic states, and a scattering from Ohio and Indiana most frequently opposed war measures; and even they did not consistently oppose all bills.

¹³Ibid., pp. 803-804; Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 287-88.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 288-89; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 804.

The Whigs helped the Democrats increase the regular army, and they helped pass appropriation bills for the support of both the regular and the volunteer forces almost without dissenting votes.¹⁵ But on bills for the organization of volunteer forces and the appointment of officers, they did not cooperate so readily. With the exception of half a dozen Southern Whigs and two or three Northern Whigs, they voted consistently to limit the administration's powers and appointments in connection with the army. Southern Democrats felt these same jealousies, however; about a dozen of them voted with the Whigs at various times in their restricting efforts.¹⁶

Near the end of the first session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress, a new kind of appropriation bill appeared, a bill to provide the President the sum of two million dollars to aid him in negotiating a peace treaty with Mexico. Many congressmen knew that Polk would seek to acquire California in that treaty.¹⁷ In the Senate Executive Proceedings

¹⁵ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 295, 399, 422; House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 799-800, 828-29, 1106-1107, 1250-51; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 805, 1074-75, 1107 (proceedings on S. 21, H. 49, and H. 491).

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 923-24, 960, 1026, 1032; House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 895-96, 1008-1009; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 343, 367 (proceedings on S. 185 and S. 211).

¹⁷ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1211 (Charles H. Carroll), 1214 (David Wilmot), 1215 (Garrett Davis), 1216 (Edwin H. Ewing).

regarding the appropriation, five Southern Whigs and three from the North voted with the Democratic majority to grant the money, while seven Southern Whigs, one Southern Democrat, and eleven Northerners opposed it.¹⁸ But trouble arose in the House. David Wilmot, a Pennsylvania Democrat, introduced a proviso that no territory acquired with any part of the appropriation would be open to slavery. This rider threw the administration forces into disarray, and Southern Whigs and Democrats alike opposed the bill with the proviso. Most Northern Democrats and Whigs voted to pass the bill over their objections, but it died in the Senate in the closing hours of the session.¹⁹

When the Congress returned for the midwinter session, both Democrats and Whigs exhibited a somewhat recalcitrant mood. The Democrats had fared badly in the fall elections and felt less enthusiastic about a war which dragged on longer than they anticipated; the Whigs, exultant over their election victories, increasingly criticized the war and the administration. Nevertheless, Whigs helped pass a number of war bills with relatively little trouble, such as a bill granting a bounty for enlistments in the army, a treasury loan bill, and appropriations to support the regular and

¹⁸Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 560-63.

¹⁹Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1217-18, 1220-21.

volunteer forces for the coming year.²⁰ In the House, most Southern Whigs aided Northern Whigs in trying to append to one of the latter bills a proviso that the appropriation did not sanction prosecution of the war for the purpose of acquiring territory or dismembering Mexico; but the Democrats defeated the proviso, with Whigs Thomas Newton of Arkansas and Edward H. C. Long of Maryland voting with them. All but twenty-eight Northern Whigs then voted to pass the appropriation bill.²¹

Other bills ran into more trouble, however. In the House, Southern Whigs, except one, plus eight Southern Democrats who ordinarily supported war measures, helped vote down a proposed tax on tea and coffee.²² A bill to raise ten additional regiments for the regular army finally passed, but not without difficulty in both houses. In the House, many Southerners, except for thirty-four of the more faithful administration men, helped defeat a section of the bill which would have permitted the President to appoint a lieutenant general to command all of the armed forces in Mexico.²³ But Southern Democrats provided more than half the votes

²⁰Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 90, 137, 247-48; Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 143, 202-203, 406-407 (proceedings on S. 73, H. 597, and H. 600).

²¹Ibid., pp. 403-404, 406-407.

²²Ibid., pp. 121-22.

²³Ibid., pp. 153-54.

necessary to defeat an effort by the Whigs and some Northern Democrats to substitute volunteer regiments for the regular forces.²⁴ On the final vote, Southern Whigs and a dozen Northern Whigs joined the Democrats to pass the bill.²⁵

When the bill reached the Senate, Democrats Calhoun and Andrew Pickens Butler of South Carolina and David Levy Yulee of Florida joined the Whigs to defeat the resurrected lieutenant general proposition.²⁶ Two Democrats, Sam Houston of Texas and David Rice Atchison of Missouri, initiated proposals to make the ten regiments a volunteer force rather than increase the regular army, and most of the Whigs joined with them; but a total of six Southern Whigs, plus one from the North, helped the Democrats defeat three such proposals.²⁷ A Kentucky Whig, John J. Crittenden, then tried twice to limit the number of regiments to three or four; Atchison of Missouri approved this idea, but three Southern Whigs and one from the North helped the Democrats defeat the proposals. On the final vote, only three Northern Whigs opposed the bill.²⁸ But disagreement between the House and Senate over a patronage feature held up final approval of the bill for another month; Calhoun and three of his Democratic friends

²⁴Ibid., pp. 154-56.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 159-60.

²⁶Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 104.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 126-27, 142, 156-57.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 141-43, 157.

from the South, along with a Northern Democrat, joined the Whigs in trying to limit the President's power of appointing officers under the bill. The bill was in grave danger of failing until the two houses finally reached a compromise.²⁹

Another bill providing for the appointment of additional officers for the army got a cool reception from the House Whigs. They took a dim view particularly of the provision which would allow the President to appoint a general-in-chief, which they considered another way of saying "lieutenant general." Nine Southern Democrats, mostly Calhounites, voted with the Whigs against that provision. Once the provision passed, however, no Southern Democrat voted against final passage of the bill; but no Whig voted for it.³⁰

The Two Million Bill had injected the specter of slavery into the war deliberations during the first session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress, and a similar appropriation for three million dollars continued the controversy through the second session. Southern Democrats uniformly agreed to grant the appropriation, but not with the Wilmot Proviso attached. Southern Whigs by now would not approve such an appropriation with or without a slavery proviso, with three exceptions; in the House, Thomas Newton of Arkansas and a

²⁹Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 279, 349, 375-77.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 526-27; House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 434-36.

Pennsylvania Whig voted for the bill after the House rejected the proviso, and Senator Henry Johnson of Louisiana supported the appropriation.³¹ In the Senate, John M. Berrien, Whig from Georgia, tried unsuccessfully to attach an amendment to the bill declaring that the United States sought no territory from Mexico. All Southern Whigs except Johnson of Louisiana voted for the amendment; all Southern Democrats voted against it.³²

When the Thirtieth Congress convened, the Whigs controlled the House. The Senate remained nominally in the hands of the Democrats, but part of their majority included Calhoun and several followers who did not always support the administration. Thus, opponents of the war could have severely hampered prosecution of the war. The Whigs, however, could not seem to make the decision to stop the war by closing the purse strings, although they still delayed and obstructed legislation sought by the administration. They apparently still preferred to exhibit their opposition in debate rather than by votes. In fact, they seemed more interested in keeping war bills from reaching a final vote at all than in casting their votes against passage.

³¹Ibid., pp. 475-76, 501-503; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 252-53; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 555-56, 573.

³²Ibid., pp. 545-46; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 252.

Interestingly, on many of the war issues that did reach a voting stage, the Thirtieth Congress did not record the yeas and nays.

Several minor war measures passed without difficulty, including an appropriation for one million dollars to supply part of a deficiency in appropriations for the army for the year ending June 30, 1848.³³ A larger appropriation, some thirteen million dollars, for the same purpose experienced a little more difficulty in the House. A Northern Whig tried to attach a proviso that the money could be used only to provide transportation home for the army; the Whig House rejected the amendment without a recorded vote. Another Northern Whig proposed an amendment that none of the money could be used for further conquest or subjugation of Mexico. Twenty-one members voted for this amendment, again without a recorded vote. A total of fifteen Northern Whigs voted against final passage of the bill; the bill cleared the Senate with little difficulty.³⁴

A bill to authorize a loan of sixteen million dollars took more than two months to clear both houses of Congress.

³³ Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 87, 133, 79; Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 153, 266, 381-82 (proceedings on S. 38, S. 105, and H. 6).

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 520-21; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 226; The Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1848), pp. 437-38, 445 (proceedings on H. 135).

The administration sought authority to issue treasury notes, but the House Whigs refused to authorize anything except a strict loan. The House, without recording the yeas and nays, refused efforts by some Northern Whigs to restrict the bill by provisos for withdrawing the army from Mexico or sending a peace commission to Mexico; one such proposal garnered twenty-three votes.³⁵ James I. McKay of North Carolina, as a member of the Democratic minority on the House Finance Committee, led the unsuccessful struggle by administration forces to secure authorization to issue treasury notes; his proposal failed by a margin of one in another unrecorded vote, indicating that a number of Whigs must have voted for it.³⁶ In the form dictated by the Whigs, the loan bill passed both houses of Congress with no Southerners dissenting; a total of sixteen Northern Whigs opposed it.³⁷

The Thirtieth Congress dealt the administration a defeat over a second bill to raise ten regiments for the regular army. For three months the Senate waged a war of words over this measure; before they finally passed it, Mexico had tentatively agreed to a peace treaty. Then the House refused to take up the bill, with Southern Whigs voting against

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 363, 368-69.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 371-73.

³⁷ Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 242; House Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 426-28.

consideration; an unusually large number of Southern Whigs and Democrats failed to register a vote at all on the motion to take up the bill.³⁸

In the Senate, some Southern Whigs and Calhounites vehemently and effectively opposed this second Ten Regiment Bill. In addition to attempting to bury it in an avalanche of words, they repeatedly tried to postpone consideration, to table the measure, to make the regiments volunteers, or to limit the bill to fewer than ten regiments; many of them voted against the bill on final passage.³⁹ Particularly active in opposition were Calhoun and Whigs John M. Clayton of Delaware, Willie P. Mangum of North Carolina, John M. Berrien of Georgia, John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, and John Bell of Tennessee.⁴⁰ In addition, Calhoun's special friends, Butler of South Carolina and Yulee of Florida, provided occasional opposition votes. On the other hand, two Southern Whigs, Henry Johnson of Louisiana and Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, provided occasional pro-administration votes.⁴¹

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 613-14, 765-66; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 220.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 83-84, 214-15, 217-20; Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 111-15, 467-68, 501.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 79-80, 111-15, 468-69, 477-79, 484, 496-97, 499-500, App., pp. 189-201.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 111-15, 467-68, 501; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 83-84, 214-15, 217-20.

In addition to the war legislation, members of the Congress recorded their votes on a number of resolutions concerning the war. Shortly after the war began, a Whig from Pennsylvania sought permission, in the House to present a resolution recommending that the President offer to open peace negotiations with Mexico. The House refused largely by a party vote, but three Whigs from Kentucky and North Carolina voted with the Democratic majority not to consider the resolution; two of them had voted for the preamble to the war bill. James A. Seddon, a Virginia Democrat who had voted against the preamble, voted with the Whigs to receive the resolution.⁴²

On several occasions, Whigs who hesitated to follow the course of their Federalist forebears, by opposing war legislation during a time of war, sought a more comfortable position on the war by trying to force Congress to go on record in opposition to territorial conquest. In a move that paralleled Georgia Senator John M. Berrien's "no territory" amendment to the Three Million Bill,⁴³ Alexander Hamilton Stephens, a Whig House member from Georgia, sought on January 22, 1847, to offer a resolution declaring that the United States was not waging the war for the conquest or

⁴²House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 79-81. Seddon was a Calhoun man; see Richmond Enquirer, March 16, March 26, 1847.

⁴³Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 545-46.

dismemberment of Mexico and that she would settle the matters of boundary and the Mexican debt to American citizens by negotiation. The Whigs and half a dozen Democrats, mostly from the South, agreed to receive this resolution, but a majority of the House voted negatively.⁴⁴

On the same date, a Northern Senator proposed a resolution that the President should withdraw the army from Mexico. A few days later, the Senate tabled the resolution unanimously.⁴⁵

In the Thirtieth Congress, the House Whigs enthusiastically presented resolutions regarding the war, though they avoided a recording of votes, probably because they could not unite their party on any one resolution.⁴⁶ On the few occasions when they did vote on resolutions, they contradicted themselves embarrassingly.

On January 3, 1848, a Massachusetts Whig, Charles Hudson, offered to the House a resolution that the United States withdraw its army to the left bank of the Rio Grande, relinquish all claims for war expenses, and agree to a boundary in the desert between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande. Southern Whigs, with the aid of seventeen Northern

⁴⁴House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 207-208.

⁴⁵Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 123-24, 137-38.

⁴⁶The Mobile Register and Journal, January 3, 1848.

Whigs, tried to prevent the resolution from reaching a vote; but the House forced a vote. Only three Southern Whigs approved the resolution; more than half of the Northern Whigs also disagreed to this ultimate solution to the war.⁴⁷

Yet, though they would not recommend withdrawing the American army from Mexico, on the same day the Southern Whigs voted with the Whig majority to pass a resolution that the President had started the war unnecessarily and unconstitutionally.⁴⁸ And on at least two occasions, they voted with the Whig majority against retracting or negating that declaration.⁴⁹

The Southern congressmen, then, did not present a solid front on the war issue. A survey of a selected list of twenty-two representative votes cast in the House on war measures during the two sessions of the Twenty-Ninth Congress allows a judgment, in terms of numbers, of the Southerners' voting records.⁵⁰ Taking sixteen, out of a possible twenty-two,

⁴⁷House Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 175-80.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 183-85.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 401-403; Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 179.

⁵⁰The selected list of representative votes was based on the major war bills and resolutions discussed in this chapter. In addition to the final votes on the bills, the list included votes on amendments designed to limit or change the effect of a bill, including some amendments which failed to pass. The list also included a few votes for postponement of a bill, if the move was clearly intended to delay the measure.

as a modest score for an administration supporter, more than half of the Southern Democrats who served during the Twenty-Ninth Congress scored sixteen or higher; that is, they were present and voting with their party more than 70 per cent of the time. In comparison, no Southern Whig scored higher than eleven; half of them scored in the range of eight to eleven, with the rest lower.

In the Thirtieth Congress, on a similar list of nine representative votes, forty-eight of the fifty-four Southern Democrats who served in the House during the remaining months of the war scored six or better, out of a possible score of nine. In comparison, no Whig from the South scored higher than six. Twenty-one of the thirty-seven Southern Whigs who served during the period scored from three to six, the rest lower.

In the Senate during the Twenty-Ninth Congress, on a list of seventeen representative votes, twelve of the twenty-one Southern Democrats who served scored thirteen or better. Nine was the highest score for a Southern Whig Senator. Of the twelve Whigs from the South, four scored from seven to nine, while six scored three or less.

In the Thirtieth Congress, twelve of the nineteen Southern Democrats who served in the Senate scored six or better out of a possible score of nine. In comparison, the highest score for a Southern Whig Senator was three, and four of the eleven Southern Whigs scored zero.

From this survey of the Southerners' actions on war legislation, certain conclusions are possible. Southern Democrats generally followed their party's pro-war line, but not without exceptions. Calhoun and a small and varying number of friends opposed the administration on some important measures. Although they usually did not oppose the money bills, they did oppose to a degree the declaration of war, the Ten Regiment Bill, and some of the measures for organizing the army and appointing officers. In other words, once the war began they helped finance it, but they objected to the manner in which the administration wanted to conduct it.

Other Southern Democrats who may or may not have been under Calhoun's influence also opposed the administration on some of the army measures involving organization and federal appointments. Included in this group are those who preferred a volunteer army. In addition, when the choice lay between passing a war measure or protecting slavery, as in the case of the Two and Three Million Bills, Southern Democrats sacrificed the war measure.

Neither the Calhoun men nor the recalcitrant Democrats could have endangered a war measure alone; but when they combined and joined the Whigs in opposition to a measure, they could and did cause trouble for the administration.

Southern Whigs acted with far less unanimity than the Southern Democrats. Most vocally expressed opposition to

the war, though a few made speeches that were at least mildly pro-war.⁵¹ As a group, they tended to parallel the course of the Calhounites, with some differences. Most would not agree to the Three Million Bill under any circumstances, and they were more active in promoting anti-conquest resolutions and trying to append them to war bills. Also, they differed from the Democrats on the kind of economic measures which should finance the war, as in the case of the tea and coffee tax and treasury notes.

Only rarely did all the Southern Whigs vote as a bloc in opposition to a war bill. A few, such as Senator Henry Johnson of Louisiana, compiled a respectable pro-administration voting record on the war legislation. However, the best Southern Whig voting records merely equalled the poorest voting records among Southern Democrats, and few Southern Whigs had a voting record comparable to Senator Johnson's.

In comparison, Northern Whigs as a group offered slightly more opposition to the war bills than Southern Whigs did, mainly because of the hard core of Whigs from New England and the mid-Atlantic states who had opposed the declaration of war. Fifteen had voted against the declaration of war, and a dozen or so other Northern Whigs sometimes

⁵¹ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 842-43 (William M. Coker), 799 (Henry Johnson), 803 (Reverdy Johnson); ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 118-19 (Henry W. Hilliard), 152 (Edward Long), 270 (Spencer Jarnagin), 429-30 (Thomas Newton), App., p. 437 (Henry Johnson); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 63-69 (Reverdy Johnson).

joined them in opposing the more controversial war measures. But on routine measures, seldom more than twenty Northern Whigs, approximately one-fourth of their group, consistently voted no.

The conclusion may be drawn that Southern Democrats as a whole provided a high degree of support to the war effort. The Calhoun group, though effective, was small and posed a problem only when they acted with the Whigs and other disaffected Democrats. The Southern Whigs gave moderate support to the war and compiled a voting record on war legislation comparable to the majority of their Northern counterparts. But the voting records of most of the Whigs from the South did not compare favorably with that of the Southern Democrats, even the Calhoun group. Therefore, any statement that the Southern Whigs acted with the Southern Democrats in support of the war, while Northern Whigs as a group opposed it, can be effectively challenged as a direct perversion of the facts or, at best, a gross misrepresentation of national history.

CHAPTER II

CONGRESS: THE ADMINISTRATION FORCES

On the eve of the Mexican War the Democratic party was far from a cohesive unit. Descended from a coalition of divergent factions, it had for a time united under the force of Andrew Jackson's will and personality; but a Martin Van Buren or a James Knox Polk could not maintain its unity.¹

Now, with Polk's administration facing a foreign war, dissensions riddled the party. Northwesterners fumed over what they called the South's treachery in failing to support their demand for all of Oregon after they had helped acquire Texas. Southerners deplored the war fever which gripped the West and feared the influence of the Van Buren wing of the party. Northeasterners looked suspiciously upon a Southern president after expansionists from the North and South had combined to prevent Van Buren's nomination in 1844, partly because he opposed the annexation of Texas. Slavery men and antislavery men faced each other with ill-concealed suspicion and hostility, ready to quarrel at the drop of a hint.²

¹James C. N. Paul, Rift in the Democracy, Perpetua ed. (New York, 1961), pp. 33-34 and passim.

²Ibid., pp. 33-36, 79, 144-68, and passim; Clark E. Persinger, "The 'Bargain of 1844' as the Origin of the Wilmot Proviso," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1911, 2 vols. (Washington, 1913), I, 189-95; The Weekly

The President could not choose a cabinet or make appointments that would please every faction. Nor could he please all groups with his actions as President. Westerners fretted over his willingness to compromise on Oregon and his veto of an internal improvements bill. Protectionists grumbled about his tariff reform, while some free-traders viewed it as merely a first step in the right direction. And Polk, a secretive and unimposing individual in appearance and personality, could not provide the dynamic leadership needed to unite his party, even while he had the determination to carry out an ambitious program guaranteed to cause controversy.³

Tribune (Liberty, Missouri), April 25, 1846; ibid., July 25, 1846, quoting the Cleveland (Ohio) Plaindealer; The Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury, April 27, 1846; Milo M. Quaife, editor, The Diary of James K. Polk, 4 vols. (Chicago, 1910), I, 132, II, 329; Calhoun, Fort Hill, South Carolina, to R. M. T. Hunter, March 26, 1845, Charles Henry Ambler, editor, "Correspondence of Robert M. T. Hunter," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1916, 2 vols. (Washington, 1918-19), II, 75-77.

³Norman A. Graebner, "James K. Polk: A Study in Federal Patronage," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVIII (March, 1952), 613-32; Justin H. Smith, The War with Mexico, 2 vols. (New York, 1919), II, 269-73, 282; Quaife, ed., Diary, I, 132, 486-87, 494, II, 399-405; The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1846), pp. 1053, 1158, 1165, 1223-24; James B. Sawyer, Pittsburgh, to Calhoun, July 10, 1846, Chauncey S. Boucher and Robert P. Brooks, editors, "Correspondence Addressed to John C. Calhoun, 1837-1849," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1929, 2 vols. (Washington, 1930-33), I, 351-52; Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, June 30, 1846, J. Franklin Jameson, editor, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1899, 2 vols. (Washington, 1900), II, 702-703.

Adding a foreign war, particularly a controversial war which aroused blatant opposition from many Whigs, to the already heavy burden of dissensions strained party discipline to the limits. Some eight months after the war began Polk admitted, "With a large nominal majority in both Houses, I am practically in a minority."⁴ He complained that some Democrats opposed one measure and another faction opposed something else, while the Whigs, in opposition to the war, united with the Democratic minority to endanger or defeat one measure after another.⁵

As Polk had been a compromise candidate for the Democrats in the 1844 election, he had no extensive support upon which to build a personal following after he became President. For Democratic leadership in Congress he had to rely upon already established leaders. Senator Lewis M. Cass of Michigan led a group of Northwesterners in strong support of the war, but for Southern leadership Polk was not so fortunate.⁶

Senator John Caldwell Calhoun of South Carolina proved, as Polk feared, to be no help at all, but rather a positive danger to the administration and to the war effort. Isolated

⁴Quaife, ed., Diary, II, 328.

⁵Ibid., p. 340.

⁶Paul, Rift in the Democracy, pp. 162-65; Smith, The War with Mexico, II, 282; Eugene I. McCormac, James K. Polk: A Political Biography (Berkeley, 1922), p. 282.

by his own narrow outlook and towering ego and standing aloof from all factions and national parties, Calhoun actively opposed the war from the beginning.⁷

Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri was friendly with the Northeastern Van Burenites but was not particularly impressed with Polk. Strong-willed, overbearing, and egotistical, he was an area of dissension unto himself.⁸ He supported the administration during the war, but not always wholeheartedly; and Polk sometimes had to cater to Benton's ideas and ambitions to keep from losing his support. Before American and Mexican forces clashed on the Rio Grande, Benton had expressed to Polk an aversion to war with Mexico, despite deteriorating relations with that country. Even after hostilities occurred, he did not want to make aggressive war on Mexico. He favored defending American territory, but he doubted that her territory extended beyond the Nueces River; though he had remained silent, he had disapproved of the movement of the American army to the Rio Grande earlier in the year.⁹

⁷Smith, The War with Mexico, II, 282-83; Quaife, ed., Diary, I, 132; Wilson Lumpkin, Athens, Georgia, to Calhoun, December 20, 1847, Boucher and Brooks, eds., "Correspondence Addressed to Calhoun," p. 413. Chapter III details Calhoun's position on the war.

⁸Smith, The War with Mexico, II, 282; Thomas Hart Benton, Thirty Years' View, 2 vols. (New York, 1854-56), II, 591-96, 649-50.

⁹Quaife, ed., Diary, I, 375-76, 390.

Benton supported the administration on the declaration of war; however, at times he seemed to waver. Even though he served as chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, he sometimes did not take the lead in pushing army bills desired by the administration.¹⁰ Early in 1847, Benton became an outright embarrassment to the administration. The Missourian devised a plan of creating a lieutenant general to command all American forces in Mexico and cast himself in the leading role. Rather than lose his support at a critical time, Polk consented.¹¹ Congress quickly scuttled the idea, obviously partly because of Benton's interest in the plan; but the affair caused hard feelings toward both Benton and Polk that affected other war legislation.¹² Thereafter, Benton's interest and activity in regard to the war waned, and ultimately he broke with the administration over a personal matter.¹³

With Benton providing limited assistance and Calhoun none at all, Polk had to depend upon less prominent men to

¹⁰Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 798, 865.

¹¹Quaife, ed., Diary, II, 227, 231, 273, 275-77, 282, 286, 293.

¹²The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), pp. 158, 184-87, 192-93, 518-19, 524, 527, 569-70; Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 153-54.

¹³Quaife, ed., Diary, III, 198, 204, IV, 227, 330; Niles' National Register, September 11, 1847.

lead the Southern wing of the party on the war measures. In the Senate, Ambrose H. Sevier of Arkansas became an outstanding spokesman for the administration. In the House, Linn Boyd of Kentucky and Georgia's Howell Cobb and Hugh A. Haralson emerged as leaders; their calm, reasoned advocacy of administration measures served far more effectively than fiery oratory.

Southerners had perhaps as much to be satisfied about as any group of Democrats. Those who had wanted Texas were happy; the 1846 tariff gratified those who wanted a tariff reduction; and those who watched over the safety of slavery had no reason to expect trouble from a Southern president. But Southern Democrats had their own reasons for being disgruntled. Polk disappointed some Southerners by not retaining Calhoun as his secretary of state; and, like every other faction, they worried about everybody else's influence with the President, feeling that they had received a small share of the federal patronage. Many positively distrusted the "wild men of the West" with whom they formed an uneasy party alliance.¹⁴ As many Southerners by now looked to men of

¹⁴W. A. Harris, Washington, to Calhoun, July 11, 1845, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1038-39; Calhoun, Washington, to Henry A. S. Dearborn, July 2, 1846, *ibid.*, p. 700; John A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, November 20, 1847, *ibid.*, p. 1141; Calhoun, Fort Hill, South Carolina, to R. M. T. Hunter, March 26, 1845, Ambler, ed., "Correspondence of Robert M. T. Hunter," pp. 75-77; J. S. Barbour, Catalpa [Virginia], to Calhoun, December 18, 1844, Boucher and Brooks, eds., "Correspondence Addressed to Calhoun," pp. 270-71; Duff Green, Washington, to Calhoun,

their own section for leadership rather than to the leaders of the national parties, they felt an urge to follow Calhoun in his independent course on the war.¹⁵

The majority of Southern Democrats, nevertheless, supported the war with reasonable consistency. But some balked at certain types of legislation, including even usually reliable administration supporters. They refused to support the Two Million Bill, of course, after the antislavery forces appended the Wilmot Proviso.¹⁶ A few opposed a tax on tea and coffee.¹⁷ However, Southern Democrats most disliked those bills concerning the army. Their resistance apparently arose from several sources: dislike of loss of state control of military forces and appointments, unwillingness to increase the number of appointments which the President would make, and distrust of a large regular army. Florida's Senator James D. Westcott was franker than most when he bluntly stated he opposed increasing federal patronage unnecessarily; others revealed similar sentiments by their votes on bills which would have increased presidential

March 17, 1847, ibid., p. 372; Samuel A. Wales, Eatonton, Georgia, to Calhoun, June 17, 1847, ibid., p. 382; The Charleston Mercury, April 27, 1846.

¹⁵ Charles S. Sydnor, The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1819-1848 ([Baton Rouge], 1948), pp. 315-31.

¹⁶ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1217-18.

¹⁷ House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 121-22.

appointments.¹⁸ Some Democrats did not want to allow the President to make appointments in the army during the time Congress was in recess.¹⁹ Some wanted any officers appointed to be discharged at the end of the war rather than remain part of the permanent military establishment.²⁰ Some preferred to use volunteer forces altogether instead of increasing the regular army. No doubt, part of these men genuinely believed, as Westcott remarked, that citizen soldiers were superior to the mercenaries, many of them foreigners, who enlisted in the regular army.²¹ Others doubtless were thinking that the volunteer forces and their officers would disband at the end of the war and, if other proposals prevailed, the President would be deprived of a vast amount of patronage; either the men would elect most of their own officers or state authorities would appoint them.²²

¹⁸Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 895-96, 1008-1009; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1026 (James D. Westcott); Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 343, 367 (proceedings on S. 185 and S. 211).

¹⁹Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), p. 143; House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 298-99; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 349, 375-77.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 527, 857, 907, 913 (remarks by James McKay, David R. Atchison, Hugh A. Haralson, and Andrew Johnson).

²¹Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1026.

²²Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1029; ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 106; House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 154-56; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 126-47, 142, 156-57.

On the more personal level, a number of Southern Democrats disliked the idea of a lieutenant general, particularly when they believed that the President would appoint Benton. Besides their dislike for Benton, or their aversion toward giving him a boost toward the presidency, even many of the Democrats did not want to see anyone supersede the popular Whig general, Zachary Taylor.²³

The Calhoun men often voted with the opposition on these issues, but some of the Southwesterners also openly resisted the measures. Tennessee representatives George W. Jones and Andrew Johnson nearly always voted against the administration on these issues, even though the latter vehemently defended the war and charged moral treason to those who threw impediments in the way of its prosecution.²⁴ He defected so frequently and so noisily that the press began to question his support of the war.²⁵ Senators David Rice Atchison of Missouri, Sam Houston of Texas, and Hopkins L. Turney of Tennessee strongly opposed the use of regular troops and tried on several occasions to substitute volunteer

²³Ibid., p. 104; House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 153-54, 434-36; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 527, 569-70.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 38-40, 527.

²⁵Liberty Tribune, April 3, 1847, quoting the Nashville Banner.

forces when the President asked for regular forces. In addition, Houston and Turney wanted to allow the men to elect most of their officers.²⁶

While the number of recalcitrant Democrats usually was small on any one issue, the Whigs were ever ready to join with them in order to jeopardize the administration bills.

Typically, the Southern Democrats claimed the Rio Grande as the true boundary of Texas, defended the President for sending a force under General Taylor to that river to signify America's claim to the boundary after Mexico refused to recognize the annexation of Texas or negotiate the boundary question, denounced Mexico for her insulting behavior toward the United States and her atrocities upon American citizens in Mexico and Texas, and demanded that Mexico pay several million dollars in claims she owed to American citizens for property losses. They charged Mexico with refusing to settle all differences peacefully and striking the first blow against American soldiers on American soil, and they demanded indemnity for the expenses of a war which she forced upon the United States. As they knew Mexico could not pay cash, they expected indemnity in the form of a territorial cession. The particular indemnity which appealed to them was California,

²⁶ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 126-27, 142, 156-57; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 232-36 (remarks by Houston), 238-39 (Turney), 268 (Atchison).

and New Mexico provided a convenient way to get there.²⁷ Some considered California more valuable than the debt which they believed Mexico owed and expressed willingness to pay an extra sum for the cession.²⁸ With the exception of a few ardent expansionists, Southern Democrats denied any desire for extensive conquests or excessive cessions of territory. While most favored vigorous prosecution of the war until Mexico surrendered and defended territorial conquests as a legitimate mode of waging war, they expressed willingness, once Mexico agreed to honorable terms of peace, to return all Mexican territory except a fair portion for indemnity--in short, all except California and New Mexico.²⁹

Though delegations from a majority of the Southern states contained at least one man who gave close to 100 per cent support to the administration's war bills, Southwestern Democrats as a group provided the most consistent support to the measures. The Tennessee Democrats enthusiastically supported the war and, except for the two representatives who

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 29th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 803-806 (David S. Kaufman), 864-67 (Hugh A. Haralson), 1101-1103 (Howell Cobb); *ibid.*, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 73-76 (James B. Bowlin); *ibid.*, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1848), App., pp. 255-62 (Ambrose H. Sevier).

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1216 (remarks by Seaborn Jones); *ibid.*, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 375 (Ambrose H. Sevier), 147-48 (John W. Tibbatts).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 37-38 (William W. Payne); *ibid.*, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 260-62 (Ambrose H. Sevier), App., pp. 201-205 (Hopkins Turney), 122-30 (Henry S. Foote).

resisted the army bills, compiled the best voting record on the war bills of any delegation. The Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas delegations were small but helpful, especially since Arkansas provided an able leader in Senator Sevier. Not surprisingly, Texans opposed all suggestions for a defensive war and urged decisive victory and complete surrender by Mexico as the only means to assure permanent peace.³⁰ Missouri and Kentucky Democrats showed less avidity about the war than other Southwestern Democrats. Benton of Missouri gave rather lukewarm support at times. Senator Atchison of Missouri compiled a less than admirable pro-administration voting record on war legislation, though he apparently wanted territorial indemnity from Mexico; and while Kentucky contributed an able war advocate in Linn Boyd, she also contributed John W. Tibbatts, a rarity among Southwestern Democrats in that he favored Calhoun's ideas. Early in 1847, he characterized the war as just but stated that the United States had already accomplished her aims of repelling invasion and claiming the Rio Grande as her boundary. He recommended taking a defensive line, holding the territory already conquered as indemnity. He did not want to prosecute the war for unjust acquisition of territory; though he preferred a

³⁰ Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 805-806 (David S. Kaufman); ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 222-23 (Sam Houston); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., p. 363 (Thomas J. Rusk).

mountain boundary to the Rio Grande, he wanted to purchase the extra territory.³¹

The Democrats from Alabama, Florida, Virginia, and South Carolina had, as a group, more equivocal voting records than Democrats from other Southern states. A majority of Alabama's Democrats, about half of Virginia's, and one from Florida had better than average pro-administration voting records on war bills; but about a dozen Democrats from these four delegations had below average voting records. Thirteen had followed Calhoun's lead on the declaration of war and had voted against the preamble, though most of them gave a modest degree of support to the administration measures thereafter.³²

But these states had their war hawks too. Alabama's Senator Arthur P. Bagby and Florida's Representative William H. Brockenbrough defended conquests in war as a lawful and just way of acquiring territory and scorned the idea of engaging in war without utilizing belligerent rights; within the bounds of justice and humanity.³³ Virginia's Representative George Dromgoole complained that some gentlemen always wanted to give up disputed territory. Early in

³¹Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 147-48.

³²House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 792-93. Chapter III details the activities of the Calhounites.

³³Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 377-78, 396.

1847, he warned against timid, halfway measures; he urged prosecuting the war with energy and vigor to convince Mexico that the United States could conquer and subdue her. If she agreed to make peace before that occurred, he thought the United States should meet her in a spirit of magnanimity, as no one desired mere conquest. But if she persisted in refusing to make peace, he believed the war must inevitably end in the entire subjugation of Mexico; and the United States would have the right to substitute her own authority for the authority of the Mexican government.³⁴

Democrats from Mississippi, Georgia, and North Carolina gave above-average support to the war bills. In the House, the men from these states vehemently defended the administration's course on the war and aggressively urged chastising Mexico for her insults to the United States.³⁵ But they showed little tendency toward extensive territorial demands. Jacob Thompson of Mississippi preferred some indemnity other than territory, though he would yield no part of Texas; he preferred cash, but would accept the revenues from Mexico's commercial ports for a period of years, plus a right-of-way

³⁴Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 490-91.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 154-57 (Jacob Thompson), App., pp. 90-94, 360 (Seaborn Jones); ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 864-66 (Hugh A. Haralson), 1102-1103 (Howell Cobb); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 145 (Abraham W. Venable), App., pp. 172-75 (Winfield S. Featherston), 227-31 (Howell Cobb).

through Mexican territory to the Pacific.³⁶ Seaborn Jones of Georgia wanted California, but he wanted to compensate Mexico for the cession.³⁷ Howell Cobb of Georgia wanted indemnity, but he privately deprecated fighting the "poor, imbecile, self-distracted provinces" of Mexico when Congress had sacrificed clearer and more unquestionable rights in Oregon in order to appease England.³⁸

If the Democratic representatives from Mississippi, North Carolina, and Georgia expressed less than extravagant demands, the Democratic senators from those states more than compensated for their lack. They ranked among the group of outspoken expansionists whose ideas ranged as far as the annexation of all Mexico.

Mississippi's Senator Jefferson Davis denied wanting all Mexico; but he wanted more territory than the peace treaty acquired, or at least favorable terrain for a railroad and a more defensible boundary.³⁹ In the Senate deliberations on

³⁶ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 157.

³⁷ Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1216.

³⁸ Cobb, Washington, to wife, May 10, 1846, Ulrich B. Phillips, editor, "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1911, 2 vols. (Washington, 1913), II, 76.

³⁹ The Mississippian (Jackson), March 17, 1848; Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 321; Dunbar Rowland, editor, Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches, 10 vols. (Jackson, Mississippi, 1923), II, 89 (Address to the People of Mississippi, 1851).

ratification of the peace treaty, he proposed an amendment which would have extended the boundary farther south to take in portions of several more Mexican provinces.⁴⁰ Such a change, of course, might have caused Mexico to reject the treaty; but several senators wanted to risk that result, including Sam Houston and Thomas Jefferson Rusk of Texas, David Rice Atchison of Missouri, Hopkins L. Turney of Tennessee, Dixon H. Lewis of Alabama, James D. Westcott of Florida, and four Northern Democrats. But other strong expansionists refused to jeopardize the treaty for the additional territory.⁴¹ Atchison, Lewis, Westcott, and three Northern expansionists subsequently voted against ratification of the treaty, while Sam Houston, who called the treaty a burlesque, absented himself on the day of the vote.⁴²

Mississippi's other senator, Henry S. Foote, prior to the treaty had few qualms about taking all of Mexico. He believed that vigorous prosecution of the war, complete victory, and at least temporary military occupation could easily effect the pacification of Mexico. He did not worry about destroying Mexico's nationality; instead, he looked forward to the civilization, Americanization, and possible

⁴⁰Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), No. 52, p. 18.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid., p. 36; Liberty Tribune, March 17, 1848.

ultimate annexation of Mexico. Early in 1848, he expressed willingness to surrender most of the conquered territory to the Mexicans if they agreed to honorable peace terms; but believing this event unlikely, he had devised plans for the type of government he would lavish upon the Mexicans. He described the numerous advantages of annexation of Mexico to allay the fears of those statesmen who worried about the supposed evils of annexation.⁴³ Apparently, however, he considered peace more desirable than all Mexico, as he accepted the boundary drawn by the treaty.⁴⁴

Georgia's Senator Herschel V. Johnson embodied the full spirit of Manifest Destiny, including its tenets of increased strength of American institutions through expansion, the moral obligation of the United States to provide haven and land for Europe's downtrodden masses, the consecration of the whole of North America to freedom, and the positive intervention of a wise Providence to assist the triumphant spirit of the age in combatting monarchies and remodeling the social and political condition of the world. He would not force the American form of government on any people by the sword, he said; but when Mexico forced war upon the United States and the increase of her territory and the

⁴³Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 122-30.

⁴⁴Senate Executive Documents, 30th Congress, 1st Session, No. 52, pp. 18, 36.

subsequent extension of the area of liberty incidentally resulted from the contest, she would be recreant to her noble mission if she refused to acquiesce in the high purposes of Providence.⁴⁵ But like Senator Foote, Johnson considered ending the war the prime consideration.⁴⁶

Ambrose Sevier of Arkansas actively sought the declaration of war⁴⁷ and consistently promoted administration measures for its prosecution. He demanded indemnity from Mexico for the claims she owed to American citizens and for the expenses of the war; in February, 1847, he believed Upper California and part of New Mexico would suffice as indemnity, and he even advocated extra payment for them.⁴⁸ After the war continued for another year, he surmised that territory to Tampico and the Sierra Madre mountains might be required, without any extra payment.⁴⁹ He denied that the President ever considered the absorption or annexation of all Mexico, as the Whigs charged; but though he personally sought only a reasonable cession of territory by Mexico, he said if the Whigs forced a choice between withdrawing the

⁴⁵Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 377-80.

⁴⁶Senate Executive Documents, 30th Congress, 1st Session, No. 52, pp. 18, 36.

⁴⁷Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 786, 788.

⁴⁸Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 375.

⁴⁹Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 260-62.

armies to the Rio Grande or subjugating all Mexico, he would go for all Mexico. He believed the objections to absorbing all Mexico, while great, could be overcome. He argued that every extension of territory thus far made by the United States had strengthened the Union, not weakened it. As for the supposed difficulties of controlling the masses in Mexico, he pointed to the successes in controlling the Indians in the United States and proposed to govern the Mexican people in the same way; he believed that a small armed force and the navy could handle the Mexicans, and the revenues from Mexico would pay the cost.⁵⁰ But Sevier, too, sacrificed such ideas and voted to ratify the treaty to which Mexico had tentatively agreed.⁵¹

Senator Thomas Jefferson Rusk of Texas said he would be content with fair indemnity, but what he considered fair ranged as far as the Sierra Madre mountains. He did not fear the consequences of absorbing all Mexico, but rather saw great advantages; it would afford freedom and protection to the Mexican people, allow them to develop the great resources of their country, and deprive foreign countries of their influence over Mexican affairs.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Senate Executive Documents, 30th Congress, 1st Session, No. 52, pp. 18, 36.

⁵² Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., p. 363.

Two Democrats in the House, Frederick P. Stanton of Tennessee and Robert M. McLane of Maryland, were also "baying at the All Mexico moon"⁵³ before the war ended. Early in the war, Stanton proclaimed the justice of conquering and keeping Mexican territory as the only logical way of attacking her and the only way in which the United States could exact indemnity. At this time he had California in mind.⁵⁴ By early 1848, he believed that the subjugation of all Mexico was not only unavoidable but also desirable. He feared no danger to American liberties from such an acquisition; on the contrary, he feared that if they left Mexico in her present condition, renewed war and ultimate absorption of the country would result anyway.⁵⁵ After learning of the terms of the peace treaty, he blamed the Whigs because the terms were not more favorable; if they had acted promptly in granting men and money, he said, the United States could have dictated her own terms of peace.⁵⁶

Robert McLane in January, 1848, did not consider mere territorial acquisitions, even to the Sierra Madre mountains, sufficient indemnity for the past and security for the future.

⁵³ Quoted from Ray Allen Billington, The Far Western Frontier, 1830-1860, Harper Torchbooks ed. (New York, 1962), p. 191.

⁵⁴ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 22-23, 76-79.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 135.

⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 365-68.

He wanted at least that much territory plus certain fixed commercial relations and the occupation of strategic points on the coast and in the interior through which to control Mexican commerce. But he really wanted, and would prosecute the war to acquire, enough control over Mexico to destroy any influence of European countries and to extend America's concept of civil, religious, and political liberty to all Mexicans. They then could enjoy, like the other inhabitants of the North American continent who had been subjugated by the United States, the degree of civilization and independence for which they were fitted, while the free and glorious civilization of the American people could press on over the rest of the continent. McLane did not see the Mexicans as becoming an integral part of the Union, but remaining in the position held by the more civilized American Indians.⁵⁷

The question of whether all these territorial ambitions stemmed from a desire to extend slavery is difficult to answer. Quite naturally, Southern war supporters denied any such ideas; if they had felt and admitted that ambition, many Northerners would have deserted the war cause. On the other hand, most Southerners who commented on the slavery issue quite naturally wanted to share the benefits of any territorial acquisitions. One Mississippian pointed out that the South had not tried to preempt any new territory for her

⁵⁷ Ibid., App., pp. 101-104.

own benefit, as the North had tried to do through the Wilmot Proviso; he felt that the South would agree to extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, though she would be yielding much for the sake of harmony.⁵⁸ Several Southerners expressed the idea that came to be called popular sovereignty, allowing the people who settled the new territory to decide whether or not to permit slavery.⁵⁹ Many felt that the slavery issue had no relation to the war deliberations and denied any fears that the Union could not withstand sectional frictions over territorial acquisitions.⁶⁰ Stanton believed that those who opposed expansion on other grounds were using the slavery question as a divisive maneuver.⁶¹ Georgia's Manifest Destiny senator, Herschel Johnson, believed that Southern Whigs opposed territorial extension because they feared the addition of new free states to the Union, and he considered this an unpatriotic position for Southern statesmen to take.⁶² Robert McLane said that mere acquisition of territory, or even subjugation of Mexico,

⁵⁸Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 149 (Thomas W. Ligon); App., pp. 142-43 (Stephen Adams), 399 (Arthur P. Bagby).

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 149 (Thomas W. Ligon), 544 (Walter T. Colquitt); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 377-80 (Herschel V. Johnson).

⁶⁰Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 149 (Thomas W. Ligon), 544 (Walter T. Colquitt).

⁶¹Ibid., p. 78.

⁶²Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 377-80.

would not necessarily result in extension of slavery. Like John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, he argued that territory where slavery did not already exist would remain free unless the inhabitants deliberately established laws for its introduction.⁶³

A few Southern Democrats, however, showed no willingness to compromise on the slavery issue. Representative David S. Kaufman of Texas wanted indemnity, but he warned that the South would not agree to territorial indemnity if Congress adopted the Wilmot Proviso; he personally doubted that California would support slave labor, but he would not abandon the principle of equality.⁶⁴ A Mississippi representative took the same position; he would compromise on the issue, but if Congress tried to prohibit slavery entirely he would prefer to hold Mexico's promise to pay indemnity for a century rather than take territorial indemnity.⁶⁵ John Tibbatts of Kentucky, who showed an affinity for Calhoun's views, opposed continuing the war at all if the South could not share equally in the territory.⁶⁶

One general conclusion in regard to the connection between the slavery issue and territorial desires is possible.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 103-104 (Robert McLane); ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 1215-16 (John Quincy Adams).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 150-54.

⁶⁵ Ibid., App., pp. 142-43 (Stephen Adams).

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 147-48.

Among the Democratic supporters of the war, the more ardent expansionists showed less concern over the slavery issue and more willingness to work out sectional problems after acquiring the territory, rather than demanding a promise of an equal share for the South before they agreed to the acquisition. Quite a few Southerners seemed to prefer to ignore the issue altogether. A minority of the Southern Democrats expressed an altogether uncompromising attitude on the question.

In retrospect, Southern Democrats cannot be completely absolved of territorial ambitions. Whether their claims for indemnity stemmed from mere desire for territory or whether the claims for indemnity arose from a genuine belief in the righteousness of the war and the justness of American claims against Mexico is a moot question. Ray Allen Billington's statement that virtually every Democrat in Congress demanded all Mexico⁶⁷ is an exaggeration, as far as the Southern men are concerned. Some did openly propose annexation of all Mexico, and others covertly hinted at it; but while these avid expansionists were active and outspoken, they did not represent the majority of Southern war supporters. As the war dragged on, the demands for territorial indemnity quite logically increased until some were demanding fully half of

⁶⁷ Billington, The Far Western Frontier, p. 191.

Mexico's territory, but the majority who expressed an opinion were content with California and New Mexico.

CHAPTER III

CONGRESS: CALHOUN AND THE BALANCE OF POWER

One of John Caldwell Calhoun's friends characterized him as standing aloof from the corruptions and intrigues of both national political parties.¹ More to the truth would be the supposition that Calhoun believed himself to be the true essence of the Democratic party, and that the rest of the party was going astray and needed his guidance to restore it to the right path.²

In any event, this attitude appeared to guide him when he returned to the Senate in December, 1845. He returned armed with a dislike for President James Knox Polk, who had declined to retain him as secretary of state, the position he had held in the previous administration. He disliked Polk's ties to the old Andrew Jackson-Martin Van Buren wing

¹Wilson Lumpkin, Athens, Georgia, to Calhoun, December 20, 1847, Chauncey S. Boucher and Robert P. Brooks, editors, "Correspondence Addressed to John C. Calhoun, 1837-1849," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1929, 2 vols. (Washington, 1930-33), I, 413.

²Calhoun, Washington, to James E. Calhoun, January 16, 1846, J. Franklin Jameson, editor, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1899, 2 vols. (Washington, 1900), II, 676; Calhoun, Washington, to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, June 11, 1846, ibid., p. 695; Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, August 8, 1846, ibid., p. 704.

of the party, and he anticipated treachery by the administration on the tariff question. He considered any devoted friend of the Polk administration to be no friend of his, and he rather expected a break with the administration.³

Specifically, he returned to the Senate for the purpose of averting war with England over Oregon and with Mexico, feeling that the country looked to him to prevent such a calamity. He took full credit for the settlement of the Oregon controversy and gave the administration the full blame for the failure to avoid war with Mexico.⁴

Calhoun believed that the Mexican difficulties and the controversy with England over Oregon were inseparably intertwined. He believed that England controlled Mexico entirely and would oppose war between Mexico and the United States unless she herself was forced into war over Oregon, in which case she would want Mexico to fight too; and with British gold and British officers aiding her, Mexico would be a formidable foe. War with Mexico, then, could bring war with

³Calhoun, Fort Hill, South Carolina, to R. M. T. Hunter, March 26, 1845, Charles Henry Ambler, editor, "Correspondence of Robert M. T. Hunter," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1916, 2 vols. (Washington, 1918-19), II, 75-77; Calhoun, Fort Hill, to James H. Hammond, September 28, 1845, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 673; Calhoun, Washington, to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, June 11, 1846, ibid., p. 696.

⁴Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, December 26, 1845, and May 12, 1846, ibid., pp. 674, 690; Calhoun, Washington, to James E. Calhoun, May 29, 1846, ibid., p. 693.

England; on the other hand, if the United States settled the Oregon matter peaceably, Mexico's truculence would probably disappear with her hopes of British aid.⁵

Calhoun greatly dreaded war with England, believing it would "leave us of the South little worth having."⁶ He believed that war always increased federal patronage, the powers of the president, and the power of the central government, thus endangering the rights and powers of the states. He feared that war would create a heavy debt and thereby damage the cause of free trade. He believed the abolitionists wanted a war because it would damage the South and her institutions. These reasons held in the case of any war, but England was both a more formidable foe and a better customer for Southern cotton than most countries.⁷

Therefore, when Polk sought his opinion in regard to possible war with Mexico a month before the hostilities occurred on the Rio Grande, Calhoun thought first of the possibility of British intervention in such a war. He

⁵ Calhoun, Fort Hill, to T. G. Clemson, September 18, 1845, ibid., p. 672; Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, January 29, 1846, ibid., pp. 680-81.

⁶ Calhoun, Washington, to James E. Calhoun, January 16, 1846, ibid., p. 676.

⁷ Calhoun, Washington, to Andrew P. Calhoun, January 16, 1846, ibid., p. 677; Calhoun, Washington, to James H. Hammond, January 23, 1846, ibid., p. 679; Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, June 30, 1846, ibid., p. 702; The Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury, November 4, 1845. The Charleston Mercury was Calhoun's unofficial organ in South Carolina.

advised the President to do nothing about Mexico until he settled the Oregon question; Mexico then would likely give no further trouble.⁸ When hostilities occurred and Polk asked Congress to recognize the existence of war, Calhoun tried to persuade Congress to separate the question of repelling invasion from the matter of constitutionally declaring war; he wanted merely to provide the army on the Rio Grande the means to defend itself while Congress pondered the wisdom of declaring war. Given time for deliberation, he believed he and his friends could persuade Congress to forego a war declaration and limit the military action to a merely defensive action.⁹ Although Calhoun did not publicly criticize the administration at this time, he blamed Polk's recklessness in sending an army to the Rio Grande for provoking the hostilities.¹⁰

⁸Milo M. Quaife, editor, The Diary of James K. Polk, 4 vols. (Chicago, 1910), I, 337-38.

⁹Calhoun, Washington, to Andrew P. Calhoun, May 14, 1846, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 691; The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), p. 501.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 500-501. Calhoun explained that he did not criticize the army movement when he first learned of it because he wanted to maintain amicable relations with the administration in order to have some influence on the Oregon question; he considered avoiding war with England more important than avoiding war with Mexico. However, he did try without success to get several friends, among them Senator John M. Clayton, Whig of Delaware, to make an issue over the move. Ibid., pp. 396-98. Calhoun's South Carolina organ, The Charleston Mercury, strongly criticized the army movement on several occasions; see issues of April 25 and May 7, 1846.

But Calhoun did not accurately gauge the patriotic fervor that gripped Congress. In the House, the pro-war men easily overwhelmed Calhoun's friends and passed a bill authorizing men and money for the war, with a preamble recognizing that war existed by the act of Mexico.¹¹ Calhoun himself could not maintain the strategy in the Senate for more than a day. He tried to persuade the pro-war men at least to strike the preamble from the bill; later, he said he could not vote for the bill with or without the preamble, as it meant a declaration of war either way, and he abstained on the final vote.¹²

The proceedings on the war bill in the House provide clues to the identity of Calhoun's Democratic friends, along with newspaper reports and references in Calhoun's correspondence. Robert Barnwell Rhett and Isaac Edward Holmes of South Carolina and Thomas H. Bayly of Virginia participated in the debate, urging the House to delay a war declaration.¹³

¹¹ Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 792-93, 796-97.

¹² Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 287-89; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 796, 804.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 792-93, 795. A correspondent described the Virginia Democratic delegation as Calhoun's "best and strongest friends" and anticipated their acting with Calhoun and the South Carolina delegation in the Twenty-Ninth Congress. Robert G. Scott, Richmond, to Calhoun, April 27, 1845, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1032-35.

In addition to these three, all of the South Carolina Democrats except one, four Virginians, and one Alabaman voted against the preamble. Two others from these delegations failed to vote on the preamble, though they were present for the final vote on the war bill which followed immediately; these two men often voted with the Calhoun group on later measures. None of these Democrats voted against final passage of the war bill.¹⁴ All but three, including Rhett, would cooperate with Calhoun in trying to keep Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri from receiving a position of command in the army;¹⁵ otherwise, this group did not again vote as a bloc in opposition to a war bill, although individually they opposed other administration war measures.

In the Senate, George McDuffie of South Carolina and Calhoun were the only Democrats to vote against the preamble.¹⁶ Later, Calhoun would keep McDuffie's successor, Andrew Pickens Butler, in tow most of the time. Florida's David Levy Yulee did not go along with Calhoun on the preamble; but Calhoun considered him a friend, and he frequently voted with Calhoun in opposition to the administration's

¹⁴House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 792-93, 796-97. Names of individuals appear only when they have a particular importance in the proceedings or when the individual plays a distinctive role later in the narrative.

¹⁵Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 153-54, 434-36.

¹⁶Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 287-88.

measures thereafter.¹⁷ Calhoun may have influenced Florida's other senator, James D. Westcott, though Westcott apparently did not oppose the war itself; at best, he was a maverick Democrat who earned a reputation for "independent uncertainty" for his erratic voting record.¹⁸

For the remainder of the first session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress, Calhoun remained relatively inactive, voting for the war measures which were not decidedly objectionable to him and waiting for an opportunity to act with some effect,¹⁹ while his friends drifted into the orbit of the pro-war Democrats. Meanwhile, Calhoun continued to worry about the effect the war expenses might have on the tariff and about the increased power and patronage the war afforded the central government.²⁰ Final settlement of the Oregon boundary removed the fear of war with England on that issue,

¹⁷ Calhoun, Senate Chamber, to Andrew P. Calhoun, February 23, 1848, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 744.

¹⁸ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 801-802. Georgia's Democratic Senator, Walter T. Colquitt, supplied the characterization. Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 438. Westcott eventually felt compelled to prepare a pamphlet defending his voting record on the war bills. Niles' National Register, April 24, 1847.

¹⁹ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 500; Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, June 11, 1846, and January 30, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 697, 717.

²⁰ Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, June 30, 1846, and February 17, 1847, ibid., pp. 702-703, 718.

but Calhoun feared that the growing probability of territorial acquisitions by the United States might cause England or France to intervene in the war.²¹ By the end of 1846, he doubted that even signal defeats would bring Mexico to terms; and he foresaw a war between races and creeds, necessitating unending campaigns to subjugate Mexico entirely. The Wilmot Proviso worried him even more; he detected a scheme by the North to ruin the South by having them do all the fighting and pay all the expenses of the war, while the North appropriated the territory acquired.²²

Calhoun returned for the midwinter session of Congress determined to stop the war. He believed that the majority of the congressmen now recognized the folly of the war but, without the lead and cooperation of the administration, did not know how to extricate the nation.²³ The chances for his acting effectively had improved; with stiffened opposition to the war from the Whigs and increasing defections among the Democrats, Calhoun and his friends could hold a balance of power in the Senate.

²¹Calhoun, Fort Hill, to James E. Calhoun, September 15, 1846, ibid., p. 706.

²²Calhoun, Washington, to James E. Calhoun, December 12, 1846, ibid., p. 714; Calhoun, Washington, to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, December 27, 1846, ibid., p. 715.

²³Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, January 30, 1847, ibid., p. 717.

On February 9, 1847, Calhoun made before the Senate a highly publicized speech in which he presented his solution to the war. He proposed ceasing all offensive operations and taking a defensive position along a line which would run from the mouth of the Rio Grande to El Paso, thence due west to the Gulf of California. This line he would fortify and hold, not necessarily for permanent retention, but as a means to force Mexico to negotiate a boundary. He would offer to pay Mexico a generous sum for such a boundary as an inducement to negotiate.²⁴

He believed this method of proceeding had a number of advantages. Mexico should see that she had much to gain by negotiating on these terms, as she would receive compensation for what she would likely lose anyway; therefore, the defensive plan could end the war, whereas continued offensive operations, after tremendous sacrifice of lives and money, would likely fail to subjugate Mexico completely. The cheaper defensive plan would protect the future of free trade, prevent the necessity of internal taxation, and secure all the purposes for which the country had gone to war, including even enough territory to cover indemnity for the expenses of the war, though Calhoun personally doubted the justice of that claim. As an added convenience, the territory included within his defensive line would present no

²⁴Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 356-59.

problems of amalgamation of foreigners with Americans, as it contained few people. Too, it was territory into which Americans would naturally expand, whether it belonged to the United States or not; and he recognized that failure to provide for the expanding population now would merely lead to another war later.²⁵

Any other course than a defensive plan, Calhoun warned, would be fraught with danger. An offensive war would lead only to conquest, which he opposed, and might never bring a successful termination to the quarrel. Even if the United States did succeed in subjugating Mexico eventually, she could not incorporate that country into the Union or amalgamate its population with Americans. To attempt to hold her as a province would be fatal, through the vast increase in executive power alone. Mexico was forbidden fruit, he said, and to consume it would be almost tantamount to the death of American institutions. Besides, he did not believe that either Congress or the people would provide the men and money to continue offensive operations. Too many people believed that the war was avoidable, commenced without constitutional authority, inexpedient, and highly injurious to the interests and reputation of the United States.²⁶

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

Once again Calhoun had misjudged the temper of Congress. A few Southerners adopted the defensive line idea;²⁷ but the majority of the Southern Democrats pressed for continued vigorous prosecution of the war, and the Southern Whigs came forth with their own proposal to lure Mexico into peace negotiations by eschewing all territory.²⁸ Even most of Calhoun's friends from South Carolina and Virginia tiptoed around the issue, seemingly preferring continued offensive operations;²⁹ and Calhoun's devoted cohort from South Carolina, Senator Andrew P. Butler, in a disjointed and contradictory speech apparently came out for all three modes of proceeding.³⁰

Calhoun's speech propelled him back into the thick of the war opposition. Yet, his votes did not underline his opposition until the latter part of the session. He, Butler, and sometimes Yulee occasionally voted with the Whigs to postpone measures which the administration men tried to rush

²⁷Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 147-48 (John W. Tibbatts); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1848), App., pp. 277 (Robert M. T. Hunter), 313 (Joseph P. Underwood).

²⁸Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 326 (John M. Berrien). Chapter IV details the activities of the Southern Whigs.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 280-81 (Alexander D. Sims), App., pp. 76-80 (James Seddon), 94-99 (Thomas H. Bayly).

³⁰Ibid., App., pp. 400-403.

through the Senate;³¹ but they supported the Three Million Bill and a loan bill.³² They indulged in the raging debate over slavery while war bills languished, but much of Congress shared that guilt.³³ They directed most of their opposition toward measures involving executive patronage and appointments. They opposed Polk's efforts to give Senator Benton a position of command in the army; Calhoun disliked Benton personally and believed Polk was trying to undercut General Zachary Taylor.³⁴ They supported the administration position on the first Ten Regiment Bill, up to a point. They opposed the various efforts to substitute volunteers for regular forces or to authorize fewer than ten regiments.³⁵ But Calhoun, Butler, and Yulee supported a move by North Carolina Whig George E. Badger to strike a portion of the bill passed by the House which would allow the President alone to appoint officers to the regiments during the recess

³¹ Ibid., pp. 247, 309.

³² Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 137, 252.

³³ Quaipe, ed., Diary, II, 340, 381; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 447, 466.

³⁴ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 104; Calhoun, Fort Hill, to Duff Green, April 17, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 727.

³⁵ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 126-127, 142, 156-57. Calhoun's organ, The Charleston Mercury, called volunteers the most expensive and least efficient type of force (January 27, 1847) and considered ten thousand men a sufficient army for the war (May 25, 1846).

of Congress, subject to Senate approval at the next session.³⁶

The two houses stood at an impasse for a time, the House refusing to recede on the provision and the Senate refusing to accept it. A conference committee worked out a compromise; but the Senate Whigs refused to agree to the compromise, and Calhoun, Butler, Yulee, James M. Mason of Virginia, and a Northern Democrat voted with them, almost killing the bill by their action.³⁷ But Congress reconsidered, and this time the Senate accepted a conference committee's compromise and passed the bill by an unrecorded vote. Yulee, Georgia Whig John M. Berrien, and the Northern Democrat signified in the debate their willingness to recede rather than lose the bill, but Calhoun remained adamant.³⁸ In the meantime, the favorable season for action in Mexico had almost passed, and Polk considered the bill practically useless by the time it became effective.³⁹

During the recess of Congress, Calhoun worried about victory almost as much as about defeat, for he feared the

³⁶Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 143; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 279.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 335, 346-49. Mason was Calhoun's friend, but this was one of the few occasions when he supported Calhoun in opposition to the administration.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 375-77.

³⁹Quaife, ed., Diary, II, 366-67.

country would not stop short of complete conquest of Mexico. He feared that the American constitution would not survive annexation of Mexico.⁴⁰ He also confessed to his son a new worry which he had never whispered to anyone, that the army and volunteers would refuse to leave Mexico and would hold her as an independent country.⁴¹

Calhoun returned to the Thirtieth Congress with renewed determination to stop the hunger for conquest and empire. He planned to present resolutions to the Senate declaring the conquest of Mexico inconsistent with the avowed objects of the war and with American policy, character, and genius, and declaring that Congress should adopt no policy for further prosecution of the war which might lead to that result.⁴²

⁴⁰ Calhoun, Fort Hill, to T. G. Clemson, June 15, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 734. The Charleston Mercury of May 25, 1846, emphasized that a military republic always tended toward a dictatorship or a monarchy.

⁴¹ Calhoun, Fort Hill, to Andrew P. Calhoun, December 11, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 741. This idea possibly arose after a correspondent wrote that an organized secret society had existed in the Southwest for several years, with a scheme to conquer and plunder Mexico. The writer, James Gregorie, believed this society had urged the Democratic party on to war with Mexico, intending to join the volunteers in Mexico and remain there as a revolutionary force. James Gregorie, Charleston, to Calhoun, May 23, 1846, ibid., pp. 1083-85.

⁴² Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 26.

Calhoun's resolutions followed by a day a series of resolutions by a New York Democrat, Senator Daniel S. Dickinson, declaring that the United States should annex as much contiguous territory as she could justly obtain that would strengthen her political and commercial relations on the continent.⁴³ Therefore, when administration men tried to brush Calhoun's resolutions aside, he insisted that Congress consider them before it considered any further war legislation. He said he did not charge anyone with desiring the conquest of Mexico, but he believed the present war policy would ultimately lead to that result if continued.⁴⁴

The President had again asked for an additional ten regiments of regular forces, and the administration forces tried to secure action on this measure before allowing Calhoun to speak; but the Whigs, with Butler and Yulee aiding, backed Calhoun in his insistence upon being heard first, even though, according to The Mobile Register and Journal, Butler and other friends had tried to persuade Calhoun not to present his resolutions.⁴⁵

In his speech supporting his resolutions, Calhoun reiterated his proposal to cease offensive operations and take

⁴³ Ibid., p. 21.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 53-55.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 79-81, 89-93; The Mobile Register and Journal of December 28, 1847, left the implication that Butler and others believed Calhoun's resolutions were too far out of step with the sentiment of Congress and the public and would injure him politically.

a defensive line. He virtually repeated his earlier speech, with embellishments. He warned that continuing to prosecute the war vigorously could lead only to overthrowing all governmental authority in Mexico, leaving no one with whom to treat, with the result that the United States would have the whole mass of the Mexican people to govern. He did not believe the United States could set up a republican government in Mexico with which to treat, as Mexico did not contain enough people competent to construct and maintain such a government; it would fall as soon as the army withdrew, and the United States would have to fall back to a defensive line anyway or else return to Mexico and assume complete control of the country.⁴⁶

He further warned against either holding Mexico as a province or incorporating her into the Union. The first course would destroy America's government; through the vast increase in federal patronage, the central government and the executive branch would become all powerful, eclipsing the powers of the states and the Congress. As for incorporating Mexico into the Union, he traced the misfortunes of South America to the fatal error of placing colored races on an equal basis with the white race.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 96-100.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

He chided the Whigs for their idea of taking no territorial indemnity. He believed the American people had resolved to have indemnity, and the Whig solution of withdrawing without securing indemnity had forced the majority of the people to espouse the administration plan, which would lead to the conquest of all Mexico, if not checked. He urged their support for his defensive line plan, which would include a certain amount of contiguous, unoccupied territory as indemnity.⁴⁸

In a letter to his daughter, Calhoun had stressed the necessity of the Senate's voting approval of his resolutions in order to arrest the growing tendency toward taking all of Mexico.⁴⁹ However, after the Senate showed no interest in the resolutions, he probably feared to allow a vote, lest it go on record in opposition. When Ambrose H. Sevier of Arkansas moved to table the resolutions, Calhoun asked his friends to offer no opposition to the motion.⁵⁰

Calhoun's friend in the House, Isaac E. Holmes of South Carolina, presented similar resolutions but went a step further and recommended that the United States recede from

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Calhoun, Washington, to Mrs. T. G. Clemson, December 26, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 741-42.

⁵⁰ Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 100.

all territory beyond the Rio Grande.⁵¹ The press placed different interpretations on the discrepancy between his position and Calhoun's. The Washington correspondent of The Daily Picayune of New Orleans surmised that Holmes probably misunderstood Calhoun's position.⁵² The Mobile Register's correspondent, however, indicated that the Holmes resolutions reflected Calhoun's real sentiments and that Calhoun, in construing his own resolutions to allow some territorial indemnity, was merely making a slight concession to public sentiment in order to limit acquisitions to the least possible amount.⁵³ The Washington correspondent of the Philadelphia Public Ledger held a similar view. He stated that Calhoun had opposed the war because he knew it would result in the acquisition of territory which would never become slave states; he had intended to carve Texas into four new slave states, and acquiring territory that would form free states would override that advantage for the South.⁵⁴ The Charleston Mercury, Calhoun's voice in South Carolina, printed the Ledger's suppositions and said they were correct.⁵⁵

⁵¹Ibid., p. 38.

⁵²The Daily Picayune (New Orleans), December 30, 1847.

⁵³The Mobile Register, January 13, 1848.

⁵⁴Public Ledger (Philadelphia), quoted by The Charleston Mercury, January 14, 1848.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Polk reported two conversations with Calhoun which shed some light on Calhoun's ideas concerning territory. Shortly before the war, while Polk was trying to buy territory from Mexico, Calhoun expressed interest in a boundary along the thirty-sixth or thirty-seventh parallel to the Pacific; he wanted San Francisco and would like to have Monterey also, he said. Polk preferred a line along the thirty-second parallel to the Pacific, or at least the line of the Rio Grande to its source, thence to the source of the Colorado and down to its mouth in the Bay of California. Calhoun agreed that either of those boundaries would be better than the one he suggested.⁵⁶

The second conversation occurred some six months after the war began. Calhoun reiterated his interest in Upper California and said he would be satisfied to acquire that territory; but he indicated satisfaction with Polk's line, which included Lower California and New Mexico, though he attached little value to Lower California. When Polk asked how much he should pay for this territory in addition to the claims of American citizens against Mexico and the expenses of the war, Calhoun said he would not quibble about the price. At Polk's reminder that slavery would probably never exist in the provinces, Calhoun agreed; he said he did not

⁵⁶Quaife, ed., Diary, I, 311-13.

desire to extend slavery, but he would, on principle, oppose any treaty which contained a slavery restriction.⁵⁷

The second conversation occurred after David Wilmot had introduced his proviso to the Two Million Bill but before the slavery controversy reached its peak during the second session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress. During the Senate Executive Proceedings on the Two Million Bill, Calhoun had opposed a proviso offered by Maryland Whig James A. Pearce that none of the money be used to purchase any part of California.⁵⁸ He supported the Three Million Bill and opposed Georgia Whig John M. Berrien's effort to persuade Congress to append to the bill a disavowal of any territorial desires.⁵⁹

In view of this evidence, plus his reproof to the Whigs for forcing the American people to make a choice between taking no territory at all or espousing the policy that would lead to taking all of Mexico,⁶⁰ the correspondent of The Mobile Register seemed to strike closest to the truth; Calhoun wanted to limit the amount of territory acquired,

⁵⁷ Ibid., II, 283-84. Calhoun doubted the justice of demanding indemnity for the war expenses and would therefore prefer to pay Mexico for the territory. Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 356-59.

⁵⁸ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, App., p. 561.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 252-53.

⁶⁰ Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 99-100.

not because he believed slavery would extend into California and New Mexico, but because he believed the only choice lay between taking a little territory or taking all Mexico. Holmes either misunderstood Calhoun's position when he presented his resolutions or else he deliberately designed them to make Calhoun's resolutions look more desirable.

Calhoun believed that his speech and resolutions brought to the surface the subterranean impulse toward the conquest of all Mexico and caused the nation to disavow the idea. Moreover, he believed he gave a new direction to the war legislation and strengthened the opposition to the war.⁶¹

Whether his assessment was correct or whether, as others speculated, the fact that the Whig leader, Henry Clay, had taken a stand of open opposition to the war and to acquiring territory by conquest stiffened Whig resistance to the war,⁶² the administration's second Ten Regiment Bill met disaster in the Thirtieth Congress.

Calhoun and his friends in the Senate contributed mightily to the opposition to the Ten Regiment Bill. After the Senate had disposed of Calhoun's resolutions, Yulee insisted on presenting resolutions regarding slavery in any

⁶¹Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, February 4, 1848, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 742-43.

⁶²Niles' National Register, November 20, 1847; Mobile Register, January 17, January 21, 1848.

new territory and spent three days elucidating his ideas.⁶³ Calhoun, Butler, and Yulee voted with the Whigs in several attempts to postpone action on the bill or to table it.⁶⁴ Butler, with Calhoun's backing, moved unsuccessfully to re-commit the bill to the Military Affairs Committee, with instructions to change it drastically by increasing the strength of the existing regiments rather than raising ten new regiments.⁶⁵ Calhoun and Butler joined the Whigs, after the Senate had approved a tentative peace treaty, in supporting an amendment offered by Senator Henry Johnson, Whig from Louisiana, directing the President take no action under the bill as long as the pending peace negotiations continued.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, Calhoun and Butler heavily emphasized the dangers of annihilating the government of Mexico, of incorporating Mexico into the Union or holding her as a province, and of increasing federal patronage or allowing the wartime powers of the President to increase unchecked.⁶⁷ Finally, after three months of delay, the opposition could prevent a decisive vote

⁶³Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 349-50; App., pp. 302-306.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 467-68; Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 83-84, 217, 219.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 214-15.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 219.

⁶⁷Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 184-89, 477-79. The addition of ten new regiments to the army would increase the number of officers to be appointed by the President.

on the bill no longer. Butler weakened and voted for the bill, though he believed the House would not approve it; Calhoun said he could not vote for it because he would consider its passage an endorsement of the administration's plans for continued offensive operations if the pending negotiations failed.⁶⁸

Most of Calhoun's friends in the House had drifted away from his influence and had given moderate support to the war measures. Only Isaac Holmes stayed with Calhoun to the bitter end, voting against taking up the Ten Regiment Bill; quite a few South Carolinians and Virginians failed to vote on the motion at all.⁶⁹

Clearly, many of Calhoun's friends, particularly in the House, supported his anti-war position to some degree only out of admiration, respect, or fear of him;⁷⁰ they undoubtedly felt that the majority of their Democratic friends in their home states disagreed with his course. Butler's lack of courage at crucial moments, such as the final vote on the Ten Regiment Bill, indicates that either his heart was not in his opposition or he feared the reaction of the voters at

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 478, 499; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 220.

⁶⁹ Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 765-66.

⁷⁰ For example, The Mobile Register of November 3, 1847, refers to The Charleston Mercury's war on Democratic Senator Arthur P. Bagby of Alabama because he refused to follow Calhoun's lead on the war.

home. Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina admitted years later that he had disagreed with Calhoun's course,⁷¹ although his letters to Calhoun never reflected disapproval.⁷² Other Calhoun men felt compelled to disassociate themselves from his position much sooner. The Democrats in the Alabama legislature required assurances from Senator Dixon H. Lewis that he would not follow Calhoun's course before they re-elected him to the Thirtieth Congress.⁷³ Lewis did indeed support the administration after his election. Calhoun expected support from Senators James M. Mason and Robert M. T. Hunter of Virginia;⁷⁴ but Mason generally supported the administration. Hunter, elected by a combination of Whigs and Calhounites, did a superb job of fence-sitting regarding the most controversial measure before the Thirtieth Congress, the Ten Regiment Bill; shrouding himself with a protective cloud of abstractions and ambiguities, he supported the

⁷¹Letter from Rhett to Richard K. Crallé, October 25, 1854, printed in American Historical Review, XIII (January, 1908), 310-12.

⁷²Rhett to Calhoun, September 18, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1132-33; June 21, 1847, ibid., pp. 1119-21.

⁷³The Mobile Register, January 19, 1848.

⁷⁴Calhoun, Washington, to T. G. Clemson, January 30, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 717.

administration by espousing Calhoun's opposition views, roughly speaking. But he voted for the bill.⁷⁵

In the 1847 congressional elections, Virginia Democrats Thomas S. Bocock and Walter Leake, former Calhoun men, disassociated themselves from his war stand without qualification.⁷⁶ But James A. Seddon, who had followed Calhoun's lead on the war declaration and had compiled a poor voting record on war legislation, equivocated and tried to keep one foot in the administration camp without disavowing Calhoun. His district renominated him for the House, but the convention refused to make the nomination unanimous and adopted a resolution almost unanimously that his renomination did not imply approval of Calhoun's course. Under those circumstances, Seddon declined the nomination.⁷⁷

Elsewhere in the South, Calhoun received strong criticism, although The Georgia Telegraph of Macon and the Constitutionalist of Augusta, Georgia, both Democratic papers, regretted the bitterness with which some men attacked him. They pointed out that Calhoun had devoted followers who should not be alienated needlessly.⁷⁸ But, in Virginia, the

⁷⁵Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 272-79; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 220.

⁷⁶Richmond Enquirer, March 12, March 19, 1847.

⁷⁷Ibid., March 16, March 19, March 26, 1847.

⁷⁸The Georgia Telegraph (Macon), May 4, 1847; Augusta Constitutionalist, quoted by The Georgia Telegraph, March 16, 1847.

Lynchburg Republican warned Calhoun's followers that they must act with the party and not expect the party to act with them.⁷⁹ The editor of the Southern Banner in Athens, Georgia, though confessing he would himself yield much for the sake of peace, decided he must write Calhoun off as a Democrat.⁸⁰ After Calhoun presented his "no conquest" resolutions, The Mobile Register reported that his supporters in Richmond, Virginia, his most influential backers outside of South Carolina, had deserted him to join the main body of the Richmond Democrats in endorsing Dickinson's resolutions.⁸¹ Both The Mobile Register and the New Orleans Picayune derided Calhoun's conjuring up terrors of bankruptcy, loss of liberty, amalgamation with Mexicans, and subversion of America's institutions in connection with the war. They predicted that the American people had too much spirit and confidence in their institutions to be frightened by abstractions.⁸²

But Calhoun did not lack support outside of Congress. During the months after the war began, South Carolinians, in

⁷⁹ Quoted by the Richmond Enquirer, March 12, 1847.

⁸⁰ Albon Chase, Athens, to Howell Cobb, May 20, 1846, Ulrich B. Phillips, editor, "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1911, 2 vols. (Washington, 1913), II, 78.

⁸¹ Mobile Register, January 21, 1848.

⁸² Ibid., January 13, 1848; New Orleans Picayune, December 31, 1847.

public meetings, praised his stand on the war declaration as wise and statesmanlike.⁸³ Throughout the war Calhoun's friends and correspondents reinforced his views, expressing their unabated confidence in him.⁸⁴ They approved his defensive line proposal.⁸⁵ They shared his concern for the costs of the war and the future of free trade, many believing the high-tariff people supported the war in the hope that a heavy debt would force resumption of a protective tariff.⁸⁶ Repeatedly, they assured him that the people were tired of Polk's unnecessary war.⁸⁷ They warned him of the country's mad desire for conquest that could only end in the annexation of all Mexico.⁸⁸ They expressed opposition to annexing all

⁸³The Charleston Courier, July 8, July 11, July 15, 1846.

⁸⁴Alexander Bowie, Taladega, Alabama, to Calhoun, April 13, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," p. 1111; James Hamilton, Charleston, to Calhoun, April 24, 1847, ibid., p. 1117.

⁸⁵Wilson Lumpkin, Athens, to Calhoun, January 6, 1847, ibid., p. 1102; R. B. Rhett to Calhoun, June 21, 1847, ibid., pp. 1119-20.

⁸⁶James Hamilton, Savannah, to Calhoun, August 12, 1846, ibid., p. 1089; F. W. Byrdsall, New York, to Calhoun, August 4, 1846, Boucher and Brooks, eds., "Correspondence Addressed to Calhoun," p. 357; James Chestney, Tuscaloosa, to Calhoun, November 23, 1846, ibid., p. 361; R. B. Rhett to Calhoun, May 20, 1847, ibid., p. 377.

⁸⁷Wilson Lumpkin, Athens, to Calhoun, March 11, 1847, ibid., p. 370; Eustis Prescott, Harrodsburg Springs, Kentucky, to Calhoun, August 20, 1847, ibid., pp. 390-91.

⁸⁸Nathan Towson, Washington, to Calhoun, May 27, 1847, ibid., p. 379; James Gadsden, Charleston, to Calhoun, January 23, 1848, ibid., pp. 425-26.

Mexico, with her mongrel population, unfit to mingle with Americans.⁸⁹ In the desire for acquisition of territory, they detected an antislavery plot to surround the South with free states and override her in the national legislature.⁹⁰ Some of the correspondents believed that most Americans wanted territorial indemnity, but only a reasonable and prudent amount.⁹¹

Only rarely did anyone write Calhoun to justify the war, question his stand, or call for vigorous prosecution of the war.⁹² In short, Calhoun's correspondents backed him on every facet of his position on the war; he might have lifted his speeches directly from their letters.

On the slavery issue, Calhoun insisted upon the principle of complete equality for the South in any territory acquired. He opposed extension of the Missouri Compromise line, any action by Congress on slavery in the territory, or

⁸⁹Wilson Lumpkin, Athens, to Calhoun, December 20, 1847, *ibid.*, p. 412; James Gadsden, Charleston, to Calhoun, January 23, 1848, *ibid.*, pp. 425-26.

⁹⁰George H. Hatcher, Ballston Centre, to Calhoun, January 5, 1848, *ibid.*, pp. 416-18; John A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, November 20, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1140-42; Waddy Thompson, Greenville, to Calhoun, December 18, 1847, *ibid.*, p. 1152.

⁹¹W. F. DeSaussure, Columbia, South Carolina, to Calhoun, January 7, 1848, Boucher and Brooks, eds., "Correspondence Addressed to Calhoun," p. 420; Louis McLane, Baltimore, to Calhoun, January 18, 1848, *ibid.*, p. 424.

⁹²J. H. Howard, Columbus, Georgia, to Calhoun, May 12, 1846 [?], *ibid.*, p. 344; H. W. Conner, Charleston, to Calhoun, January 9, 1847, *ibid.*, p. 365.

any prohibition of slavery by the inhabitants of the territory.⁹³ As a practical matter, he realized that California and Mexico, the only territory that he would want, probably would not sustain slavery;⁹⁴ therefore, his insistence upon equality for the South in the territory was more a matter of principle than a practical issue. Senator Butler also believed slavery would never exist north of the thirty-second parallel; he said if he thought only of the South's interests he should favor taking all Mexico, in order to acquire territory where slavery might extend.⁹⁵ But some of Calhoun's friends believed slavery could not exist even in Mexico proper; they objected to acquiring any territory at all because they did not want to surround the South with free states.⁹⁶ The preponderance of evidence, then, indicates that Calhoun and his friends who supported his anti-war stand most loyally believed that the Mexican War would in no way benefit the South.⁹⁷

⁹³ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 453-55.

⁹⁴ Quaife, ed., Diary, II, 283-84.

⁹⁵ Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 187-88.

⁹⁶ John A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, November 20, December 20, 1847, Jameson, ed., "Correspondence of Calhoun," pp. 1140-42, 1155; Waddy Thompson, Greenville, to Calhoun, December 18, 1847, ibid., pp. 1149-52; John A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, March 1, 1848, Boucher and Brooks, eds., "Correspondence Addressed to Calhoun," pp. 430-34.

⁹⁷ As the Memphis (Tennessee) Enquirer pointed out, Calhoun, the champion of the South, would undoubtedly have

In conclusion, Calhoun was the key to opposition to the war among Southern Democrats. In Congress, his supporters were few in number, and their conviction that they should oppose the war seemed weak. Either they personally believed in the justness of the war or they believed the majority of their constituents supported it; apparently, their devotion to Calhoun, or their fear of him, principally spurred the support they did give him. They felt safe only when opposing the more controversial measures, such as the lieutenant general proposition, the tea and coffee tax, or patronage features of the army bills, when they had other Democrats for company.

In the House, where pro-war Democrats greatly outnumbered them, the Calhoun men caused relatively little trouble, except in the encouragement they might have given the Whig opposition. But in the Senate, where the Democratic majority was smaller, by swinging two or three votes to the Whigs, Calhoun could wield a balance of power on war legislation. In addition, as Senator Lewis Cass of Michigan remarked, his reputation and character gave extraordinary weight to everything he said and did.⁹⁸ Therefore, Calhoun and his friends created an atmosphere of war opposition far out of proportion to their actual numbers.

favored the annexation of all Mexico if he had believed it would strengthen the South. Quoted by the Arkansas State Gazette (Little Rock), December 30, 1847.

⁹⁸ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 370.

CHAPTER IV

CONGRESS: THE SOUTHERN WHIGS

Reluctant to follow the course of their Federalist forebears by openly opposing a war with a foreign foe, the Whigs never seemed to find a comfortable position on the Mexican War. In the debates, they ranged from the vitriolic harangue of Representative Joshua R. Giddings of Ohio, who called it an aggressive, unholy, and unjust war for conquest,¹ to the critical, qualified, but positive defense of the war by Maryland Senator Reverdy Johnson.²

Southern Whigs spread themselves over this entire spectrum of opinion. Representative William T. Haskell of Tennessee denied that any Southern Whig had ever called the war unjust,³ apparently drawing a distinction between "unjust" and "unnecessary," "unconstitutional," or "unjustifiable"; but several Southerners ventured perilously close to that

¹The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1846), App., p. 641.

²Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1848), App., pp. 63-69.

³Ibid., pp. 517-18.

charge.⁴ Senator George E. Badger of North Carolina charged that the President deliberately committed an act of aggression in sending an army to the Rio Grande in order to provoke war, as an excuse to seize Mexican territory.⁵ Representative Thomas Newton of Arkansas called the war entirely just and constitutional.⁶ Representative John S. Pendleton of Virginia absolved Mexico of committing any outrage against the United States;⁷ Representative Edward H. C. Long of Maryland saw a frightful picture of wrongs committed by Mexico against the United States and her citizens.⁸ Representative Joshua F. Bell of Kentucky admitted Mexico's misdeeds but declared that the United States, in her strength, should have shown more forbearance.⁹ Senator James A. Pearce of Maryland vowed to withhold supplies from the President, if necessary, to force him to accept honorable terms of peace without dismembering Mexico.¹⁰ Virginia Representative William L. Goggin would grant means to rescue the army from any peril, but not to conquer a foot of Mexican soil.¹¹

⁴ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), App., pp. 354-58 (Milton Brown), 437 (James A. Pearce); ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 786-87 (John M. Clayton).

⁵ Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 116-22.

⁶ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 429-30.

⁷ Ibid., App., p. 411.

⁸ Ibid., p. 152.

⁹ Ibid., App., p. 249.

¹⁰ Ibid., App., p. 437.

¹¹ Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., p. 272.

Virginia Representative John S. Pendleton opposed withholding supplies, as such action would punish the army, not the President.¹²

Georgia Senator John M. Berrien wanted a just indemnity, but not in the form of territory, though Mexico could pay only in territory.¹³ Senator William S. Archer of Virginia wanted no territory beyond the small amount that might come from defining the boundary of Texas.¹⁴ Tennessee Representative Washington Barrow wanted territory acquired by negotiation, but not by conquest,¹⁵ and Kentucky Representative William P. Thomasson wanted to buy California;¹⁶ both ignored the fact that Mexico refused to negotiate or sell. And Representative Robert Toombs of Georgia met the territory issue squarely on both sides when he stated that the United States should make Mexico pay her just debt to American citizens in any way but territorial cessions; but he wanted the South to share equally in the territory acquired.¹⁷

In spite of their confusion, Southern Whigs did agree on some points. With the exception of Senator Reverdy

¹²Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., p. 410.

¹³Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 484.

¹⁴Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 556.

¹⁵Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., p. 159.

¹⁶Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., p. 167.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 140-42.

Johnson of Maryland,¹⁸ most Southern Whigs agreed that Texas had no legitimate claim to the Rio Grande as her boundary, and that the President acted either unwisely, unconstitutionally, or unjustifiably in sending an army to the left bank of that river prior to the hostilities.¹⁹ Most agreed that the Whig generals, Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, deserved all the glory won in the unconstitutional war.²⁰ And virtually all agreed that they opposed taking all of Mexico, with her mixed population.²¹

In the beginning, at least part of the Southern Whigs reconciled themselves to the war. Although they questioned the manner in which the war began and tried to avoid or postpone a declaration of war,²² they expressed determination to fight it out to a successful and honorable end.²³ Indeed, thirteen Southern Whigs indirectly approved the controversial

¹⁸Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 63-69.

¹⁹Ibid., App., pp. 95-101 (James A. Pearce); ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 786-87 (John M. Clayton), 837 (Robert Toombs).

²⁰Ibid., p. 903 (Garrett Davis); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 514-16 (Thomas L. Clingman).

²¹Ibid., pp. 351-53 (John H. Crozier), 499 (John M. Clayton), App., pp. 189-201 (John Bell), 272 (William L. Goggin).

²²Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 784-87, 792-801.

²³Ibid., pp. 784 (John M. Clayton), 799 (William S. Archer), 842-43 (William M. Cocke); ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 79 (John M. Clayton), App., pp. 423-24 (James Graham).

preamble which stated that war existed by the act of Mexico. In a preliminary House vote, when Whigs had the alternative of voting for a measure which authorized men and money for the war but which did not contain the preamble, ten Southern Whigs voted for the measure containing the preamble.²⁴ In the Senate, Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, Spencer Jarnagin of Tennessee, and Henry Johnson of Louisiana voted against Whig efforts to strike the preamble from the House bill.²⁵

Of the thirteen Whigs who tacitly agreed to the preamble, four came from Kentucky, four from Tennessee, two each from Maryland and Louisiana, and one from North Carolina. Later, after party opposition reached a peak, Representative William M. Cocke of Tennessee explained his vote by saying that he did not approve the preamble but simply preferred the wording of the supply measure to which the preamble was attached.²⁶ Whether this reason actually governed his vote or the others, the fact remains that several of these thirteen Whigs subsequently voted with the Democrats on war measures more often than other Southern Whigs did, even on some of the controversial measures.

²⁴Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 792-93.

²⁵Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1845-46), pp. 287-88.

²⁶Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 779.

For example, on the army bills, where even Democrats broke party ranks, several of the thirteen Whigs voted with the Democratic majority, particularly in the early stages of the war. Five of them, plus two other Whigs from Maryland and North Carolina, helped the Democrats pass a bill permitting the President to appoint additional officers for the army; four of them, including Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Spencer Jarnagin of Tennessee, even voted to allow the President to appoint more officers than the bill authorized in its final form.²⁷ Senators Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Henry Johnson of Louisiana generally agreed to give the President the number and kind of troops he wanted, whereas most Southern Whigs and some Democrats wanted to authorize only volunteers or fewer regular army regiments.²⁸

Most Southern Whigs, however, opposed these army bills, preferring to limit the amount of patronage the Democratic President might dispense. They sought to vest state authorities, rather than the President, with the power to appoint officers for the volunteer forces, or at least to

²⁷House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 895-96; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 343; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 923-24, 960.

²⁸Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 111-15, 467-68, 501; Journal of the Senate of the United States of America, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 126-27, 141-43, 156-57; ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 214-15, 217-20.

allow the volunteers to elect their own officers.²⁹ Failing this, they tried to restrict the number and type of officers which the President might appoint.³⁰ They cooperated in passing the first Ten Regiment Bill, after joining some Democrats in trying to substitute volunteers for the regular forces or to authorize fewer than ten regiments of regulars;³¹ but they almost caused its defeat, in combination with John C. Calhoun's faction, by refusing to accede to the House's provision permitting the President to appoint officers to the regiments during the recess of Congress.³² They strongly resisted the second Ten Regiment Bill, partly because of the added patronage it would confer upon the President.³³

In addition to their resistance to increasing the President's patronage, the Southern Whigs solidly opposed

²⁹ Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 343, 367; House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 895-96, 1008-1009; Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 903, 912, 1026, 1029, 1032.

³⁰ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 343; ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 104; House Journal, 29th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 895-96; ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1846-47), pp. 153-54, 434-36.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 154-56, 159-60; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 126-27, 141-43, 156-57.

³² Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 349, 375-77.

³³ Ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 468 (Willie P. Mangum); The Daily Picayune (New Orleans), Supplement, January 14, 1848.

the lieutenant general proposition and the President's effort to secure authority to designate one general as the chief commander of American forces in Mexico.³⁴ Representative Meredith P. Gentry of Tennessee voiced the typical Whig complaint about these and other army bills.

Gentry characterized the war as a political war altogether. Confident of a short, easy, brilliant campaign, he charged, the Democrats had shaped all their measures so as to drive the Whigs into opposition to the war, so that they might have full credit for adding vast territories to the Union. The administration designed the army bills, the lieutenant general scheme, and the general-in-chief plan to allow the President to appoint his partisans to command the army and supersede Scott and Taylor, whom Polk regarded as rivals for the presidency. Gentry even charged the President with holding back supplies and transportation to keep the Whig generals from being too successful. He fancied he could hear Polk praying at night, "Good Lord, let Taylor be victorious; and then, oh Lord, take him to thyself speedily."³⁵

As the war continued, Southern Whigs grew increasingly disillusioned and critical. Several events probably contributed to their intensifying opposition. Their victories

³⁴ Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 104; House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 153-54, 434-36.

³⁵ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 523-24.

in the 1846 congressional elections might have reassured them concerning their criticism of the war. They may have gained audacity because the administration appeared to falter in pressing the war. The rapid distension of the Democrats' claims against Mexico, for debts due American citizens before the war and for the expenses of the war, may have revolted them.³⁶ Undoubtedly, the introduction of the slavery issue into the war question frightened them.

In any event, the Southern Whigs reached a turning point during the second session of the Twenty-Ninth Congress. Their growing opposition to the Democrats' ambitions became fully evident in connection with the Three Million Bill.

Only a few of the Whigs who openly defended the war ever talked freely of acquiring territory as a result of the war. Arkansas Representative Thomas Newton explained that his constituents, mostly Democrats, did not want the war waged for conquest or exclusively to acquire territory; but they saw no valid objections to acquiring territory to secure the payment of the just claims of American citizens and to indemnify the United States for the expenses of the war.³⁷ Representative Edward H. C. Long of Maryland talked vaguely of reaping all possible benefits from the war and

³⁶ Willie P. Mangum, Washington City, to Governor David L. Swain, January 12, 1848, Henry Thomas Shanks, editor, The Papers of Willie Person Mangum, 5 vols. (Raleigh, 1950-56), V, 91.

³⁷ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 429-30.

deplored dragging the slavery issue into discussions of territorial acquisitions.³⁸ Several, like Representative Garrett Davis of Kentucky, Senator James T. Morehead of Kentucky, and Senator Henry Johnson of Louisiana, expressed interest in purchasing a part of California, particularly the better ports.³⁹ But most Southern Whigs found the idea of territorial acquisitions incompatible with their opposition to the war.

During the proceedings on the Three Million Bill, Senator Ambrose H. Sevier of Arkansas, a recognized spokesman for the administration, specified acquisition of New Mexico and Upper California as a minimum indemnity for the United States.⁴⁰ Senator John M. Berrien of Georgia responded by offering a proviso to the bill declaring that the United States would not prosecute the war with a view of dismembering Mexico or acquiring any portion of her territory by conquest.⁴¹ He cited several reasons for his amendment. He characterized Mexico's resistance to peace negotiations as a determination born of despair because of the exorbitance of the American demands, and he argued that such an avowal would dispose the Mexicans toward peace. Like Calhoun, he

³⁸ Ibid., p. 152.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 345 (Morehead), App., p. 437 (Johnson); 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1215 (Davis).

⁴⁰ Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 306.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 326.

pointed to the difficulties of governing Mexican territory, if acquired, and declared himself opposed to incorporating the mongrel races of Mexico into the Union on an equal basis with American citizens.⁴²

But mostly, Berrien based his "no territory" proposal on the disruptive tendency of the slavery issue. He did not believe that the Senate would ever approve a treaty involving acquisition of territory with the question of slavery in the territory unresolved. He hoped to avoid a damaging quarrel by refusing to acquire any territory at all. He particularly called upon Southerners for support, stating they would be derelict in their duty to their constituents if they approved a treaty acquiring territory without requiring a stipulation protecting slavery; the numerical superiority of the free states would dictate the prohibition of slavery in the territories if Congress decided the matter after the Senate ratified the treaty. But more, he called upon men of all sections of the Union for support in order to evade the direful question altogether.⁴³

Berrien insisted that he did not propose withdrawal of American troops from Mexico or abandonment of any of the legitimate aims of the war. He wanted to prosecute the war until Mexico agreed to a just settlement of the Texas boundary and gave satisfactory security, in the form of bonds,

⁴²Ibid., pp. 325, 330.

⁴³Ibid., p. 330.

for payment of the just claims of American citizens against Mexico. He would give adequate compensation for any territory involved in the boundary settlement, and he would even purchase a port on the Pacific, if Mexico freely agreed to sell. But he opposed extending American territory and urged the Senate to relieve the nation from the imputation of prosecuting the war merely to gratify lust for territory.⁴⁴

Berrien's amendment failed to pass the Senate, but all the Southern Whigs except Senator Johnson of Louisiana approved it.⁴⁵ Johnson explained that he doubted the wisdom of announcing in advance the intentions of the United States; besides, he believed Mexico could not pay indemnity in cash, and he hoped she would agree to cede California for that purpose.⁴⁶

Despite its failure, Berrien's proposal signaled other Southern Whigs to oppose acquisition of territory and to oppose the Three Million Bill, which contemplated such an acquisition. Those who had approved the Two Million Bill in the previous session found a difference between that bill and the present one. The Two Million Bill, they insisted, had been intended merely for the purpose of settling the Texas boundary, while the Three Million Bill contemplated

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 252.

⁴⁶Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., p. 437.

acquisition of New Mexico and California, or maybe even would be a bribe for Santa Anna.⁴⁷ They conveniently ignored the fact that Kentucky Representative Garrett Davis had leveled the same charges against the Two Million Bill during the preceding session,⁴⁸ and that Whigs and Democrats alike had assumed that the President intended to use the appropriation to acquire California.⁴⁹

One after another, the Southern Whigs fell in line with the "no territory" idea. They evoked the horrors of acquiring an ignorant, barbaric, vicious, degraded, mixed population along with the Mexican territory.⁵⁰ Virginia's Senator Archer worried about the slavery threat and about the prospect of a nation so large that representative government could no longer function.⁵¹ Senator George E. Badger of North Carolina, called the idea of indemnity mere subterfuge for territorial conquest and declared his opposition.⁵² Representative John S. Pendleton of Virginia asked what the United States would do with more land when it could not sell,

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 309 (Willie P. Mangum), 375 (John M. Berrien), App., pp. 357-58 (Milton Brown).

⁴⁸Ibid., 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 1215.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 1211 (Charles H. Carroll), 1214 (David Wilmot), 1216 (Edwin H. Ewing).

⁵⁰Ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 344-46 (James T. Morehead), App., pp. 309 (Garrett Davis), 436 (James A. Pearce).

⁵¹Ibid., p. 556.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 429-30.

for a dollar and a quarter an acre, lands richer than the banks of the Nile.⁵³ Representative Robert Toombs of Georgia suggested satisfying the claims for indemnity by taking over Mexico's ports, exercising rigorous taxing powers, and collecting her revenues.⁵⁴ Senator James A. Pearce of Maryland warned that California, if acquired, would break away from the unnatural alliance and become a rival power after Americans had paid taxes to develop the country. He warned that extension of territory would weaken the nation, diminish its power by dispersion, increase its burdens, and endanger its institutions. Only a compact nation, well-peopled and well-educated, could aspire to greatness, happiness, and prosperity, he said.⁵⁵

And the Southern Whigs dwelt intensely on the slavery issue. Tennessee Representative Milton Brown said he would oppose territorial acquisition because of the slavery issue if he knew of no other drawbacks; he considered preserving the Union far more important than adding territory.⁵⁶ Representative Edwin H. Ewing of Tennessee, who once had wanted to buy California and New Mexico, now opposed acquiring any territory beyond the Rio Grande. He believed the Northern men were scheming to indemnify themselves for the annexation of Texas; and he warned that if the South did not protect

⁵³Ibid., App., p. 413.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 141.

⁵⁵Ibid., App., p. 436.

⁵⁶Ibid., App., p. 357.

herself by opposing territorial acquisitions, the North would surround her with a cordon of free states.⁵⁷ Garrett Davis, representative from Kentucky, also detected a scheme by Northern Democrats; but he wanted to purchase Upper California as far down as the Missouri Compromise line and make it and Oregon free territory in order to pacify those Democrats, lest they try to fight England to get Canada.⁵⁸ Georgia Representative Robert Toombs saw no need to pacify the North; either the South would remain in the Union on a ground of perfect equality with the rest of the states, he warned, or she would leave it.⁵⁹

Even Senator Reverdy Johnson of Maryland, one of the few Whigs who defended the war from the beginning to the end, urged Congress to disavow territorial acquisitions, on both moral and practical grounds. He said if the President, in his war message, had declared the object of the war to be the acquisition of California and New Mexico, Congress would never have passed the war bill. The idea of dismembering a sister republic revolted and frightened him. He warned that antislavery sentiment now prevailed in the North, while the South stood equally firm in the conviction of her rights; therefore, the nation could avoid disunion and civil war only by refusing to bring new territory into the Union.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Ibid., App., pp. 270-72.

⁵⁸Ibid., App., pp. 308-10.

⁵⁹Ibid., App., pp. 311-14.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 142.

Under this onslaught, only two Southern Whigs dared to vote for the Three Million Bill, Senator Johnson of Louisiana and Representative Newton of Arkansas.⁶¹

Southern Whigs did not yet want to cut off supplies for the war, however. Even those who wanted to eschew territory agreed to continue voting supplies, as the honor and dignity of the nation were involved.⁶²

By the time the Thirtieth Congress convened in December, 1847, several events had occurred to bring the Whigs nearer the point of cutting off supplies. By now, expansionists talked openly of taking all of Mexico. Men like Calhoun who objected to that step believed that the administration's present course could have no other result. And Henry Clay, guiding light of the Whig party for so long, made an anti-war speech at Lexington, Kentucky, and proposed a series of resolutions.

In the early stages of the war, Clay had labeled it regrettable, unnecessary, and avoidable; but as late as January, 1847, he expressed an inclination to seek a nook in the army to serve in avenging the wrongs to his country.⁶³

⁶¹House Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 475-76; Senate Journal, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 252-53.

⁶²Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 250 (Joshua F. Bell), 270 (Edwin H. Ewing), 410 (John S. Pendleton).

⁶³Wilmington Chronicle, December 2, 1846; The Weekly Tribune (Liberty, Missouri), January 30, 1847.

By the spring of 1847, he was trembling with fear at the internal discord created by the war of aggression.⁶⁴ In November, 1847, he declared that he could never have voted for the palpable falsehood contained in the preamble to the war bill and reproached Whigs who too readily helped prosecute the war without examining its aims. He expressed shock at the idea of conquering and annexing all Mexico, believing that such a course would be fatal to the United States, either through the despotism entailed in governing an unwilling population or through internal discord over the slavery issue. Therefore, he called upon Congress to resolve whether the war should be a war for conquest and, if so, how much territory it required. If it decided against a war of conquest, he urged it to force the President to respect its decision through its power over appropriations. Clay also proposed a resolution disavowing any desire to acquire territory for the purpose of extending slavery; while such a desire might not exist, he said, the South should free itself from that imputation. He believed that if Congress took this action, peace would follow within sixty days.⁶⁵

Clay's speech came perilously close to creating a schism in the Whig party. His resolutions embodied the same idea as Berrien's "no territory" proposal, which the congressional

⁶⁴Clay, Ashland, to S. Schenck, April 8, 1847, reported in Niles' National Register, August 7, 1847.

⁶⁵Niles' Register, November 20, 1847.

Whigs from the South had accepted. But Clay's resolutions involved more than the negative action of disavowing conquest; they called for positive action in cutting off supplies for the war. Thus far, a majority of the Whig party had not reached that point.

Some of the more liberal Whig papers, North and South, such as the New York Courier and Enquirer and the Nashville Whig, rejected Clay's resolutions.⁶⁶ Indeed, some Whig papers had not even accepted the "no territory" proposal.⁶⁷ Prominent Whigs like the governor of New York and Senator Reverdy Johnson publicly disagreed with the resolutions.⁶⁸ Georgia Whig Robert Toombs privately called Clay the dupe of the bitterly anti-war and antislavery Northern Whigs, who would discard him when his usefulness ended; Toombs knew only three Southern congressmen who had not dismissed Clay as a possibility for the next presidential nomination in

⁶⁶Quoted by The Charleston Mercury, November 22, 1847; see also The Mobile Register and Journal, December 9, 1847, quoting the Columbus, Georgia, Times.

⁶⁷American & Commercial Daily Advertiser (Baltimore), October 11, 1847; Nashville Whig quoted by Richmond Enquirer, October 12, 1847; Richmond Times, quoted by Richmond Enquirer, October 1, 1847.

⁶⁸Message to the New York legislature, reported by The Mobile Register and Journal, January 17, 1848, and The Mississippian (Jackson), January 21, 1848; speech by Reverdy Johnson, reported by Baltimore American, January 4, 1848.

favor of General Zachary Taylor, who favored a defensive line solution to the war.⁶⁹

Thus, the war issue mingled irrevocably with the matter of finding an attractive Whig candidate for the 1848 presidential election. The Washington correspondent of The Mobile Register and Journal noted a breach between the "expediency Whigs," or Taylorites, who wanted to avoid bitter criticism of the war lest they damage Taylor's chances, and the "conscience Whigs," who supported Clay's extreme anti-war position.⁷⁰ When the Thirtieth Congress convened, the Whig Speaker of the House, Robert Winthrop of Massachusetts, further exacerbated the feelings of Southern Whigs who favored Taylor. He chaired the major committees with men who were both bitterly antislavery and anti-war.⁷¹ Southern Whigs found themselves in a dilemma on two counts; cooperating too closely with the Whig leadership could lead to betrayal of their constituents on the slavery issue and betrayal of their favored candidate on the war issue.

⁶⁹Toombs, Washington, to James Thomas, April 16, 1848, Ulrich B. Phillips, editor, "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1911, 2 vols. (Washington, 1913), II, 103-104; Niles' Register, January 30, 1847, quoting a letter from Taylor, Monterey, November 5, 1846.

⁷⁰The Mobile Register, January 17, 1848.

⁷¹The Mobile Register, December 28, 1847.

Apparently, Clay exerted a strong influence over the Thirtieth Congress. He followed his Lexington speech with a visit to Washington, and reporters credited him with dampening the Taylor fever and encouraging the anti-war faction in its opposition.⁷² They believed he persuaded Southern Whigs such as Delaware's Senator John M. Clayton, who had already shifted from favoring vigorous prosecution of the war to Calhoun's defensive line idea, to vote against further supplies for the war.⁷³ They saw his hand in the House's resolution that the President began the war unnecessarily and unconstitutionally; the Clay men reportedly designed this declaration to trap Whigs who criticized the war but favored Taylor for the presidency.⁷⁴ Reporters saw the Clay-Taylor breach as the reason why the Thirtieth Congress avoided a vote on most of the anti-war resolutions that it received.⁷⁵

But the breach between the Whigs came close to doing what the strictly anti-war men had been unable to accomplish, cutting off further supplies for the war. The Thirtieth Congress procrastinated until the administration could not feel confident that the supplies would be forthcoming, and the incipient "all Mexico" movement withered.

⁷²The Mobile Register, January 17, January 21, 1848.

⁷³New Orleans Picayune, January 23, 1848.

⁷⁴The Mobile Register, January 17, 1848.

⁷⁵Ibid., January 3, 1848.

The Whig House refused the administration's request for authority to issue treasury notes in connection with a sixteen million dollar loan. It authorized the loan but trammelled it with such strict conditions that Democratic papers called it virtually a refusal of the loan, as the administration could not obtain money under such conditions.⁷⁶ And, with the help of the Calhounites, the Senate Whigs delayed a second Ten Regiment Bill until it would have been useless even if the House had approved it.

For the first time, Southern Whigs openly refused to authorize more men, basing their refusal on the assumption that the administration intended to annex all Mexico.⁷⁷ The Democrats denied that the administration sought additional forces for this purpose, saying the Whigs invented the charge to excuse their opposition to the war; but statements by members of their own party rendered them vulnerable to the charge.⁷⁸

Senator Badger of North Carolina opposed furnishing additional forces lest the act should encourage the President

⁷⁶Evening Post (New York), quoted by The Mobile Register, February 11, 1848; Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), pp. 426-28.

⁷⁷Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 182-84 (Willie P. Mangum), 499 (John M. Clayton), App., p. 101 (James A. Pearce).

⁷⁸Ibid., App., pp. 101-104 (Robert McLane), 122-30 (Henry S. Foote), 363 (Thomas J. Rusk).

in his schemes of territorial aggrandizement.⁷⁹ Kentucky Senator Joseph R. Underwood agreed to vote supplies to sustain the army but not to enlarge it.⁸⁰ Only Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Henry Johnson of Louisiana favored furnishing the additional men, and the latter refused after the Democrats voted down his amendment to postpone the effect of the Ten Regiment Bill until the pending peace negotiations with Mexico ended.⁸¹

Southern Whigs called forth all the old arguments against taking Mexican territory and added new ones. Berrien reiterated his "no territory" proposal.⁸² Badger of North Carolina did not believe his constituents desired territory acquired by force, or even freely ceded, if it endangered the Union.⁸³ Kentucky's Underwood bewailed the cost of subduing and governing a land composed mostly of bleak mountains and deserts.⁸⁴ And Senator John Bell of Tennessee lingered excruciatingly over the prospect of forty or so new senators adding interest to the Congress by the novelty of their complexions. He drew a gloomy picture of the United States staggering under the burden of governing a mixed population

⁷⁹Ibid., App., p. 120.

⁸⁰Ibid., App., p. 313.

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 115, 501, App., pp. 63-69; Senate Journal, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 214-15, 219-20.

⁸²Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, p. 484.

⁸³Ibid., App., pp. 121-22.

⁸⁴Ibid., App., pp. 311-12.

incapable of self-government, losing her own freedom in a morass of executive patronage, standing armies, and the trappings of empire, and finally becoming the victim of what she had captured. He chided the Whigs for their divisions and sectional jealousies and their hesitancy to withhold supplies. He warned that they must stop the war immediately or they could not avoid the fatal result of taking all Mexico.⁸⁵

In the House, a few Southern Whigs, especially Tennesseans, contented themselves with denouncing the administration over the origin and conduct of the war, opposing expansion by conquest but betraying an interest in California.⁸⁶ But others launched vicious attacks upon the administration, charging Polk with dereliction of duty at best, or, at worst, treason against the people of the United States for his role in commencing the war.⁸⁷ Maryland's J. Dixon Roman stated that if Congress did not stop the President's mad schemes at once he might attack Central America.⁸⁸ Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia said he had supported the war until it became a war of conquest, but he did not intend to vote to tax his constituents for the conquest of Mexico.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Ibid., App., pp. 189-201.

⁸⁶ Ibid., App., pp. 156-59 (Washington Barrow), 396-400 (John W. Jones).

⁸⁷ Ibid., App., pp. 485-89 (Patrick W. Tompkins).

⁸⁸ Ibid., App., pp. 213-17. ⁸⁹ Ibid., App., pp. 159-64.

Interestingly, many Southern Whigs in the Thirtieth Congress tended to avoid the slavery issue in connection with territorial acquisition, emphasizing instead the moral objections, the cost of governing the territory, or the dangers of incorporating a mixed population. But Florida Representative Edward C. Cabell opposed even peaceful cession of territory, even to the Isthmus of Darien, because he believed the South should not agree to annexation of territory on her southern and southwestern frontiers if slavery could not exist there.⁹⁰

Only Reverdy Johnson of Maryland spoke in defense of the war during the Thirtieth Congress. In a speech on the Ten Regiment Bill, he defended the justice of the war, though he deplored Polk's recklessness in sending an army to the Rio Grande prior to the hostilities. Having little doubt of the legality of Texas's claim to the Rio Grande, he believed the United States had every right to put an army there; but Polk unwisely involved the honor of the nation by exercising that right. However, he charged no improper motive to the President in taking such a step, nor in his manner of conducting the war. Believing in the justice of the war, believing that vigorous prosecution alone could bring Mexico to her senses and vindicate the honor of the United States, and trusting that the American people harbored no desires to

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 425-29.

wrest territory from Mexico unjustly or incorporate the whole country, he would grant any necessary forces to carry the war to the heart of Mexico. However, he still hoped to secure indemnity for the claims of American citizens in some form other than territory, as he still dreaded the consequences of acquiring territory.⁹¹

Johnson had defended the war on other occasions. He had spoken at a war rally in Baltimore in May, 1846, on the same program with the staunchly pro-war Robert M. McLane of Maryland and Sam Houston of Texas.⁹² During the debate on the war declaration, he had refused to agree to any amendment which implied that the United States had been the aggressor.⁹³ He had defended the war at a Washington dinner for two generals returning from service in Mexico.⁹⁴ But never in Congress had he spoken at such length in its defense, shredding the arguments of the other Whigs at a time when their opposition had reached a peak.

The Whigs reacted with a fury that they had not directed at other Whigs who defended the war. They designated the other Maryland Senator, James A. Pearce, to reply to Johnson's speech; the Washington correspondent of The Mobile Register

⁹¹ Ibid., App., pp. 63-69.

⁹² Baltimore American, May 25, 1846.

⁹³ Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 1st Session, p. 803.

⁹⁴ Baltimore American, January 4, 1848.

predicted that Johnson had ruined himself politically.⁹⁵ Within a short time, the Whig legislature in Maryland re-elected Pearce, whose term would expire soon, to the Senate; the Whigs supported him unanimously and particularly praised his reply to Johnson.⁹⁶ In spite of its moderate stand on the war, the Whig American & Commercial Daily Advertiser of Baltimore lavished praise on Pearce and made no comment on Johnson's speech.⁹⁷ It did, however, upon request by a reader, reprint an editorial from an obscure Maryland paper which praised Johnson's honesty and independence. The editorial stated that the course of some Whigs on the war had been ridiculous in the extreme and had nearly killed the Whig party in Maryland.⁹⁸

Other Whigs may have felt the party lash during the Thirtieth Congress. The press reported that the Whig legislature of Tennessee required Whig candidates for the Senate to promise to support vigorous prosecution of the war. After they selected John Bell, he reportedly publicly opposed Clay's anti-war resolutions.⁹⁹ Once in Washington, however,

⁹⁵The Mobile Register, January 21, 1848.

⁹⁶Baltimore American, February 3, February 11, 1848.

⁹⁷Ibid., February 3, 1848.

⁹⁸Snow Hill Shield, quoted by Baltimore American, January 26, 1848.

⁹⁹The Georgia Telegraph (Macon), November 30, December 3, 1848.

Bell violently opposed continuation of the war, though he took care to explain minutely the moral and ethical reasons for his change of heart.¹⁰⁰

The Southern Whigs' attitude on the war forms a pattern only if considered in relation to the attitude of the Democrats and the Southern press.¹⁰¹ Democrats from the Southwest enthusiastically supported the war; some Whigs from the Southwest showed more moderate views on the war and indicated more interest in territorial expansion than the Southeastern Whigs. The moderate views of some Whig papers in the Southwest and their stand against the "no territory" proposal reinforce the theory that the Southwestern Whigs were relatively "soft" on the war. Senator Johnson of Louisiana compiled the best pro-administration voting record on war legislation of any Southern Whig.¹⁰² Representative Newton of Arkansas openly defended the war.¹⁰³ Senator Spencer Jarnagin of Tennessee and the Whig representatives from Tennessee, Kentucky, and Louisiana, as a whole, compiled better voting records than other Southern Whigs. Nevertheless, even Calhoun had a slightly better pro-administration

¹⁰⁰Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 189-201.

¹⁰¹The next chapter describes the attitudes of the press.

¹⁰²Statements about voting records are based on the list of selected votes described in Chapter I.

¹⁰³Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session, App., pp. 429-30.

voting record than Senator Johnson of Louisiana, and the best Whig voting records merely approached the poorest voting records among Southern Democrats. In addition, all three Whig senators from Kentucky who served during the war compiled extremely poor voting records, as did Senator John Bell of Tennessee.

The Southeastern Whigs presented no semblance of a pattern. Senator Badger of North Carolina strongly opposed the war, but during the Twenty-Ninth Congress the other North Carolina Whigs, including Senator Willie P. Mangum, compiled a voting record comparable to the Tennessee Whigs. In the Thirtieth Congress, however, all of the North Carolina Whigs receded from even modest support of the war. Maryland Senator Reverdy Johnson compiled a voting record comparable to Louisiana Senator Henry Johnson's; but the other Maryland senator, James Pearce, did not record a single pro-war vote. The war enthusiasm of the Georgia Democrats failed to inspire the Georgia Whigs to behave similarly. And Democratic Mississippi sent to the House one Whig, Patrick W. Tompkins, who attacked the administration and the war bitterly.¹⁰⁴

Among all Southern Whigs, with the exception of Senators Reverdy Johnson of Maryland and Henry Johnson of Louisiana, opposition to the war peaked during the Thirtieth Congress with the rise of the "all Mexico" movement. No Southern

¹⁰⁴ Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, App., pp. 485-89.

Whig congressman declared for "all Mexico." A few, especially from the southwestern states, indicated an interest in California, if fairly purchased;¹⁰⁵ but the majority of the Southern Whig congressmen accepted the "no territory" proposal. In the Senate deliberations on ratification of the peace treaty, all the Southern Whigs, except Johnson of Louisiana and Pearce of Maryland who did not vote, supported an amendment offered by Kentucky's John J. Crittenden which would have rejected much of the territory ceded by the treaty.¹⁰⁶

Short of arbitrarily assuming that the Southern Whigs gave modest support to the war in the secret hope that the Democrats would override all objections and conquer vast domains, no charge that the Southern Whig congressmen desired the war as a means of acquiring territory can be justified.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 517-18 (William T. Haskell), App., pp. 156-59 (Washington Barrow); ibid., 29th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 344-46 (James T. Morehead).

¹⁰⁶ Executive Documents of the Senate of the United States, 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1847-48), No. 52, p. 23.

CHAPTER V

THE SOUTHERN PRESS

In this era of the party press, Southern newspapers, like the Congressmen, took sides on the war issue principally according to party affiliation. Even a small sampling of Southern papers indicates that the Democratic press generally proclaimed the justice of the war and defended the administration's conduct, while Whig papers usually questioned the necessity of the war and criticized the President's role in its origin.

The exceptions to the generalization provide the interest in studying the attitude of the Southern press toward the war. John Caldwell Calhoun influenced some of the Democratic papers in the Southeast, just as he influenced some of the congressmen from South Carolina, Virginia, and Alabama. Whig congressmen from Maryland, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Tennessee provided more support for the war than other Southern Whigs; and some Whig newspapers from these states defended the war to a degree and showed expansionist tendencies.

A sampling of the Southern press reveals the same wide range of opinion evidenced by Southern congressmen. Among the Democratic papers, The Mississippian of Jackson mirrored

the aggressive attitude of the state's senators, Jefferson Davis and Henry S. Foote, while The Charleston Mercury echoed Calhoun's critical attitude toward the war. Between these extremes lay other Democratic papers which loyally sustained the war and the administration and insisted upon securing indemnity from Mexico, but expressed modest demands and stopped short of the idea of absorbing all of Mexico.

The Mississippian, enthusiastically expansionist and hawkish, had wanted Texas and all of Oregon; it viewed both issues, as well as the war with Mexico, as matters of national, rather than sectional, concern. The paper also looked forward to the purchase of California, until Mexico's unrelenting belligerence rendered that happy result unlikely. Like Calhoun, The Mississippian saw a connection between the troubles with England over Oregon and Mexico's truculence; unlike Calhoun, however, it considered war a calamity second to national dishonor and proclaimed itself ready for a war for the continent with England and Mexico. Actually, The Mississippian preferred to fight England, believing England's outrages against the United States were greater than Mexico's. Its editors did not favor war against Mexico alone unless Mexico's hostility necessitated keeping a large force on the Texas frontier; in such a case, they believed the United

States should settle the difficulties with Mexico summarily by giving her a sound trouncing.¹

Like most of the ardent expansionists, newspapers or individuals, The Mississippian professed great concern over European influence in Mexico and the possibility of a monarchy in Mexico. Once the war began, it counseled a vigorous campaign, both as chastisement for Mexico and as a warning to England and France not to interfere. It expressed humiliation and mortification over the reaction of Calhoun and Southern Whigs to the war bill and had no patience with Calhoun's defensive plan for ending the war or with the Whigs' "no territory" proposal.²

Early in the war, The Mississippian advised seizing California; and it insisted upon retaining California and other conquered territory even while it denied, on behalf of the United States, any ambition for conquest. The Mississippian betrayed its territorial ambitions in its insistence that the war should be vigorous and brief, so that a Democratic administration could negotiate the peace terms rather than the Whigs, and in its dislike for a British offer to mediate the war. It approved British intercession to initiate peace negotiations, but it wanted England to have

¹The Mississippian (Jackson), April 3, 1844, November 26, December 3, 1845, January 1, January 11, February 25, 1846, March 12, 1847, March 24, 1848.

²Ibid., November 26, 1845, January 11, April 1, May 27, June 3, October 7, 1846, March 5, December 10, 1847.

no voice in settling the peace terms. It distrusted the Whigs' attitude on the war, linking their opposition to the war with the abolitionist, anti-expansionist, British-inspired interests which had opposed all territorial acquisitions.³

On the effect of the war on the issues of particular interest to the South, the tariff and slavery, The Mississippian showed little of Calhoun's concern. The editors insisted that war should not harm the cause of free trade, as a low tariff would produce more revenue through stimulation of trade. By early 1847, The Mississippian suspected the protectionists in Congress of trying to force a return to the high tariff by rejecting the administration's other measures for war revenue, such as the tea and coffee tax; but this fear did not dampen the paper's enthusiasm for the war.⁴

The Mississippian considered the slavery question an abstract discussion which should have no place in the war deliberations and should not delay needed war legislation. The editors made comparatively little comment on the Wilmot Proviso, except the typical cant that any new territory should be open to North and South alike. Actually, they expected the North to benefit more from New Mexico and

³Ibid., June 3, October 7, November 17, 1846, March 12, April 16, 1847.

⁴Ibid., December 10, 1845, February 5, March 26, 1847.

California than the South. The paper's Washington correspondent, writing under the pen name of "Faquier," even attacked Calhoun's position on the slavery question, saying that his making such an issue over the Wilmot Proviso hampered responsible Northern Democrats like James Buchanan of Pennsylvania and Senator Lewis Cass of Michigan in their efforts to keep the Democratic party on a reasonable course on the slavery issue; Faquier singled out for praise the Southern men who accepted the popular sovereignty idea.⁵

The Mississippian showed an early interest in the grandiose ideas of some of the New Orleans expansionist papers. On December 1, 1846, it printed an article from the New Orleans Delta which evoked the fear of British designs on a future canal across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and proclaimed that the United States should secure and retain control of that valuable area. On May 28, 1847, The Mississippian carried an article from the New Orleans Courier extolling the blessings for Mexico in the prospect of total absorption of that country by the United States.

By late 1847, The Mississippian was recommending that the United States proclaim peace, occupy Mexico militarily, and set up a free American government for that country. The Washington correspondent, Faquier, dismissed the problems of differences in race, religion, and language and predicted

⁵ Ibid., January 22, March 12, March 19, April 16, 1847, January 28, 1848.

annexation of all Mexico. When the Senate ratified a treaty that fell short of this ultimate solution, The Mississippian approved the action but predicted that the mixed races of Mexico could never govern the country adequately, and the white race would eventually dispossess them. In the meantime, The Mississippian gloried in the territory acquired, which it said would provide new fields for Southern planters in Texas, land and wilderness for the farmer and hunter of the West, and the wealth of the Eastern trade for the Northern merchant and manufacturer.⁶

Other Democratic papers in the South stopped short of The Mississippian's strident expansionism, though most wanted indemnity and expected to take it in the form of territory, particularly California. The St. Louis Daily Union favored vigorous prosecution of the war and assumed permanent retention of California. Like The Mississippian, it opposed British mediation in the war, partly because it expected England would oppose acquisition of more territory by the United States. By the end of 1846, the Union had decreed a boundary along the Sierra Madre mountains, but it opposed the annexation of all Mexico.⁷

⁶ Ibid., October 15, October 29, December 10, 1847, January 28, February 11, March 17, March 24, 1848.

⁷ St. Louis Daily Union, September 29, October 5, October 6, October 17, 1846; Frederick Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation (New York, 1963), p. 151.

The Richmond Enquirer of Virginia and The Mobile Register and Journal of Alabama both loyally sustained the administration during the war, but neither espoused the "all Mexico" idea. Both had upheld America's claim to Oregon, though not necessarily to 54°40'; the Register had been slightly more hawkish than the Enquirer and thought the President could have acquired a boundary north of the forty-ninth parallel if some Democrats had not deserted him.⁸

Both papers expressed concern over the influence of European monarchists in Mexico and counseled firmness but moderation in dealing with that country. Both, however, revealed an interest in Mexican territory prior to the war. The Register on February 9, 1846, carried an article from the New Orleans Commercial Times extolling the glories of California and stating that the United States should either acquire it or issue an ultimatum that no other country should acquire it. On April 10, 1846, the Enquirer was already speculating about the probability and desirability of eventual annexation of Mexico by the United States, saying it would not hasten that event by direct action but would not refuse the prize if it became feasible. However, neither paper recommended war with Mexico prior to the

⁸Richmond Enquirer, March 10, 1846; The Mobile Register and Journal, January 6, January 17, March 4, March 17, April 24, August 19, 1846.

hostilities on the Rio Grande. The Register disliked the thought of begging England for peace while bullying Mexico; as late as April 10, 1846, the Enquirer counseled yet a bit more forbearance toward Mexico.⁹

Once the hostilities began, however, both stoutly defended the administration's conduct and urged a substantial and decisive invasion of Mexico. By late 1846, the Enquirer was speculating about the benefits to America and to humanity of retaining permanently the territory which the United States had conquered; it even commented upon the possibility of having to hold Mexico as a conquered province, though it hoped to avoid that dire result. The Register expressed territorial desires only obliquely, by carrying numerous articles from other expansionist newspapers and by its anger at Mexican demands in 1847 that the United States surrender most of the territory already conquered before she would agree to negotiate a peace treaty.¹⁰

Neither paper overtly indicated any desire to take all of Mexico. The Register's Washington correspondent expressed relief that the treaty finally negotiated involved no heavily populated territory and worried that the Senate might refuse

⁹Richmond Enquirer, February 3, April 10, 1846; The Mobile Register, January 16, January 29, 1846.

¹⁰Richmond Enquirer, December 1, December 4, 1846; The Mobile Register, October 14, 1847, December 9, 1847, quoting the Sun (Baltimore), February 9, 1848, quoting the Delta (New Orleans).

to ratify the treaty and thereby incur the danger of prolonged war and the ultimate absorption of all Mexico. The Register approved the treaty editorially, saying that it dissipated the delusion that the Democrats wanted to annex all Mexico; the Register believed that the American people wanted their institutions spread over all the continent, but by the steady and peaceable confluence of willing nations rather than by violence or conquest, however justified that conquest might be.¹¹

The Register and the Enquirer commented on the tariff issue in connection with the war, but neither expressed undue alarm about the fate of free trade. The Enquirer believed some tariff Whigs desired prolonged war in hopes that a heavy debt might force a return to a higher tariff. The Register warned congressmen not to allow concern for the fate of tariff reform prevent them from doing their duty in regard to Mexico.¹²

The Register said little about the slavery issue. The editors did comment on a letter published in the Montgomery, Alabama, Advertiser and Flag, in which the writer urged the South to make extension of slavery a positive issue by refusing the acquisition of any territory unsuitable for slave

¹¹The Mobile Register, March 2, March 13, March 20, May 24, 1848.

¹²Richmond Enquirer, August 28, 1846; The Mobile Register, June 6, 1846.

labor. The Register warned that if the South refused to accept territory rightfully gained in a just and honorable war upon purely sectional grounds, a combination of other sections of the nation would rise against her. The Enquirer deprecated introduction of the slavery issue into the war discussions and preferred to postpone discussion of slavery until the United States had actually acquired territorial indemnity. The Enquirer believed the South would stand by the Missouri Compromise; and if the South stood firm, the responsible Democrats of the West and Pennsylvania would support her. The Enquirer considered the "no territory" idea a surrender to the abolitionists and a dishonorable retreat in the eyes of the world, virtually an admission that the war was unjust.¹³

The Georgia Telegraph of Macon defended the war and the administration's conduct, but it also betrayed a sensitivity to Calhoun's influence. During 1846, it expressed strong expansionist tendencies. Reporting the admission of Texas into the Union, it noted that Americans were eyeing most of the continent north of the Isthmus of Darien. The Telegraph claimed Oregon outright and speculated on the possibility of acquiring California, Mexico, and even Cuba. "The more the merrier!" it exclaimed. A week later, however, the Telegraph

¹³The Mobile Register, February 19, 1848; Richmond Enquirer, December 22, 1846, January 12, January 22, March 2, September 28, 1847.

admitted a disinclination to fight for Oregon, expressing disapproval of the "hotspur notions" of the Westerners and looking to Calhoun to clear up the war gloom.¹⁴

When the war with Mexico began, the Telegraph reacted aggressively, vowing that the United States should dictate peace in Mexico City and exact retributive justice for the aggressions, treachery, and faithlessness of Mexico. It continued this aggressive attitude throughout 1846, printing numerous articles from other sources regarding the conquest and possible annexation of Mexico and glowing reports of Mexico's riches. On January 19, 1847, the Telegraph still considered vigorous prosecution and the subjugation of Mexico the only way to secure the objects of the war, reparation and indemnity.¹⁵

Then, on February 16, 1847, after Calhoun's defensive line proposal, the Telegraph began to retreat. On May 11, it suddenly discovered the Wilmot Proviso and printed a vague article which hinted at secession. By June 22, 1846, the Telegraph had decided that while the administration had conducted the war with moderation and justness, the victories

¹⁴The Georgia Telegraph (Macon), December 30, 1845, January 6, 1846.

¹⁵Ibid., May 12, May 19, 1846, June 2, 1846, quoting The Times (London), June 16, 1846, quoting the Herald (Mobile), June 30, 1846, quoting the Courier (Boston) and the Post (Boston), July 21, 1846, quoting the Journal of Commerce (New York), January 26, 1846, quoting the Delta (New Orleans).

might be Pyrrhic; it feared the results of the war. It suspected that the country, in the noise and excitement of the war, had forgotten that America's great democratic experiment counted for more than a whole planet of territory. The Telegraph then presented Calhoun's whole defensive line argument, complete with warnings of the fatal consequences of acquiring an alien population of a hybrid race. Like Calhoun, the Telegraph wanted only to acquire the sparsely populated area of California and New Mexico, plus possibly holding the major ports on the Pacific and Gulf coasts.

The Charleston Mercury, Calhoun's organ in South Carolina, provides additional clues to Calhoun's attitude on the war, sometimes going beyond the statements he made publicly. For the most part, it followed Calhoun's reasoning, urging patience with Mexico and warning of England's possible intervention in a war with Mexico. It scorned the concern of other Democratic papers over the influence of European monarchists in Mexico, charging that they were hunting excuses for meddling in Mexican affairs; the Mercury said they opposed a monarchy in Mexico because they feared that a strong monarchical government would block their territorial aspirations. The Mercury was one of the few papers sampled, including even Whig papers, to make an issue prior to the war over the President's sending an army to the Rio Grande early in 1846; and it later charged that the war

resulted not from the annexation of Texas, but from deliberate provocation by the administration.¹⁶

Once the war began, the Mercury resigned itself to fighting it out; but it favored limiting military action to driving the Mexicans beyond the Rio Grande. As early as May 25, 1846, the Mercury expressed concern at the spirit of conquest resulting from the war and worried about the dangers of conquest to American institutions, particularly if it involved taking in Mexico with her bigoted, ignorant, and idle population. Like Calhoun, the Mercury feared the evil influence of increased federal patronage and the possibility that the war might endanger tariff reform, a measure which it called more valuable than all of Mexico. The Mercury's Washington correspondent, who signed his reports "Nous Verrons," blamed three groups for creating and perpetuating the war: the War Party, composed of Democrats, principally the 54°40' men of the West and North, who wanted war and territorial conquest in the hope of reaping political power; the Protective Tariff Party, which hoped that war would create a debt heavy enough to defeat the free trade principle;

¹⁶The Charleston Mercury (South Carolina), January 31, February 6, March 6, March 19, April 25, May 7, May 20, 1846.

and the Whigs, who hoped to use the war for political gain and as a means of defeating important Democratic reforms.¹⁷

Like Calhoun, the Mercury believed that if the Westerners could be controlled and territorial acquisitions limited to Upper California and the Bay of San Francisco, the war might not do irreparable damage to the Union. Consequently, it espoused the idea of taking a defensive line to end the war. However, the Mercury rejected the idea of withdrawing American troops from Mexican territory altogether or of disavowing in advance any intention of taking Mexican territory for indemnity.¹⁸

The Mercury became increasingly concerned about the slavery issue during the last year of the war and began to regard the war almost entirely in the light of its effect on slavery. At first, the Wilmot Proviso did not seem to disturb the Mercury unduly. It did not editorialize on the subject until January 13, 1847; and on October 21, 1846, commenting on the Pennsylvania congressional elections, the Mercury had only friendly words for David Wilmot as a friend

¹⁷ Ibid., May 15, May 18, May 25, 1846, January 12, January 16, February 18, February 22, 1847. Strong similarities between the reports of the Mercury's Washington correspondent and Calhoun's views and actions indicate that either Calhoun or someone close to him wrote the reports; see, for example, the issue of May 15, 1846.

The 54°40' men urged the United States to press the extreme claim to Oregon, regardless of the threat of war with England.

¹⁸ Ibid., May 30, 1846, January 27, 1847.

of tariff reform. But the Mercury rejected the idea of avoiding the slavery issue by killing the Three Million Bill or by appending to it a "no territory" clause; the Mercury urged instead that the South force a confrontation on the slavery issue and began carrying articles from other Southern newspapers presenting similar views.¹⁹

By the end of 1847, the Mercury believed that the territorial desires of the North stemmed from an intention to hem the South in by free states. It particularly opposed the "all Mexico" movement for this reason and upon racist grounds. It argued that incorporation of extensive Mexican territory and the mongrel Mexican race would be the first blow against the caste system based on color, which was the security of the slave states. Besides, the Mercury said, the North had designed the popular sovereignty idea deliberately to mislead the South; the new territory would form free states. The Mercury preferred the Wilmot Proviso to the incorporation of all Mexico; the former would merely prohibit slavery in the territory, while the latter would make the slaves equal to the white man eventually by making racially mixed people citizens of the United States. Holding these ideas, the Mercury decided early in 1848 that the congressmen no longer

¹⁹ Ibid., February 10, June 19, 1847, September 11, September 16, and September 27, 1847, quoting the Journal (Hamburg, South Carolina), the Jeffersonian (Mecklenburg, North Carolina), and the Flag and Advertiser (Montgomery, Alabama).

had a duty to support the war, as the expansionists had perverted the original aims into unholy aims of conquest.²⁰

The Southern Whig press exhibited as wide a range of opinion as the Democratic press on the war. The Wilmington Chronicle of North Carolina, after the first burst of patriotism, consistently opposed the war and acquisition of territory. The Weekly Tribune of Liberty, Missouri, looked on with horrified approval while the Democrats moved to take the territory it professed not to want. The American & Commercial Daily Advertiser of Baltimore favored taking a defensive line to end the war, but wanted that line drawn at the Sierra Madre mountains. The Arkansas State Gazette of Little Rock unashamedly justified the war.

Strangely, these Southern Whig papers offered little comment prior to the war about the President's moving an army to the Rio Grande. The Baltimore American reported the order as early as February 27, 1846, but offered no criticism; indeed, it expressed confidence in the administration's foresight. The Wilmington Chronicle also printed the news, commenting that the American troops exhibited high spirits in expectation of a conflict; however, it did print the Charleston Mercury's criticism of the move.²¹

²⁰ Ibid., December 30, 1847, January 17, January 28, January 31, February 3, 1848.

²¹ American & Commercial Daily Advertiser (Baltimore), March 25, April 29, 1846; Wilmington Chronicle, March 25, April 29, 1846.

The Wilmington Chronicle apparently opposed expansion in any direction. It criticized the annexation of Texas and printed numerous articles from other papers which opposed chancing war to acquire Oregon. When the war with Mexico began, the Chronicle at first called for a united front during the war, postponing an investigation into the administration's actions until the war ended. Within a month, however, the Chronicle began to criticize the administration, and by the end of the summer it charged the President with sole responsibility for beginning the war. By the end of 1846, the Chronicle decided that the United States had no clear title to the Rio Grande as the Texas boundary.²²

The Chronicle took little notice of the slavery issue other than to say that the war created political questions which would likely shake the Union to its core. It welcomed the "no territory" proposal apparently out of doubts of the justice of the war rather than solely as a solution to the slavery issue. On January 26, 1848, the Chronicle culminated its record of opposition to the war by recommending that the Whigs in Congress cut off supplies for the war if they disapproved of the administration's objectives.²³

²² Wilmington Chronicle, November 26, 1845, December 3, 1845, quoting the Journal of Commerce (New York), December 17, 1845, and January 14, 1846, quoting the Gazette (Alexandria, Virginia), January 28, 1846, quoting the Daily Advertiser (Boston), May 23, June 10, August 19, December 16, 1846.

²³ Ibid., October 20, November 24, 1847.

The Weekly Tribune of Liberty, Missouri, vacillated more than the forthright Wilmington Chronicle. During the Oregon controversy, it had carried numerous articles from other papers counseling compromise with England; yet, after the Oregon settlement, it criticized the administration for compromising. On April 25, 1846, it called for firmness by the administration, and war if necessary, to settle the difficulties with Mexico. For a short time after the war began, the Tribune advocated uniting behind the President in a vigorous war against Mexico, towards whom the United States had been forbearing too long. But by June 20, 1846, the Tribune decided that Polk had no right to send an army to the Rio Grande; and by July 4, it discovered a "spirit of reckless aggrandizement" in the Democrats' interest in California, a territory which the Tribune had been eyeing with relish only two months earlier. Thereafter, the Tribune alternated between criticizing the war and calling for vigorous prosecution. It espoused the "no territory" proposal as a means to avoid the slavery issue but squawked over an inaccurate rumor that the peace negotiator, Nicholas P. Trist, had agreed to a treaty that did not include cession of California. The Tribune apparently had no special interest in slavery and looked forward to its demise.²⁴

²⁴The Weekly Tribune (Liberty, Missouri), April 4 and May 2, 1846, quoting the Journal (Louisville), Richmond Enquirer, and National Intelligencer, May 9, May 30, July 11, September 26, October 3, 1846, January 9, July 24, August 24, October 1, December 31, 1847.

The New-Orleans Bee at first favored vigorous prosecution of the war and acquisition of California as the sine qua non for peace. It opposed dismemberment of Mexico further than acquisition of California because it believed that the United States would eventually gradually absorb Mexico peaceably. By late 1847, however, the Bee advocated the "no territory" idea as the best course for the South and for the harmony of the nation; it argued that the South would commit an act of insanity by taking territory which would form free states and add to the political strength of the North. The Bee did not advocate withholding supplies for the army, however, despite its criticism of the administration's wholesale schemes of conquest and territorial acquisitions.²⁵

Like many Southern Whig congressmen, the American & Commercial Daily Advertiser of Baltimore never found a comfortable position on the war; it could not subordinate its strong expansionist leanings to its Whig sympathies. Consequently, it frequently contradicted itself and conveniently interpreted the Whig position to suit itself.

Prior to the hostilities with Mexico, the American tacitly approved the administration's action in sending an army to the Rio Grande. On May 11, 1846, still unaware of the occurrence of hostilities, the American stated that the

²⁵The New-Orleans Bee, July 2, July 30, August 14, 1846, November 9, November 22, November 29, November 30, December 28, 1847.

Mexican army would commit an act of war by crossing the Rio Grande; it hoped that General Taylor would not interpret his instructions to act on the defensive so literally as to allow the Mexican army to move into a superior position. Yet, before the end of 1846, the American questioned the legality of Texas's claim to the Rio Grande and blamed President James K. Polk for putting the boundary question beyond diplomacy by moving the army to the Rio Grande. Throughout the war, however, the American complained principally that the administration failed to prosecute the war vigorously and efficiently.²⁶

From the beginning, the American took for granted the acquisition of California and even speculated about the absorption of Mexico, but dismissed the latter idea as unwise because of the presence of a large alien population. After the final settlement of the Oregon boundary, the American's lyrical effusions of Manifest Destiny sentiments regarding California and Oregon rivalled any Democratic paper.²⁷

Toward the end of 1846, the American began to lean toward the defensive line idea. Apparently, the conquest of New Mexico and California fulfilled its territorial desires for the time being; that territory contained only a sparse

²⁶ American & Commercial Daily Advertiser (Baltimore), March 25, April 29, June 13, August 15, October 16, November 13, November 16, December 10, 1846, January 1, January 27, February 11, 1847.

²⁷ Ibid., May 29, June 8, June 23, 1846.

population, a decided advantage in the American's opinion. When faced with the Southern Whigs' "no territory" proposal early in 1847, the American blithely assumed that the proposal envisaged no territory beyond a defensive line drawn from the Rio Grande to the Gulf of California.²⁸

By late 1847, the American had discovered a geographic peculiarity on the North American continent. It said that the great Mississippi Valley, destined to become the center of and the richest source for the world's commerce, dominated the entire continent. In order to realize its full potentialities, the United States must have outlets on the Pacific Coast and must control all the approaches to the best ports in California. In addition, California and the intervening territory were merely appurtenances of the Mississippi Valley and would never develop fully without access to the products of that great alluvial formation. Therefore, as the Sierra Madre mountain range marked the natural limits of the Mississippi Valley, the laws of geographical affinities demanded that the territory down to that mountain range belong to the United States. "Nature having made it a boundary, let us accept it," the American graciously conceded.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid., October 24, November 30, 1846, February 11, 1847.

²⁹ Ibid., September 14, October 11, 1847, February 29, 1848.

The American never approved the idea of absorbing all Mexico, however; by January 4, 1848, it had decided that the administration desired that result, and it opposed further active prosecution of the war. It mainly opposed incorporating territory containing a hostile and alien population, different in language, customs, and ideas; it had no qualms about incorporating such territory once it became Americanized through emigration and entered the Union willingly, an event which it fully anticipated.³⁰

The American showed little concern over the slavery question. It fully believed the Union could withstand the shock of acquiring territory and settling the Proviso issue.³¹

As much as the American wanted a Sierra Madre boundary, it advocated ratification of the treaty which drew a boundary short of that range; indeed, it favored the treaty even when an inaccurate rumor indicated that the terms did not include cession of the valuable Bay of San Francisco. The American considered that lack unfortunate, but it believed that no territory would be worth another year of war. However, it refused to give up on the Sierra Madre boundary and continued to express hope that the United States might still

³⁰ Ibid., June 8, November 30, 1846, April 26, 1847.

³¹ Ibid., September 23, 1847.

press its advantages further and secure the Sierra Madre line, paying a fair equivalent for it, of course.³²

The Arkansas State Gazette of Little Rock went further than most Southern Whig papers in defending the war, but it opposed complete subjugation of Mexico. In the beginning, the Gazette took the stand that the majority of Congress had decided on war, and any man who refused to support the government fully during war was a traitor. It opposed a war of conquest but called for invasion of Mexico, believing that carrying the war into the enemy's territory did not necessarily entail conquest of Mexico. At first, it defended the President for sending an army to the Rio Grande. It argued that the United States had every right and obligation to exert a claim to the disputed territory between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande, and Mexico must bear the responsibility for resorting to arms instead of negotiating a settlement.³³

Later, after the onslaught of Whig criticism of the war, the Gazette began to doubt the validity of Texas's claim to the Rio Grande and to ask if the President could not have avoided the war. It also questioned the aims of the administration, saying that it could not support a war of conquest, regardless of Mexico's misdeeds. However, it

³² Ibid., February 25, February 28, March 9, 1848.

³³ Arkansas State Gazette (Little Rock), May 25, June 1, June 8, 1846.

vowed to continue to sustain the administration for the duration of the war. By early 1847, the Gazette advocated taking a defensive line in order to end the war.³⁴

The Gazette insisted upon territorial indemnity from Mexico, but expressed satisfaction with just Upper California, apparently assuming that fixation of the Texas boundary at the Rio Grande would bring in most of New Mexico. However, it believed California's value exceeded the amount of American claims against Mexico and favored paying a fair price for it. It considered Polk's claim to all of New Mexico and Upper and Lower California unjust.³⁵

The Gazette's policy on slavery changed somewhat after a new editor took control on February 10, 1848. At first, the Gazette viewed the Wilmot Proviso merely as a threat to final settlement of the difficulties with Mexico. The editor believed that the peace settlement must include indemnity from Mexico, and as she could pay only by ceding territory, the acquisition of territory would be worth the risk of encountering the slavery issue. However, he expressed willingness to acquire only territory north of the Missouri Compromise line in order to avoid the slavery issue. But his successor took a more militant stand on the issue

³⁴Ibid., August 17, October 26, 1846, January 6, February 6, February 13, 1847, January 6, 1848.

³⁵Ibid., January 23, February 27, December 2, December 23, 1847.

and insisted that if the Democrats must acquire extensive territory, the South must share it equally.³⁶

Several papers in the South not affiliated with a political party rivalled the enthusiasm of the Democratic press in regard to the war. The St. Louis Reveille had little patience for repeated peace offers and urged the administration to give the army the means to command peace and speed the blessings of American laws to Mexico.³⁷

The Baltimore Sun exhibited equal enthusiasm and advised the most vigorous prosecution of the war. The Sun viewed the war criticism and the introduction of the slavery issue merely as symbols of a struggle for political advantage between Whigs and Democrats and between North and South, rather than as a true moral issue. By the end of the war, the Sun advocated taking all of Mexico.³⁸

The New Orleans Delta apparently wanted expansion in any direction--Oregon, Yucatan, Cuba, California, Mexico, or South America. Like most other expansionists, it grew tired enough of the war to accept a treaty that fell short of its ambitions; but it still looked longingly toward a Sierra

³⁶ Ibid., January 23, February 27, December 2, 1847, March 23, 1848.

³⁷ Quoted by the Weekly North-Western Gazette (Galena, Illinois), July 30, 1847.

³⁸ Quoted by the Richmond Enquirer, May 19, 1846, January 12, 1847, by Niles' National Register, January 23, July 10, 1847, and by The Mobile Register, December 9, 1847; Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission, p. 125.

Madre boundary at least, and preferably a return to occupy the whole of Mexico.³⁹

The Daily Picayune of New Orleans, a self-described neutral paper edited by Whigs, showed no Whiggish tendencies in regard to the war. It defended the administration for sending an army to the Rio Grande prior to the war, arguing that even if it were disputed territory, Mexico committed the first act of aggression. Throughout the war, it advocated vigorous prosecution and complete conquest of Mexico. It opposed the proposals to withdraw the armies from Mexico altogether or to take a defensive line, believing that the wisest course would be to defeat Mexico completely and then decide how liberal the peace terms should be.⁴⁰

The Picayune looked to California as the source for satisfaction of American claims against Mexico and voiced belief that the Americans would never consent to surrender it. Beyond that, the Picayune approved the resolutions of New York Senator Daniel Dickinson for annexing such contiguous territory as the United States could justly obtain.⁴¹

³⁹Quoted by The Mobile Register, April 14, April 18, 1846, February 9, May 24, May 25, 1848, by The Mississippian (Jackson), December 1, 1846, by the Macon Telegraph, January 26, 1847, by Niles' National Register, May 22, 1847, July 19, 1848, by the Galena Gazette, March 3, 1848, and by the Baltimore American, April 14, 1848.

⁴⁰The Daily Picayune (New Orleans), May 3, May 17, October 11, December 12, 1846, December 8, December 12, December 21, 1847, January 4, 1848.

⁴¹Ibid., July 1, 1846, December 22, 1847, Supplement, January 4, 1848.

The Picayune revealed no distaste for the idea of annexing all Mexico, though it never actually advocated such action. It believed the final boundary of the United States depended solely upon how long Mexico refused to make peace; it argued that the United States had every right to utilize its belligerent rights regarding conquered territory and should not set a dangerous precedent of disavowing territorial conquest as a result of war. The Picayune believed that the American people did not wish either to take all of Mexico or abandon all of it; but it believed that if Mexico continued the war indefinitely, complete absorption might become the only solution. Furthermore, it believed that the better classes of Mexican people secretly desired American rule and might seek annexation. Besides, it said, the politicians might as well try to stop the north wind with a fan as to try to repress the expanding destinies of America; and if Americans moved into Mexican territory, the government could not abandon them. However, the Picayune expressed satisfaction with the peace treaty that acquired less territory than many expansionists anticipated.⁴²

On the slavery issue, the Picayune adopted the popular sovereignty solution. It noted that most travelers agreed that none of the territory contemplated would support slavery,

⁴²Ibid., October 11, 1846, November 27, November 28, November 30, December 8, December 16, 1847, January 8, February 15, 1848.

and it argued that neither the North nor the South should presume to decide the question on behalf of the inhabitants. It firmly believed that the Union could withstand the slavery disagreement and that it should not refuse territorial acquisitions out of timidity.⁴³

Elsewhere in the South, newspapers took sides mainly according to party. In Kentucky, the Glasgow Gazette, the Kentucky Observer, and the Louisville Journal criticized the war and charged the administration with provoking it. The latter paper opposed expansion to the Pacific Coast altogether, believing that after the old states bore the expense of conquering and developing the country, the Pacific states would become their commercial rivals and possibly break away to form a new republic. The Journal advocated the defensive line idea, however, rather than the "no territory" proposal.⁴⁴ The Louisville Democrat assumed retention of California and New Mexico early in the war and urged conquest of Mexico as the best way to secure peace and indemnity, though it opposed annexation of all Mexico; it denied, on behalf of the Democratic party, any ambition to extend slavery but argued that

⁴³ Ibid., December 22, 1847, January 14, 1848.

⁴⁴ See the Liberty Tribune, July 11, September 12, 1846; St. Louis Daily Union, September 9, 1846; Niles' Register, October 24, 1846; Charleston Mercury, July 29, 1847; Wilmington Chronicle, January 26, 1848.

the United States could secure just indemnity only in the form of territory.⁴⁵

Some Whig papers in Tennessee and Louisiana declined to follow the party line entirely on the war issue. While the Nashville Banner and the Knoxville Register followed the Whig line on the war, the Nashville Whig justified Polk's ordering the army to the Rio Grande prior to the war, defended the justice and necessity of the war, and advocated retaining California and New Mexico for indemnity without paying Mexico any additional sum.⁴⁶ The New Orleans papers preponderantly displayed hawkish sentiments on the war, even including such Whig papers as the Tropic, the Bulletin, and the Southerner. The Tropic willingly admitted desiring war in order to create a heavy debt which might force revival of the protective tariff. The Bulletin eventually assumed the defensive line solution to the war.⁴⁷

The Nashville Union, a Democratic paper, freely expressed the attitude that pervaded the utterances of many Democrats, that California already belonged to the United States in

⁴⁵ See St. Louis Daily Union, October 17, 1846; The Mobile Register, November 30, 1847; Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission, p. 151.

⁴⁶ See the Liberty Tribune, April 3, 1847; and Richmond Enquirer, June 9, 1846, October 12, 1847.

⁴⁷ See the Macon Telegraph, April 21, 1846; Liberty Tribune, May 30, 1846; Mobile Register, August 21, 1846; Charleston Mercury, November 10, 1846; and Richmond Enquirer, October 12, 1847.

spirit and taking it in actuality meant recognizing a reality rather than making a conquest.⁴⁸

In Maryland and Virginia, some Whig papers took relatively moderate positions on the war. Like the Baltimore American, the Richmond Times rejected the "no territory" idea, having a particular interest in the port of San Francisco and the intervening territory; the Times believed that a majority of the Whig party disapproved disavowal of territorial acquisitions. However, other Whig papers in these states, such as the Richmond Republican, the Baltimore Patriot, and the Baltimore Clipper, bitterly assailed the administration over the war. The Hagerstown, Maryland, News opposed the war to the extent that it singled out for reproach a local man who had volunteered for the army; such an intelligent man, it said, would undoubtedly later reproach himself for participating in an unjust war. Other Whig papers took a less extreme attitude, but the Whig and the Republican of Richmond both adopted the "no territory" proposal.⁴⁹

On the other side of the coin, a Democratic paper in Wytheville, Virginia, strongly protested armed occupation of Mexico or extensive territorial acquisitions. It opposed

⁴⁸Quoted by the Baltimore American, June 4, 1846.

⁴⁹See the Richmond Enquirer, January 8, October 1, 1847; Liberty Tribune, November 21, 1846, October 8, 1847; Wilmington Chronicle, November 17, November 24, 1847.

adding territory that would make twenty or more new free states; it also opposed the consequent obliteration of the white race by amalgamation with the Mexicans.⁵⁰

Elsewhere in the Southeast, the Charleston Evening News showed an affinity for Calhoun's ideas on the war. The Greenburg Patriot and the Raleigh Register, Whig papers in North Carolina, showed the same strict opposition that the Wilmington Chronicle purveyed. The Patriot warned that sustaining the administration, right or wrong, did not constitute true patriotism; the Register predicted dissolution of the Union if the "unhallowed war" did not end immediately. The Southron, neighbor of the hawkish Jackson Mississippian, assailed the war as unjust and provoked by the President. In Georgia, the Whig Savannah Republican agreed with Henry Clay's anti-war Lexington resolutions, while the Whig Columbus Times repudiated them and called for a cessation of attacks on the administration and the war.⁵¹

Papers in the Southeast took a strident interest in the slavery issue. The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser in Alabama wanted no compromise on the Wilmot Proviso, but it disagreed with a letter from a reader who insisted that the

⁵⁰Quoted by The New-Orleans Bee, December 28, 1847.

⁵¹See the Richmond Enquirer, January 5, October 12, 1847; Jackson Mississippian, January 15, February 2, 1847; Mobile Register, December 9, 1847; Wilmington Chronicle, October 20, November 10, 1847, January 26, 1848; Charleston Mercury, December 3, 1847.

South should refuse to acquire any territory unsuitable for slavery. The Southern Banner of Athens, Georgia, advocated compromise on the slavery issue; the Hamburg, South Carolina, Journal vowed no compromise. The Augusta Constitutionalist at first deprecated truckling to the abolitionists; it pointed out that if the North dissolved the Union over the slavery issue, it would still have to divide the territory. Later, the Constitutionalist accepted the popular sovereignty plan as the most reasonable solution the South could ask.⁵²

The Mobile Herald proved that a sentiment for acquiring new slave territory did exist in the South, however sublimated. At the beginning of the war, it considered annexation of Mexico inevitable, believing the Yankee would never leave once he set foot there. After the "no territory" proposal gained popularity, the Herald expressed opposition to the idea. It argued that adoption of that solution would mean admitting that the American system of government was so weak that the country dared not accept territory to which it had a right. But further, the Herald argued that the South should not reject an undoubted benefit out of fear of a tyrannous majority; and it proceeded to demonstrate that the

⁵²See the Richmond Enquirer, January 22, 1847; Charleston Mercury, September 11, September 27, 1847; Mobile Register, January 27, February 19, 1848.

South, in order to maintain the safety and profit of slavery, must seek additional territory.⁵³

Presumably, a newspaper, if subsidized by a political party or faction, must follow the party line; if not subsidized, it must please its subscribers and advertisers in order to survive. Therefore, it must mirror their opinions to some extent, allowing for a certain amount of editorial independence. The moderate position of such Whig papers as the Baltimore American and the Arkansas State Gazette indicates a greater degree of expansionist and pro-war sentiment among the average Southern Whig voters than the Southern Whig congressmen, under the lash of party discipline, revealed. Southern Whig newspapers did not accept the "no territory" proposal as readily as the Whig congressmen did; many preferred at least the defensive line idea, which contemplated a limited territorial acquisition.

Even a random sampling of the Southern newspapers reinforces the pattern shown by the members of Congress. Whig and Democratic congressmen and newspapers from the southwestern states showed more support for the war and a stronger urge for territorial expansion than those from the Southeast, with the exception of Maryland. Democratic congressmen and papers in the southeast supported the war but showed a deeper concern over the slavery issue. Calhoun and The Charleston

⁵³ See the Macon Telegraph, June 16, 1846; Charleston Mercury, September 28, 1847.

Mercury led a pocket of resistance to the war and to extensive territorial acquisitions as inimical to slavery. Whig congressmen and newspapers from the Southeast, except Maryland, showed less forbearance toward the war and the administration.

Naturally, the party press preferred to play down the slavery question because of its divisiveness.⁵⁴ However, the papers sampled continued the pattern shown by the congressmen. A minority took a militant stand on the issue; the majority sustained the South's rights but indicated a willingness to compromise. The stronger expansionists showed less interest in the slavery issue and more willingness to compromise, while the papers reflecting a preoccupation with the slavery issue showed less concern about the war and territorial expansion.

In retrospect, a sampling of Southern newspapers reveals that expansionist sentiment existed in the South, even to the extent of taking all Mexico. However, as among Southern congressmen, the "all Mexico" press did not constitute a majority in the South. Many papers vehemently opposed incorporating all Mexico on racist grounds. Most papers expressed the same territorial desires as the majority of Southern congressmen, the acquisition of sparsely populated California and New Mexico for indemnity. Even papers which

⁵⁴Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission, pp. 173-74.

had no qualms about incorporating all Mexico, such as the New Orleans Ficayune and The Mississippian, like the "all Mexico" men in Congress, favored ratification of a treaty that secured less territory, as long as it ended the war.

CONCLUSION

The great majority of Southern Democrats strongly supported the Mexican War. While John C. Calhoun and a group of Southeastern Democrats created difficulties for the administration's war effort, the group was small; and some who cooperated with Calhoun's anti-war stand undoubtedly were supporting him rather than opposing the war.

The majority of the Southern Whigs gave modest support to the war effort during the first year, but even that modest support dwindled as the Democrats' ideas about territorial indemnity grew. As a group, they never wholeheartedly supported the war; but they undoubtedly remembered their Federalist predecessors of 1812 and felt hesitant to stand in complete opposition to a war. The arguments of Southern Whigs, particularly the Southeasterners, against acquiring territory revealed that many of them had little faith in the ability of the United States to maintain her power and her form of government while expanding in size,¹ lending credibility to the charge that they emphasized the slavery question

¹The Congressional Globe, 29th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, 1847), App., p. 436 (James A. Pearce); ibid., 30th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, 1848), App., pp. 189-201 (John Bell), 311-12 (Joseph Underwood); Louisville Journal, quoted by the St. Louis Daily Union, September 9, 1846.

in advocating their "no territory" idea when they actually opposed expansion altogether.²

The Mexican War was not a Southerners' war. Senator Ambrose H. Sevier of Arkansas and Representative Howell Cobb of Georgia served as administration advocates for the war measures, but they were secondary leaders to Senator Lewis M. Cass of Michigan and Representative Stephen A. Douglass of Illinois. Southern Whigs gave modest support to the war effort, but so did Northern Whigs outside of the New England area. The Whig Arkansas State Gazette broke the party ranks and supported the war effort, but so did the Whig New York Courier and Enquirer.³

Southern Democrats revealed a strong interest in territorial acquisitions, and no doubt many would have been disappointed if Mexico had paid indemnity in cash rather than territorial cessions; but many Northern and Northwestern Democrats exhibited the same attitude. If they genuinely believed in the justice of the war, they can incur no odium for seeking indemnity, in whatever form Mexico could pay.⁴

²The Mississippian (Jackson), March 12, 1847; Richmond Enquirer, December 1, 1846.

³Quoted by The Mobile Register and Journal, September 14, 1847.

⁴The brother of staunch war-supporter Howell Cobb disagreed even with this doctrine. Thomas R. R. Cobb considered taking territory for indemnity an odious British practice. He wanted to extend the area of freedom, but not by war; he wanted to whip Mexico decently and then give her a good government. Thomas R. R. Cobb, Athens, to Howell Cobb,

Southerners like Senator Henry S. Foote of Mississippi and Representative Frederick P. Stanton of Tennessee, who felt the stirrings of Manifest Destiny and took the "all Mexico" movement to heart, did not differ appreciably from Northerners like Cass of Michigan or Senator Daniel S. Dickinson of New York.⁵ Southern newspapers like the New Orleans Delta and the Baltimore Sun took up the "all Mexico" movement, but so did the New York Sun and the Philadelphia Public Ledger.⁶ Frederick Merk, a historian of the Manifest Destiny movement, credited the Northeast with propagating the "all Mexico" movement and found the movement weaker in the South than in the Northeast or Northwest.⁷

While Southerners quite logically and naturally insisted upon equality for the South in any territory gained, evidence that they favored territorial expansion solely for the purpose of extending slavery is scanty. Undoubtedly, some Southerners did have such a purely selfish motive. The Mobile Herald openly advocated seeking additional territory

June 23, 1847, Ulrich B. Phillips, editor, "The Correspondence of Robert Toombs, Alexander H. Stephens, and Howell Cobb," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1911, 2 vols. (Washington, 1913), II, 88.

⁵Congressional Globe, 30th Congress, 1st Session, pp. 21, 79.

⁶Frederick Merk, Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation (New York, 1963), pp. 122-23.

⁷Ibid., pp. 144-51.

suitable for slavery.⁸ The Montgomery Flag and Advertiser printed a letter from a reader urging the South to agree to acquire only territory suitable for slavery and refuse all other territory.⁹ The Memphis Enquirer indicated that some Democrats in that region argued that annexation of all Mexico would result in the extension of slavery.¹⁰ No doubt, other Southerners privately held such opinions but felt it wiser not to emphasize them in a climate of growing tension between the North and South over slavery.

But facts also point to a conclusion that some Southerners opposed territorial expansion because of the danger to slavery. The majority of the Southern Whigs opposed the war and territorial expansion; yet the Whigs formed the majority of slaveholders, owning two-thirds to three-fourths of the slave property in the South.¹¹ And, as the Memphis Enquirer pointed out, Calhoun was the champion of the South and slavery and had sought annexation of Texas because it would strengthen the South; and he undoubtedly would not have

⁸Quoted by The Charleston Mercury, September 28, 1847.

⁹Quoted by The Mobile Register, February 19, 1848.

¹⁰Quoted by the Arkansas State Gazette (Little Rock), December 30, 1847.

¹¹Arthur C. Cole, The Whig Party in the South (Washington, 1913), p. 104.

opposed the subjugation of all Mexico unless he considered its annexation dangerous to the South.¹² Calhoun and some of his friends did not believe slavery would even extend to California, which Calhoun personally considered acceptable, though some of his friends did not want even that much territory which might form free states.¹³ Calhoun opposed the incorporation of Mexico for constitutional and racist reasons; but he also knew of the antislavery men's belief that they could use expansion to destroy slavery, either by providing an escape route to the Southwest for fugitive slaves or by allowing the slaveholders to disperse over a wide area so that they could no longer dominate a bloc of state governments.¹⁴

The fact that Southwestern congressmen and newspapers of both national parties showed more support for the Mexican War and more interest in territorial expansion conforms to

¹²Arkansas State Gazette, December 30, 1847.

¹³Milo M. Quaife, editor, The Diary of James K. Polk, 4 vols. (Chicago, 1910), I, 311-13, II, 283-84; Joseph W. Lesesne, Mobile, to Calhoun, August 24, 1847, J. Franklin Jameson, editor, "Correspondence of John C. Calhoun," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1899, 2 vols. (Washington, 1900), II, 1130-31; John A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, November 20, December 20, 1847, ibid., pp. 1139-45, 1152-55; J. A. Campbell, Mobile, to Calhoun, March 1, 1848, Chauncey S. Boucher and Robert P. Brooks, editors, "Correspondence Addressed to John C. Calhoun, 1837-1849," Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1929, 2 vols. (Washington, 1930-33), I, 430-34.

¹⁴George H. Hatcher, Ballston Centre, to Calhoun, January 5, 1848, ibid., pp. 415-19.

the pattern of the Manifest Destiny phenomenon. Slavery existed in the southwestern states, but Manifest Destiny ideas were more firmly entrenched; Southwesterners were expansionists first and slaveholders second.¹⁵ And Maryland, the pocket of expansionism in the Southeast, was a border state. These facts indicate that Manifest Destiny sentiments principally inspired the territorial ambitions of Southerners during the Mexican War rather than a desire to gain new lands for slavery.

¹⁵ John D. P. Fuller, "The Slavery Question and the Movement to Acquire Mexico," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXI (June, 1936), 32.

APPENDIX I

GEOGRAPHIC AND PARTY DIVISIONS IN CONGRESS
DURING THE MEXICAN WAR,
1846-1848

Twenty-Ninth Congress*

House of Representatives	
Northern Democrats	77
Southern Democrats	67
Northern Whigs	54
Southern Whigs	25
Senate	
Northern Democrats	14
Southern Democrats	19
Northern Whigs	13
Southern Whigs	12

Thirtieth Congress*

House of Representatives	
Northern Democrats	57
Southern Democrats	54
Northern Whigs	80
Southern Whigs	37
Senate	
Northern Democrats	15
Southern Democrats	19
Northern Whigs	11
Southern Whigs	11

*This list excludes a small number of congressmen who represented a minor party. It includes only those congressmen who served during the period of the war and voted on the war measures. In cases where vacancies occurred because of deaths or resignations and a member of the opposition party replaced the outgoing member, both members are included in the total number.

APPENDIX II

SOUTHERNERS SERVING IN CONGRESS
DURING THE MEXICAN WAR

Twenty-Ninth Congress

Democrats

Whigs

Alabama

Bagby, Arthur P., Senator
Lewis, Dixon H., Senator

Chapman, Reuben
Dargan, Edmund S.
Houston, George S.
McConnell, Felix G. (died
September, 1846)
Bowden, Franklin W. (re-
placed McConnell,
December, 1846)
Payne, William W.
Yancey, William L. (re-
signed September, 1846)
Cottrell, James L. F.
(replaced Yancey,
December, 1846)

Alabama

Hilliard, Henry W.

Arkansas

Ashley, Chester, Senator
Sevier, Ambrose H., Senator

Yell, Archibald (resigned
July, 1846)

Arkansas

Newton, Thomas (replaced
Yell, February, 1847)

Delaware

Delaware

Clayton, John M., Senator
Clayton, Thomas, Senator

Houston, John W.

Florida

Westcott, James D., Jr.,
 Senator
 Yulee, David Levy, Senator

 Brockenbrough, William H.

Georgia

Colquitt, Walter T.,
 Senator

 Cobb, Howell
 Haralson, Hugh A.
 Jones, Seaborn
 Lumpkin, John H.
 Towns, George W. B.

Kentucky

Boyd, Linn
 Martin, John P.
 Tibbatts, John W.

Louisiana

Soulé, Pierre, Senator
 (replaced Barrow
 February, 1847)

 Harmanson, John H.
 La Sere, Emile
 Morse, Isaac E.

Maryland

Constable, Albert
 Giles, William F.
 Ligon, Thomas W.
 Perry, Thomas J.

FloridaGeorgia

Berrien, John M., Senator

 King, Thomas Butler
 Stephens, Alexander H.
 Toombs, Robert

Kentucky

Crittenden, John J.,
 Senator
 Morehead, James T.,
 Senator

 Bell, Joshua F.
 Davis, Garrett
 Grider, Henry
 McHenry, John H.
 Thomasson, William P.
 Trumbo, Andrew
 Young, Bryan R.

Louisiana

Barrow, Alexander, Senator
 (died December, 1846)
 Johnson, Henry, Senator

 Thibodeaux, Bannon G.

Maryland

Johnson, Reverdy, Senator
 Pearce, James A., Senator

 Chapman, John G.
 Long, Edward H. C.

Mississippi

Chalmers, Joseph W.,
 Senator
 Speight, Jesse, Senator

Adams, Stephen
 Davis, Jefferson (resigned
 June, 1846)
 Ellett, Henry T. (replaced
 Davis, January, 1847)
 Roberts, Robert W.
 Thompson, Jacob

Missouri

Atchison, David R.,
 Senator
 Benton, Thomas Hart,
 Senator

Bowlin, James B.
 Phelps, John S.
 Price, Sterling (resigned
 August, 1846)
 McDaniel, William (re-
 placed Price, December,
 1846)
 Relfe, James H.
 Sims, Leonard H.

North Carolina

Haywood, William H., Jr.,
 Senator, (resigned July,
 1846)

Biggs, Asa
 Clark, Henry S.
 Daniel, John R. J.
 Dobbin, James C.
 McKay, James I.
 Reid, David S.

South Carolina

Calhoun, John C., Senator
 McDuffie, George, Senator
 (resigned August, 1846)
 Butler, Andrew P. (re-
 placed McDuffie,
 December, 1846)

MississippiMissouriNorth Carolina

Badger, George E., Senator
 (replaced Haywood,
 December, 1846)
 Mangum, Willie P., Senator

Barringer, Daniel M.
 Dockery, Alfred
 Graham, James

South Carolina

Black, James A.
 Burt, Armistead
 Holmes, Isaac E.
 Rhett, Robert Barnwell
 Simpson, Richard F.
 Sims, Alexander D.
 Woodward, Joseph A.

Tennessee

Turney, Hopkins L.,
 Senator

Chase, Lucien B.
 Cullom, Alvan
 Johnson, Andrew
 Jones, George W.
 Martin, Barclay
 Stanton, Frederick P.

Texas

Houston, Sam, Senator
 Rusk, Thomas J., Senator

Kaufman, David S. (seated
 June, 1846)
 Pilsbury, Timothy (seated
 June, 1846)

Virginia

Pennybacker, Isaac S.,
 Senator (died January,
 1847)
 Mason, James M., Senator
 (replaced Pennybacker,
 January, 1847)

Atkinson, Archibald
 Bayly, Thomas H.
 Bedinger, Henry
 Brown, William G.
 Chapman, Augustus A.
 Dromgoole, George C.
 Hopkins, George W.
 Hubbard, Edmund W.
 Hunter, Robert M. T.
 Johnson, Joseph
 Leake, Shelton F.
 McDowell, James
 Seddon, James A.
 Tredway, William M.

Tennessee

Jarnagin, Spencer, Senator

Brown, Milton
 Cocke, William M.
 Crozier, John H.
 Ewing, Edwin H.
 Gentry, Meredith P.

Texas

Virginia

Archer, William S.,
 Senator

Pendleton, John S.

Thirtieth CongressAlabama

Bagby, Arthur P., Senator
Lewis, Dixon H., Senator

Bowdon, Franklin W.
Cobb, Williamson R. W.
Harris, Sampson W.
Houston, George S.
Inge, Samuel W.

Arkansas

Ashley, Chester, Senator
Sevier, Ambrose H.,
Senator

Johnson, Robert W.

DelawareFlorida

Westcott, James D., Jr.,
Senator
Yulee, David Levy, Senator

Georgia

Colquitt, Walter T.,
Senator (resigned
February, 1848)
Johnson, Herschel V.,
Senator (replaced
Colquitt, February 14,
1848)

Cobb, Howell
Haralson, Hugh A.
Iverson, Alfred
Lumpkin, John H.

KentuckyAlabama

Gayle, John
Hilliard, Henry W.

ArkansasDelaware

Clayton, John M., Senator
Spruance, Presley, Senator

Houston, John W.

Florida

Cabell, Edward C.

Georgia

Berrien, John M., Senator

Jones, John W.
King, Thomas Butler
Stephens, Alexander H.
Toombs, Robert

Kentucky

Crittenden, John J.,
Senator
Underwood, Joseph R.,
Senator

Boyd, Linn
 Clarke, Beverly L.
 French, Richard
 Peyton, Samuel O.

Adams, Green
 Buckner, Aylett
 Duncan, W. Garnett
 Gaines, John P.
 Morehead, Charles S.
 Thompson, John B.

Louisiana

Downs, Solomon W., Senator

Harmanson, John H.
 La Sere, Emile
 Morse, Isaac E.

Louisiana

Johnson, Henry, Senator

Thibodeaux, Bannon G.

Maryland

Ligon, Thomas W.
 McLane, Robert M.

Maryland

Johnson, Reverdy, Senator
 Pearce, James A., Senator

Chapman, John G.
 Crisfield, John W.
 Evans, Alexander
 Roman, J. Dixon

Mississippi

Davis, Jefferson, Senator
 Foote, Henry S., Senator

Brown, Albert G.
 Featherston, Winfield S.
 Thompson, Jacob

Mississippi

Tompkins, Patrick W.

Missouri

Atchison, David R., Senator
 Benton, Thomas Hart,
 Senator

Bowlin, James B.
 Green, James S.
 Hall, Willard P.
 Jameson, John
 Phelps, John S.

Missouri

North Carolina

Daniel, John R. J.
 McKay, James I.
 Venable, Abraham W.

North Carolina

Badger, George E., Senator
 Mangum, Willie P., Senator

Barringer, Daniel M.
 Boyden, Nathaniel
 Clingman, Thomas L.
 Donnell, Richard S.
 Outlaw, David
 Shepperd, Augustine H.

South Carolina

Butler, Andrew P., Senator
Calhoun, John C., Senator

Black, James A.
Burt, Armistead
Holmes, Isaac E.
Rhett, Robert Barnwell
Simpson, Richard F.
Sims, Alexander D.
Woodward, Joseph A.

South CarolinaTennessee

Turney, Hopkins L., Senator

Chase, Lucien B.
Hill, Hugh L. W.
Johnson, Andrew
Jones, George W.
Stanton, Frederick P.
Thomas, James H.

Tennessee

Bell, John, Senator

Barrow, Washington
Cocke, William M.
Crozier, John H.
Gentry, Meredith P.
Haskell, William T.

Texas

Houston, Sam, Senator
Rusk, Thomas J., Senator

Kaufman, David S.
Pilsbury, Timothy

TexasVirginia

Hunter, Robert M. T.,
Senator
Mason, James M., Senator

Atkinson, Archibald
Bayly, Thomas H.
Beale, Richard L. T.
Bedinger, Henry
Bocock, Thomas S.
Brown, William G.
McDowell, James
Meade, Richard K.
Thompson, Robert A.

Virginia

Botts, John M.
Flournoy, Thomas S.
Fulton, Andrew S.
Goggin, William L.
Pendleton, John S.
Preston, William B.

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