

There are two issues here: ① the constitutional and legal issue of principle; i.e., the "compact" and ② the application of that principle to the moral issue of slavery; i.e., American chattel slavery.

- The issue of the letter of man's law (i.e., the constitutional compact) must be resolved in favor of the slaveholding states; however, - The issue of God's Higher Law (love, mercy, and biblical justice) must be resolved in favor of the non-slaveholding states.

# Document set out reason for S.C. secession: slavery

On Dec. 24, 1860, the delegates to the S.C. Secession Convention in Charleston adopted a six-page "Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina from the Federal Union." They ordered that 15,000 copies be printed together with the two-paragraph Ordinance of Secession. The first half of the Declaration lays the legal groundwork for secession, recounting the circumstances under which the Revolutionary War was fought and the Union established and paying particular attention to the idea that each state was "free, sovereign and independent." The second half, which explains the reason for secession, follows:

We assert that fourteen of the States have deliberately refused for years past to fulfill their constitutional obligations, and we refer to their own Statutes for the proof.

The Constitution of the United States, in its fourth Article, provides as follows:

"No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping to another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up, on claim to the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

This stipulation was so material to the compact, that without it that compact would not have been made. The greater number of the contracting parties held slaves, and they had previously evinced their estimate of the value of such a stipulation by making it a condition in the Ordinance for the government of the territory ceded by Virginia, which now composes the States north of the Ohio River.

The same article of the Constitution stipulates also for rendition by the several States of fugitives from justice from the other States. The General (federal) Government, as the common agent, passed laws to carry into effect these stipulations of the States. For many years these laws were executed. But an increasing hostility on the part of the non-slaveholding States to the institution of slavery, has led to a disregard of their obligations, and the laws of the General Government have ceased to effect their objects.

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The ends for which this Constitution was adopted, have been wholly forgotten by the States north of this. Those who hold that a compromise has been made in regard to the African race, have perjured themselves to the blood of the millions who have been wronged, and who are yet wronged, and who will never be reconciled to the compromise.

der to justice fugitives charged with murder, and with inciting servile insurrection in the State of Virginia. Thus the compact constitutional has been broken.

These ends, it is endeavored to accomplish by a Federal Government, in which each State has an equal and separate voice. It is endeavored to accomplish by a Federal Government, in which each State has an equal and separate voice.

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tution was framed are declared by itself to be "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

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We affirm that these ends for which this Government was instituted have been defeated, and the Government itself has been made destructive of them by the action of the non-slaveholding States. Those States have assumed the right of deciding upon the propriety of our domestic institutions; and have denied the rights of property established in fifteen of the States and recognized by the Federal Government; they have denounced as sinful the institution of slavery; they have permitted the open establishment among them of societies, whose avowed object is to disturb the peace and to eloign (take away) the property of the citizens of other States. They have encouraged and assisted thousands of our slaves to leave their homes; and those who remain, have been incited by emissaries, books and pictures to servile insurrection.

For twenty-five years this agitation has been steadily increasing, until it has now secured to its aid the power of the Common Government. Observing the forms of the Constitution, a sectional party has found within that article establishing the Executive Department, the means of subverting the Constitution itself. A geographical line has been drawn across the Union, and all the States north of that line have united in the election of a man to the high office of President of the United States whose opinions and purposes are hostile to slavery. He is to be entrusted with the administration of the Common Government, because he has declared that "Government cannot endure permanently half slave, half free," and that the public mind must rest in the belief that Slavery is the course of ultimate extinction.

Sectional interest and animosity will deepen the irritation, and all hope of remedy is rendered vain, by the fact that public opinion at the North has invested a great political error with the sanction of a more erroneous religious belief.

We, therefore, the people of South Carolina, by our delegates, in Convention assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, have solemnly declared that the Union heretofore existing between this State and the other States of North America, is dissolved, and that the State of South Carolina has resumed her position among the nations of the world, as a separate and independent State, with full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent States may of right do.

On the 4th of March next, this party will take possession of the Government. It has announced that the South shall be excluded from the common Territory; that the Judicial Tribunals shall be made sectional, and that a war must be waged against slavery until it shall cease throughout the United States.