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Title: Letter from Alexander H. Stephens to Thomas W. Thomas

Date: June 16, 1856

Location: I-SpahrB-1959-10

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Washington de 16. Dune 1856 How Thomas M. Thomas Chy sear bu your leten ofthe 11. Inst has just wearhed me- Lly no many Con au un Mi run in the observe that Buchaund as a mother of course will be duched -Florth whom the approaching contise as on of quat arat afteren rufs nor is the result pre from doubt - on the most purhable wesult leverene Lean not that mention onen or Ale culation dutes facting torregains severed de du what the pusunt fusion Munuals at Bhilitithen will dewerplish - Nor do & concur anthrow at all as a the weather, why to, durer eno not thomenally De was not areaux he Shordown the abothlion traiters in Rausa," but souther arcause he that down's all an mu finis of the Koursay But sin the Anthon States leve gran orgo - not with que pourde t is the lint with execulous halrowings by milling their onemen in teoms over their weeks already - Many of our less finds able horte were wistile to there - and only Munchage Muy had historia lu- It is only within the bash Les monthe that the houtine of Mr. Bura has been duch as 8 he curi my Courmendation 2 man it poster og his admin. stration - That Miesesbrug hem or charge in his holing Than no

don't - When he sent Mude Athanses his disign in that offin, calient & am blighy laft apretion ares to make Kausar a fre Stale - The water to the change in that probey look place Duhays from the same motion which count Mouth and hasallating Counas When their lacker on The original Merhosilen when it way furt cultivatured null the tenste -It may have her des covered that The question was drong enough to over now " huny of herahon But her Conduit Commends thou mu who sloud in the front of Ou fight loved not a gorsollin by Them havy lucaus abthe Cass hour la seemed des levra to resent The tide that her could no longer stay had hower I am now strathing of

The marves amoleves on the harton those forther men in the Councilian who wer offware they ar nomention And while I world him whatfu how if he had been the choice of the Convention defor the grounds Mal lie is now night or has her lutty daw for a Combes Azon as you attendy the wow her ever no favount of men - Und his our of the Cust men in the Grenty I would mad a bubillion for -Iluluw with of the defluently and Now have in theuses dramanson from the fieldenely, unallings, tolly and vasulation of his policy in higard to that Lembory - der. Buchaunan, nor monther for his reveneration day abolition or fur soil or dule Raisey buling on the back of duy apthe members of the cureunate Courenter - 1 an Truth & When were notuch members Mess - But & Could gene instances of

men in that Commenteren - have a, Stul to thansas . who were against Quirer weaun of his Course Courses The The Kauses men sollhe brewd that trud meris Lord" on that questin But I med not ahen thou hous-The fact is as descrit it - And you and fund that then well be but from men abother borth of francis for soil producting who note for Buchan non - down may but d'ance he thou and who have a will matar ut Min minds Valrandon Their horisis and for the butien Hand with the harty whow the Status of excaling Ligistation -My word fact you und have to approhentions for the welsen't Orones heroper if Buchaunch Shoreahelicher Ale wen who looks way such hesult

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Bucharman delaration, white Than heard of that he wouldhave bolice for the Bur of arhad hours Congues, - a part from the public streck in hishown to the Rusolulain, up the Deur Demvemlie Countin affermy that The Thousan But may not an act of un messay ligislative lint analy Sustin a Equaly-which Nurvhous he approved - ahart Lay from Nun Connderations whas bully relatively endorsed Hu Cen unnate Acolforn which fully identifies him with it and about he with all of us much Stand a fall as the Mother in the toulese may dunde - for is his can about analogous What of General Scott in 1852 - The Whing Deatform ofthat man

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munaid for him - That if Un Com hentron would but fulle a Lound and national Blulfour Such as that which was advant and which Lallment to and Sosper ? Also murate Scott out andy the world Marthauself whom it though I may very much opposed this trung the Candidate on it tout humblules Twould tole for hum Then an fact - The Oblattom ena adobata - Scott men nomenatid - the tufused to give the Realfour by approval and I approved his chelian while Mr. Danson Wood of Sun - Non hi the pusual candham dean

Nothing from Mr. Benhauman Cenders to thow that hower, not in sentendo with as in the original Kauser. Murrent - asknow many ofthe was mit built of his normalism wen also the Slaunchest funde and had in that fight - afknow he has bublishing undersed the delaration that the trucken me, not an ceressay act - and about all I Thur that his now short and fully Committed attrapolicy ofthe maken notors in thickers hit in our fulur and Lalso Know that the qual body of the backing oftent maden hour britte and South will make the quolose worker April in their leoner To defeat him and manif the caun they

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sudued to brad a whellow etand Now her for him - But in this case duly does not hourt that andy a Iful Our purtdung its Serite On the Contrary 2 but in the Mollin very much as Douglass 4 posses his own beling, andle Subject - and hen Sunde humanda that I ful bully askend and Loter fund that you an mustaffen in supposing that & ouglass way not normated because he herethed Ruser - Ithnow the most inglumbal near from the Anth in that Commente who Levourd Bucksuna roundline wen just as the and downed of Douglass hemself - Shaw heer with them in Council in the doubless hours which over outhoused our Cause - Their properon for Buchamin grew ant of no aphouhour to Douglass! houtin a prinche, from no des houter to guld an esta to the anti- / houses buling - but from a hersonal purperme - and from the fact that Douglass' Uniting ni fulla Promunden four Man ago depended Buchaum and Caused Deerer an ouldeder When tather who and whow whole Troling unail latis hay been to stirke down Mahonal men hertwand Sometin - This is the masser for Mui professor and it is not a agilimate our and en ex weather our in my Copierion - These are my news given ag fuly and frankly as your gow your to zon - Law on The ground and Strath of they defenow - And and endustand The dictales of starty in the atmen droth slougger lorgone us on du hasty the finds of the elsion the duthe Constitution as I is and very the other snamland on our side and the Then and downed emmin of both on the other side they proupt me Shorgly not only feet to ophone Butidenna and Mus cripple the Afrity the partonot thinghout Mu Cand lind to gene them my Cordial and warm Cooker: other - Whether My Course were.

be the tryining a the one of my brothered rein sol question of lint little anythe with me - If the Country Can a sand by a lesurer of its fried, who make Course lans & prosere it on The only brases an which it ong we when Junkerand 2 Shaer an Content whalever forteen undy which mysey you if furst a Sympathy for Those mu Malwerd Conthe Culion abriding men aptho North who have been ent down for their Maulenan ofthe right in days hast I ful Mir Same - But zon must allow me Oday Oron Stal Murighen fell ender the hands

of Runcia and his admishibien Than by any alter man - There an the men who mere the Most aux con for Buchaunes promenation - Jour of them If know and the course of Mun granasa, Lalso Musin And it und "notheral as aske Acry for them to toute to down alter quarter for a leader than alle hand that Denote them Ithrow it has been Land that Buchannos fruid, wen Corking to for doch support - The Lace Coir Candid & from an abservation on the ground in very sherin is a mesufrusulation-Those who men descrows aller tromenshin of

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befor 1850 be forgollen - On deis puisple or Fellown in 1832 - And oven after the hassen of The Kausan Bull in have not to make ophosition athat musteen a lest for perfulual exclusion -I am willing to appellate usu huth all who from their lime hence forthe will make the purples applied Bell in our Lendonal Trokery the have of agistution - thou who want only ague to let the Bull hernand ceulouslud aboute Slatul Broke leve who well in fution apply the seems fruther in all analagous cases -The quat well of getting this

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haden ham wer signiful any des howhow to make the fumble, of the Keen a Bell of tollowy The hasin of Julien hoges color mi un cualion a formalion of Lemboral Green 5- to Min polo ay Mr. Bulanna and the whole harty - ong mon that revenuted him is bull Commelled - to got the whole Country - all harter in Eugen anderry when the tronger Alle Deime Commellal o allumulage met is the hught of my aprilieher This what I wish about all Mung to der allowhlished -If dolin Vantzum for instance Shall lake down what he has Devid dud gem en he; adhesion to bound and stry he doctron gren at the eleventhe house Imparlations elon the door against him - The heenth of The muth is what Laush to Su and on the fronts Com day with carnislates, end deal to all who have howafor forgat us -" Whele the Could holy out of heem 1 The welest Senner may betern"-Lam not bouthing to the succes, of men men a tracties - 2 and looking sold to the Lucies of fruity - and L'hovenly halien if in the approachings

Contest without suced then well never be another Lechoned aslavy stuggle in au conte States of hast in ourday -Juste bust amin un Untusting of the Country has the downt issue her presented - A nogal Olalfon pushed by a unanimous paty with a condudate seeing squary whom the fruitly arreamed that heme lufor Sulemeled to the Ausman hobe - left on the hisuthof the issue the fate of the Country May defend - Ishall hol nows auticipali loulingeaning - L Than a String allactumet for Strange on h may be maintound ence

The Constitution - Than Story. faith in its been glier Juderand But now is the lesse when it's ohe but atter trying tral - elly almost effects well be made on the side of those who looks with the same object and holes that I do to the fulien_ But drunt Stoh - dean day no. Min now - I have anthen world Num than I had any white led ling when I look who my her - My Lungers an and out Shear you can not de applier whot is alway unline or ruther dentilled Than given you howen my very tente that fundour and freeking which I thought was due no less dyon their mysuf your most thes bulguly the This tr. Thomas Alexandulo hiphers alberton ga

Hon Thomas W. Thomas

My Dear Sir

Your letter of the 11th just has reached me. I by no means concur with you in the opinion that Buchanan as a matter of course will be elected. I look upon the approaching contest as one of great heat and fierceness nor is the result free from doubt. On the most probable result however I can not yet venture speculation satisfactory to myself until I see what the present fusion movements at Philadelphia will accomplish. Nor do I concur with you at all as to the reasons why Mr. Pierce was not nominated. It was not because he "shot down the abolition traitors in Kansas" but rather because he "shot down" all the true friends of the Kansas bill in the northern states two years ago - not with gun powder it is true but with executive patronage by putting their enemies in power over their CKS & our best friends at the North were hostile to Pierce - and to my knowledge they had reason to be. It is only within the last six months that the position of Mr. Pierce has been such as to receive any commendation - I mean the position of his administration - that there has been a change in his When he sent to Kansas his design or that policy I have no doubt. of his cabinet I am fully (?) of opinion was to make Kansas a free state. The reason the change in that policy took place I will not now stop to inquire into. Perhaps it sprang from the same motive which caused weak and vasallating councils to change their tack on the original proposition when it was first introduced into the Senate. It may heve been discovered that the question was strong enough to override "puny opposition." But his conduct towards those men who stood in the front of the fight could not be forgotten by them because at the tast how he seemed disposed to ent the tide that could no longer stay back & be borne upon its bosom again into power. I am now speaking of the reasons and motives on his part of those nothern men in the convention who were apposed to his re nomination and while I would have woted for him if he had been the choice of the convention upon the grounds that he is now right or has been lately I am free to confess to you as you already know he was no favorite of mine. And he is one of the last men in this country I would head a for. I believe most of the difficulties we now have in Kansas have arisen from the fickleness, weakness, folly and vasallation of his policy in regard to that territory. Mr. Buchanan is not indebted for his nomination to any abolition or free soul or anti Kansas feeling on the part of any of the members of the Cincinnati convention. The truth is there were no such members there. But I could give you instances of men in the convention true as steel to Kansas - who were against Pierce because of his course toward the Kansas men "at the period that tried men's souls" on that question. But I those points. The fact is as I state it. And you will find that there will be but few men at the north of previous free soil proclivities who vote for Buchanan. Some may but it will be those only who have or will make up their minds to abandon their heresies and for the future stand with the party upon the status of existing legislation. My word for it you need have no apprehension for the Wilmot Proviso hereafter if Buchanan should be elected. All men who look to any such result or could have a desire to produce it will fall into the fusion ranks of Black Republicanism which now seriously threatens to swamp the entire north. If I could today be assured of carrying the whole south 120 votes and Penna. and New Jersey I would be willing to

. I am however not without hopes of carrying several other northern states towit Illinois, Iowa, California, Connecticut and perhaps New Hampshire & Maine - and it may be Indiana also - But the contest in all these states will be the hotest ever waged in politicks, and just as directly on theline as if Pierce had been the nominee. Apart from Buchanans declarations which I have heard of that he would have voted for the Bill if he had been in Congress - a part from his public speech in response to the resolutions of the Penna Democratic convention affirming that the Kansas Bill was not an act of "unnecessary legislation" but an act of justice &m equality - which resolutions he approved - apart I say from those considerations he has fully & cordilaly endorsed the Cincinnati platform which fully identifies him with it and upon it he with all of us must stand or fall as the people in the contest may decide. Nor is his case at all analagous to that of General Scott in 1852. The Whig platform of that year it is true was sound enough upon the slavery question. It was satisfactory to or helped to draw it -But General Scott would not express his approval of it. me for I drew it -He took the nomination with the resolutions and Yeal? . And it is well known that I never took any position against Scott with he refused to endorse or approve the Platform. Indeed after the nomination I stated to friends of his that I would fote for him if he would in his letter of acceptance give his approval to it. This he declined to do - and so far from it distinctly stated in his letter that he would not make those principles the policy of his administration so far as the conferring of patronage was concerned. It was when this letter of acceptance made its appearance that I for the first time announced my determination not to support him. Up to that time I had not committed myself against his support. I expressly refused to commit myself in conversation with Mr. Dawson and others just before they went to the convention, though Dawsoon and other Fillmore men were open & in their declarations that they would not vote for Scott if nominated. Dawson said if Scott should be nominated there could not be an electoral ticket got up in Georgia for him. I told Dawson if Seward were nominated an electoral ticket would be run (?) in Georggia for him - That if the convention would put forth a local and national Platform such as that which was adopted and which I alluded to and nominate Scott on it and if he would plant himself upon it though I was very much opposed to his being the candidate on it yet nevertheless I would vote for him. These are facts. The Platform was adopted. Scott was nominated. He refused to give the Platform his approval. And I opposed his election while Mr. Dawson voted for him. Now in the present case I have seen nothing from Mr. Buchanan tending to show that he was not in sentiment with us as in the original Kansas movement. I know many of thewarmest friends of his nomination even also the staunchest friends we had in that fight. I know he has publickly endorsed the declaration that the messure was not an unnecessary act - and above all I know that he is now openly and fully committed to the policy of the messure not only in past but in the future and I also know that the great body of the enemies of that measure both north and south will make the greatest efforts in their power to defeat him and mainly because of his present open and avowed position. But in the case of Scott the great mass of those at the north him and whom his would have tended more or less to bring into power openly repudiated the Platform upon which he was nominated. So much for this digression - which I hope you will excuse especially as you think I had not "half so strong a case for going against Scott" as I have for leading a rebellion against Buchanan in favor of Pierre or Douglas. Now I assure you again I look solely in all these questions to principles and not to men - or at least I look more to

principles than I do to men. Douglass was my choice and if for either of these men I could have been induced to head a rebellion it would have been for him. But in this case duty does not point that way as I feel the pressure of its . On the contrary I feel in the matter very much as Douglass expressed his own feelings on the subject. And here I will remark that I feel fully assured and satisfied that you are mistakeh in supposing that Douglass was not nominated because he backed Pierce. I know the most infleuntial men from the north in that convention who favored Buchanan's nomination were just as true and sound as Douglass himself. I have been with them in council in the darkest hours which ever enshrouded our cause. Their preference for Buchanan grew out of no opposition for Douglass' position or principles - from no disposition to yield an iota to the anti-Kansas feeling - but from a personal preference - and from the fact that Douglass' putting in for the nomination four years ago defeated Buchanan and caused Pierce an outsider to be taken up and whose whole policy until lately has been to strike down national men north and south. This is the reason for their preference and it is not only a natural one and a legitimate one but an excusable one in my opinion. These are my views give to you as fully and frankly as you gave yours to me. I am on the ground and speak of things I know. And as I understand the dictates of duty in the almost death struggle before us on the part of the friends of the union under the Constitution as it is and ought to be maintained on our side and the open and avowed enemies of both on the other side they prompt (?) me strongly not only to oppose Buchanan and thus cripple the efforts of the patriots throughout the land but to give them my cordial and warm cooperation. Whether this course will be the beginning or the end of my political ruin is a question of but little weight with me. If the country can be saved by a union of its

friends who make common cause to preserve it on the only basis on Which it ought to be preserved I shall be content whatever fortune may betide myself. You express a sympathy for those true national constitution abiding men at the north who have been cut down for their maintenance of the right in days past. I feel the same. But you must allow me to say to you that mamm of them feel under the hands of Pierce and his administration than by any other man's. These are the men who were most anxious for Buchanan's nomination. Some of them I know and the cause of their grievances I also know. And it was "natural" as men say for them to took to some other quarter for a leader than to the hand that smote them. I know it has been said that Buchanan's friends were looking to free soil support. This I tell you candidly from an observation on the ground in my opinion is a misconception. Those who were desirious of the nomination of Pierce favoured such rmours. I could hever find any real friend of Buchanan that ever put forth such an argument. I was very anxious that the contest between the several candidates for the nomination should not descend to such a system of warfare. I am well satisfied that it was not founded in truth and justice. Buchanan's antecedents were also brought up - his expressions on slavery expressed in his Texas speech - &c. Now upon all these points I have acted upon the principle of letting men's antecedents before 1850 be forgotten. On this principle only could I have supported Webster or Fillmore in 1852. And even since the passage of the Kansas Bill in 1852 I have not been disposed to make opposition to that measure a test for perpetual exclusion. I am willing to affiliate now with all who from this time hence forth will make the principles of that Bill in our policy the basis of legislation those who will not only agree to let that Bill untouched upon the Statute Books but in future apply the same principles in all analagous cases. The great result of getting this policy sustained and established in

our government is the object to which I am looking. If in Georgia there should be a union of parties as you anticipate in support of Buchanan I should be rejoiced. But you or I certainly do not understand the position of the leaders of the Georgia K. Ns. if you suppose their position is the same as ENEMEREN that of Buchanan. In the Platform in Philadel. in Feb. last which Mr. Fillmore has endorsed the taking off of the Missouri restriction is one of the grave offenses brought against this Administration. That act Buchanan approves. NeitherFillmore or any of his Georgia leaders have ever signified any disposttion to make the principles of the Kansas Bill as to slavery the basis of future legislation in the creation or formation of territorial governments. To this policy Mr. Buchanan and the whole party - every man that nominated him is fully committed - to get the whole country - all parties in Georgia and everywhere else brought to the same committal and acknowledgment is the height of my ambition. This is what I wish above all things to see accomplished. If John Van B for instance shall (should?) take down what he has said and give in his adhesion to sound and right doctrine even at the eleventh hour I would not close the door against him. The triumph of the truth is what I wish to see, and on this point I can say with earnestness and zeal to all who have heretofore fought us -

"while the camp holds out to un-

"The vilest sinner may return" .

I am not looking to the success of men or parties. I am looking solely to the success of principles. And I do verily believe if in the approaching contest we shall succeed there will never be another sectional or slavery struggle in the United States at least in our day. For the first time in the history of the country has the direct issue been presented - A right Platform presented

by a unanimous party with a candidate serving (?) squarely upon the principles announced was never before submitted to the American people. Upon the result of the issue the fate of the country may depend. I shall not now anticipate xhark contingencies or what may happen in case of defeat. I have a strong attachment for the anticipate as it was made and so long as it may be maintained under the constitution. I have strong faith in its being there (thus?) preserved. But now is the time when it is to be put to the trying test. My utmost efforts will be made on the side of those who look with the same objects and hopes that I do to the uture. But I must stop. I can say no more now. I have written vastly more than I had any idea of writing when I took up my pen. My fingers are tired out. I fear you can not decipher what is already written or rather scribbled.

I have given you however my views with that freedom and frankness which I thought was due no less to you than to myself.

Yours most respectfully

Alexander H Stephens

Hon. Thos. W. Thomas