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Title: Letter from James Buchanan to Robert Flenniken

Date: May 5, 1851

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Wheatland, near Lancaster 5 May 1851.

My dear Sir,

I have received your kind favor of the 29th ultimo & thank you for the good news which it contains. I had been before induced to believe that the nomination of General Lane in Indiana was intended to let General Caji down easily who is in truth & in fact out of the way except for the purpose of breaking me down in Pennsylvania: & in this I do not believe they will succeed.

You ask what are my prospects of carrying New York in Convention? I answer that I do not know. The party is there so divided & the different sections so hostile to each other that I have purposely kept aloof. Neither section is hostile to me, though I am not the first choice of either. All depends upon Pennsylvania. Should she come out decidedly at the proper time, I think, from present ^{throughout the Union} appearances, there would be little difficulty.

Since the death of my good friend William Beatty I have taken no part in regard to the question of Canal Commisssioners. Messrs Cameron & Co have determined, if possible, to distract the Reading Convention by introducing a Caji Resolution there; & failing in this, against all right & justice & the rules of the party, to admit the Ingers delegates from this County over the heads of the regularly ^{& claim this as a triumph over me} elected delegates. By pursuing this course, they show conclusively that they are not the true friends of Caji; but merely wish to ^{by means of his name} ~~frustrate the~~

to do me
~~course for my injury~~. It is understood here that the friends of
Sebright will unite in these measures; and if so, you will perceive
at once that they will necessarily come into conflict not only with
my friends but ^{whose interest it is to keep down disunion in the party} the true friends of Poyles. It is both the true
policy of the party & justice to all concerned to adopt the maxim
"Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." To precipitate the
Presidential question prematurely on the Reading Convention would
involve us in inextricable difficulties. I have heard from Pittsburg
that some of the friends of Mr. Sebright ^{from Fayette County} have openly declared in
that City that the Frazer delegates from this County were the true
delegates & ought to be admitted. Indeed the impression here is,
though I know not on what authority, that these Frazer delegates
already have an understanding with Cameron who is understood
to be the leaders friend of Sebright. Now you will perceive,
under these circumstances, how impossible it will be to prevent
the issue which both you & I so much deprecate. I repeat,
~~again~~, however, that since the death of Mr. Beatty, I have
taken no personal part on the question of Canal Compromise.

I do not yet know, whether I shall visit the West
during the approaching summer; but, if I should, I shall
certainly visit Greene County & give you due & timely notice.

From your friend
Very respectfully

James Buchanan

R. J. Henneken Esq

Wheatland., near Lancaster 5 May 1851

My dear Sir/

I have received your kind favor of the 29th ultimo & thank you for the good news which it contains. I had been before induced to believe that the nomination of General Lane in Indiana was intended to let General Case down easily who is in truth and in fact out of the way except for the purpose of breaking me down in Pennsylvania: & in this I do not believe they will succeed.

You ask what are my prospects of carrying New York in convention? I answer that I do not know. The party is there so divided & the different sections so hostile to each other that I have purposely kept aloof. Neither section is hostile to me though I am not the first choice of either. All depends upon Pennsylvania. Should she come out decidedly at the proper time, I think, from present appearances throughout the Union there would be little difficulty.

Since the death of my good friend William Beatty I have taken no part in regard to the question of Canal Commissioner. Messrs. Cameron & Co. have determined, if possible, to distract the Reading convention by introducing a Cass resolution there; & failing in this, against all right & justice & the rules of the party, to admit the Frazer delegates from this county over the heads of the regularly elected delegates & claim this as a triumph over me. By pursuing this course, they show conclusively that they are not the true friends of Cass; but merely wish to ~~pursue this course for my~~ by means of his name

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to do me injury. It is understood here that the friends of Searight will unite in these measures; and if so, you will perceive at once that they will necessarily come into conflict not only with my friends but with the true friends of Bigler whose interest it is to keep down dissention in the party. It is both the true policy of the party & justice to all concerned to adopt the maxim "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." To precipitate the Presidential question prematurely on the Reading convention would involve us in inextricable difficulties. I have heard from Pittsburg that some of the friends of Mr. Searight from Fayette County have openly declared in that city that the Frazer delegates from this county were the true delegates & ought to be admitted. Indeed the impression here is, though I know not on what authority, that the Frazer delegates already have an understanding with Cameron who is understood to be the leading friend of Searight. Now you will perceive, under these circumstances, how impossible it will be to prevent the issue which both you & I so much deprecate. I repeat, however, that since the death of Mr. Beatty, I have taken no personal part on the question of Canal Commissioner.

I do not yet know whether I shall visit the West during the approaching summer; but if I should, I shall certainly visit Greene County & give you due & timely notice.

from your friend
very respectfully
James Buchanan

R. P. Flenniken Esq.