

2. PRIMARY SOURCES DOCUMENTS JANUARY WEEK TWO

January 8, 1861



(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#7.1)

January 8, 1861

Missouri Volunteer Militia Gen. Frost Orders an Assembly of All Officers and Soldiers of the 1st Military District

*History of Saint Louis City and County: From the Earliest
Periods to the Present Day: Including Biographical
Sketches of Representative Men, Vol. 1: 487*

Headquarters First Military District,
St. Louis, Jan. 8, 1861.

General Orders No. 4.

I. With a view to facilitate a prompt assemblage of the troops in this district, whenever it may be necessary so to do, it is hereby ordered that all officers and soldiers in the command shall assemble at their armories and headquarters, in full dress uniform, as soon as they may hear the bells of the churches sounding a continual peal, interrupted by pauses of five minutes. The troops having thus assembled will await in their quarters orders from their commanding officers.

II. Commanding officers of corps will be held responsible that this order is communicated and explained to their commands.

By order,

BRIG. GEN. FROST,⁸⁰ Commanding,
WILLIAM D. WOOD, A. A. G.

⁸⁰ Missouri Volunteer Militia (MVM) Gen. Daniel M. Frost, in command of the 1st Military District, which included the city of St. Louis and the surrounding county, worked closely with Southern-sympathizing Gov. Jackson and would enroll the secessionist paramilitary Minutemen in early 1861 as companies in a second regiment (the MVM) so that they could operate and recruit openly.



(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#7.2)

January 8, 1861

Senator Thomas C. Johnson to D. Robert Barclay

Missouri Republican, published untitled on January 9, 1861

"The act I introduced does not interfere with the powers of the mayor and sheriff to call out the military under the Militia Law of 1859, to suppress riots. When the military are called out under the last named law, they will be under proper command and held responsible. No one here but the Black Republicans are opposed to this law, and it is because it takes away a power to do harm."

St. Louis, January 8, 1861

Mr. Editor:

I have the following telegram from our representative, Senator Johnson, which I request you to publish:

SENATE CHAMBER, JEFFERSON CITY,
Jan. 8, 1861.

To D. ROBERT BARCLAY:

My object⁸¹ was to prevent our mayor [of St. Louis] from calling out those semi-military

⁸¹ This refers to the Metropolitan Police bill, which would pass on March 27, 1861. The bill took control of the St. Louis police away from the St. Louis mayor and put it under a four-man Board of Police Commissioners. The first four members that were appointed by Gov. Jackson, on April 4, 1861, were all secessionists: John A. Brownlee, president; Charles McLaren, vice-president; James H. Carlisle, treasurer; Basil Duke (after the resignation of B. Wilson Duke); and Daniel G. Taylor, mayor. Basil Duke, many years later, stated, "the Police Bill was in reality a war measure, adopted to enable our people to control St. Louis." For the full text of the Metropolitan Police bill, see (FLP: Ser 2PS-Mar-Annex-13.)

organizations called Wide Awakes,⁸² who might shoot down Democrats and be justified in law; besides, if they were called out, it would most probably be the signal for other semi-military organizations to turn out in opposition.

My object was to remove this occasion of breaking the peace by giving the power conferred by the act of 1855, first to the governor, second to the lieutenant governor, third to such persons as the governor may appoint, and fourth to the judge of the circuit court. The act I introduced does not interfere with the powers of the mayor and sheriff to call out the military under the Militia Law of 1859, to suppress riots. When the military are called out under the last named law, they will be under proper command and held responsible. No one here but the Black Republicans⁸³ are opposed to this law, and it is because it takes away a power to do harm.

THO. C. JOHNSON

Wide Awakes were political clubs in cities across the North, but the St. Louis chapter was unique in that it became more involved in paramilitary operations in 1861. Organized in 1860 by Frank Blair Jr. as a security element to protect attendees at Republican political gatherings from hecklers and troublemakers, the St. Louis chapter was composed mostly of Germans and were a sub-element of German social clubs organized along military lines, called Turnvereins, or "Turners," for short



**Pin Worn by
Wide Awakes**

Missouri History Museum

interest in Missouri and to counter the newly

organized secessionist paramilitary Minute Men, the Wide Awakes formally disbanded and became part of the Central Union Club.⁸⁴ Members of this St. Louis group were some of the first to respond to Lincoln's call for troops after the fall of Fort Sumter on April 15, 1861. Many of them were with General Lyon when he captured the secessionist Missouri state militia at Camp Jackson on May 10, 1861, and were with him when he was killed at the Battle of Wilson's Creek on August 10, 1861.

January 9, 1861



(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#9)

January 9, 1861

Maj. Bell to Gen. Harney

National Archives: RG 108, Registers of Letters Sent
1861



Lyon Foundation, Inc.

"I have never considered the Arsenal in sufficient danger from an attack to render it necessary for me to trouble the general or the Department at Washington at all on the subject."

St. Louis Arsenal, Mo.
January 9th, 1861

Capt. S. Williams,

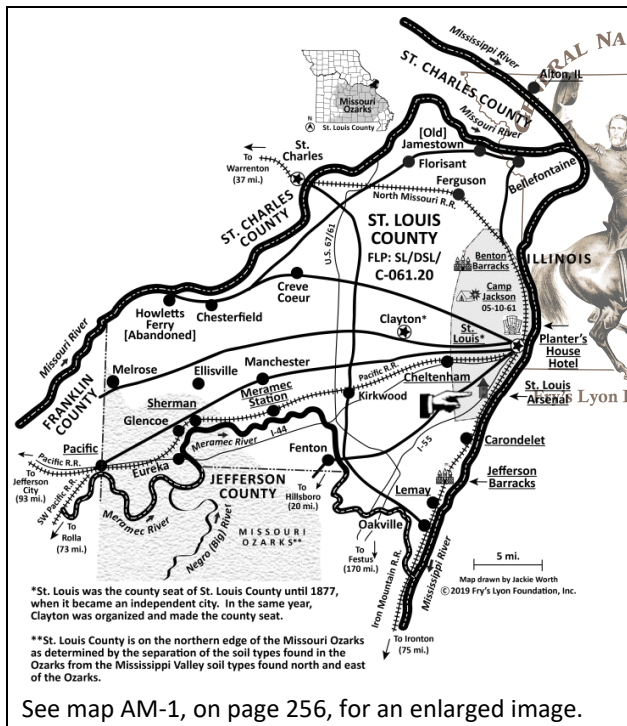
⁸⁴ The Wide Awakes were a uniquely Republican group. When the Central Union Club was created in St. Louis on January 11, 1861, in response to the paramilitary secessionist Minute Men being formed, the Wide Awakes became representatives of multiple Union-supporting political parties that had agreed to work together to counter secessionist activities in Missouri. After that date, the name, Wide Awakes, was formally dropped by Unionists to demonstrate it was no longer a uniquely Republican organization. See (FLP: Ser 1MD-Jan#28).

⁸² See insert-bar above.

⁸³ Black Republicans: a contemptuous label used to emphasize the Republican Party's anti-slavery leanings.

Assist. Adj. Genl., Dept. of the West., St. Louis, Mo.

Sir: In answer to your letter of the 8th of this month, I have the honor to state: thus, I have never considered the Arsenal in sufficient danger from an attack to render it necessary for me to trouble the general or the Department at Washington at all on the subject; that on the occasion of receiving a warning letter from Chicago, dated 18th Dec. 1860, from an unknown person there, and being at the *Republican* Office for the purpose of depositing the letter for publication, I made inquiries of Col. Knapp⁸⁵ as to the manner in which assistance could be immediately obtained in case of any real danger; in which case when it arrived, I intended to have communicated with the general, giving him information of such present, obtainable, & reliable force as may have been ascertained.



But I did not think it at all necessary to make such communication before I was fully satisfied that there was danger.

It will, of course, be my duty to apply to the general whenever, in my opinion, there is any real necessity, and I shall promptly do so. But I have not now the slightest apprehensions of danger.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Col. John Knapp was commander of the St. Louis Grays.

⁸⁶ Maj. William H. Bell would later in the month agree to turn the Arsenal over to the state. See (FLP: Ser 2PS-

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obdt Servant,

William H. Bell,
Major

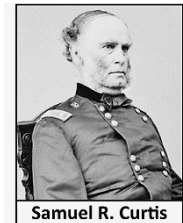
P.S. I have thought it barely possible the general imagined, that in the above prudential inquiries of mine, there was disrespect intended to him; should such be the case, I would have you to understand that it is a great mistake, as I have ever entertained for him the highest regard.

Very respectfully,

William H. Bell, *Major*



Washington D.C.



Samuel R. Curtis

(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#9.1)

January 9, 1861

Congressman Curtis to Belinda Curtis

"The Irrepressible Conflict of 1861" the Letters of Samuel Ryan Curtis," *The Annals of Iowa* Vol. 24 Issue 1 (1942): pp. 14-58

"Mr. Adams's proposition to admit New Mexico as a state is the only important matter. It would stifle the question about territory as this is all there is south of 36°30'. The disunionists, will of course, refuse everything, but we want to deprive them of every ground of complaint and then let them stand clearly on persistent wrong."

Washington, Jan. 9, 1861

My dear wife,

Your letter of the 2nd, and one from Goodril, on the subject of changing our household arrangements were received last night. I am inclined to think we had better give up housekeeping sometime soon,

Jan#20). He was, however, replaced shortly after by Maj. Peter V. Hagner.

but I dislike to do so without some further reflection, for I have a longing anxiety to unite our dear family with you at our quiet fireside in March, and if then the troublesome times permit, allow us a few weeks or months of family home enjoyment.

I will not precipitate a determination. We need not be in great haste. I presume Goodril will not be required to move hastily.

Although things look quite cheerless, in many respects, we are not in desperate straits just yet and we need not be in great haste.

Goodril proposes that he take the house, and in consideration, board you and Carrie. This does not seem to me a safe arrangement for us. You may or may not desire to remain there. If I am to be here most of the time to attend called sessions as now seems probable, you would probably prefer to be nearer to me, and I should prefer to have you. I would of course prefer that Goodril should have the house and furniture, but is he so settled now as to feel certain he will remain in Keokuk [Iowa]? Hard times are down on all of us and we must arrange our domiciles to suit the revolutionary times that now seems to hinder all matters of business and may influence the peace and quiet of different localities.

We have got through the Committee of 33,⁸⁷ and the Chairman Mr. Corwin⁸⁸ is now writing out his report. Our recommendations are only explanatory of our views of Southern rights under the Constitution with provisions to give a little more

⁸⁷ *The Committee of Thirty-three was appointed December 5, 1860, upon motion of Boteler of Virginia. Curtis was appointed the member of the Committee from Iowa. Majority reports of the Committee were filed January 14, and the minority January 16. A consideration of the same was made a special order of the day for Monday, January 21. No formal action of the House was had, however. Its purpose was to consider the proposals of compromise which might avert secession. Tension was so high, and tempers and mind so determined, that several members refused to serve on the Committee, stating they knew they could accept no compromise. See the Congressional Globe 36th Congress, 1st session, for appropriate dates. [Footnote from Annals of Iowa.]*

⁸⁸ *Thomas Corwin, Whig and Republican leader of Ohio, served in both branches of the national legislature. In 1861, he was completing his last term as a Representative before taking duties under the new administration as minister to Mexico. [Footnote from Annals of Iowa.]*

clearness to matters in controversy.

Mr. Adams's proposition to admit New Mexico as a state is the only important matter.⁸⁹ It would stifle the question about territory as this is all there is south of 36°30'.⁹⁰ The disunionists, will of course, refuse everything, but we want to deprive them of every ground of complaint and then let them stand clearly on persistent wrong. In the caucus and among Republicans, I have opposed this because I preferred a general organization of the territories as inchoate states which would, in my judgment, settle the matter and organize all necessary territories. But Mr. Adams does not by his propositions violate our platform, and if it tends to peace or tend to expose the obstinacy of the revolutionists, I am willing to go with those who must take some responsibility in their support of the chairman and Mr. Adams.

We are in momentary anxiety to hear from Charleston where it is said troops and provisions have been sent to the relief of Major Anderson.⁹¹ As I said to you in a former letter, I do not care now how much S. Carolina displays her *quo animo* [motive], it will rally the entire North to the resentment of insults and outrages already committed. My resolutions favoring the use of force were defeated in the Committee of 33 by a substitute introduced by Mr. Dunn⁹² of Indiana. There is still a hope existing among some that we may avoid blood. I consider it impossible, and therefore, the sooner the appeal to arms be made the less extended will be the conflict, and the sooner we may hope to see peace.

Nat Sturges is here boarding with us and is

⁸⁹ *See Congressional Globe for references to New Mexico being admitted as a state. [Footnote from Annals of Iowa.]*

⁹⁰ *The latitude 36°30' refers to the demarcation proposed in the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which outlawed slavery above said latitude. The Compromise was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854.*

⁹¹ *Major Robert Anderson, West Point graduate, Southerner by birth and ancestry, assigned to protect Charleston Harbor in 1860, was an unintentional hero of Fort Sumter. An earnest soldier, he adhered to the Union cause in the war that followed. [Footnote from Annals of Iowa.]*

⁹² *William McKee Dunn, representative from Indiana 1859-1863, later rose to become Judge Advocate General in the U. S. Army. [Footnote from Annals of Iowa.]*

enjoying himself generally. He seems as clever and kind as ever and has some hope of securing some office under the incoming administration.

Last night we called on Miss Juliana May and her mother and sister, where we had a feast of music and a very agreeable visit.

After that, I went with Mr. Pennington⁹³ and made a call at his home. Miss May gives a concert Thursday evening for the benefit of some persons who sustain losses by a fire that occurred last week.

Legislation is proceeding while I write. We are very quiet while the gathering storm of the South continues to threaten the entire country. Perhaps you had best show this to Goodril. I will write him soon. Give my love to our folks. I will answer Laiffe and brother Hosmer very soon.

Affectionately yours,

Samuel R. Curtis



John S. Million to Henry Singleton

Missouri Historical Museum, St. Louis - H.R. Gamble Foundation, Inc.

"Are we to destroy the Union & expose ourselves to the horrors of civil war only because these men are *trying to unsettle it?*—and trying, too, with so little prospect of success?"

Washington, Jan. 9th, 1861

My dear Uncle:

I received your letter⁹⁴ of 2nd January a day or

⁹³ William Pennington, governor of New Jersey 1837-1843, Whig member of Congress but one term. 1859-1861, was elected speaker for that term, one in which much contention with the Chair was inevitable. [Footnote from *Annals of Iowa*.]

⁹⁴ Letter not found.

two ago, & I read with much interest the letter⁹⁵ of your lieut. [governor], which you enclosed to me. Its tone indeed was hardly as temperate as I would have expected from the latitude of Missouri, & I fear the disunion epidemic is running through your state as it seems to be in the states to the south of you. I had supposed that if there was any state in the Union, proof against these evil influences, it would be Missouri. But men seem to have lost their reason everywhere. They are frightened but can hardly tell at what. They fear some evil, some danger, but they cannot give it legs or shape, nor show how they are to be affected by it. They cherish vague & undefined apprehensions, like children afraid of ghosts, without knowing precisely what the ghost is, from what quarter it is to come, or what harm it will probably do them. For my own part, I never feared the abolitionists or Republicans less than now. They have never, for many years, had less ability to carry into effect their distinctive views in reference to slavery, & their triumph in the presidential election will only more plainly demonstrate their inability to succeed in establishing any policy adverse to the rights & interests of the slaveholding states. The territorial question is already settled, settled by the present laws, by the Constitution, as expounded by the Supreme Court & by the judiciary, & *settled in our favor*. Are we to destroy the Union & expose ourselves to the horrors of civil war only because these men are *trying to unsettle it?*—and trying, too, with so little prospect of success? Are we to break up the gov. on account of the personal liberty bills of some of the states, when, too, there is almost a certainty that they will soon be repealed?

I fully concur in your view of this great & solemn subject, "We are in rebellion against the gov. of Heaven." I fear we are unworthy [of] the blessings He has granted to us. The very greatness of our prosperity has caused us to forget the source from which it came, & in our folly & pride, we have supposed it was due alone to our own efforts & merits. We are now feeling his chastisement, & unless it shall please Him to relieve us, vain will be our counsel & fruitless our exertions.

When I last heard from home, all my family &

⁹⁵ Likely refers to the letter from Lt. Gov. Reynolds to the editor of the *Missouri Republican*, dated December 31, 1860. See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan-Annex-3).

relations were well. Since I came to Washington, my occupations have been very engrossing. Our committee of 33 have met almost every day, & as we sit during the sessions of the House, I have been very little in my seat there—we are now about to bring our consultations to a close.

Mary is quite well & joins me in affectionate love to you & my aunt.

Very truly yours

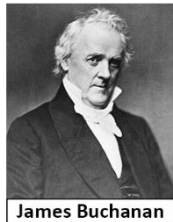
John S. Million

[To] Henry Singleton,
Esq., St. Louis, Mo.

January 12, 1861



St. Louis



James Buchanan



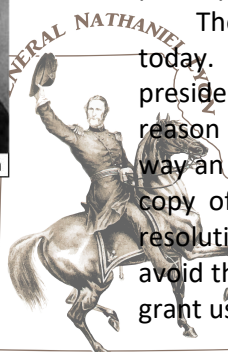
Isaac H. Sturgeon

(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#11)

January 12, 1861

**Asst. U.S. Treasurer Sturgeon to
President Buchanan**

O.R., I, 53:481-482 & Missouri Republican, January 9, 1886



Pry's Lyon Foundation, Inc.

the suggestion and advice of Major McKinstry,⁹⁷ were temporarily placed in some vacant rooms of the custom house. In consulting with Lieut. Robinson in the afternoon, we deemed it best for them to take up their quarters at the Arsenal, which is some two miles from the office of the assistant treasurer of the United States.

The secession paper of this city and those who follow it seemed to think it highly improper that troops should be sent to guard the public property here.

All Union men whom I have seen today are gratified that the government has taken this precautionary measure. I wish it was about two hundred instead of forty men. I give no explanations in regard to the matter, except that they were sent to be placed at the Arsenal for the protection of the public property.

There was a tremendous Union meeting here today. I observe that I was made one of the vice-presidents. I was not able to get to the meeting by reason of engagement until after it had been under way an hour and the resolutions adopted. I enclose a copy of them. They seem well enough. The tenth resolution, as I understand it, is merely an appeal to avoid the shedding of blood, if possible. May Heaven grant us a peaceful solution to our troubles.

With high regard,

Your obedient servant,

ISAAC H. STURGEON,⁹⁸

*Assistant Treasurer United States,
Saint Louis, Mo.*

"The secession paper of this city and those who follow it seemed to think it highly improper that troops should be sent to guard the public property here. All Union men whom I have seen today are gratified that the government has taken this precautionary measure."

SAINT LOUIS, January 12, 1861

His Excellency JAMES BUCHANAN,
President of the United States:

Dear SIR:

Forty men, under command of Lieut. Robinson,⁹⁶ arrived here yesterday morning, and on

⁹⁶ Lt. W. G. Robinson commanded the 2nd Infantry. See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#15).

⁹⁷ Maj. Justus McKinstry was the quartermaster of the Department of the West, as of January 10, 1861.

⁹⁸ Asst. U.S. Treasurer Isaac H. Sturgeon's earlier letters to President Buchanan influenced the president's decision to send the federal troops to St. Louis on January 11 to guard the \$400,000 in the Arsenal. See (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#4).



St. Louis



Winfield Scott



Isaac H. Sturgeon

(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#12)

January 12, 1861

**Asst. U.S. Treasurer Sturgeon to Cmd.
Gen. of the U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Scott**

Missouri Republican, January 9, 1886

hand that time would not be afforded to avert it. I think it would be well to have about 200 men, well officered and armed, kept in the Arsenal until our troubles are passed. Should any trouble then occur, this band would furnish a nucleus around which the Union-loving, law-abiding and conservative elements of our city would rally to prevent any unlawful proceedings. With respect and esteem, your obedient servant,

ISAAC H. STURGEON

January 14, 1861

"I think it would be well to have about 200 men, well officered and armed, kept in the Arsenal until our troubles are passed. Should any trouble then occur, this band would furnish a nucleus around which the Union-loving, law-abiding and conservative elements of our city would rally to prevent any unlawful proceedings."



Washington D.C.



Slavery

(FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan#13)

The Crisis, and What It Demands!
**Summary of Missouri's U.S. Senator Polk's
Senate Speech**

For full text of speech, see (FLP: Ser 2PS-Jan-Annex-4)

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 12, 1861

Lieut. Gen. Winfield Scott:⁹⁹

DEAR SIR:

(After alluding to their personal intercourse, the letter proceeds): I hope that the cloud overhanging our country may pass away and that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you in St. Louis as you partially promised me we should have when on our trip.

Forty men arrived here under the command of Lieut. Robinson, who will guard the Arsenal (which is within the city limits) and protect my office should there be a necessity for it. It is to be hoped, and is thought, there will arise no necessity for their services; yet in the recent excited condition of the country, no one can tell what a day may bring forth, and it seems to be better to take time by the forelock than to wait until the danger is so near at

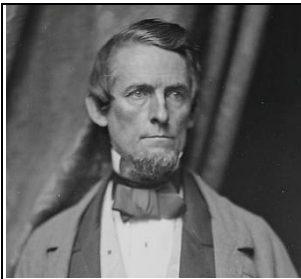
"He contended that these attacks on slavery could not continue, and without intervention, would lead to the dissolution of the Union. The remedy to these grievances, according to Senator Polk, was to amend the Constitution to protect the institution of slavery."

In 1861, before the United States Senate, Missouri Senator Trusten Polk¹⁰⁰ delivered a speech in which he spoke about the grievances of the secessionists (a minority in the state). He maintained throughout his speech that while he supported the Union, the restrictions placed upon slavery by the North and the Republican Party could not be ignored. He explained that many in the South feared for their lives and property, exclaiming that it was

⁹⁹ LGen. Winfield Scott joined the army in 1808, was promoted to brigadier general in 1814, and served as commanding general of the U.S. Army since 1841. He was a veteran of the War of 1812 and the Mexican-American War. He also commanded the operations against the Seminoles in Florida (February 1836) and defeated the Muscogee in the Creek War of 1836.

¹⁰⁰ U.S. Sen. Trusten Polk, a former Missouri governor, would be expelled from the Senate in January 1862 for supporting the Southern cause.

the duty of the federal government to protect the interests of all its citizenry.



Trusten Polk

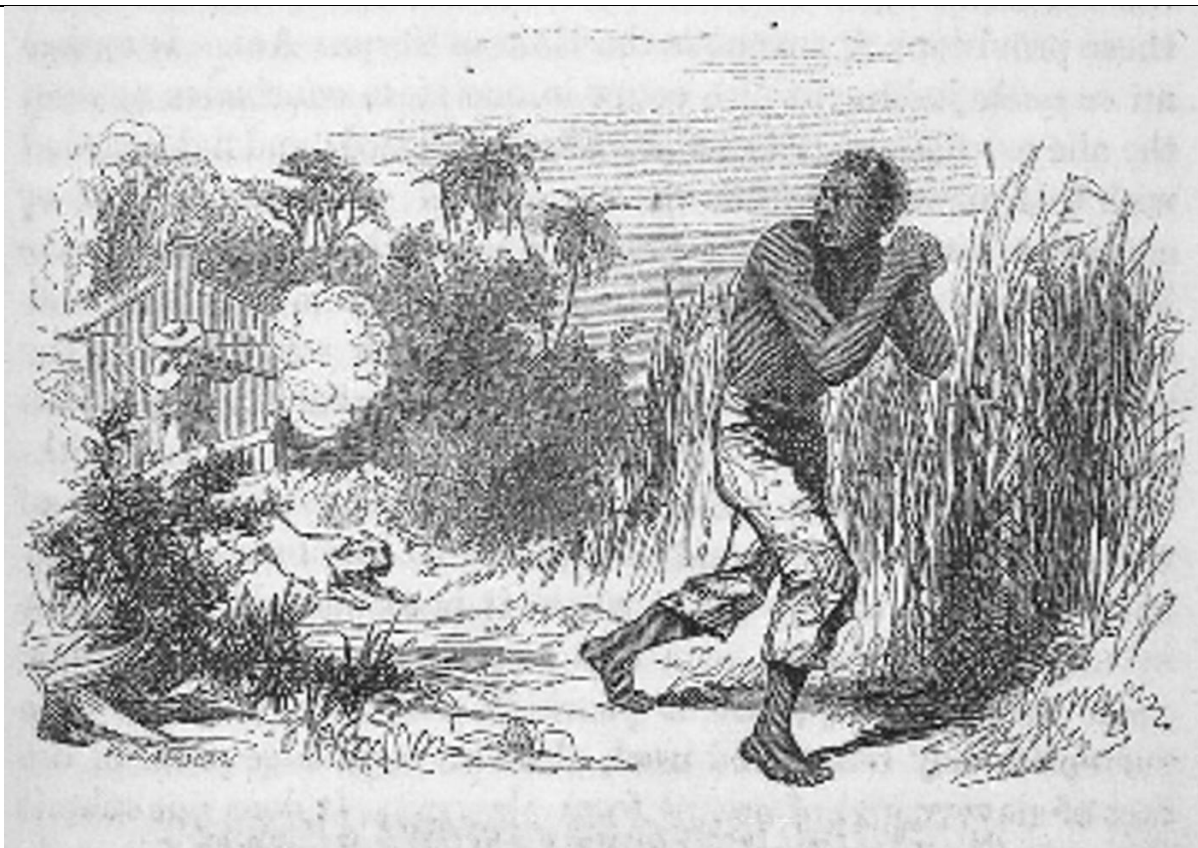
Senator Polk expounded the following points that caused strife in the South:

- Fugitive slave laws were not respected in non-slave states, leading to slaves not being returned and owners being attacked.
- Government officials, including the president, opposed the institution of slavery.
- Southerners lived in fear of slave rebellions caused by the interference of northern abolitionists.

He contended that these attacks on slavery could not continue, and without intervention, would lead to the dissolution of the Union.

The remedy to these grievances, according to Senator Polk, was to amend the Constitution to protect the institution of slavery. These amendments included protecting the rights of slave owners traveling to non-slave states, prohibiting Congress from abolishing slavery, allowing slavery in the District of Columbia, allowing slave transportation and compensating owners for lost fugitive slaves. He believed that these amendments would satisfy the concerns of the South and were fair to the North.

If the Republican Party refused these concessions, then the Southern states would have no other option than to secede. Polk believed that Missouri would side with her Southern neighbors due to common interests. In closing, he proposed that if and when the states seceded, the government should allow it and work towards peacefully mending the Union rather than resorting to war.



"Slave Owner Shooting a Fugitive Slave"

Hoosier State Chronicles
Indiana's Digital Historic Newspaper Program