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Washington, D.C. Peace conference, 1861.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

CONFERENCE CONVENTION.



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WASHINGTON, February 4th, 1861.

A number of Commissioners assembled at Willards' Concert Hall in consequence of the following preamble and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of Virginia, January the 19th, 1861.

WHEREAS it is the deliberate opinion of the general assembly of Virginia, that unless the unhappy controversy, which now divides the States of this confederacy, shall be satisfactorily adjusted, a permanent dissolution of the Union is inevitable; and the general assembly, representing the wishes of the people of the commonwealth, is desirous of employing every reasonable means to avert so dire a calamity, and determined to make a final effort to restore the Union and the Constitution, in the spirit in which they were established by the fathers of the republic: Therefore,

Resolved, That on behalf of the commonwealth of Virginia, an invitation is hereby extended to all such States, whether slaveholding or non-slaveholding, as are willing to unite with Virginia in an earnest effort to adjust the present unhappy controversies, in the spirit in which the Constitution was originally formed, and consistently with its principles, so as to afford to the people of the slaveholding States adequate guarantees for the security of their rights, to appoint commissioners to meet on the 4th day of February next, in the City of Washington, similar commissioners appointed by Virginia, to consider, and if practicable, agree upon some suitable adjustment.

Resolved, That ex-president John Tyler, William C. Rives, Judge John W. Brockenbrough, George W. Summers and James A. Seddon are hereby appointed commissioners, whose duty it shall be to repair to the City of Washington, on the day designated in the foregoing resolution, to meet such commissioners as may be appointed by any of the said States, in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

Resolved, That if said commissioners, after full and free conference, shall agree upon any plan of adjustment requiring amendments to the Federal Constitution, for the further security of the rights of the people of the slaveholding States, they be requested to communicate the proposed amendments to Congress, for the purpose of having the same submitted by that body, according to the forms of the Constitution, to the several States for ratification.

Washington, 1861