

**PETITION OF CITIZENS OF NEW
ORLEANS, CREDITORS OF THE
LATE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS, TO
THE THIRTY-SECOND CONGRESS**

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Petition of Citizens of New Orleans, Creditors of the Late Republic of Texas, to the Thirty-second congress by Various

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VARIOUS

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P E T I T I O N
OF
C I T I Z E N S O F N E W O R L E A N S ,
C R E D I T O R S
OF THE
L A T E R E P U B L I C O F T E X A S ,
TO THE
T H I R T Y - S E C O N D C O N G R E S S .

NEW ORLEANS:
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1852.

PETITION.

To the Honorable
SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

THE UNDERSIGNED CITIZENS OF NEW ORLEANS, IN THE STATE
OF LOUISIANA, CREDITORS OF THE LATE REPUBLIC OF
TEXAS,

By this their Petition, respectfully beg leave to lay before your Honorable Body, their grievance touching the debt of the late Republic of Texas, in which they are deeply interested; having been for many years holders of the bonds, and other evidences of debt, of the said late Republic: And in the enjoyment of this favored privilege, of which they are in a high degree sensible, they most respectfully approach you in the attitude of creditors, suffering from long deprivation of their dues, justly and assiduously earned, and most unreservedly confiding in your wise and skilful counsel, and in your unqualified devotion to the dispensation of justice. It is, then, in the consideration of those sublime elements governing the action of your Honorable Body, and in pursuit of their inalienable rights, that they present themselves in the simplicity of citizens, seeking

at your hands redress in a just cause, and the restitution of their just rights.

Your Petitioners would represent, that they, in common with many other citizens of New Orleans, had been dealing with the people of the Republic of Texas, which then possessed an independent form of government; and that they, during such commercial intercourse, became possessed of the bonds, and other evidences of debt, of that Republic. They would likewise represent, that esteeming the Republic of Texas an independent government, and in its destiny promising to fill an exalted position in the rank of nations, they in confidence relied on the faithful discharge of its just indebtedness. And moreover, were they further inspired with confidence, from the important consideration of the sacred pledge of the public faith, and from the solemn hypothecation of the impost duties and other revenues, and the public lands thereof, having been thus severally and jointly pledged for the redemption of its liabilities. And in such confidence did your Petitioners hold their claims, in expectation that they would be as faithfully redeemed, as had been sacredly promised. Circumstances have destined otherwise; and by the act of annexation to the Government of the United States, the support of that reliance—the independent Republic, and the glory and pride of a national identity—have been extinguished; and through that extinguishment of nationality, and the consequent helplessness, growing out of the full surrender of their available resources, your Petitioners were virtually debarred from appealing to a sovereign people, who had, in the early and gloomy existence of their Government, authorised and ratified negotiations for the procurement of that aid so vital to their success, and so indispensable to their well-being.

Your Petitioners were satisfactorily impressed that the consequences flowing from annexation rendered the Government of the United States justly liable for the indebtedness of the said Republic; they were nevertheless constrained to abide patiently the action of the State of Texas, inasmuch as said State was composed of the people of the Republic of Texas, and had assumed the debt, and accepted as an equivalent the unoccupied domain of that Republic, which afforded ample means to discharge the said liabilities. In consideration of the adoption of a measure so commensurate with the exigency, and trusting to the honor and integrity of the State of Texas in the application of that measure, your Petitioners cherished the expectation, that so soon as prosperity dawned on that people, thereby enabling them to dispose of the lands thus set apart, they would realise the sum of their claims. That adventitious period has arrived, and the full tide of prosperity is realised; but consequences arising from inability to discharge the debt for a term of years subsequent to annexation on the one hand, and the changes effected by the influx of emigration into Texas, and thereby changed views and feelings, on the other hand, have completely effaced the moral obligation of that people to discharge the debt that had been assumed by their predecessors.

It is, then, from such circumstances, that your Petitioners have been and are now deprived of their just rights; and it is from such circumstances, that they are now impelled to invoke and appeal to you in your administrative capacity.

Agreeable to the terms of annexation, such available means as the Republic of Texas possessed were transferred to the United States; and as well, also, was surrendered to the United States all control over the revenues arising from import duties.

And in consideration of which revenues, with other resources, *being, at the time of* annexation and transfer, solemnly pledged for the redemption of the debt, your Petitioners confidently believe, that the Government of the United States is justly liable for the payment of the debt, and that the dictates of sound reason absolutely confirm such opinion; in which they are likewise supported by the declared opinion of many distinguished statesmen.

Your Petitioners would likewise respectfully submit to your matured and unbiassed judgment, the renewed and sacred obligation on the part of the United States, growing out of the stipulation offered and ratified by the Government of the United States, in the purchase of a part of the domain embraced within the line of the State of Texas, but nevertheless specially appropriated for the payment of the debt of the Republic of Texas.

The purchase and payment, in part, have been accomplished, without inuring to the benefit or advantage of your Petitioners, who had, both prior to and from the terms of annexation, a lien against said lands. Then, and in consideration of such lien having been consummated by the act of the Government of the United States, no possible interpretation, in conformity to "law and equity," could justify, or reasonably be advanced in behalf of, a delivery of the purchase money, without providing a safe application of it in the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Republic of Texas.

The act of annexation, while it declares that the United States Government shall in no event become liable for the indebtedness of the Republic of Texas, also specially provides that the unappropriated lands shall be set apart for the payment of that indebtedness, and "the residue of said lands, after

discharging said debts and liabilities, to be disposed of as the State of Texas may direct."

So important a provision, executed agreeably to its declarative import, would have produced, in the course of time, ample means for the discharge of the existing debt, and would have assured to your Petitioners the payment of their claims. The condition of that enactment has been lost sight of, in the more important and absolute necessity of harmonizing the discordant clamor, consequent upon the conflicting questions, and from the threatening aspect that prevailed in the halls of Congress in its session of 1849-'50; and which involvement demanded that the interest of the few should succumb to the good of the whole.

Your Petitioners, however, from intimations that had already been divulged by the Texas authorities, were apprehensive that good faith would not prevail: yet they were constrained to abide quietly the result, in just apprehension that difficulty might ensue in the event of Congress declining to credit the integrity of Texas.

The application of that judicious policy, through the untiring and devoted zeal of the Thirty-First Congress, accomplished the desired end, and instead of anarchy, harmony prevailed, by which the Union, untarnished and immutable, is preserved inviolate, — the invaluable bequest of futurity.

Your petitioners viewed with intense interest the Congressional debates of 1849-'50; and they pondered with fearful anxiety the gloomy aspect, and the ominous forebodings that fell from the lips of many of the honorable members engaged in the great struggle for the maintenance of the Union. And when the voice of wisdom predominated, and the great compromise measures were consummated, none more than your Petitioners hailed with glad delight the adoption of those mea-

tures, as promising perpetuity to the Union, and "peace and good will to man." And they, not forgetting the welfare of their fellow citizens, and not lacking in patriotism, but ready and desirous to yield personal advantages to the behests of their country, in so trying an emergency, rejoiced in the happy issue: and they are constrained to say, that they should continue to rejoice, even should permanent loss result, and total obliteration ensue to their just claims.

Your Petitioners come before your Honorable Body with feelings of much delicacy, and as citizens of the United States deploring the occasion which has compelled them to invoke your action in a matter so justly presumed to have been satisfactorily disposed of by the carefully applied action of the Thirty-first Congress. Deeply deploring it, as they do, gladly would they silence complaint, and cheerfully submit to the sacrificial altar prepared for them, were they not compelled to appear before you from the indispensable necessity of possessing once more their justly earned acquisitions.

It is familiar to your Honorable Body, that Congress, in September, 1850, passed an Act stipulating to give to the State of Texas Ten Millions of Dollars in United States stock, in consideration of said State transferring to the Government of the United States a certain portion of the public domain embraced within the boundary of that State. And it is equally as familiar to your Honorable Body, that the thus liberal appropriation was made mainly on the ground of the large indebtedness of the late Republic of Texas remaining unpaid. In view of so large an indebtedness due from the State of Texas, and yet binding on the Government of the United States, unless discharged by that State, the liberal sum of ten millions of dol-