

States; by the decisions of the most eminent judicial authorities; and by the consent of the people of America, is considered an element of our political system; and as the Holy Bible is at once the source of Christianity, and the depository and fountain of all civil and religious freedom, we oppose every attempt to exclude it from the schools thus established in the States.

XII.—The American party having arisen upon the ruins and in despite of the opposition of the Whig and Democratic parties, cannot be in any manner responsible for the obnoxious acts or violated pledges of either. And the systematic agitation of the slavery question by those parties having elevated sectional hostility into a positive element of political power, and brought our institution into peril, it has, therefore, become the imperative duty of the American party to interpose for the purpose of giving peace to the country and perpetuity to the Union. And, as experience has shown it impossible to reconcile opinions so extreme as those which separate the disputants, and, as there can be no dishonor in submitting to the laws, the National Council has deemed it the best guarantee of common justice and future peace, to abide and maintain the existings laws upon the subject of slavery, as a final and conclusive settlement of that subject in spirit and in substance.

And regarding it the highest duty to avow their opinions upon a subject so important, in distinct and unequivocal terms, it is hereby declared, as the sense of this National Council, that Congress possesses no power, under the Constitution, to legislate upon the subject of slavery in the States, where it does or may exist, or to exclude any State from admission into the Union because its constitution does or does not recognize the institution of slavery as a part of its social system; and expressly premitting any expression of opinion upon the power of Congress to establish or prohibit slavery in any Territory, it is the sense of the National Council that Congress ought not to legislate upon the subject of slavery within the Territories of the United States, and that any interference by Congress with slavery as it exists in the District of Columbia, would be a violation of the spirit and intention of the compact by which the State of Maryland ceded the District to the United States, and a breach of the national faith.

XIII.—The policy of the Government of the United States, in its relation with foreign governments, is to exact justice from the strongest, and do justice to the weakest; restraining, by all the power of the government, all its citizens from interference with the internal concerns of nations with whom we are at peace.

XIV.—This National Council declares that all the principles of the Order shall be henceforward every where openly avowed; and that each member shall be at liberty to make known the existence of the Order, and the fact that he himself is a member, and it recommends that there be no concealment of the places of meeting of subordinate councils.

E. B. BARTLETT, OF KENTUCKY,  
*President of National Council,*

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