

Civil War Politics in California

BY GERALD STANLEY

“Uniqueness” as a theme in California’s early politics permeates histories of the Golden State, surprisingly. Certainly any state with a population which has never been more than forty-five percent native born, and which has doubled every two decades for 130 years now, is bound to have its Hiram Johnsons, Upton Sinclairs, Ronald Reagans, and Jerry Browns; and yet, the mid-nineteenth century historians have shown that the uniqueness theme easily lapses into provincialism and that this serves truth badly by separating California from the nation. The treatment of politics during the Civil War is a remarkable example of this distortion, and an important one.¹

Here the spotlight is on the Republicans, briefly, for pledging California’s loyalty to the Union in 1860 and winning the Civil War elections; is on the oratory of Rev. Thomas Starr King and Colonel Edward Baker, two of those Republicans who “saved California for the Union”; is on the extent of pro-secessionist sympathy in the state; and, finally, is on the 500 or so Californians who actually fought in the Civil War via the “California Battalion,” which has nothing to do with Civil War politics but is invariably thrown in whenever the subject comes up, and in fact, tends to dominate the discussion and enhance provincialism. The reader is left with the impression that the state’s political figures had a rather unique experience in Civil War times, for after having saved the state for Lincoln, it is inferred that California’s politicians, unlike those elsewhere, occupied themselves mostly with local affairs. With the war a continent away, they seem happily detached, almost carefree, quite literally oblivious to and unaffected by the profound issues of emancipation and abolition. Yet such was not the case.²

The emphasis on provincialism, the slighting of California’s wartime politics, the dismissal of emancipation and abolition as serious issues in the state, is unfortunate from today’s perspective

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— and from the perspective of those politicians who saw themselves as participants in an unparalleled historical drama which used freedom as its main plot. In some ways it was the state's greatest moment, even if it started out with unwilling participants. For had they had their way in 1860, California's Republicans would have saved the Union and slavery, but confined slavery to the south, and busied themselves with contesting elections where patronage was mostly at stake. Had they had their way in 1862, they would have emancipated some slaves to save the Union, then sent them to distant places, and reserved civil and political rights for their own race. But the war dragged on, and in a way dragged the Republicans forward, so that by 1863 they advocated abolition, mostly to save the Union, but increasingly to promote humanity. This transformation, a gradual, grudging acceptance of freedom for four million blacks which happened through no fault of the state's Republicans, happened elsewhere during the Civil War and suggests, at least in this period, that California's politics resembled the nation's.

In one form or another the black man had influenced the state's politics since at least 1856, when the Republican party first appeared in California, so the focus on him in the Civil War years represents a logical, if unwanted, continuation of the state's ante-bellum political history. Acquiescence in the expansion of slavery into the western territories characterized the state's political parties prior to Republicanism as the Whigs, Know-Nothings, and most Democrats welcomed the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which proclaimed popular sovereignty as the cure-all for the nation's difficulties. The doctrine permitted territorial residents to vote for or against the western expansion of slavery in the hope that Congress, once freed of the burden, would be less contentious. Opposed to the expansion of slavery though not to slavery itself, the Republicans of 1856, headed up by their leader and organizer Cornelius Cole, denounced popular sovereignty in taking a hard stance against slavery's expansion but drafted no planks affecting the 5,000 blacks in the state who were largely excluded from the gold fields, could not vote, and could not testify in court cases against whites.

Thereafter the state's ante-bellum politics were more animated, more racial, if not more clear-cut. Democrats said Republicans

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were "Black," that is, "abolitionists," "fanatics," "darky sympathizers," "devotees of the dark faith" and otherwise "Wooly heads" and "negrophilists" hellbent on destroying slavery and the white race. "If a man is not crazy on the subject of niggers," the officeholders of the 1850s collectively lamented,

if he happens to entertain the idea that a white man is as good as a darkey . . . such a man is totally unfitted for any position, public or private, and in the opinion of these nigger-worshipping demagogues [Republicans].

The Republicans said Democrats were "Black," that is "nigger-worshippers," members of the "African Democracy" and "the nigger-worshipping clique" who "slandered" Republicans by saying that their party favored freedom for the black race; for, all the party wanted was "to preserve the liberties of white men." Not even the new party's nomination of a slave owner for governor in 1857 was enough to please the electorate and break the string of Democratic victories in the 1850s.³

This type of politicking, common for western and midwestern states and found in some eastern areas, appears in the 1860 election, where the Republicans saved California for the Union. And yet, the Republican expressions of being "for the white man first" and against the "nigger, nigger, eternal nigger"; of being for railroads and homesteads "to build up Free States and benefit poor white men and against Democrats for making "a compromise between the white man and the darkey" on these measures; and even of being "for an extension of slave territory by honest means" and against "the Democratic scheme to nationalize slavery" — these appealing expressions probably helped the Republicans less in achieving victory than did the division in the Democratic party between Northern or Douglas Democrats and Southern or Chivalry Democrats over when and how to execute popular sovereignty. For in the four-party presidential election of 1860, the Republicans carried California by a plurality of 643 votes from a vote total of nearly 120,000.⁴

On the eve of the Civil War and throughout 1861, California's Republicans, now safely in office but lacking an abolitionist ideology, joined other Republicans in working to save the Union and

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slavery; and, from their far western perspective, from the perspective of any of their contemporaries, all signs indicated that slavery would survive. The clearest sign came in March 1861, when President Abraham Lincoln read his inaugural address which set the national policy: to preserve the Union at all costs. Quoting an often repeated statement from one of his past campaign speeches, Lincoln, upon assuming the presidency, told the nation, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists." In addition, earlier in the year Congress had passed a proposed amendment to the Constitution, which forever prohibited federal interference with slavery; and, after the war began in April, the 37th Congress, meeting in a special July session, adopted the Crittenden Resolution that declared the preservation of the Union the sole object of the war.⁵

California's Republicans adhered to these guidelines in 1861. To allay any fears that their party aimed to crush the rebellion and slavery at the same time, in April the twenty-four Republicans in the state legislature joined fifty-four Douglas Democrat members to pass a resolution supporting strict compliance to the federal fugitive slave law and noninterference with slavery in the District of Columbia and in the slave states. These same legislators also approved the proposed constitutional amendment that prohibited Congress from abolishing slavery at any future time; with this action, surely the Republicans believed that slavery had been eliminated as an issue in the state's politics.⁶

Hoping this was so, the Republicans chose Leland Stanford as their candidate for governor in 1861, and from June to early September he stumped in the populous mining regions telling listeners of his desire to preserve the Union without harming southern slavery.⁷ This accorded with the party's platform, which endorsed the use of force to crush the rebellion but nothing else, as did Stanford's affirmation in August that the party had accomplished its goal of confining slavery and now thought the subject unimportant.⁸ For Stanford and most Republican campaigners, the handy issues of loyalty and preserving the Union were ways, not only to keep office, but to rid the party of undeserving labels, though others in the ranks were less certain that this would work.

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Consequently, Frank Fargo, nominee for Clerk of the Supreme Court, kept denying that he favored emancipation while confirming that he would "as readily shoulder a musket in the defense of slavery where it exists as . . . to repel an invasion." "If there are men in the Republican ranks," an aspiring candidate for the Assembly instructed voters, "who mistakenly think the party was organized on the basis of eternal hostility to slavery . . . the sooner they leave the better . . . for they are its worst enemies."

Unrelenting, nostalgic Democrats actually kept the slavery issue alive, committing what has to be one of the most significant mistakes in the state's political history. For their part, the Douglas Democrats, still a separate faction in 1861, sided with the Republicans in being for the Union and against abolition and, more importantly, against the Democrats who still sided with the south.¹⁰ These southern or Breckinridge Democrats in California took an 1861 position of favoring recognition of the Confederate States instead of civil war declaring, in the words of their state central chairman, "Let us have union if we can, peaceable dissolution if we must, but conflict never."¹¹ To shift the debate back to the slave, the southern Democrats hauled up the old charges that all Republicans, and some Douglas Democrats as well, favored freedom for the blacks, always presenting this assertion as a certainty and the ultimate, inevitable horror of the war. As for Leland Stanford, he especially represented the "damning fanatical spirit of abolitionism" whose election would sanction the slaughter of white men, and, worst of all, the equality of the races.¹²

This constant agitating of the slavery issue, though unrequested by the Republicans, served them well in that it, and the defense of the South, made some former Northern Democratic voters vote Republican. In the three-party election of 1861, Democrats split a majority of the vote and this, plus the Republicans' anti-abolition stance and, most significantly, the issues of loyalty and preserving the Union, produced a Republican victory. Receiving 47 per cent of the total vote, the Republicans elected Stanford, three Congressmen, and won a plurality of the seats in the legislature; but, by the time these men assumed office, slavery was confronting them again.¹³

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It was the second session of the 37th Congress, which met from December 1861, through July 1862, that made California's Republicans face slavery once more. As the war dragged on, Republicans were persuaded by the argument that the North might easier defeat the slave power by attacking slavery; "Men who had never thought of attacking the South's peculiar institution before secession," historian Richard Hofstadter accurately observed, "were now ready to destroy it . . . if by so doing they could hasten the end of the war."¹⁴ They were motivated chiefly by military necessity and a desire to keep England and France from entering the war in behalf of the Confederacy,¹⁵ Congress, in 1861 and 1862, made a limited assault on slavery by prohibiting the use of military power to return fugitive slaves, abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia and in the territories, and passing the Confiscation Act, which would confiscate slaves owned by disloyalists if and when the Union armies ever controlled the South. In addition, the Republicans appropriated \$500,000 to finance the removal of slaves freed by this legislation.¹⁶

Though more active in other matters, such as securing railroad legislation, California's Republican Congressmen, Frederick Low, Timothy Phelps, and Aaron Sargent, voted to finance the removal of ex-slaves (against the advice of a black newspaper in California) and, if they were not absent, supported the move against slavery;¹⁷ in doing so they created a real division between California's parties over the existence of slavery, though had the South returned to the fold in 1862, southern slavery would have persisted.

The congressional assault on slavery, though timid, tardy, and forced upon the state's Republicans, aroused the Democrats in 1862 instinctively; for now they could prove that their opponents were at least emancipationists. Maintaining separate political organizations, the Douglas and Breckinridge Democrats mimicked each other in the fall campaign for State Superintendent of Public Instruction and control of the legislature, and in platforms lambasting emancipation and requesting a restoration of the Union as it was in 1860.¹⁸ Thus, when Senator Milton Latham, a Breckinridge campaigner, called the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia "an outrage," he sounded very much like the Douglas

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Democrat who thundered "That niggers ain't white folks and white folks ain't niggers. We no longer have a Government because the Black Republicans are Abolitionists."¹⁹ There was, of course, the usual complaint that Republicans wanted "to elevate the negro and degrade the poor white man" and the standard observation that "The political contest in this State has narrowed itself down to purely a fight between white men . . . on one side, and black and mulattos on the other;" and these fantasies too show commonality on race.²⁰

The Republicans responded intelligently to this lively but errant haranguing with a careful litany that played up the Union, played down emancipation, and used the former to justify the latter.²¹ Overshadowing the endorsement of the Confiscation Act in their platform was the blunt thesis that the only issue in the state's politics was prosecution of the war, and, as if to demonstrate this, in the 1862 Republican-controlled State Senate only one vote was cast in favor of a motion approving the emancipation *and* arming of slaves.²² Congressman Phelps, who voted for limited emancipation, ignored it while campaigning;²³ the Republican editor of the Los Angeles *Southern News*, while endorsing limited emancipation, explained "This is not a war against slavery, and if it suffers, it will be the effect of the war, and not the cause;"²⁴ and, southern rebellion, some speakers noted, necessitated the confiscation of rebel property, and therefore, they reasoned, the South was responsible for emancipation.²⁵

This strategy, similar to Republican campaigning elsewhere, worked in 1862, maybe even better than Republicans thought it would considering the state's past politics on race. Voters endorsed the argument that preserving the Union required the freeing of some slaves, as the Republicans captured nearly fifty-eight per cent of the vote in the three-party election, elected John Sweet as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and gained control of ninety-four of the 120 seats in the state legislature. The strength of the Union issue, the defense of emancipation as a military necessity, the inability of Democrats to convince enough voters that racial equality was at hand, and the continuing shift of former Douglas Democratic voters to Republicanism made the Republican party the majority party for the first time in its short

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political history. Its members, in spite of their silence, evasiveness, and apology for emancipation, were loyal, and now firmly in power, and unwittingly on the road to abolition.²⁶

The Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 made California's Republicans, and thousands of others as well, abolitionists, by the 1863 definition of favoring the abolition of slavery in the disloyal slave states but not necessarily in the loyal slave states. When Lincoln put the Proclamation into effect on January 1, as one historian correctly observed, it failed to indict slavery, failed to free slaves in the loyal slave states, and failed to declare that any ex-slaves were entitled to any of the rights outlined in the Declaration of Independence. Nevertheless, the Proclamation became Republican policy, and enforcement of it by the Union Army would mean the actual end of southern slavery and not merely the confiscation of slaves.²⁷

Though ignored by textbook writers and political historians of California, the impact of the Proclamation on the state's Republicans was eventually major, extraordinary, and great in the sense of having unusual merit and honor and distinguished value. The first response came when party members in the legislature sanctioned the document as a "military necessity," after they deleted a phrase from their resolution labelling the Proclamation "an act of justice."²⁸ Also, in January, the Republican editor of the *Napa County Reporter* was mournful, "regretting," he wailed, "that such a measure would seem necessary;"²⁹ and even as late as June there were those who said they believed "in confiscating th property of rebels, be it a cow or an ass, or even the poor nigger."³⁰ Surely these sentiments squared with those of the vast majority of Republicans who defended the end of southern slavery in the belief that the freedmen would stay in the South, in the conviction that the physical characteristics of blacks would keep them in the warm Southern climate, and even in the hope that the abolition of southern slavery might cause blacks in the North and West to migrate to the south.³¹

Yet by midyear (for reasons discussed below), it was clear that the party was changing, as was the nation. At odds with their traditional attitude toward slavery and the black race, their June platform justified the Emancipation Proclamation as a military

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necessity *and* as “a step onward in the course of civilization and human progress.”³² More important, in the 1863 election to choose a governor, three congressmen, and a new legislature, leading Republicans cautiously reversed themselves by defending the Proclamation on humanitarian grounds. The best example, and the most remarkable, is Leland Stanford. Four years earlier he had affirmed “I would make no war with the institutions of any portion of this country” and “I prefer the white man to the Negro as an inhabitant of our country”; but in his annual message for 1863 the Governor called the Proclamation “a great Moral Declaration . . . that blotted out an ignoble stain . . . and gave a new impulse to human liberty and human progress.”³³ Further, the gubernatorial candidate Frederick Low, though previously silent on slavery, endorsed abolition on moral grounds, as did ex-Douglas Democrats turned Republican such as John Conness, the newly elected United States Senator.³⁴

This sanctimonious rhetoric, even if made possible by the Proclamation, tolerable by the need to save the Union, and permissible by the likely death of slavery, cannot be dismissed as simply a new campaign strategy designed to win votes, though, of course, for many Republicans it was that. Evidence of authentic change in the party, though slight, gradual, and bounded by race, came in the 1863 session of the state legislature when the Republican majority nullified the 1851 law prohibiting black testimony in court cases involving whites. Certainly some Republicans voted nay, and far more voted yea once assured that the reform was “not a proposition to elevate the black man.” All obviously agreed that the question was “not whether they [black Californians] are to be allowed to become citizens” or “to be elevated to social equality with whites.” All obviously favored continuance of the exclusion on Chinese testimony and surely agreed with Governor Stanford’s pronouncement that “the settlement among us of an inferior race is to be discouraged by every legitimate means.” Nevertheless, in the debates on the measure many Republicans expressed sympathy for the state’s black population, and nearly every Republican voted yes, and nearly every Democrat voted no, and the prohibition on black testimony was abolished.³⁵

The repeal of the black testimony law, the Emancipation Proclamation, and especially the sudden morality in Republican ranks

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on slavery, alarmed the Democrats and, in addition, influenced them in important ways: namely, the new objective of the Civil War — to restore the Union without southern slavery — was enough to unite the Democrats in California. As in most other states, the Douglas and Breckinridge Democrats formed a new Democratic party in 1863 to campaign against, their platform said, “the Administration, the Abolitionists” and the “war for the negro,” and to campaign for the restoration of the Union with “the rights of the several states unimpaired.”³⁶ The new party denounced the Emancipation Proclamation as tending to prolong the war, condemned “the fanatical attempt to place the negro on a social and political equality with the white race,” and warned that emancipation would trigger a massive black migration to California.³⁷ But the highlight of this campaign came when ex-Governor, ex-United States Senator John B. Weller ended two years of political retirement to speak out against emancipation; fearing arrest for disloyalty, he told listeners that if imprisoned for life his epitaph should read: “Here Lies The Body Of An American Who Forfeited His Liberty; And Died In Prison, For Refusing . . . To Give Freedom To Four Million [Members] Of The African Race.”³⁸

Any strategy based on racial hyperbole worked in ante-bellum California; but the year was 1863 and California voters supported the Republican version of the Civil War, and the destruction of southern slavery to win the war, overwhelmingly. Reaching the high point of their popularity in Civil War elections, the party polled a remarkable 59 percent of the vote, electing ex-Congressman Frederick Low as governor, William Higby, Thomas Shannon, and Cornelius Cole as congressman, and capturing 105 of the 120 seats in the legislature.³⁹ By any measure, this election victory marked a turning point for Republicans, for although no one could correctly accuse them of favoring equal rights for blacks or any rights for Chinese, they had struck down the black testimony law, called for the abolition of slavery in the disloyal states, denounced slavery as morally wrong, and secured voter approval, if not for all of this, then at least for preserving the Union. Their party blended a newfound compassion for slaves with an old aversion towards blacks that contrasted with the un-

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changing Democratic image, a moderate contrast in 1863, a sharp contrast thereafter.

In 1864 and 1865 the state's political parties were sharply divided on race, and this ideological cleavage has no parallel in all of California's history. The issue was the end of human slavery in America. Early in April 1864, the United States Senate approved the proposed Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which called for the total abolition of slavery; and, although the House of Representatives voted against the amendment in June, it became a plank in the 1864 Republican National Platform. After Lincoln won reelection in November, the House of Representatives passed the amendment, and on December 18, 1865, Secretary of State William Seward announced that three-fourths of the states had ratified the amendment and that slavery no longer existed in America.⁴⁰

Unlike the Confiscation Act and even the Emancipation Proclamation, the Thirteenth Amendment was endorsed by California's Republicans enthusiastically and not because of mere political expediency. Political expediency plus the appearance of new members in the party and the disappearance of old-liners,⁴¹ and especially the transforming nature of the Civil War on some Republicans, in California and elsewhere, who witnessed the evils of slavery for the first time, who read reports of slaves deserting the slave South, and who heard of ex-slaves fighting in the Union Army to destroy slavery – these explanations account for the modest change in most Civil War Republicans.⁴² Facing a torrent of racist propaganda from the Democrats and the possibility of election defeat, most of the Republicans, for the first time in the state's history, indicted slavery as a sin and expressed compassion towards blacks.

The acquired sense of justice first appeared in the presidential election of 1864 when the Republicans made no compromise on the total abolition of slavery. In January, before the Thirteenth Amendment was introduced in Congress, the Republican legislature declared the Emancipation Proclamation "self-acting," that is, not contingent on military control of the slave states; and in the following month, all of the Republican legislators endorsed the

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enlistment of black soldiers in the Union Army and the establishment of military governments in the rebellious states, against the wishes of all voting Democrats.⁴³ Outdistancing even the congressional lawmakers who would vote down the Thirteenth Amendment in June, the Republican delegates to the March state convention declared in their platform “We are opposed to human slavery as an institution condemned by God and abhorrent to humanity.”⁴⁴

Contrasting Democratic campaigning in 1864 with Republican pronouncements in that same year best gauges the extent of the transformation in the party that had once defended southern slavery but was now calling it sinful. Early in the campaign for presidential candidate John B. McClellan, Democratic newspapers endeavored to show the impracticality of abolishing slavery because of the biological inferiority of blacks. Travelers’ accounts in Africa and the *Proceeding of the Ethnological Society of London* furnished these presses with evidence, however unscientific, to sustain the argument that blacks were incapable of attaining civilization and that their natural state was slavery.⁴⁵ The newspapers featured “Sambo” stories as well that slurred blacks and ridiculed humanitarian efforts made in their behalf. “‘Well Tom,’ one read, ‘do you feel like going back to the army when your wound is well?’ ‘No, not unless I could go back either as a nigger or a brigadier-general.’”⁴⁶ And there were poems, songs and jingles designed to excite the public mind, such as, “When this cruel war is over, All the nigs will be in clover. Blacks at ease – whites at labor/Pretty picture, ain’t it, neighbor?”⁴⁷ It goes without saying that the rhetoric of 1864 foreshadowed and parroted the Democratic campaigning of 1865.

The drama of California’s Civil War politics – what makes the subject momentous and deserving of attention – is found in the Republican response to the harsh Democratic rhetoric of 1864 and 1865. No longer fitting were the party’s expressions in these years that it was “fighting primarily for the white man’s rights” and that Democrats were the ones who sought racial equality, because, the vast majority of Republicans simply refused to meet the Democrats on traditional grounds.⁴⁸ Instead of arguing that the end of slavery was necessary to shorten the war, mainstream Re-

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publicans denounced slavery as immoral – a violation of divine law, according to Congressman Shannon; “the great lie of the age,” according to Congressman Higby; and “that curse,” “that crime,” “that treason,” according to Senator Conness.⁴⁹

They shifted the debate. They appealed to the electorate’s patriotism, not to its prejudice, in naming slavery as the cause of the war and arguing that if it survived the Union would perish, and that since it strengthened the rebellion, its demise would strengthen the Union and “bless humanity.”⁵⁰ “What will we do with the slave when he becomes free?” Congressman Higby asked in a typical Republican speech, “Better ask what we will do with the master?”⁵¹ The party’s speakers likewise dropped derogatory terms in referring to blacks and stopped ridiculing the slaves’ suitability for freedom.⁵²

Congressman Cole and Governor Low, both elected in 1863, exemplify this apex in California’s Civil War politics and also demonstrate the transforming nature of the war. As one of the founders of the party in California, Cole matched his colleagues in defending southern slavery and deploring blacks in ante-bellum speeches and letters.⁵³ Yet, while serving in Congress from 1863 to 1865, he justified the end of slavery and the elevation of the ex-slave on humanitarian grounds publicly and in private letters to his wife, telling her, shortly after Congress passed the Thirteenth Amendment, “We can now look other nations in the face without shame . . . Let us rejoice.”⁵⁴ Governor Low underwent a similar conversion and he, more than any other Civil War Republican, displayed a remarkably humane attitude, for as chief executive he reproved the exclusion of Chinese and Indian testimony in court cases involving whites, saying in one speech “We must learn to treat the Chinese who come to live among us decently, and not oppress them . . . nor allow them to be abused, robbed, and murdered.” and used his office to secure ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, which all Republicans in the legislature and half of the Democratic members approved in December 1865.⁵⁵

The Republicans won the elections of 1864 and 1865 and went on to become Radicals in the Reconstruction period, meaning that they called for civil and political rights for blacks and agreed

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with the postwar assessment of one of their leaders who wrote in a private letter:

They who have saved the Union must sustain the efforts to meet and arrange the logical consequences. They must labor to make intelligent the freedmen . . . and protect them against the prejudice that would keep them degraded. The copperheads and traitors will howl, "negro equality" — let them do so . . . we must meet the question boldly, and on the principle of equal justice.⁵⁶

In 1867, in speeches and editorials, they expressed sentiments heretofore little heard in California, such as "The battle we are now fighting is to give equal rights to every American citizen;" "The day had passed when men could not stand up for the rights of blacks as well as whites;" and "We think we are radical. We believe in a practical application of the Declaration of Independence." Most attacked the idea "That America was a white man's continent;" some even affirmed "the right of freedmen to earn their bread wherever in the world they may see fit to cast their lot." But their venture ended in that year when, in the first election since the Union had been saved, the California voters overwhelmingly rejected the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution. In the words of one party member, the Republicans fell victim to "the whim and caprice of a majority in a petty state."⁵⁷

Certainly, while California's political parties quarreled over blacks in the Civil War years, they also discussed a variety of other issues, such as railroad legislation, that were possibly as important as the unmentioned struggle over the state's patronage. Nevertheless, the part played by California in extending freedom, though not unique and easily overstated, seems more meritorious and deserving of attention, and far more significant than the California Battalion and Colonel Baker's orations in behalf of the Union as it was in 1860.

N O T E S

¹ Gladwin Hill's widely-read treatment on California politics, *Dancing Bear: An Inside Look At California Politics* (New York, 1968), quotes and adheres to James Bryce's observation of many years ago that "The politics of California is unique" (p. 4); and applies this thesis as far back as 1867 (p. 2). Yet Hill ignores

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the impact of the slavery issue on California's early politics and concentrates instead on an extended discussion of railroad politics in the Civil War period (pp. 21-32). This same interpretation is restated in "California Politics" in *The California Revolution* (New York, 1968), Carey McWilliams, ed., pp. 172-84. Similarly, Herbert L. Phillips' *Big Wayward Girl: An Informal Political History of California* (New York, 1968) separates California's politics from the nation's by discussing local efforts made in behalf of the Union in 1860 while avoiding serious mention of Civil War politics in the state (pp. 16-24). Eugene P. Dvorin and Arthur J. Misner, *California Politics and Policies* (Massachusetts, 1966), pp. 3-4, is representative of the political science surveys of California's politics in that it emphasizes the same topics as the history surveys (see note 2) and declares that (p. 3) "California politics was comparatively uneventful during most of the 1860s."

For criticism of the uniqueness theme and provincialism in the treatment of California's early politics see Early Pomeroy, "California, 1846-1860: The Politics of a Representative Frontier State," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXII (1953), 291-302; Robert W. Johannsen, *Frontier Politics and the Sectional Conflict: The Pacific Northwest on the Eve of the Civil War* (Seattle, 1955); and especially Ward M. McAfee, "California History Textbooks and the Coming of the Civil War: The Need for a Broader Perspective of California History," *Southern California Quarterly* LVI (1974), 159-74. Johannsen stressed the need for a national interpretation of Western politics. "Frontier political life," he wrote, "did not operate in a vacuum but was closely likened at all times with national issues (vii)."

² California history textbooks mostly repeat one another in characterizing the state's politics during the Civil War. John W. Caughey's *California: A Remarkable State's Life History* (3rd ed., New York, 1970) is typical in that the author emphasizes the 1860 demonstrations for and against the Union with an emphasis on the latter, while the slavery issue in California's wartime politics goes unmentioned (pp. 221-23). King, Baker, and the California Battalion also figure into the account, and although Caughey states that national issues were important during the Civil War (p. 223), he mentions neither the Emancipation Proclamation nor the Thirteenth Amendment but concludes, nevertheless, that "The Civil War had laid to rest several of the issues of the fifties, such as the questions of state division and western secession (p. 223)." Warren A. Beck and David William, *California, A History of the Golden State* (New York, 1972) has the stress on lingering southern sentiment, the California Battalion, and especially Baker, "the most authentic California Civil War hero" (pp. 168-70). With the 1867 election, Edward Staniford writes in *The Pattern of California History* (New York, 1975), California's politics were placed "more in formal alignment with the national party system (p. 167)." Staniford thus infers that the state's political parties were unaffected by the slavery issue during the war, which he too, ignores. Andrew Rolle, *California: A History* (3rd ed., Illinois, 1978) is also like Caughey except that passage of the Pacific Railroad Bill in 1862 dominates what little discussion there is of California's Civil War politics (pp. 293-96). Rolle does say that the Republicans "endorsed measures championed by the national administration for the purpose of winning the war (p. 295)" but avoids naming those measures or showing how they affected the state's politics. His joint authorship with John S. Gaines of *The Golden State: A History of California* (sec. ed., New York, 1979) reads the same way (pp. 143-45), as does David Lavender's *California: A Bicentennial History* (New York, 1976), pp. 101-04, and Weldon Bean's *California: An Interpretive History* (3rd ed., New York, 1978), pp. 115-16. All of the above sources ignore the impact of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment on the state's politics and actually devote more space to the Pony Express than to California's Civil War politics.

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Joseph Ellison's *California and the Nation, 1850-1869* (Berkeley, 1927), William H. Ellison's *A Self-governing Dominion: California, 1849-1860* (Berkeley, 1950), William Penn Moody, "The Civil War and Reconstruction in California Politics" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1951), and John E. Baur, "The Beginnings of the Republican Party," in *The Rumble of California Politics, 1848-1970*, Royce D. Delmatier, et al., eds. (New York, 1970), pp. 40-69, give extensive treatment to California's Civil War politics; but none note the transforming effect of the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment on California's Republican party.

³ For documentation see Gerald Stanley, "Racism and the Early Republican Party: The 1856 Presidential Election in California," *Pacific Historical Review*, XLIII (1974), 171-87; "The Politics of the Antebellum Far West: The Impact of the Slavery and Race Issues in California," *Journal of the West*, XVI (1977), 19-26; and, "Slavery And The Origins of the Republican Party In California," *Southern California Quarterly*, LX (1978), 1-16.

⁴ For the 1860 campaign see Gerald Stanley, "The Slavery Issue and the Election in California, 1860," *Mid-America* LXII (1980), 35-46. For the similarity of California's ante-bellum and Civil War politics with those in other free states see Eugene Berwanger, *The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy* (Urbana, Illinois, 1967); V. Jacque Voegeli, *Free But Not Equal: The Midwest and the Negro During the Civil War* (Chicago, Illinois, 1967); Forrest G. Wood, *Black Scare: The Racist Response to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Los Angeles, 1968); James Rawley, *Race and Politics: 'Bleeding Kansas' And The Coming Of The Civil War* (New York, 1969); and Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York, 1978), pp. 139-259.

⁵ J. G. Randall and David Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (2nd ed., Boston, 1969), p. 370; *Congressional Globe*, 37th Congress, 1st Session (July 25, 1861), 222-23 and 265.

⁶ *Sacramento Union*, January 18, April 19, 1861.

⁷ *Ibid.*, February 20, July 29, August 16, 18, 21, 24, 1861.

⁸ Winfield J. Davis, *History of Political Conventions in California, 1849-1892* (Sacramento, 1893), pp. 174-75; *Sacramento Union*, August 19, 1861.

⁹ *Sacramento Union*, February 21, 1861; *Daily Appeal* (Marysville), March 1, 1861.

¹⁰ Davis, *Political Conventions*, pp. 167-68.

¹¹ *Ibid.*; *New York Times*, March 16, 1861.

¹² *Sacramento Union*, August 28, 1861; *Mountain Democrat* (El Dorado), September 28, December 21, 1861; *Union Democrat* (Sonora), January 19, 1861. The reference to Stanford comes from Catherine Coffin Phillips, *Cornelius Cole, A California Pioneer and United States Senator: A Study in Personality And Achievements Bearing Upon the Growth Of A Commonwealth* (San Francisco, 1929), pp. 106-07.

¹³ *Sacramento Union*, October 19, 1861. See note 30 for correlation analysis of the election.

¹⁴ Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition And The Men Who Made It* (New York, 1948), p. 128; also Randall and Donald, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, *passim*, especially p. 380.

¹⁵ Voegeli, *Free But Not Equal*, p. 13; Hans L. Trefousse, *The Radical Republicans: Lincoln's Vanguard for Racial Justice* (New York, 1969), pp. 210-22; Allan Nevins, *The War For The Union* (4 vols., New York, 1960), Vol. II, 203-04.

¹⁶ Voegeli, *Free But Not Equal*, p. 13; Randal and Donald, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 371-73; *Congressional Globe*, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess. (July 14, 1862), 3331.

¹⁷ *Congressional Globe*, 37th Cong., 2nd Sess. April 11, 1862), 1648-49, (June 9, 1862), 2623, (July 11, 1862), 3267-68, (July 14, 1862), 3331. The San Fran-

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cisco *Pacific Appeal*, a black newspaper, argued that rather than colonizing the ex-slave, the Republicans should colonize the ex-slaveowner (April 19, 1862).

¹⁸ Davis, *Political Conventions*, pp. 186, 190-91.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 161; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, August 15, 1862.

²⁰ *Union Democrat* (Sonora), September 27, 1862; *Colusa Sun*, August 30, 1862.

²¹ See Republican speeches in *Sacramento Union*, August 2, 8, 28, 30, 1862.

²² Davis, *Political Conventions*, p. 185; *Sacramento Union*, March 10, 1863.

²³ *Sacramento Union*, September 1, 1862.

²⁴ *Southern News* (Los Angeles), June 13, 1862.

²⁵ *Sacramento Union*, September 1, 1862; *Alameda County Gazette*, May 24, 1862; *Southern News* (Los Angeles), June 13, 1862; and *Napa County Reporter*, August 30, October 4, 1862.

²⁶ *Alta California* (San Francisco), November 2, 1862.

²⁷ Hofstadter, *American Political Tradition*, p. 132. See John Hope Franklin, *The Emancipation Proclamation* (New York, 1963), pp. 96-98, for the text of the Proclamation. The Emancipation Proclamation came as no surprise to California's Republicans, but few of them actually urged Lincoln to issue the measure or to take any further steps against slavery. The Lincoln Papers contain approximately one hundred letters from 1860 through 1863 written by such leading California Republicans as Leland Stanford, Frederick Low, Cornelius Cole, Aaron Sargent, and Timothy Phelps. Concerned with patronage and prospects for Republican success in the state, the California letters mention neither a desire for emancipation nor the necessity for emancipation. Only Senator McDougall, a Douglas Democrat, implored the President to move against slavery; and McDougall justified emancipating slaves on the grounds that it would shorten the war and save thousands of dollars.

²⁸ Davis, *Political Conventions*, p. 193; *Sacramento Union*, January 7, 12, 1863.

²⁹ *Napa County Reporter*, January 17, 1863.

³⁰ *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, June 13, 1863.

³¹ *Ibid.*, August 1, 1863; *Napa County Reporter*, August 8, 1863.

³² Davis, *Political Conventions*, p. 194-95.

³³ *Sacramento Union*, June 9, July 9, 1859; January 8, 1863.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, August 24, 1863; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, April 25, 1863.

³⁵ *Statutes of California, 1863* (Sacramento, 1863), p. 60. For the debate see *Sacramento Union*, January 29, March 6, 24; and Charles Maclay, *Speech to California Assembly, April 1862* (n.p., n.d.), p. 2, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Leland Stanford, *Annual Message of Leland Stanford, January 1863* (Sacramento, 1863), p. 7, Stanford Papers, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.

³⁶ *Sacramento Union*, June 12, 1863; Davis, *Political Conventions*, pp. 196-97.

³⁷ *Sacramento Union*, May 20, July 8, 10, August 6, 31, 1863; *Union Democrat* (Sonora), February 21, 1863; *Butte Record*, November 14, 1863; *Colusa Sun*, January 31, 1863.

³⁸ John B. Weller, *Speech of ex-Governor John B. Weller, delivered before the Democratic Club at Petaluma, Cal., June 6, 1863* (San Francisco, 1863), Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

³⁹ As the following correlation analysis shows, Republicans won support from many former Douglas Democratic voters in 1863. A .43 figure derived from correlating 1863 Republican county percentages with 1862 Douglas percentages. While generally considered a low or insignificant correlation, the .43 figure appears striking when compared to the $-.30$ coefficient that resulted from correlating 1863 Democratic percentages and 1862 Douglas percentages.

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VARIABLES	COEFFICIENTS
1861 Republican and 1860 Douglas	.00
1862 Republican and 1861 Douglas	.06
1863 Republican and 1862 Douglas	.43
1863 Democratic and 1862 Douglas	-.30
1863 Democratic and 1862 Breckinridge	.60

Voting returns for these elections are in the *Sacramento Union*, November 6, 1860, October 19, 1861; *Alta California* (San Francisco), November 2, 1862; and *Sacramento Union*, December 10, 1863.

⁴⁰ *Congressional Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. (April 8, 1864), 1490; (June 15, 1864), 2995; 38th Cong., 2nd Sess. (January 31, 1865), 531; Randall and Donald, *Civil War and Reconstruction*, p. 396.

⁴¹ See Gerald Stanley, "The Republican Party in California, 1856-1868" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1973), pp. 158, 188-89.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 179-212; Trefousse, *Radical Republicans*, 203-30; J. C. Randal and David Donald, *The Divided Union* (Boston, 1961), p. 377.

⁴³ *Sacramento Union*, January 13, 1864; February 18, 1864; David, *Political Conventions*, 201-02.

⁴⁴ *Sacramento Union*, March 26, 1864; Davis, *Political Conventions*, 206-07.

⁴⁵ *Union Democrat* (Sonora), January 23, 30, August 5, 1864; *Butte Record*, January 2, 1864.

⁴⁶ *Union Democrat* (Sonora), January 9, 1864.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, March 12, 1864. See also *Sacramento Union*, October 3, 1864; *Napa County Reporter*, April 23, 1864; and Joseph B. Crockett, *Address of Col. J. B. Crockett, Democratic Candidate for Congress* (n.p., 1864), *passim*, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.

⁴⁸ *Union Record* (Butte), October 8, 22, 1864.

⁴⁹ *Congressional Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. (February 9, 1864), 538, (February 18, 1864), 740-43, (June 14, 1864), 2943-52.

⁵⁰ See the Republican speeches in the *Sacramento Union*, September 2, 21, October 19, November 4, 1864; *Alameda County Gazette*, September 17, October 20, 1864; *Napa Register*, March 5, 1864; *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, March 25, May 7, November 26, 1864; *Union Record* (Butte), May 21, 1864.

⁵¹ *Sacramento Union*, June 2, 1864.

⁵² See, for example, Republican speeches in *Sacramento Union*, September 2, 21, November 4, 1864, cited in note 50.

⁵³ Stanley, "Racism and the Early Republican Party," 183.

⁵⁴ *Congressional Globe*, 38th Cong., 1st Sess. (February 18, 1864), 740-43; Cornelius Cole to Olive Cole, February 1, 1865, Cole Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, California. See, also, Cole to Olive, January 31, 1865, Cole Papers.

⁵⁵ H. Brett Melendy and Benjamin F. Gilbert, *The Governors of California: Peter H. Burnett to Edmund G. Brown* (Georgetown, California, 1965), pp. 133, 137; *Sacramento Union*, December 7, 16, 1865.

⁵⁶ John Bidwell to James Gillespie, January 29, 1866, Miscellaneous Letters, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

⁵⁷ For documentation and sources on the historical controversy over Radical Republicanism see Gerald Stanley, "The Whim and Caprice of a Majority in a Petty State: The 1867 Election in California," *Pacific Historian*, XXIV (1980), 443-55.