

Southerners to prevent blacks from enjoying full citizenship, enraged Radical Republicans, who subsequently attempted to wrest control of Reconstruction policy away from Johnson.

The radicals having been completely "flanked" by President Johnson's reconstruction policy are now endeavoring to force the President to abandon his position by the circulation of the most absurd falsehoods. The plan is to systematically libel the Southern people by originating stories of great dissatisfaction among them as unwilling on their part to submit to the conditions laid down by the President. They hope by this means to retard the work of pacification and reorganization in the South until they can perfect their plans to force negro suffrage upon the people of the Southern States as a condition of the return to their Union. If they can induce the President to believe these fabrications they imagine he will abandon his present position and adopt the radical view of the case. Even "conservative" Republicans, who but a few weeks ago were loud in their praise of the President's policy of restoration, are now heard to say that "the South will compel the President to hold them as conquered provinces," when they well know it is the Northern radicals that are attempting to do the "compelling." This transparent trick will fail if President Johnson is made of the stuff we think he is.

Franklin Repository, "Who Shall Dictate Terms?" October 31, 1866

The Repository argues that the Southern states gave up their rights in the Union when they seceded, and so must accept the terms of Reconstruction and pass the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. The amendment was proposed on June 13, 1866, and mandated that states provide equal protection and due process to all persons living within their borders, provided penalties for any state that withheld the right to vote from eligible citizens, disqualified many ex-Confederates from holding national public office, and repudiated all Confederate war debt.

Enough is now known of the sentiment of the North to convince the most obturate, that the people will consent to no policy of

reconstruction that falls short of the acceptance of the proposed constitutional amendments. The issue was fairly made in the great States, and they have with one voice demanded the adoption of the proposed change in our organic law.

Had the elections been but half as decisive in favor of the Democracy, the verdict would have been pronounced a condemnation of the amendments, and they would have fallen. But, since the people have decided for the amendments and against the policy of Andrew Johnson, the President and the leading journals and managers of the Democracy, persist in advising the South not to accept the amendments. The President, in his singular blindness, advises against the adoption of the amendments even in the face of the palpable fact that during his entire term he will be as powerless as he is now, to bring about any more favorable adjustment to the rebels. ***

*** The issue is therefore plainly presented to the rebellious States. They have made causeless, wanton, bloody war. Their own arbiter has given its fearful judgement against them, and from it there is no appeal. They have, by the constitution and the laws, forfeited citizenship, property and even life, and their rights are only the rights of disfranchisement, confiscation, or the right to die as the law demands. They have not, either by moral or legal rules, any voice in the government they spurned and sought to dismember by the sword. They have no claim other than that which appeals to the magnanimity of the victors, and reminds us that we are all of one nation and should be again one brotherhood.

But the North desires to welcome the rebellious States again into the folds of the Union, and while it would be boundless in its generosity, it dares not be entirely forgetful of justice. It seeks no wanton humiliation, no measure of vengeance; but it must make treason and rebellion odious, and must protect the living and those who are to live hereafter from a repetition of the bloody drama that has just shadowed the land. It asks the adoption of the constitutional amendments and the modification of local laws in conformity therewith, as South Carolina has already done, and the work of reconstruction will be finished. ***

*** The North is firm to the point of its demand—beyond that it would allow no mere sectional feeling to retard the complete restoration of the rebel States. It demands the amendments. It demands