THE KANSAS QUESTION[20]

From the Tarboro Southerner of April 17, 1858.

Letter from Hon. Asa Biggs—We copy below from the *Baltimore Republican* the letter of the Hon. Asa Biggs of this State, addressed to the Lecompton meeting recently held in that city. This letter will commend itself to the reader by its sound practical sense and by the clear and correct view which it presents of the present condition of the Kansas question. The Richmond *Enquirer* has paid Col. Biggs the high compliment of copying the letter [as] embodying in the clearest and best manner its own views on this absorbing question.

SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, March 3, 1858.

GENTLEMEN:—I cannot conveniently attend the mass meeting in Baltimore to which I am kindly invited by yours of 20th ultimo.

The object of the meeting I cordially approve. President Buchanan, in my opinion, should not only be publicly approved, but he deserves the affection of the people, for his bold and patriotic position, in the face of an unprincipled opposition and the defection of some Democrats from whom he had reason to expect better things. I candidly confess that the state of affairs in Kansas for the last three years, has not given me a very exalted opinion of the character of that people for an enlightened self-government: but they partake of the characteristics generally of our border population, who drawn together by a speculating mania and a desire and expectation to make themselves speedily rich, are not very scrupulous about the forms of law.

But what have we in the Lecompton constitution under which it is proposed by the President to admit Kansas? It is a constitution emanating from legal authority and in its adoption all the necessary forms of law, to ascertain the people's will, have been observed. It is no doubt true that there have been fraud and violence and great irregularities in the action of all parties in Kansas: and suppose, as is charged, there was fraud, at the Delaware crossing or other precincts yet it cannot be denied that, deducting this and all other fraudulent votes (as they ought to be with the emphatic condemnation and denunciation of all honest men) still there is an overwhelming *legal* majority of the people of Kansas, voting for delegates and approving the Constitution. If however it be admitted that a majority of people *in* the Territory refused to vote, then to make that an excuse for refusing admission is to encourage *faction* and rebellion against lawful authority.

It may be seriously questioned whether we do not make a dangerous precedent in admitting a state with such a small population: but upon the whole it is evident to my mind, that the contest is one between law and order and faction and rebellion: between peace and agitation: between the supporters of the Constitution and constitutional rights of all the States and those disposed to stir up civil strife and to test the strength of the Union

[20]Copied in the Scrap-Book in Judge Biggs' handwriting.