

VIEWS OF THE HON. J. L. ALCORN, ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION OF MISSISSIPPI. pdf

1: Reconstruction & James Alcorn

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Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Disaster and Freedom In congressional debates, Reuben Davis warned his colleagues that failing to protect slavery and denying slaveholders their right to expand into the territories would lead to war and that southerners would resist coercion even if it meant devastating their homeland and making it a wasteland. Yet despite his prophesy, he supported secession. A decade of rhetoric since a majority of white Mississippians supported the Compromise of 1850 boxed the Democratic lawyer-planters into an inescapable position. Prosperity based on high cotton prices and slavery deluded the lawyer-planters and most southerners into believing that their economy and their social system pointed to the future both for themselves and the world. Events of the 1850s persuaded them that the North intended to force an end to slavery. For slaveholders, that meant economic ruin. For nonslaveholders, a free society placed them on par with the black population, which they viewed as unacceptable. As a minority, white Mississippians felt the need to keep the black majority enslaved in order to protect themselves from demands for equality. The Civil War initiated a century of racial conflict in Mississippi pitting blacks against whitesâ€”first to end slavery and then to achieve racial equality. Few, aside from the leading political leaders, foresaw where secession would lead. Instead, the convention created a military commission to rein in the governor lest he involve the state in unnecessary conflict. In Oxford, the chancellor of the university tendered his resignation after all the students abandoned their studies and enlisted for the war, but the board persuaded him to withdraw it and encouraged him to plan for Civil War: Disaster and Freedom the fall session on the assumption that war could be avoided. In Vicksburg, the female academy announced its fall schedule. The returning congressional members described passing through towns illuminated by thousands of candles, with crowds singing and cannons booming salutes. Secession released a decade of tension, and Mississippians celebrated the end of the Union and the bright prospect of increasing prosperity. Based on recent memories of the Mexican War, they assumed any fighting would be brief and that because of their military prowess, southerners would triumph easily. As with the Mexican War, Mississippians volunteered in such numbers that Pettus could not begin to handle the influx of heady men ready to whip the Yankees. Local leaders paid to arm and clothe a company, and the grateful company often elected their patron to lead them into battle. Pettus exerted himself by asking for militia arms early from the U. Pettus next turned to Bolivar County planter Charles Clark to head the military. Clark toured the state to inspect the units springing up in almost every community and bluntly told a hostile crowd in Vicksburg that they must look to the governor for leadership and that they could not determine policies themselves. Alcorn, the Whig Coahoma lawyer-planter who opposed secession until the final vote, stood next in line on the military commission to get the appointment, but Pettus refused to give it to him and turned to Reuben Davis, another member of the commission who had commanded the second Mississippi regiment in the Mexican War. Trying to manage the horde of volunteers, Pettus sent troops to Alabama and Florida to assist in assaulting U. You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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His parents were of African, European, and Native American ancestry. His mother was of Scottish descent and his father was a Baptist preacher. In he went to live with his older brother, Elias B. Barbering was a respectable trade in this period, as men of all races used barbers. After Elias Revels died in , his widow Mary transferred the shop to Hiram before she remarried. He studied religion from to at Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. He became a minister in a Methodist Episcopal Church in Baltimore, Maryland , where he also served as a principal for a black high school. He took part at the battle of Vicksburg in Mississippi. In , he was called as a permanent pastor at a church in Natchez, Mississippi , where he settled with his wife and five daughters. He became an elder in the Mississippi District of the Methodist Church, [5] continued his ministerial work, and founded schools for black children. During Reconstruction , Revels was elected alderman in Natchez in . As the Congressman John R. Lynch later wrote of him in his book on Reconstruction: Revels was comparatively a new man in the community. He had recently been stationed at Natchez as pastor in charge of the A. Church, and so far as known he had never voted, had never attended a political meeting, and of course, had never made a political speech. But he was a colored man, and presumed to be a Republican, and believed to be a man of ability and considerably above the average in point of intelligence; just the man, it was thought, the Rev. Noah Buchanan would be willing to vote for. Lynch wrote, That prayerâ€”one of the most impressive and eloquent prayers that had ever been delivered in the [Mississippi] Senate Chamberâ€”made Revels a United States Senator. He made a profound impression upon all who heard him. It impressed those who heard it that Revels was not only a man of great natural ability but that he was also a man of superior attainments. At the time, as in most states, the state legislature elected U. Previously, it had been held by Albert G. Brown , who withdrew from the US Senate in when Mississippi seceded. For the two days of debate, the Senate galleries were packed with spectators at this historic event. Supreme Court , which ruled that people of African ancestry were not and could not be citizens. Among the narrower arguments was that Revels was of primarily European ancestry an " octoroon " and that the Dred Scott Decision ought to be read to apply only to those blacks who were of totally African ancestry. Supporters argued that Revels had long been a citizen and had voted in Ohio and that he had met the nine-year requirement before the Dred Scott decision changed the rules and held that blacks could not be citizens. Nothing more need be said. For a long time it has been clear that colored persons must be senators. Today we make the Declaration a reality. The Declaration was only half established by Independence. The greatest duty remained behind. In assuring the equal rights of all we complete the work. Senator[edit] Revels advocated compromise and moderation. He vigorously supported racial equality and worked to reassure his fellow senators about the capability of African Americans. In his maiden speech to the Senate on March 16, , he argued for the reinstatement of the black legislators of the Georgia General Assembly , who had been illegally ousted by white Democratic Party representatives. He said, "I maintain that the past record of my race is a true index of the feelings which today animate them. They aim not to elevate themselves by sacrificing one single interest of their white fellow citizens. At the time, the Congress administered the District. While Radical Republicans called for continued punishment of ex-Confederates, Revels argued for amnesty and a restoration of full citizenship, provided they swore an oath of loyalty to the United States. Davis had been a senator from Mississippi until He quietly, persistentlyâ€”although for the most part unsuccessfullyâ€”worked for equality. He spoke against an amendment proposed by Senator Allen G. Thurman D-Ohio to keep the schools of Washington, D. He nominated a young black man to the United States Military Academy ; the youth was subsequently denied admission. Revels successfully championed the cause of black workers who had been barred by their color from working at the Washington Navy Yard. His conduct in the Senate, along with that of the other black Americans who had been seated in the House of Representatives, prompted a white Congressman, James G.

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Blaine , to write in his memoir, "The colored men who took their seats in both Senate and House were as a rule studious, earnest, ambitious men, whose public conduct would be honorable to any race. Senator expired, appointment as the first president of Alcorn Agricultural and Mechanical College now Alcorn State University , a historically black college located in Claiborne County, Mississippi. He taught philosophy as well. He was dismissed from Alcorn in when he campaigned against the reelection of Governor of Mississippi Adelbert Ames. He was reappointed in by the new Democratic administration and served until his retirement in [1] On November 6, , Revels wrote a letter to fellow Republican and President Ulysses S. Grant that was widely reprinted. Revels denounced Ames and the carpetbaggers for manipulating the black vote for personal benefit, and for keeping alive wartime hatreds: My people have been told by these schemers, when men have been placed on the ticket who were notoriously corrupt and dishonest, that they must vote for them; that the salvation of the party depended upon it; that the man who scratched a ticket was not a Republican. This is only one of the many means these unprincipled demagogues have devised to perpetuate the intellectual bondage of my people. The bitterness and hate created by the late civil strife has, in my opinion, been obliterated in this state, except perhaps in some localities, and would have long since been entirely obliterated, were it not for some unprincipled men who would keep alive the bitterness of the past, and inculcate a hatred between the races, in order that they may aggrandize themselves by office, and its emoluments, to control my people, the effect of which is to degrade them. Hiram Revels died on January 16, , while attending a church conference in Aberdeen, Mississippi.

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Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Woods, reflected on what had happened, how it had happened, and the men who had made it happen. He was in a nostalgic mood as he wrote; he was, after all, one of only a few members still alive at that point. Despite the disastrous results of the war the convention had helped bring on, Woods placed a chivalric halo around the convention, presenting the delegates as heroes of a lost cause and the elite of antebellum society. January perhaps a few others. Were they the cream of the social and political elite of Mississippi? To truly understand the convention, what happened, and why it happened, the delegates must be understood. A comprehensive analysis of who they were, what ideals they brought to the convention, and their backgrounds must be made to determine if delegate Woods was correct. The statistical breakdown of the delegates offers some surprising new pieces of information. Some of the statistical information has already been plowed by contemporary newspapers as well as such historians as Percy L. Rainwater and Robert Wooster, but there are other factors that still beg to be defined. Fortunately, there is a wealth of information on the members, starting with a descriptive roster of delegates compiled by the reporter of the convention, John L. Although that list contains a wealth of statistical information, it is neither infallible nor complete. Cross-referencing the data with census records as well as biographical sketches not systematically mined previously provides historians with an abundance of data on the men of the Mississippi secession convention. There were twenty-five delegates in their thirties, but the largest group was those in their forties; forty-six of the delegates were in that age range. Given the shorter life expectancy of the day, it is logical that only sixteen were in their fifties and only three in their sixties. The youngest member was Woods of Kemper County; he was a mere twenty-four at the time, unmarried, and fresh out of college. The oldest was Henry Vaughan of Yazoo County, who at age sixty was born just three months into the nineteenth century. While none of the delegates remembered the volatile times of the American Revolution, they were certainly reared on stories of those events. And fully 40 percent of them had been born prior to or during the War of , the second American Revolution, as it was known. You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

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At an early age he was brought to America by his parents, who settled in Kentucky. Young Adams was fitted for Yale, but pecuniary reverses attendant upon the failure of his father in business, obliged him to forego his plans. He bravely accepted the change in his circumstances, obtained a mercantile situation, and in his leisure time studied law. At the age of twenty-one he was admitted to the Mississippi bar. He removed to Tennessee, and pursued his theological studies with a view to entering the church; he returned to Mississippi before the completion of his course, and was ordained a deacon in St. His first charge, which he held for six years, was St. He accepted the duties of his charge with every promise of abundant success, but the fatigues of the long and painful journeys, necessary in so new and extensive a diocese, undermined a constitution already impaired by his ministrations to sufferers from yellow fever in Louisiana, and compelled his resignation, which in was accepted by the house of bishops. From to Dr. Adams was rector of Holy Trinity, Vicksburg, Miss. He received the degree of D. He was graduated from Cumberland College, Kentucky, taking up his residence in that state, and in he served one term in the state legislature. In he went to Mississippi to practice law, and between the years and he represented his district in the state legislature for sixteen years, serving in both branches. In he was an elector on the national Whig electoral ticket, and in was nominated for governor by the Whigs, but declined. In he was an unsuccessful candidate for representative in Congress. The levee system was founded by him, and he was chosen president of the levee board. At the breaking out of the civil war he was appointed by the State Secession convention brigadier-general, but when his brigade entered the Confederate army, President Davis refused to commission him, on account of political differences. He was elected United States senator in , but did not take his seat, as Mississippi was under provisional government and not allowed congressional representation. In he was elected governor by the republicans, but resigned in , having been elected to the U. In he was the unsuccessful candidate for governor. In he served as a member of the State constitutional convention. He died at Eagle Nest, Miss. He was educated at the Collegiate institute, Marionville, Mo. He married in , Salome Crane of Rodney, Miss. Houston in the war between Texas and Mexico. He was a representative in the Mississippi legislature in ; engaged in sugar-planting at West Baton Rouge, La. He studied law at Harvard in ; sailed for Italy in , intending to enlist with Garibaldi, but found the war was over, and made a tour of Europe. He served a second term in the Louisiana legislature, enlisted in the Confederate army in , and became colonel of the 4th Louisiana regiment and military governor of Jackson, Miss. He distinguished himself at Shiloh, Baton Rouge and Vicksburg; was promoted brigadier-general in , and was elected governor of Louisiana. He returned to the city of Mexico in , and established the "Mexican Times. He received a common-school education, and at the age of fifteen enlisted in the Confederate army, in which he served as a private throughout the civil war. He then studied law at the Cumberland university, Tenn. He opened a law office at Tupelo, Lee county, and in was chosen district attorney for the first judicial district of Mississippi, and served for four years. In he was elected to represent his district in the 49th Congress, and was returned to the 50th, 51st, 52d, 53d, 54th, 55th and 56th Congresses. He became universally known as "Private Allen," through a happy repartee which he made in a political speech during the canvass for his first election to Congress. In a joint debate his competitor opened his speech with: I know, for I was guarding that tent all night long in the cold and the wet. In Congress he showed himself a ready and effective debater. Louis Exposition of ; resumed the practice of law in Tupelo, Miss. His parents removed from Georgia to Mississippi during his infancy and settled on a farm. They were unable to educate their large family of children beyond the free schools of Mississippi. Judge Arnold attended the public sixteenth section school of Concord Church on the Starkville road between Columbus and Mayhew. Later, through the interest of Honorable John T. Connell, Thomas Bell, and his son James R. Bell, he was brought to the attention of John A. Foster, afterwards chancellor of the Mobile chancery court district, who was teaching a high school at Monticello, Mississippi.

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Foster offered to admit young Arnold to his school without compensation, and to pay him for teaching primary grades several hours of the day. After attending this school for a year he took charge of the school at Concord Church, where he taught for a year. Then he entered the University of Mississippi in , graduating in . While Arnold was a student at the university he heard the joint debate between L. Lamar, then a young man of thirty-two years of age, and James L. Lamar was the nominee of the Democratic party for congress, and Alcorn the nominee of the Whigs, and of the debate Judge Arnold wrote the following graphic description: Alcorn, who was then the strong and aggressive leader of the Whig party in Mississippi, and Col. Lamar, in the first race made by Judge Lamar for congress, and in which he was elected over Governor Alcorn. There were thousands of enthusiastic partisans of each side present, and music and beauty and generous rivalry and patriotic ardor lent their attractions to the scene. It was a contest between giants conducted with the utmost courtesy and decorum, over great principles and policies. The older and more experienced Whig leader, who had but few equals in his State as a political speaker, spoke well, and conducted his lines of assault defense with consummate skill and ability, but it was generally conceded that he had found his match in the young Harry Percy of Democracy, from Georgia. I have never before or since witness such a discussion. It was an inspiration to everybody, instructive to the young, refreshing to the old, and elevating in all its aspects. He joined a volunteer company, which was ordered into action in the spring of . He attended the session of the legislature, declining to accept the exemption from military service that the law provided for members of that body, and returned to the army when the sessions were over. He was re-elected to the legislature at the next session after the war. He was admitted to the bar at Columbus, Mississippi. At the end of the term he was reappointed without opposition. Before the expiration of his second term, upon petition from the bar and citizens of the district, he was appointed by the governor of Mississippi to the office of associate justice of the supreme court of the State. Two years later he was made chief justice of the supreme court, holding that position until , when he resigned because of failing health and his desire to get back into the practice of law. Removing to Birmingham, Alabama, he formed a law partnership with Col. Evans formerly of Columbus, Miss. Judge Arnold was twice married; his first wife was Orline Lowry, daughter of Col. Robert Lowry, of Baldwyn, Mississippi. They had two children, Orline Lowry and Jemmy. Robert Lowry, of Baldwyn, Mississippi, and this union was blessed with five children: Judge Arnold was a devout member of the Baptist church and up to the time of his death was the teacher of a large class in the Sunday school of the First Baptist church of Birmingham. He died in Birmingham, Alabama, in July

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5: Juniper Alcorn at Fairfield University - www.enganchecubano.com

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Program for Inaugural Ceremonies. Jimmy Carter Campaign Broadside. A Report from Congressman Travis
W. Childers on North Mississippi" Circuit Court of Appeals decision on North Carolina segregation.
Coleman, April 22, ," re: Copy typed letter from Coleman to "House of Representatives," re: Copy typed letter
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the U. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit Johnson, January 21, Johnson, January 5, ," re: State of the State
speech. Coleman press release re: An Address by Governor Paul B. Johnson to Joint Session of the
Legislature, January 28, ," re: Printed photograph portrait of Johnson as governor. Starner Jones Campaign
Card. Celeste Jordan Campaign Card. Kennedy General note John L. Kennedy donated some of his state
legislative records to the University of Mississippi, hence some of the material is more generally related to the
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6: List of Governors of Mississippi - Wikipedia

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He immediately returned to politics and was a part of every legislature or convention in the immediate post-war years. He also renewed his efforts both by speeches and participation to get the Yazoo-Mississippi levees rebuilt. Senator, and private citizen, he consistently pursued this goal. For instance, he was one of three commissioners appointed by the Convention of to travel to Washington to try to get aid for rebuilding the levees. Unsuccessful in this attempt, Alcorn nevertheless used this opportunity to assess the national political scene. In the same year he also traveled to Washington to seek a special pardon, since he owned too much property to come under the general amnesty. Astute observer that he was, he immediately recognized that the South was going to have to grant some civil and political franchise rights to its Negro citizens. In a letter to his wife from Washington, he stated that necessity, and prophetically stated that Southerners must make the Negro their friend or the path ahead would be "red with blood and damp with tears. Ardentlly opposed to the Democracy all his life, it was easy for him to move to a new party with a strong business outlook and the intent to use the Black vote to keep in power those he thought should be in power, i. Alcorn steadily moved toward Negro suffrage, and in so doing alienated conservatives in the state and appeared to be more and more radical when in reality he probably was more conservative than they. Although in the long run Alcorn was defeated, that defeat fastened a second hundred year burden on the back of the state and section that he loved. Hindsight, of course, is always easy, but it would appear that had Alcorn been able to establish a viable Republican Party composed of Conservative white Southerners and Blacks the progressive South of today would have appeared one hundred years earlier. Passions, however, outweighed practicality. Alcorn began his push in the direction of suffrage in August, , when he issued a pamphlet entitled *Views of the Hon. Alcorn on the Political Situation of Mississippi*. In this pamphlet he seemed to be calling for a new party that would bargain with the Radicals in Congress, and he stated that Mississippi could not afford two parties based on racial distinction. He concluded his appeal with this statement about Blacks: By he was openly working with the Republicans. He was an avowed candidate for Governor by the summer of and in September of that year accepted the gubernatorial nomination from the Republican Convention. He campaigned vigorously, was elected, and took office in March of Much of his victory was due to the support of the Military Commander of the Fourth Military District, Adelbert Ames, who was also the provisional governor of the state. Ames was identified with the radical wing of the Republican Party, and he and Alcorn soon became bitter enemies as they contested for control of the Republican Party in Mississippi. Alcorn, even before being inaugurated as governor, was elected for the full term beginning March, ; thus he entered his office expecting to be there only one year. He got the State back on its feet financially, made repairs to ruined public buildings, expanded the court system, and inagurated a system of public education that, even though rudimentary and segregated, did reach into all parts of the state. Oakland College became Alcorn State University in , funded by the land grant college system of the Morrill Act. However, before the end of his first year criticism against the school system mounted and the Ku Klux Klan engaged in increasing violence against the Negro schools. This violence gave critics of the Alcorn administration an excuse to appeal to Washington, particularly to Adelbert Ames, for help, asking for federal troops. Alcorn consistently maintained that there was no organized Klan activity, even after pushing through the Legislature an act outlawing the wearing of masks and disguises, and creating a "special contingency fund" to investigate acts of violence. No doubt he was trying to prevent federal troops being sent to the state and also to prevent Adelbert Ames from having an excuse to interfere. Congress, however, passed the Enforcement Act, and in the summer of a Congressional Investigating Committee came to Mississippi. Alcorn realized he would have to remain in the state until after the fall election to retain control of the party so he refused to take his Senate seat in March and postponed it until November of Thus from

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March to November he was not only Governor, but Senator-elect. The rivalry between Ames and Alcorn became more intense as Ames returned to Mississippi to campaign in the fall elections. Ostensibly campaigning together against the Democrats, it was obvious that the two were jockeying for position, thus moving the Republican Party towards the factionalism that would help to destroy it. Following the election, Alcorn resigned as Governor, left the governorship to the Lieutenant Governor, Ridgely Powers, and went to Washington to take his Senatorial seat. Adelbert Ames considered himself the champion of the Negro and civil rights. An idealist, he could not abide the practical moderate position of Alcorn. Alcorn had a comparable antipathy to Ames, who he thought was an outsider using the Blacks and carpetbaggers for his own political advancement. In Mississippi and in Washington the two struggled, and when Ames was able to get the gubernatorial nomination of the Republican Party in August of , Alcorn was appalled, having expected it to go to Governor Powers. Two days later he announced to the same convention that he would also run for governor, and campaigned against Ames as an outsider, accusing his supporters of dishonesty. He hoped for White conservative support to "save" the state from Ames, but his defeat meant the end of any hope for a native Republican Party. Alcorn remained in the Senate, however, where he continued to support internal improvements, particularly levee-building, but with little success. He opposed the Radicals in the South but consistently supported the positions of the Republican Party. He campaigned in Mississippi in for Hayes and in that contested election he cast his vote on a straight party line. Following the action in the spring of , he departed from state and national politics, returned to Coahoma County, and spent the rest of his life attending to business and family. He may have failed to achieve what he desired in politics, but he desired to be. Before his death on 20 December , he emerged briefly from political retirement to participate in the Constitutional Convention of Ever the practical realist, he voted for the clauses that disenfranchised the Blacks even though twenty years before he had worked for their enfranchisement. Unlike Ames, his support had never been based on principle but on expediency. His actions were in character with his life, as are all of his extant writings. An examination of the tracts, brochures, and political speeches show the two consistent themes of his life-practical politics and business acumen. Although bitterly criticized, he served his state well. He was widely respected by his Southern compatriots, and it would appear that if Alcorn, with his background, ability and integrity, could not take his state into the twentieth century, then no one could. His failure meant the failure of his State and region.

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7: Hiram Rhodes Revels - Wikipedia

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Supreme Court of Mississippi. LEE, Justice, for the Court: This is an appeal from the Circuit Court of Alcorn County wherein the appellant, Vincent Curlee, attempted to represent himself, was furnished assistance of counsel and was found guilty of kidnapping, armed robbery and simple assault. Curlee was sentenced to two consecutive life sentences and twenty years. Curlee was charged with abducting Mrs. Lawson. Once at the park he began to assault her and ordered that she surrender her money, watch and rings. Curlee then demanded that Mrs. Lawson remove her clothes, which she refused to do. Upon her refusal to undress, Curlee directed her to drive him to the city cemetery. Curlee got out of the car at the cemetery and Mrs. Lawson drove by her home and then to the city police department. The police arrested Curlee a short time later that evening. In the house where he was arrested, two rings and a small handgun were recovered. Lawson subsequently identified Curlee as the assailant, and the rings, as the ones which he had taken from her. Curlee later admitted the entire incident, and signed a written confession. On May 3, , the Alcorn County Grand Jury returned an indictment against Curlee charging him with kidnapping, aggravated assault and armed robbery. Curlee filed an affidavit of indigency and was provided counsel on May 4, . On the same day through his appointed counsel, the Hon. Phil Hinton, Curlee filed a waiver of arraignment and entry of a plea of not guilty. The record reflects that two days later, on May 6, , a proceeding was had in the circuit court wherein it was determined that Curlee would be allowed to proceed pro se, although court-appointed counsel would remain at the counsel table with him throughout the trial. That proceeding began as an attempt by Mr. Hinton to withdraw a plea of not guilty and enter a plea of guilty. The judge began to question Curlee on the voluntariness of the guilty plea when Curlee stated he would enter a plea of "no-contendory". There was then a conference between Curlee and Hinton, after which Hinton requested that they proceed with the change of plea. Thereupon, the judge began to repeat his questioning concerning the voluntariness of the plea. Curlee responded by asking that Hinton be "removed from my case for insufficient counsel. Following the drawing of the special venire, the judge began to question Curlee concerning his request that Hinton be removed as counsel. Curlee replied that he did not want a lawyer but instead wished to have Jimmie Kimbrell, a non-lawyer and fellow inmate awaiting trial, appointed as "legal adviser. The judge asked Curlee about his age, education, employment, training, and experience with the legal system. Upon the completion of the questioning the judge ruled that Curlee would be allowed to represent himself but the judge also ordered that Mr. Hinton remain at the counsel table with Curlee throughout the course of the trial. At the close of the trial the jury found Curlee guilty and the judge sentenced him to two life sentences and a twenty year sentence to run consecutively. This case is analogous to *Matthews v. State*. In such delicate situations, the question of counsel waiver must be determined on the facts of each case. In the case sub judice, the attorneys appointed for the appellants were required to remain in the courtroom within a few feet of the appellants during the four days of trial and were present, ready, willing and able to advise, counsel and assist the appellants. In fact, *Matthews* did call upon her appointed attorney at times for advice. We are of the opinion that the trial judge who observed and talked with *Matthews* prior to trial and for four days during the trial, was in the best position to know whether or not she executed a knowledgeable waiver of counsel and was mentally competent to do so and that he did not err in overruling the motion for a new trial. In the case sub judice, as in *Matthews*, the trial judge ordered that an experienced attorney remain with the defendant throughout the course of the trial. Indeed Hinton submitted the only jury instructions offered by the defense. The trial judge was in the best position to determine whether Curlee had made a knowing and intelligent waiver of his right to counsel.

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8: Project MUSE - The Mississippi Secession Convention

Alcorn began his push in the direction of suffrage in August, , when he issued a pamphlet entitled Views of the Hon. J. L. Alcorn on the Political Situation of Mississippi. In this pamphlet he seemed to be calling for a new party that would bargain with the Radicals in Congress, and he stated that Mississippi could not afford two parties.

Revels of Natchez was appointed by the predominantly Republican Mississippi Legislature in to serve out the unexpired term of Jefferson Davis and became the first black to serve in the U. Bruce of Bolivar County, Mississippi, in was the second black sent to the U. Senate and was the first black to serve a full term in the Senate. Bruce, Frederick Douglass, and Hiram R. Revels surrounded by scenes of African-American life. The same language could describe post-Civil War Reconstruction in Mississippi. Depending on your perspective, Reconstruction was the best or worst time, an age of political wisdom or foolishness, a time of heartfelt belief or profound doubt, a brilliant period of limitless possibilities or the darkest chapter of our past. States with the longest and most divisive Reconstruction were states where most of the population was black and whose white leaders had established the Confederacy, such as South Carolina, the first state to secede from the Union, and Mississippi, the second to secede. Reconstruction, which went through two phases, lasted for eleven years in Mississippi. Being the center of slavery and cotton culture, heavily agricultural places such as Mississippi seceded first and returned to the Union last. Planters, who had produced cotton for the world market, emerged from the Civil War in a state of shock. They had enslaved their workforce for generations. After emancipation and Confederate defeat, many white Mississippians still thought they had been right to own slaves and secede from the Union. This position, within a state where the population was 55 percent black, foreshadowed a difficult Reconstruction. Black and white Mississippians grappled with a devastated economy and a new social structure. The Bureau had many important responsibilities. It distributed clothing, food, and fuel to freedmen and white refugees. It protected the civil rights of former slaves by offering them legal counsel. Faced with limited resources and resistance from many white southerners, the Bureau failed to accomplish many of its goals. President Andrew Johnson issued guidelines for re-admittance of the former Confederate states into the Union based on the Reconstruction plans that Lincoln had developed during the war. The president offered amnesty to individuals who would take an oath of loyalty to the United States, but there were exceptions. When 10 percent of the voters in a state had taken the oath of loyalty, the state would be permitted to form a legal government and rejoin the Union. In Mississippi, Johnson appointed William L. Sharkey, a Union Whig, as provisional governor to guide Reconstruction in the state and to organize an election of delegates for a state constitutional convention. To kill a Negro they do not deem murder. Trying to explain this defiance, Thomas pointed to prejudices seared into white minds and hearts during the era of slavery. One of the first necessities of Reconstruction was to define the legal status of former slaves. How would Mississippi define citizenship? Which civil rights would the state legislators give to freedmen? Instead of embracing change Mississippi passed the first and most extreme Black Codes, laws meant to replicate slavery as much as possible. Blacks could not own a gun or preach the Gospel without first receiving a special license. On one level, the Black Codes made a political statement. White Mississippians meant to limit the political power of blacks by denying them civil rights. On another, deeper level, these codes revealed an economic struggle between former masters and freed slaves. Ex-masters wanted to force blacks to work as they had during bondage. Freedmen desired something else. They sought land to rent or own; they wanted self-sufficiency and independence from the old ways of plantation agriculture. Though most blacks wanted physical and economic distance from their terrible past, few achieved this goal. Blacks who saved money to purchase land seldom found a white man who would sell it to them. This white defiance had unintended consequences. Declining land prices and a failing cotton market threatened the livelihood of white planters. Proud men who had withstood wartime destruction and postwar uncertainties faced spiraling debt. Over planters near Natchez, one of the wealthiest cotton regions in the world, forfeited their land to pay debts or back taxes. Something had to

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give. In time, when neither whites nor blacks could achieve their economic aims, landowners and laborers compromised by creating the sharecropping system. Planters provided land, animals, seed, and fertilizer; freedmen provided labor. They split the crop. This was hardly an ideal arrangement, but it resolved an economic impasse between land and labor, white and black. Former masters were guaranteed a constant source of labor, and former slaves could work a separate plot of earth, though they did not own it. Radical Reconstruction, Testimony from officials like Thomas and the oppressive Black Codes convinced Congress that Mississippi and other states needed a more thorough Reconstruction. Congressional, or Radical, Reconstruction ensued. In Mississippi this period contained great achievements and embarrassing failures. One of the greatest successes was black participation in democracy, both as voters and office holders. At least black Mississippians held public office during Reconstruction, compared to only 46 blacks in Arkansas and 20 in Tennessee. Mississippi sent the first two and only black senators of this period to Congress. The first senator, Hiram R. Revels, was a free black from North Carolina who served as a chaplain to black troops during the Civil War. Revels moved to Natchez in and founded schools for freedmen throughout the South. The second African-American senator was Blanche K. Bruce in Bolivar County, Mississippi, Bruce encouraged black political participation as the county sheriff, tax collector, and superintendent of education. This local political base catapulted Bruce to a U. Senate seat in 1875. Other black and white Mississippians promoted a biracial political society. Former slave owner James Lusk Alcorn showed that not all white planters opposed progress. But Radical Reconstruction infuriated southerners committed to white supremacy. As Republicans implemented political equality, terrorist groups used intimidation and violence to halt progress. The foremost of these organizations was the Ku Klux Klan. Klansmen hid beneath costumes meant to represent the ghosts of Confederate soldiers, but they often unmasked themselves when committing violence. This act sent a chilling message to their victims: Klansmen thought they could murder with impunity, because local authorities were unwilling or unable to stop them. The Klan targeted Dupree because he led a local Republican Party group and spoke his mind. Throughout Mississippi the Klan also sought to uphold planter authority by disciplining troublesome workers. The violence sparked a bloodbath in Meridian; white rioters picked out dozens of black leaders and murdered them in cold blood. In time these violent tactics ruined democracy in Mississippi and throughout the South. Their insurgency worked; Democratic candidates committed to white supremacy replaced every Republican incumbent in the elections. After this success, insurgents used violence and voter fraud to gain political control of the state. When the federal government refused to address these crimes, John R. Lynch. One hundred years later, the civil rights movement achieved the freedom that Lynch and thousands of other Mississippians first won and then lost during Reconstruction. For Lynch and his fellow Mississippians, these tumultuous postwar years were the best of times and the worst of times. Posted May Busbee, Jr. Harlan Davidson, pp. A Sphinx on the American Land: Louisiana State University Press,

9: Project MUSE - A New History of Mississippi

No less active in the 70s, King embarked on a series of doomed political candidacies, getting trounced for Georgia governor in 1964, the Georgia state legislature in 1966, and in a Georgia triple whammy, the state legislature, Dougherty County Commission and Albany City Commission in 1967.

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