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**THE KNOW-NOTHING PARTY AND THE GROWTH OF SECTIONALISM IN
EAST TEXAS**

by Waymon L. McClellan

In 1855 the American (Know-Nothing) Party was a novelty bursting with excitement, the first promising attempt to change Texas' one-party politics. A mere two years later the party had slipped from lustiness to languor, a broken, leaderless Know-Nothing remnant joining the Sam Houston-led Independent Democrats.¹ But the brief, tumultuous life of the Know-Nothings was not without importance. Historians commonly give most significance to the fact that antagonism against a common foe, the Know-Nothings, effectively overrode the bitter factional alignments that had long prevented the organization of the regular (states' rights) Democrats, stressing that Democrats reacted to the Know-Nothing challenge by perfecting party organization and establishing nominations by convention.² The usual interpretation of the American Party as a catalyst to Democratic organization slights the most momentous development of ante-bellum Texas politics: the sharp division between union and states' rights groups, with the ultimate triumph of the states' righters. The product of Democratic organization—the victory of the states' rights wing—should be emphasized rather than the act of organization, and Know-Nothings played a significant role in the success of the regular Democrats.

By condemning Know-Nothings as collaborators with Northern abolitionists and by questioning the allegiance of individual Know-Nothings to the South, Democrats created an atmosphere in which states' rights extremism flourished. Alarmed by accusations of disloyalty to the South, most Know-Nothings found the lures of secrecy, ritual, and nativism fleeting. After a brief attraction to the Americans, Democrats and states' rights Whigs who had joined the Know-Nothings joined with the regular Democrats, there to prove loyalty to the South by helping defeat Houston and Independents in the election of 1857 and by seating an aggressively pro-Southern legislature.

The pro-Southern views of Texas' voters could not be counted a surprise. Slavery was integral to Texas' economy, with both the number of slaves and the ad valorem value per slave rising rapidly during the 1850s.³ In many counties the percentage of slaves increased at a much greater rate than the percentage of whites. Henderson County, for example, showed a 201 per cent increase in the white population from 1850 to 1860, but during the same period registered a 1,277 per cent increase in the number of slaves.⁴

Newcomers to Texas came overwhelmingly from the lower South, bringing with them feelings of kinship to Southern brothers left behind as well as an affinity for the economic system gripping their native section. The slave states populated East Texas, with Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi furnishing almost 52 per cent of the new families to 1860; Arkansas, Georgia, and Louisiana added another 35 per cent.⁵ In the legislature, also, the typical member was of Southern background. The percentage of slaveowners in the legislature grew steadily in the 1850s, rising from almost 40 per cent in 1850 to more than 54 per cent in 1860.⁶ Legislators illustrated Texas' identification with other Southern states by resolving in 1850 that Texas' interests were the same as those of the rest

of the South, and that slavery was to be defended.⁷

Because of the pro-Southern bias, most Texans found the American Party suspect from the beginning, the party having been born in a spasm of sectionalism. At the first national Know-Nothing convention, meeting in Philadelphia in 1855, a number of delegates sought to minimize sectional differences and unify the party by appealing to national interests. But when the convention adopted a section denying Congress the authority to consider legislation affecting slavery, Northerners reacted heatedly.⁸ The Know-Nothing governor of Massachusetts, attending the convention, denounced the section as unacceptable and went home. Fifty-three delegates representing twelve Northern states withdrew and met separately.⁹ One of the delegations, New Hampshire's, adopted a resolution typical of Northern Know-Nothings. Contending that slavery was not national, but sectional—not permanent, but temporary—the anti-slavers criticized the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the Fugitive Slave Law as unconstitutional, pled for the re-institution of the Missouri Compromise, and vowed refusal to consent to the admission of slavery into any area protected by the Compromise of 1820.¹⁰

The sectionalism of Northern Know-Nothings led Texas' Democratic editors to publish numerous articles condemning the fusion of Northern Know-Nothings with abolitionists. East Texas papers such as the *Marshall Texas Republican*, the *Clarksville Standard*, the *Tyler Reporter*, and the *Dallas Herald* reduced issues to simple terms; abolitionists, freesoilers, and Know-Nothings of the North opposed national men of all parties and states.¹¹ Know-Nothingism had spread in the South, Democrats stated, because of the promise to reduce sectionalism. But Know-Nothing actions contradicted Know-Nothing aspirations. Clearly, Democrats argued, abolitionists were in power throughout the North, seemingly with Know-Nothing consent, and Americanism was merely an attempt to surrender the South to anti-slavers.¹²

Where Know-Nothings had been successful in the North, the "rankest sort of abolitionism" had been placed "by the side of the rankest sort of Know-Nothingism." In Pennsylvania, Know-Nothings had helped elect a free-soil governor; in Massachusetts, a Know-Nothing governor had been elected who pledged to oppose "in public or private life the aggression of slavery . . . so long as I live." William H. Seward, an outspoken New York abolitionist, had won office by Know-Nothing votes. In Rhode Island, Democrats had been defeated by a combination of Know-Nothings and "nigger worshippers."¹³ By concluding that abolitionists had gained leadership of Know-Nothing councils, by showing that the greatest Know-Nothing victories had occurred in centers of Northern abolitionism,¹⁴ by linking inextricably abolitionist and Know-Nothing, Democratic editors in east Texas helped create an image of the American Party as a party dominated by anti-slavery extremists, an accusation contributing prominently to the party's defeat.

Know-Nothings was of greatest importance. The presence of three Democrats in the contest would insure Know-Nothing victory.¹⁵ In discussing the election, the editor of the *Marshall Texas Republican*, R. W. Loughery, who had once defended his staunchly Democratic journal by writing that a newspaper without politics was a "perfectly wishy washy affair, devoid of interest or merit," illustrated the election's sectional nature by writing that Ward would give no comfort to abolitionists or freesoilers and would support the South when the "hour of resistance" came.¹⁶

The same attitude motivating Chilton and Mills was evident in the actions of Democratic candidates for state offices. In the gubernatorial election, M. T. Johnson, of Tarrant County, announced as a candidate in opposition to E. M. Pease, the convention-selected candidate. When D. C. Dickson entered the race as the Know-Nothing nominee,¹⁷ Johnson earned official thanks from the Democrats by withdrawing from the campaign.¹⁸ Even though Pease held views on state policies objectionable to perhaps a majority of Democrats, spokesman urged the electorate to unite in his support. When Pease won, Democratic leaders applauded Texans for electing him, but admitted that his policies were unpopular.¹⁹ In referring to Pease's victory, Loughery wrote that three-fourths of the voters had disagreed with his views, but, nevertheless, had voted for him. The election had gone beyond state issues, Loughery said, being linked to larger Southern issues.²⁰

As the presidential election of 1856 neared, Democrats continued to emphasize the abolitionism of Northern Know-Nothings. Abolitionism was the only issue, Democrats warned, and an abolitionized Northern group of Know-Nothings endangered the South.²¹ Attacks against the Know-Nothing presidential candidate, Millard Fillmore, labeled him an opponent of the South. Texas Democrats condemned Fillmore as a candidate whose stand on slavery left him suspect and not worthy of²² Fillmore, Democrats stressed, had opposed the Missouri Compromise, had not supported the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and approved squatter sovereignty.²³ As the clincher, editors, including R. W. Loughery, published an 1838 letter written by Fillmore which gave his responses to questions asked by an anti-slave society in Pennsylvania. He had given affirmative answers to four questions:²⁴

1. Should petitions about slavery be read and considered in Congress?
2. Did he oppose the annexation of Texas as long as it was slave?
3. Should Congress abolish slave trade between states?
4. Should slavery be abolished in the District of Columbia?

Texas voters defeated Fillmore by a two-to-one margin. He was denied a single county in the east, and failed to carry Austin or San Antonio in the west, previously centers of Know-Nothing power.²⁵ In Harrison County, center of Know-Nothing power in the east, Democrats won the county by 60 votes, after having been defeated by 250 votes in 1855. Thus it was that the Know-Nothings passed from the promise of 1855 to the repudiation of 1856.²⁶ In the state elections of 1855, Know-Nothings had been well-known and honorable Texans who were able to capitalize on personal reputation. But in the presidential election, the emphasis was on national candidates reflecting party images. By divorcing the election from person popularity, issues had regained importance. The Know-Nothing Party represented equivocation in the face of Northern attack against Southern institutions. In contrast, the Democrats seemed to speak sternly for an inviolate South.

An important reason for the rapid defeat of the American Party in East Texas, as in all of Texas, was that Know-Nothings seemed to be Southerners first and Know-Nothings second. Although the National Know-Nothing Platform of 1855 bragged that the party was national,²⁷ the immediate splitting into Northern and Southern factions made the statement false. As an observer of the 1855 convention had correctly noted, the party was destined to "split upon the rock of slavery."²⁸

The stout stand Southern Know-Nothings took for their section gave special meaning even to opposition to immigration, as immigrants shunned the rural South for the industrial North. The growing superiority in population of the free states because of inpourings of foreigners was of concern to Southerners who recognized that immigrants added to abolitionist forces. A Know-Nothing editor wrote in 1855 that the rights of the slave states could be guaranteed only "when the deadliest enemy the South has, foreign immigrants at the ballot box, have been curbed . . . they despise the slaveholders." Continuing, the writer warned that immigrants almost invariably settled in the North, increasing Northern representation in Congress.²⁹ Aware of the dwindling power of the Southern states, a number of Southern delegates to the National Know-Nothing Convention of 1856 withdrew when Northerners, having gained control of the convention, voted to change the pro-Southern twelfth section of the platform. One Southern group severed connection with the "abolitionist" national organization.³⁰

In their defense of the South, Texas Know-Nothings found much common ground with Democratic opponents. A study of fifty-six Know-Nothing leaders shows that 89.3 per cent were Southern born, and that 57.4 per cent owned slaves.³¹ A Know-Nothing legislator from Harrison County, A. D. Burrell, exemplified the pro-Southern convictions of many Know-Nothing leaders by introducing to the legislature seated in 1855 a resolution censuring a fellow representative for making a speech favorable to free-soilers.³² The pro-Southern convictions of Texas Know-Nothings was made evident in their 1856 platform. Like the Democrats and in language only slightly less aggressive, Know-Nothings fully endorsed Southern views. The platform advocated strict construction of the Constitution and called for limited power of the federal government. In addition, the platform denounced "higher law" doctrines and defended slavery against federal intervention.³³

Attempting to suppress the rift between unionists and states' righters, delegates to the convention determined to make nativism the main issue. Trying to avoid sectional topics, Know-Nothings demanded a twenty-one year naturalization period for immigrants.³⁴ Officially, the party was presented as a nativistic organization openly protecting Southern institutions while seeking to minimize sectionalism. But the strong identification of Texas Know-Nothings with the South made nativism weak cement for holding the party together. All across the state Know-Nothings rushed into the Democratic party, citing as the reason the abolitionism of Northern Know-Nothings and the need for Southern unity.³⁵ A favorite technique of Democratic editors was to publish letters from ex-Know-Nothings expressing disillusionment with the party. The letters, usually containing several signatures, had the same theme: Know-Nothings, deserting nativism, were warring against the South and the Democratic party.³⁶ Democratic meetings in Marshall were enlivened by former Know-Nothings who had become dissatisfied with the American Party because of the abolitionism of the Northern wing, feared as openly hostile to the South.³⁷

In an act illustrative of what was happening, J. S. Ford, editor of the *Texas State Times*, the leading Know-Nothing newspaper, announced in 1857 that duty to the South had forced his withdrawal from the Know-Nothings and reaffiliation with the Democrats.³⁸ W. B. Ochiltree, Know-Nothing champion and former Whig gubernatorial candidate, stunned the Americans by supporting the Democrats in the presidential election of 1856. Views against foreigners, Ochiltree warned, should be disregarded in favor of views against abolitionists. To Ochiltree, the real foe was "Black Republicanism."³⁹

Like Ochiltree, other Whigs in the Know-Nothings placed a concern for the South and slavery over their role as members of the opposition to the Democrats. Slaveholding states' rights Whigs, who had entered the Know-Nothings because the party was the only alternative to the Democrats, linked forces with Democrats in support of slavery. Clearly, sympathies lay with the party taking the strongest pro-Southern stand.⁴⁰ Speaking to the Democratic convention of 1858, an ex-Whig from Fannin County said that he had changed from liberal constructionalist to strict constructionalist. The struggle, he said, was solely between the Democrats and the "Black Republicans."⁴¹ Harrison County's T. J. Jennings, who was defeated at the Democratic convention of 1856 in his attempt to gain the nomination to a second term as attorney general, is another example of the movement from Whig to Know-Nothing to Democrat. Actions such as that of Jennings fulfilled the Democratic prediction that many Whigs would find the Know-Nothings a "way station" to the Democrats.⁴²

By withdrawing from the Know-Nothings, pro-Southerners in the party fully answered the question of Charles De Morse, editor of the *Clarksville Standard*. "Why . . . will persons professing loyalty to the South," De Morse asked, "deliberately throw away strength that may be essential to its safety?"⁴³ Claiming loyalty to the South, many Texas Know-Nothings recognized that a course similar to that of the Democrats would weaken Southern solidarity. The effect of continued support of the American Party would bring disaster to the South by splitting the conservative vote.⁴⁴ Speaking to the state Democratic convention of 1858, the well-known Know-Nothing leader Hugh McLeod stated that he had left the Know-Nothings because of the need for a united Texas and a united South.⁴⁵

The division of the Democrats into states' rights and unionist groups has been frequently discussed, but the division of the *Know-Nothings* into union and states' rights factions has been overlooked. Too often the Know-Nothings are thought of as unionists or nativists only.⁴⁶ True, some Southerners were attracted by the unionism of the party. Certainly, however, not all Know-Nothings were unionists. Men who had joined the party because of its opposition to immigration were frequently sectionalists, believing that immigrants increased abolitionist forces in the North. Nativism, then, was not sufficient to unify groups split over such fundamental ideas as unionism and states' rights.

Stripped of many members who had entered the party for reasons other than unionism, the Americans were unable to organize in 1857.⁴⁷ Brought to the surface by the Democratic attack against Northern abolitionism, pro-Southern attitudes of both Democrats and Know-Nothings needed only direction to become a powerful political force. The unionism of Sam Houston, once the "high priest" of Texas Know-Nothings, and his candidacy in the election of 1857 provided the opportunity.⁴⁸

Many Texans considered Houston a traitor to the South, the list of his

culpable actions including opposition to annexation, opposition to the Nashville Convention, voting for the Wilmot Proviso, approval of abolitionists being seated in the National Democratic Convention of 1848, and voting against the Missouri Compromise and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. As proof of Houston's error, Democratic papers pointed out that abolitionists praised him for his actions.⁴⁹

Houston had stirred protests when he opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Charles De Morse, editor of the *Clarksville Standard*, declared that Houston had "passed our limit of endurance" and would not longer be supported. R. W. Loughery stated flatly that Houston should be asked to resign, as he had for a number of years run athwart Southern views. Houston's followers were "time-serving, miserably mean toadies." When Houston entered the Know-Nothings, Lamar County Democrats passed a resolution "tendering our congratulations . . . on being rid of him." The Texas legislature joined the anti-Houston outcry by denouncing Houston's vote on the Kansas-Nebraska Act.⁵⁰ In their state platform of 1856, Democrats spoke in opposition to Houston's vote as "not in accordance of the sentiments of the Democracy of Texas."⁵¹ In the state Know-Nothing convention of 1856, a resolution instructing the Texas delegation to the national convention to support Houston for the presidential nomination was withdrawn after Hugh McLeod urged the party to rid itself of Houston "as Jonah had been cast overboard."⁵² In a meeting of Marshall Know-Nothings in 1857, a motion to support Houston for governor met sharp opposition.⁵³

Bro-Southern, anti-Houston feeling was given full expression by the delegates to the state Democratic convention of 1857, a convention unhesitatingly and unequivocally embracing states' rights. Continuing to stir the cauldron of pro-Southern preachings, the regular Democrats, by then strongly reinforced by ex-Know-nothings, were unwilling to emphasize controversial state issues. The platform committee refused to discuss state policies in the party's platform. Specific views concerning the railroads and other state topics, Democrats feared, would divide the party. The convention concluded that the restrictive Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions had "binding authority."⁵⁴ Thus the issues were drawn: unionism and the constitution as expressed by Houston contested states' rights and the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions as proclaimed by the regular Democrats.

Though Houston abandoned nativism and renounced Know-Nothingism in 1857, stating that Jacksonian Democracy was his only platform, his campaign found little favor with an electorate whose thinking had been influenced by warnings of collusion between Houston and Northern abolitionists. Editors and speakers across the state ridiculed Houston for trying to base the election on Houston or anti-Houston forces. The radical L. T. Wigfall, for example, who frequently debated Houston in East Texas, remarked in reply to Houston at Marshall that the election was neither a popularity contest nor a battle over state issues, but simply an approval or indictment of Houston's anti-Southern Senate performance.⁵⁵

On the ticket with Houston was the unionist L. D. Evans, who had been elected to Congress in 1855 as a Know-Nothing. Evans argued that the regular Democrats were extremists and disunionists.⁵⁶ His opponent, the highly-respected John H. Reagan, later to become postmaster-general of the Confederacy, was a states' righter whose reasoned arguments lacked the fire of Wigfall's, but strictly adhered to the position of the regular Democrats. Shying

away from denunciations of men, Reagan dealt with principles. As a states' righter, he opposed the federalism of Whigs and Know-Nothings. Acknowledging the right of secession, he recognized that it would be accompanied by violence. Admitting "great respect" for Houston's character and "distinguished public service," Reagan argued against his political views.⁵⁷

Texans listened. Despite a mid-1850s drop in the number of immigrants entering Texas,⁵⁸ the vote in the governor's race of 1857 showed the largest percentage increase from one election to the next of the decade. Texans abandoned the politics of state for the politics of section, soundly trouncing Houston's Independent slate. Of the thirty-seven Eastern counties from which returns are available, Houston carried only Angelina, Nacogdoches, Sabine, Shelby, San Augustine, Jefferson, and Orange.⁵⁹ Significantly, Houston's strength lay in the lightly populated lower East Texas counties where four counties, in contrast to counties in upper East Texas, were decreasing in the number of slaves because of the westward movement and the failure of immigrants to settle in the lower section.⁶⁰ Unlike upper East Texas counties, which contained many recently arrived pro-slavers from the lower South, the typical citizen of lower East Texas was an older Texan who well remembered the exploits of Houston during the war for Texas Independence.⁶¹

Evans fared worse. In 1855 he had squeezed into Congress on a tiny majority; in 1857 he was catapulted out by an aroused electorate. Pulled along by Houston, Evans won six counties, losing only San Augustine among the seven counties Houston carried.⁶² The Clarksville *Messenger* had written Evan's political epitaph months earlier:⁶³

Alas, poor Lem'—here he lies,
No body laughs, no body cries,
Where he has gone, and how he fares,
No body knows, and no body cares.

In Harrison County, a Know-Nothing county in 1855, Democrats made a clean sweep. One of the winners was L. T. Wigfall, who was elected to the state senate. The results of the vote in Marshall showed crossing of party lines. While the Know-Nothing nominees of Harrison County polled an average of 212 votes, Houston's state ticket polled an average of 247 votes. Evans, who had won Harrison County in 1855, lost the county by forty votes.⁶⁴

With the victory of the regular Democrats, states' righters took control, not to release it until the Civil War reshaped Texas politics. The legislature seated in 1857 was ardently pro-Southern. After the suicide of T. J. Rusk and as an act of censure to Houston, the 1857 legislature chose two United States Senators. J. P. Henderson and John Hemphill, both states' righters, were selected to fill the positions. The state Democratic convention of 1858 resolved that the governor, the adamantly pro-Southern H. R. Runnels, of Bowie County, appoint delegates to the Southern Convention, a meeting dedicated to the "general welfare of the institutions of the South." Acting on the resolution, Runnels, in a special message to the legislature, stated that a refusal by Congress to admit Kansas as a slave state would force the South to look to its own future security. By a unanimous vote in the legislature and a twenty-three to five vote in the senate, the governor assumed power to appoint delegates to attend any convention designed to protect the South. An additional resolution gave the governor the authority to call a special legislative session in order for Texas to act alone. Texas was pursuing a hard pro-Southern course, and "secession became a live topic of discussion."⁶⁵

Though the unionist Houston defeated the states' righter Runnels in 1859, the victory was a personal one and not a mandate for a backing-off from the brewing sectional clash. The sectionalist ardor of the new legislature was not lessened. When J. P. Henderson died, the legislature selected the volcanic L. T. Wigfall, who in the election of 1857 had "endeared himself to the Democracy" through his debates with Houston, as the new Senator.⁶⁶ During the Democratic convention of 1859, delegates had proposed the acquisition of Cuba as a way to extend slavery.

Ironically, the effect of the American Party was to increase sectionalism, though the party's state platform of 1856 called sectionalism the greatest threat to the union.⁶⁷ In East Texas, as in the entire state, the Know-Nothing challenge had produced a swift and vigorous response. First, Democratic editors such as R. W. Loughery and Charles De Morse constantly emphasized the fusion of Northern Know-Nothings with abolitionists, urging Texas Know-Nothings to break away from a party dominated by anti-slavers; second, Democrats began organizing, developing the convention system of selecting candidates; third, Democratic politicians suspended personal ambitions and worked for the victory of convention-selected candidates, as shown by the actions of George Chilton, John T. Mills, and M. T. Johnson in the 1855 election—men who withdrew from candidacy so that the Democratic vote might not be split; fourth, Democrats ignored state issues and emphasized sectional topics, as shown by the state platform of 1857; fifth, large number of Know-Nothings left the party, joining with the regular Democrats; sixth, strong leaders—Wigfall, Reagan, Runnels—emerged from among the states' rights Democrats; and, seventh, in unprecedented turnout, voters decisively defeated the forces of unionism in 1857 and set Texas solidly among other Southern states. The significance of the American Party does not lie in its own actions or motives, but in the powerful reaction to it, climaxing in clamorous attack, exaggerated sectionalism, and forceful, conservative leadership.

NOTES

¹For the history of Know-Nothing beginnings, see William Darrell Overdyke, *The Know-Nothing Party in the South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1950), 34-44. A summary of Know-Nothing activities in Texas is in Rupert Norval Richardson, *Texas, the Lone Star State* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1958), 129-31.

²Richardson, *Texas*, 131; T. R. Fehrenbach, *Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1968), 334.

³Charles William Ramsdell, *Reconstruction in Texas* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1910), 11-12; *Texas Almanac*, 1857, 69-71; Ralph A. Wooster, "Notes on Texas' Largest Slaveowners, 1860," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXV (July, 1961), 72.

⁴Barnes F. Lathrop, *Migration into East Texas, 1835-1860* (Austin: Texas State Historical Association, 1949), 25-26.

⁵*Texas Almanac*, 1857, 124; Lathrop, *Migration*, 34.

⁶Ralph A. Wooster, "Membership in Early Texas Legislatures, 1850-1860," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXIX (October, 1965), 166-172.

⁷H. P. N. Gammel, *The Laws of Texas, 1822-1897* (Austin: The Gammel Book Company, 1898), 531-32.

⁸Text in Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 131-32.

⁹*National Intelligencer* (Washington, D. C.), June 30, 1855; *Marshall Texas Republican*, June 30, 1855.

¹⁰*Texas Republican*, June 16, 1855.

¹¹*Tyler Reporter*, November 17, 1855.

¹²*Texas Republican*, March 10, 1855; February 24, 1855.

¹³*Clarksville Standard*, May 3, 1856; *Texas Republican*, February 24, 1855; *Dallas Herald*, May 24, 1856.

¹⁴*Texas Republican*, July 28, 1855.

¹⁵*Texas Republican*, July 7, 1855.

¹⁶*Texas Republican*, July 28, 1855. Biography of Loughery in *The Encyclopedia of the New West* (Marshall: The United States Biographical Publishing Company, 1881), 501-502.

¹⁷Ernest William Winkler (ed.), *Platforms of Political Parties in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1916), 63. Short biography of Dickson in Walter Prescott Webb et al, (eds.), *The Handbook of Texas* (Austin: The Texas State Historical Association, 1952), I, 501.

¹⁸See Additional Resolution No. 11 of the 1856 Democratic Platform in Winkler, *Platforms*, 67.

¹⁹Francis Richard Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas, or Memoirs of Francis Richard Lubbock, Governor of Texas in War Time, 1861-1863*, Additional Resolution No. 15 in Winkler, *Platforms*, 68.

²⁰*Texas Republican*, March 21, 1857.

²¹*Texas Republican*, March 22, 1856; October 11, 1856.

²²See letter from Donelson to the *Washington Union*, October 18, 1851, quoted in *Texas Republican*, November 1, 1856.

²³Speech by L. T. Wigfall in *Texas Republican*, October 11, 1856; Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 142.

²⁴*Texas Republican*, April 5, 1856.

²⁵County results in Walter Dean Burnham, *Presidential Ballots, 1836-1892* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1955), 764-813; Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 271.

²⁶Election results for Harrison County in *Texas Republican*. November 8, 1856.

²⁷The twelfth section of the 1855 platform stated that sectionalism had made it the duty of the American Party to "interpose for the purpose of giving peace to the country and perpetuity to the Union." Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 131.

²⁸*National Intelligencer* (Washington, D. C.), June 13, 1855.

²⁹Southern Know-Nothings objected to immigration because of its threat to the South, not because of its threat to the union. Carl Degler, *Out of Our Past; the Forces that Shaped Modern America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), n. 10, 298.

³⁰*Texas Republican*, March 15, 1856; Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 135-37.

³¹Ralph A. Wooster, "An Analysis of the Texas Know-Nothings," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXX (January 1967), 421-22.

³²*Texas Republican*, December 8, 1855.

³³Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 199; *Texas Republican*, February 9, 1956.

³⁴Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 199.

³⁵Publication of Know-Nothing activities "caused a stampede among unsuspecting Democrats who had joined the Know-Nothings." Winkler, *Platforms*, 64.

³⁶*Texas Republican*, April 21, 1855; *Clarksville Standard*, July 28, 1857.

³⁷*Texas Republican*, July 12, 1856.

³⁸John Salmon Ford, *Rip Ford's Texas*, ed. Stephen B. Oates (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), xxxi.

³⁹Ochiltree's comments taken from the *Trinity Advocate*, quoted in the *Texas Republican*, May 17, 1856.

⁴⁰Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 233-35; *Texas Republican*, April 5, 1856.

⁴¹Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 233-35.

⁴²*Texas Republican*, August 4, 1855; April 5, 1856; April 19, 1856; Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 202-203; *Clarksville Standard*, July 14, 1855.

⁴³*Clarksville Standard*, May 3, 1856.

⁴⁴*Texas Republican*, March 22, 1856.

⁴⁵Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 233-35.

⁴⁶For a discussion of Know-Nothings as unionists, see Frank H. Smyrl, "Unionism in Texas, 1856-1861," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LXVII (October, 1964), 172-75. The *Handbook of Texas* does not mention that the following Know-Nothing leaders, most being familiar to students of early Texas history, had been members of the American Party: R. E. B. Baylor, S. H. Darden, R. Q. Mills, Robert H. Taylor, J. W. Flanagan, William Stedman, E. S. C. Robertson, John Sayles, T. J. Chambers, Hugh McLeod, T. J. Jennings, John S. Ford, W. B. Ochiltree, and John C. Robertson.

⁴⁷Overdyke, *Know-Nothing Party*, 272.

⁴⁸Speaking to the Senate in August, 1856, Houston admitted membership in the American Party. Amelia W. Williams and Eugene C. Baker (eds.), *The Writings of Sam Houston, 1813-1863* (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1942), VI, 386.

⁴⁹*Texas Republican*, May 23, 1857; Edward R. Maher, Jr., "Sam Houston and Secession," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, LV (April, 1952), 448-49.

⁵⁰*Clarksville Standard*, August 25, 1855; November 24, 1855; *Texas Republican*, September 15, 1855; October 6, 1855; December 18, 1855.

⁵¹Winkler, *Platforms*, 68.

⁵²Lubbock, *Memoirs*, 199.

⁵³*Texas Republican*, April 4, 1857.

⁵⁴Winkler, *Platforms*, 72-73; *Texas Republican*, June 13, 1857.

⁵⁵*Texas Republican*, June 27, 1857.

⁵⁶The story of Evans' victory in Waymon L. McClellan, "1855; The Know-Nothing Challenge in East Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal*, XII (Fall, 1974), 32-44.

⁵⁷*Texas Republican*, June 20, 1857; Reagan, *Memoirs*, 63-64.

⁵⁸Lathrop, *Migration*, 59.

⁵⁹Computed from figures in Winkler, *Platforms*, 244-45. The gubernatorial vote in the East, excluding Shelby, Trinity, and Wood Counties, was 14,199 for Runnels and 10,305 for Houston.

⁶⁰The counties were Sabine, San Augustine, Shelby, and Jefferson. *Texas Almanac, 1857*, 69-70.

⁶¹George Louis Crocket, *Two Centuries in East Texas: A History of San Augustine County and Surrounding Territory from 1685 to the Present Time* (Dallas: The Southwest Press, 1932), 234-35.

⁶²The *Texas Republican*, October 24, 1857, gave the results as 15,341 for Reagan to 9,921 for Evans.

⁶³*Texas Republican*, February 2, 1856, quoting the *Clarksville Messenger*.

⁶⁴*Texas Republican*, August 15, 1857.

⁶⁵Louis J. Wortham, *A History of Texas; from Wilderness to Commonwealth* (Fort Worth: Wortham-Molyneaux Company, 1924), III, 254-57.

⁶⁶*Dallas Herald*, August 29, 1857.

⁶⁷Resolution No. 2. Winkler, *Platforms*, 69.