

Andrew Jackson to Francis Preston Blair, June 25, 1844, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>TO FRANCIS P. BLAIR.

Hermitage, June 25, 1844.

Confidential

. The last Washington papers give an account of the very irritated reply of Col. Benton to Mr. McDuffie on Benton annexation Bill in the senate, after which Col. Benton seized J. Q. Adams by the hand and said, "we are both old men, we must now unite and save the constitution"—do my dear Mr. Blair inform me if this can be true 1 —if it is, I want no better proof of his derangement, and it political[ly] prostrates him—he is now under the imputation of a design to go over to the enemy. I regret his course much, he stood on high ground with the democracy, and I fear as I suggested to you formely, that his letter to Mr. VanBuren had induced V.B. to come out against immediate reannexation and thereby we have lost him as our armour bearer. But the people in four years, will call him, like cincinatus, from the plow. Polk, you will see from his acceptance, withdraws at the end of four years. Under the existing circumstances, it was a happy result the nomination of Polk and Dallas—it has united the whole democracy. The reannexation of Texas, is not, nor ought not to have been a party question, but a national one, as I wrote Col. Benton, "The Union must be preserved ," and the annexation of Texas and our laws extended over Orragon, the perpetuation of our glorious Union would be as firm as the Rocky mountains, and put to rest the vexing question of abolitionism, the dangerous rock to our Union, and put at defiance all combined Europe, if combined to invade us.

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1 Benton's opposition to the Texas treaty of 1844 brought forth a sharp reply by Senator McDuffie of South Carolina. The Missourian countered with a violent speech against his critic. A story got into the newspapers that, as he was leaving the hall, Benton met John Quincy Adams, whom he had previously opposed sternly, and said, "Mr. Adams, you are passing off the stage, and I am passing away also, but while we live we will stand by the Union." See Meigs's Life of Benton , p. 351. See also Blair to Jackson, July 7, 1844, p. 299, post.