

MEMORIAL

OF

ANTHONY M. DIGNOWITZ,

OF

*San Antonio, Texas, praying the military occupation of Texas, with a
view of protecting loyal citizens.*

DECEMBER 24, 1861.—Referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and the Militia, and
ordered to be printed.

*To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives in Congress
assembled:*

The memorialist, Anthony M. Dignowitz, respectfully represents: That himself and thousands of others, citizens of the United States, of German origin, having resided many years in the State of Texas, to which they were invited to settle, with the most solemn assurances held out to them that if not all, at least the larger portion of the State of Texas will be made a free State; that contrary to these promises a strong combination of men, whose avowed design was the extension and propagating negro slavery, which is the great enemy of free labor, calculated to enrich a few at the expense of the many, this combination, growing more and more powerful, have, by various methods of oppression and tyranny, used every means, howsoever the most infamous and oppressive, to silence the just demands of your memorialist, which eventually resulted in the most stupendous conspiracy to overthrow and destroy the best government on earth. To this infamous crime your memorialist, together with thousands of loyal citizens of German origin, refused to become a party, were persecuted and hunted like malefactors, and in a great many instances were driven out of Texas, deprived of their hard-earned property, and being deprived of the legal rights of representation in your honorable bodies, no other method remains of making themselves heard only through this form of petition to lay their many wrongs and grievances before your honorable bodies, praying for justice and redress. Your memorialist would further draw the attention of Congress to the fact that at present near or about sixty-five thousand soldiers of German origin

are in the field to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, to uphold and restore the power of our common government over all the States and Territories of this Union. Your memorialist would respectfully submit to your collective wisdom and your sense of right, not as a particular reward to us of German origin, but as a great policy of national economy, to direct the executive power so that the speedy reconquest of Texas may be effected, and to convert said State into a free State. To effect this object, it would be flattering and congenial to the feelings of all the citizens of German origin if part of that army composed of the German citizen soldiers would be employed to bring freedom and deliverance from the most despotic bondage now suffered by thousands of loyal citizens still remaining on the soil of Texas. Your memorialist would hazard his opinion suggestive to carry out such measures into effect; first, the following plan: An army of ten thousand strong could be landed either at Corpus Christi or at Indianola, there to take a position and await the co-operation of an army advance, which should be made from the borders of Kansas, of at least twenty-five thousand strong, which army should advance through the Indian country, would overawe those tribes now partly in rebellion, and will bring them back to their allegiance to the United States; then advancing along the lines of the military posts into Texas, and there form a junction with the first army of ten thousand strong, already occupying the sea-coast. This combined force, if desirable, could be strongly strengthened from the loyal citizens of Texas, and would soon make short work with the rebellion in that State, and, if necessary, its force could be turned either against Louisiana or Arkansas; then a wise and equitable measure of negro emancipation could be put in force, indemnifying those *few* loyal owners, and, of course, confiscating all *property* of the rebels of every kind; then to remove said negroes either to Florida or some other locality which may have been selected for such purpose to colonize them. Then Texas, freed from this blasting incubus, would and should be opened to German and other free-soil emigrants. This, in the view of your memorialist, would form a great plan of political economy, and would present incalculable advantages, and will be pregnant with immense results. Texas, if once opened to free labor, could produce all the cotton needed in the world—not only that staple, but a large portion of the sugar, rice, tobacco, hemp; also small grains of every kind; the best and abundant crops of the finest wool; nay, the geniality and salubrity of the climate is adapted to the South American llama, sheep, alpaca, and hundreds, nay, thousands, other branches of industry; the facilities for railroads, its facilities for manufacturing of every kind, in localities of unrivalled water-power—nay, it contains within itself the germ of a large empire. There is another item that will not escape your legislative wisdom. Texas has still an unappropriated public domain, consisting of over one hundred millions of acres of land. This, as a matter of course, is forfeited by the rebellion to the federal government. Would it not be wise and just to grant bounty warrants to the soldiers from this great domain, with a view to its distribution and settlement with free laborers? Let us again turn from this great

prospective future to those sad realities of the present. I would crave your attention and your indulgence to state my individual views on this tremendous crisis. I view this as a necessary sequel of the great revolution of the past century, and I shall be satisfied if its duration shall not exceed the first struggle, the last or present one being the more important *moral revolution*. That it will be accomplished thoroughly I entertain not the least doubts whatsoever. When it will be accomplished there will not remain on this continent one single foot of soil subject to monarchical rule, neither will there remain on this continent one single human being owned by others as a slave. This great work or mission the American people are bound and are destined to accomplish—yes, the complete abolishment of the African slave trade, when there shall remain no market for human beings. War with foreign powers is unavoidable, whatsoever diplomacy will attempt to the contrary; but who fears the result? This great nation is preparing for all emergencies, and will be amply able to meet them. God in his wisdom has established immutable laws of progress, and, according to those laws, onward and forward is our motto. In conclusion, I would take the liberty to admonish all that a unity of purpose is essential, nay, necessary. Our experience will be our great teacher. Humanity demands that the greatest results shall be obtained with the smallest sacrifices of human life. The French revolution and the massacres of St. Domingo should admonish us to moderation and wisdom. Our John Browns must not be permitted to act contrary to the wisdom of our present ruler. He is the one selected under Divine Providence by the suffrages of his countrymen to occupy the highest trust ever conferred on any man. From the judgment I have formed of his character, I believe his greatest errors will be those committed on the side of humanity. Individually I consider him to fill the right place at the right time. All have the right to advise in courtesy, but only one must direct, or anarchy and indiscriminate slaughter will soon be the result. Our guide must be binding on our acts. Wisdom, justice, freedom, humanity, are universal principles, and must be applied universally.

Respectfully submitted by

ANTHONY M. DIGNOWITZ,
of San Antonio, Texas,

on behalf of himself and thousands of loyal citizens of Texas, particularly of German origin.