July 4th 1892

My dear Mr. Nixon:

I have yours of the 7th inst.

Of course, you are the judge of what you wish to publish. I have no desire to argue that; but I do not think your reasons are either candid or just. It is not necessary that any one should know the outcome of the Southern question to know three things: to wit:

1 — Free speech, ~~is denied~~ and public assemblage and a free ballot are denied.

2 — The equal protection of the law is denied.

3 — Oppression never grows weaker by being let alone. Submission always inflames the oppressor. This is the universal law. We saw it well illustrated in Slavery which was always just about to disappear but steadily grew stronger and worse.

Everyone knows, too, that there must be one of three things result, to wit:

1— Either the condition of affairs at the South must be remedied by the action of the white Democracy of the South, or

2— The power of the Nation must be exerted through the ordinary forms of law to assert and maintain the rights of the citizen, or

3— The time must come when those whose rights are denied will assert them by force no matter what the result. This is an inflexible law of human nature.

Now, whether it is better to find out the danger and flee the conference and common-sense of the people to meet it or wait until it is beyond remedy

The first ~~is the old~~ proceeds on the theory that oppression cures itself. It is the old notion that slavery would abolish itself. Nearly all the good people of the country believed it. We paid a big price for our folly.

The second, of course, can only come through the action of the Republican party. The Democracy naturally oppose it; the Alliance never have and never will favor it.

Do you think the Republican party has any purpose to right such wrongs?

I know you do not.

Do you not think the Republican party would sit quietly by and see every colored citizen and every white Republican disfranchised rather than exercise the power of the government to prevent it, if they thought they would submit?

I know you cannot doubt it.

If they knew there would be 100,000 killed in one year if the nation did not intervene would the Republican party not

if it took the chance?

I think so.

Now is it better to have these things fully discussed and the probabilities determined upon which such evils are preventible or avoidable as we did with slavery until the bolt must is inevitable. I think undoubtedly the former. Peace is not always preferable and what is pleasant is not always wise.

However what may clearly be for the interest of humanity on the country may not be for the interest of a newspaper. Its prosperity depends on its telling people what they want to hear rather than what they ought to hear. A newspaper which advocated emancipation in 1850, would have paid very slender dividends. Why? Simply because the American people did not wish emancipation or thought they did not until they saw what a hellish

force Slavery was — a monster that could only be sated with constantly increasing victims.

This position I can understand and appreciate, but ~~But~~ when you accuse me of being "soured on everybody but the U.C.R.A." and of being unjust to "the press" because I in my desire to be just & carefully draw the distinction between facts and average opinions and deductions from facts, it seems to me that you are taking unnecessary pains to ~~find faults~~ impute wrong to me. I admitted that a newspaper could gather facts better than ~~a~~ an individual (not that it always does) and can collate general opinion better. But this does not make any man's power to deduce causes or give the rationale of events. The editor's ~~access to~~ knowledge of facts may be ~~gen~~ wider but the editor's reasoning is no better than if he

were not an editor and if his knowledge of facts is less than that of the expert his conclusion as to cause is not likely to be as good. That is all I said and you are too broad a man to stand on the platform of the infallibility of the press. It may do for a county paper but it is too thin for a great journal like the Inter Ocean to espouse.

The fact that a man is a journalist does not make his judgment incurring on his information accurate. What I said to these men whose words showed their lack of knowledge was simply this. Upon this subject I am an expert. I have had just as good opportunity to learn as any journalist. For years I have read and ~~not~~ annotated everything written on this subject and have the advantage of not having my attention devoted by all the rest of the world's activities. I may be wrong, but it is not for ~~[illegible]~~ men to assume to put me right by false assertions simply because they are journalists.

As to the U. C. R. A. you had but to have intimated that you did not wish it referred to and I would not have mentioned it. I think it has been profitable to the Union Cause but would not have obtruded it against your wish for anything if you had merely hinted it.

The U. C. R. A. may not be any "good" as "good" or as "patriotic" as others, but if the Republican party would heed their warning it would not only save itself but the country from disaster. You say that "others have votes". So have they remember. They are not the ones who threaten: it is those who deny us half a dozen leading Republican papers do, that the protection of the citizens' right is a part of the Republican policy. Look at the New York Tribune — the vice presidential candidate's own paper — sneering at the idea that the Republican party has any mission of protecting the ballot or securing the citizens' rights.

If you know with what difficulty I have prevented an organized movement on the part of colored men and white voters who ~~realize the said truth~~ deem the protection of the citizens rights by ~~that so far as legislation or [illegible] of the judicial power~~ ~~you might have a different~~ no [illegible] ~~the rights of the citizen is concerned~~ there ~~But for any intervention there would have been~~ ~~is no choice between the color~~ Democratic ~~and the Republican~~ parties. The one ~~simply says "there shall be~~ one" and ~~the other responds~~ by the judicial power of the nation more important than all other questions, you might have ~~the~~ spoken differently. Despite the fact which they realize just as well as you and I, that upon this subject the Republican party does not intend to antagonize the Democracy, I have been able thus far to prevent the calling of a convention to remonstrate and ~~combine action to~~

the ~~one~~ of all yours

establish an organization equivalent to the old "Liberty party" relatively considered. ~~How long~~

I think you must confess that for a quarter of a million of earnest men we have been very patient and very forbearing. Remember that only two Republican papers ~~would~~ published by white men would print our respectful protest to the convention. The Inter Ocean twice refused ~~twice~~ to do so. Yet these men were anxious only that the party should carry out the very policy it has professed for twenty-five years and redeem the pledges it professed to make again. Out of regard for my wishes and because I refused to make the call or permit the

rolls to be used to do so, ~~these men have defer~~ they deferred ~~the~~ all action for a month or more, only to find what they believed to be confirmed by the most unmistakable indications.

It may be "policy" but it is practically kicking 200,000 active, earnest, men who would have worked night and day for success — such men work they do not bluster — away from the support of the party. It is the supremest folly I have ever known. I had not quite given up hope that the party leaders might realize that it is a bad time to kick men who are anxious to help it to success, until the receipt of your letter. Of course, if you are not willing to allow me to advocate justice as both common sense and a patriotic

duty, no one can expect the Republican party to do anything more than leave matters to wobble along until the crisis comes. ~~Then it will probably~~

~~and then pretend it has done~~

~~all I have no doubt of the end but when it will come on through what means I do not know.~~

~~Then it will probably do like the old~~

~~or~~ and then "cuss" because it has come. That is the way the old Whig party did and we are patterning its mistakes very closely.

Of course, I will not write what you do not want and will never mention "the press" on the "U.C.R.A." again and will make no further reference to the rights of the citizen on the denial of justice. ~~My interest in the campaign as a mere squabble about money is not very great and to anyone in the United States. That does not leave me a very inviting.~~ I realize the diffi-

They are hard words. I sincerely regret that I was ever inclined to use them.

culty of your position in trying to make people understand why it is necessary to protect a man's hat and shoes and leave the citizen who wears them unprotected, and have no desire to increase it.

Sincerely yours

Albion W. Tourgée