

## **The Thing Cannot Be.**

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All the Power of the Federal Army and Civil Government Cannot Force Negro Rule on North Carolina.

(Washington Post, Administration Organ.)

Every thoughtful and humane citizen, from one end of the country to the other will be appalled by the prospect now discernible in North Carolina. It is no longer possible to believe that the clamor of the whites is merely a revival of the old democratic trick to catch votes and ride into official place and perquisites. On the contrary, we are confronted with the admissions of prominent republicans to the effect that the question is far deeper and more vital—that it is, in fact, a question of simple civilization. We are carried back thirty years to the dark and bloody episode of reconstruction, and see once more the menace is obliterating mere party lines and bringing together the whites, without interference to political affiliations, in a solid phalanx of self defense. The issue involves the preservation of enlightened institutions of honest government of law and order, of the integrity of the Caucasian race. It is an issue that can have but one determination.

Apparently, the white republicans have gone too far in their efforts to keep control of North Carolina patronage. They have simply repeated the malign and sinister performances of carpet-baggers of '69-'76, and invited a similar catastrophe. The southern people have shown already that they cannot and will not submit to negro domination, with all that that implies. The negro has proved to the satisfaction of the entire country that he is incapable of conducting a civilized and wholesome government. As far back as 1869, the northern men who went to the south to invest money and make for themselves permanent homes and legitimate careers, recognized the unquestionable fact that local negro rule was hopelessly inconsistent with social order and material prosperity. They accordingly joined the native whites in all matters connected with domestic politics, while voting the republican ticket in all national contests. It was with their aid and sympathy [sic] that the south threw off the incubus, and after eight long years of tragedy, stood erect at last. It seems, however, that the North Carolina leaders have forgotten the lesson of thirty years ago, and are about to revive the horrors and calamities of that abominable episode. We draw this conclusion not from the outcries and

imprecations of democratic demagogues and office seekers, but from the solemn utterances of white republican officials. Let us quote [sic], from the public declaration of Mr. McKinley's postmaster at Wilmington, made in the form of an open letter to Senator Pritchard:

“There is a greater feeling of unrest and uncertainty about the maintenance of order than I have ever seen, and many, even the most conservative, feel that a race conflict is imminent, than which nothing could be more disastrous, not only to this city and county, but to our party in the state and rather than have riot, arson, and bloodshed prevail here, I republican though I am, advise giving up the local offices in this county, as there are no national political principles involved in the contest.

“I had thought at first that it was merely the usual political cry and the fight for the offices, but I am not convinced the feeling is much deeper than this as it pervades the whole community, and there seems to be a settled determination on the part of the property owners, business men, and tax-payers that they will administer city and county government.”

This is from the Hon. W. H. Chadbourn, a republican of high personal character and of good social standing and responsibility. He is a friend of Senator Pritchard and as we have already shown, Mr. McKinley's appointee as postmaster of Wilmington. He states that there are thirty-six negro magistrates in that county alone to say nothing of a negro register of deeds and various other officials of greater or less importance. This means that the indices through which the people and the government are brought into the closest and most intimate contact are administered by negroes while the business men, the taxpayers, and the classes most interested in government are in the proportion of at least 95 percent whites. Is it conceivable that the representatives of practically all the property, the education, the enlightenment [sic], and the civilization in North Carolina will assent to an arrangement so preposterous—so impossible? We think not. There is no reason why we should mince matters. The experiment has been tried under the most favorable auspices, and it has proved a dismal and a tragic failure. Even General Grant, who had conquered the confederate armies in the field, could not with all the civil and military power of the country at his back, force negro rule upon the southern whites. The

thing is out of the question. It cannot be. And those who engage in such a desperate enterprise will reap only the harvest of dismay and ruin.