

# CHAPTER 1

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## WORDS OF ENTICEMENT

“Come to Texas”—a refrain heard throughout all of Texas history—held a special urgency in the fifty years after the Civil War. With enormous tracts of land to settle, Texans longed for help in that task. In a loud, bold, persistent voice that was also multidimensional, the residents of Texas broadcast their need. Just how did they do this? They wrote letters to their families and friends. They published promotional brochures. They met in conventions to develop plans for enticing newcomers. In some cities, like Galveston, their internal improvement efforts demonstrated their interest in pulling immigration into the state. Corporations, like the railroads, developed advertising agencies and immigrant homes to lure migrants. Even the state government, for a time, supported a Bureau of Immigration to encourage the agricultural development of its vast lands. While not typically working cooperatively, various avenues evolved over time that facilitated the effort to entice immigrants to “Come to Texas.”

Words often became the common denominator for these efforts: words to explain; words to entice; words to make people feel welcome. Texans of the late nineteenth century believed in the power of words written down. Word of mouth might succeed in a primitive sort of way, but words on paper could really convey the message—at least that is what many Texans strongly believed. They envisioned a movement energized by the power of rhetoric. They aggressively acted on this belief, creating together an overwhelming tide of publications. Their efforts were seemingly rewarded as the population of Texas steadily increased between 1865 and 1915.

The energy and interest Texans displayed at attracting newcomers drives this story. Some Texans put pen to paper and sent letters. Some Texans turned scribbled notes into published pamphlets. Other Texans established government agencies that in turn produced words of enticement on paper. Some citizens joined with their local neighbors and created booster brochures. This story is one of activists, railroads, community developers, individual farmers, committee members, politicians, and business leaders. Just as importantly it is an account of the influence carried by a terse restrictive clause in the state’s

1876 constitution. This Texas story begins with a burning desire to solve the state's perceived labor problem as the Civil War comes to an end. It continues through to the establishment of a federal immigration station in Galveston harbor. In between are many unique examples of the way Texans worked to say, "Come to Texas."

### IMMEDIATE POST-CIVIL WAR ENERGIES

Robert E. Lee formally surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865. The gradual end of military conflict between the northern and southern states produced a season of uncertainty for all southerners, including Texans. With slavery no longer an option, what would be the nature of labor relations between blacks and whites? What would be new? What would remain of the old?

One strand of calm, unchanging experience amid all the chaos was the agricultural foundation of southern society. The rhythm of planting and harvesting, especially the planting and harvesting of cotton and corn, dominated southern daily existence. With the constancy of agricultural production and the uncertainty of most other peripheral yet crucial issues, the South in 1865 struggled to stand stable and strong one day at a time.

In 1865, on the nineteenth of June—a day now celebrated by black Texans as "Juneteenth"—slaves in Galveston officially learned of their freedom. This special event arrived midway in the growing season—more than halfway through the development of the cotton crop. Many concerns fed an intense panicky feeling immediately after emancipation. Lawlessness throughout the state seemed epidemic.<sup>1</sup> Blacks on the move shook the expectations of whites. Population shifts from rural to urban areas intensified the sense of change taking place.<sup>2</sup> Political questions and military occupation heightened personal and individual fears.<sup>3</sup> Texans looking for solutions hoped to set aright a floundering economy. Those immediate months and years following the close of the Civil War found Texans with a mingled sense of fear and hopefulness for the future. As they scrambled to redraw the rules of black/white labor relations, they also searched for alternatives to black workers.

Blacks were a significant portion of the Texas population. The census records 182,566 slaves in Texas in 1860, listing twenty-five thousand of that number as mulattos. They thus comprised about 30 percent of the state's population. Using these figures, one historian notes that the black population was increasing at a rate much faster than the white population, the blacks having grown by 212 percent in the decade between 1850 and 1860 and the whites by 173 percent. The Civil War years saw additions to these totals as many slave-

owning southerners fled other areas of the South for the relative safety of Texas. Another scholar labels these individuals who were finally freed in 1865 as “uprooted slave immigrant[s].”<sup>4</sup>

No matter how the blacks arrived in Texas or when they arrived, they were treated upon emancipation with the same contempt found throughout the South. Blacks entered the free labor force at a “time of massive disruption.” In the midst of uncertainty, whites made multiple assumptions about the previous slaves. They presupposed the black person would not work unless coerced physically. Some assumed that blacks would just fade away in time—become extinct through natural demise. Others believed that blacks made the best common laborers but definitely needed to be controlled. Blacks were thus both praised and damned for their supposed characteristics.<sup>5</sup>

Racism permeated the atmosphere of the time as well as the written documents. One farmer from Maury County complained that blacks didn’t want to work for white men. He also projected onto the future by saying, “I fear that next year they will not work at all.” With such apprehension of failure it would not be surprising that pessimism was in the air. Another Texan wrote, “Negroes will never make neat and careful farmers. . . . Negroes know nothing of the value of time.” Then angry with black geographical mobility, he added to the racial stereotypes saying, “Negroes rove from place to place. They love change, and a month’s work at a place, and are reluctant to make a year engagement.” By comparison he went on to say “White people love home, take interest in making it pleasant, comfortable—as the spot from which issue all their money and comforts.” Expectations became concrete assumptions and then solid fact for many white citizens. The black worker was held down by the whites’ economic and political power. Rather than work to change black/white perceptions or relationships, many southerners turned elsewhere. Elsewhere was where the grass seemed greener, at least in terms of hard-working, highly motivated individuals willing to be farmers in a new land. Immigration was seen by many as “the” answer to the labor problem.<sup>6</sup>

“The thinking among us do not believe the great mass of free persons are to be relied on for the *continuous production* of cotton; hence the obvious utility of the enterprise you desire to inaugurate of inducing emigration from Europe to our cotton lands,” wrote a man from Montgomery County, Texas. He went on to note that competition with northern and western states existed and had previously promoted “injurious and false reports” about Texas. Overcoming negative publicity was thus, for this citizen, an essential part of attracting immigration to his state. He also encouraged people to simply come to Texas and check things out for themselves.<sup>7</sup>

In racist fashion the press in Texas, as well as the press across the South, repeatedly linked the value of the immigrant to the white's belief in the lack of the "Negro's" ability. The argument for white immigration allowed southerners and Texans a way to express in print their intolerant attitudes left over from slavery and to meld that view with current racist assumptions about the superiority of white workers. By raising up the call for supposed hard-working white immigrants, the press could "put down" by comparison the failure of blacks to work hard in their freed status. To compare the two—white immigrant and black ex-slave—was to praise the one while devaluing the other. W. H. Neblett of Grimes County disparaged black workers, writing, "The negro, working for a part of the crop or as a renter, failed to exert himself at the critical periods of his crop, and either lost a portion or permitted it to suffer from weeds and grass until it made but little." Another observer noted, "In a great majority of instances the negroes have worked listlessly, and to kill time instead of grass and weeds."<sup>8</sup>

Often the best indications of strongly held beliefs are found in personal communications, for the letter requires less circumspect language than the formal press. Thomas Affleck, a Washington County plantation owner, vigorously condemned black workers in his correspondence. "The bulk of them, including almost all of the young & able-bodied, [are] already worthless," wrote Affleck. Very pessimistically he claimed, "We have no hope of working our plantations by free negro labour" and the "negroes are becoming daily more unwilling to work—with a very few exceptions; and daily verging nearer & nearer insolence." Another Texan, James Harper Starr of Harrison County, derisively explained in one of his letters that blacks were fast on the track to becoming as "indolent as were their ancestors on the banks of the Niger."<sup>9</sup>

Relatively newer Texans made similar observations. Having arrived in Texas in 1858, a lawyer wrote back to kin in Virginia seven years later: "I do not believe that the negro can be used successfully unless he can be compelled to labor regularly and from the beginning to the end of the year. I have no confidence in moral suasion in the case of a negro who is at best not above a half savage. . . . The retrogradation of the negroes commenced at the moment of their liberation and will continue until the race is exterminated." A Mississippian recently turned Texan wrote home "the negroes, here as elsewhere, are disposed to be idle." Frustrations abound in such personal letters revealing expectations of whites upon the black workers.<sup>10</sup>

By contrast, the white immigrant seemed to receive nothing but praise. One editorialist wrote, "We shall soon have our troublesome labor question settled by having an abundance of intelligent white men to till our rich soil."

Another journalist noted the arrival of Swedish immigrants to Austin and proclaimed, “Let them come. There is plenty of room for all foreigners desirous of homes in our state. All hard-working industrious people, of whatever nationality, who will come to this country, are now more than welcome.”<sup>11</sup>

Getting hard-working laborers to Texas became a passionate goal. The option of cooperative organization appealed to many Texans. Enthusiasm for such cooperative endeavors is clearly seen in the newspapers of the time. Let’s organize a “Labor and Immigrants Aid Society,” said J. S. Thrasher, a Texas planter, in an August, 1865, letter to the *Galveston Daily News*. In a very sensible proposal Thrasher pointed to the fact that most people have private businesses that keep them from spending large amounts of time on securing needed immigration. The answer could be the formation of a group that would fund a central secretary to handle correspondence, the collation of information from around the state, and its distribution to potential migrants. Some of these efforts at association died on the vine. But Thrasher’s suggestion seems to have become a concrete effort about a year later. The 1867 *Texas Almanac* identifies the incorporation by the 1866 legislature of a “Land, Labor, and Immigration Company.” Thrasher, who had previously written several letters to the *Galveston Daily News*, was on the nine-member executive committee developing this company.<sup>12</sup>

The publication of Thrasher’s letter in the *Daily News* also spurred a public correspondence between Thrasher and W. R. Baker of Houston. Baker set the tone for the dialogue by suggesting that there was no sense in bemoaning the past. He looked to immigration from Europe, from other states, and even from Canada as part of the solution, but he asked how best to achieve that goal. Thrasher, in reply, answered loud and clear, “the secret of successful effort—*organization*. We must have organized action in this great field.”<sup>13</sup>

Calls for statewide coordination of immigration efforts continued to appear in the newspaper throughout the decade after the Civil War.<sup>14</sup> The suggestions varied, but the goal of peopling Texas with new farmers and laborers remained central. The *Galveston Daily News* reported on activities of such successful planters as Mr. Cherouze and Mr. Lawrence. Cherouze’s trip to Europe in order to obtain white labor received full coverage in the paper. *Flake’s Bulletin*, another Galveston newspaper of the time, also reported on efforts at association. In a reference to “Emigrants’ Aid Societies” being discussed by Mayor Leonard, the editor said that more than talk was necessary. “There must be those who will undertake the organization, and put its machinery in motion. The object is to secure the greatest possible number of the better class of emigrants—those for which other States are competing.” This reference to

other states was meant to act as a spur to state pride. It was an argument used repeatedly during the subsequent years. What did Flake see as the task of this organization? He wrote, "What is essential is two or three energetic, shrewd and conscientious salaried officers, who will devote their whole energies to the work of settling the State with the hardy yeomanry of oppressed Europe." With unknowing prescience, Flake's suggestion of lecturers and paid immigration agents was a precursor to the Texas Bureau of Immigration, established in 1870 with exactly this mode of operation in mind.<sup>15</sup>

Yet another, albeit different, approach to cooperative action was the work of legislators in the 1866 Texas congress. According to one historian, these representatives "thoroughly understood" the needs of Texas for responsible laborers and people to till the soil. They encouraged each congressman to gather information of current conditions in his home district. These reports would then be provided to Willard Richardson, editor of the *Galveston Daily News*. As editor of the *News*, Richardson also used the presses to produce the most comprehensive state *Almanac* of the time. According to Richardson, the legislators cheerfully contributed what he described as accurate and helpful information for immigrants. His *Almanac* was a 360-page work with 108 pages devoted to these county descriptions. The legislators thus demonstrated their belief that authoritative, correct information would have a strong pull on the prospective immigrant. This particular *Almanac* for 1867 offers an interesting window into Texas society in 1866. It reinforces the picture of planters' hopes for a substitute labor force to replace or supplement the freedmen. For example, the account for Washington County quoted a recent clerk of the county, J. H. Randle, as stating that German immigrants within the last year had purchased over 10,000 acres of land in the county involving ninety different tracts of land. This information directly followed the statement by the Washington County reporter that "Our population is fast increasing; can not say at what rate; but the result will be to make this beautiful county a white man's country."<sup>16</sup> Racism obviously propelled some Texans in their desire to attract European immigrants to do the planters' work.

Tremendous energy, especially through written admonitions in newspapers, stimulated ideas for collective action to entice immigrants. This positive encouragement by the Galveston newspaper helped to foster interchange of information among Texas communities through the columns of the paper. This interaction served to dispense ideas throughout the state, since the *Galveston Daily News* was the preeminent paper in Texas. A July 20, 1867, letter to the editor began, "As your paper is an advocate of immigration, and thus working for the welfare of the State, and as this movement is for the same, you

will please publish the following Resolutions.” Other examples of cooperative action and newspaper publicity exist. In Walker County, a group had formed the Waverly Immigration Society. Among their goals was the importation of Polish workers that they “cordially recommend . . . as good laborers to the country.” This immigration society announced the group’s formation with election of a president, secretary, and agent all selected for the purpose of helping their local community. By using the newspaper with a statewide readership, they were also showing a willingness to share with others the benefits of the structure they had in place. Another individual seeking to encourage migration announced in his letter to the editor that he had 30,000 acres of land along the Concho River available in tracts of about 320 acres each that he was “willing to lease . . . for a term of five years, without charge, to actual settlers who will cultivate them.” He urged individuals and colonies to take advantage of his offer. In his mind, many soldiers during the recent war had traveled into the southern states and seen for themselves the advantages of agriculture in that area. He was sure they were ready to make a move and he thus offered his land.<sup>17</sup>

Yet another individual who heavily invested energy and time into promoting immigration to Texas in the postwar years was Thomas Affleck. A Scottish immigrant, Affleck moved to Texas in 1858 after living in Ohio and Mississippi. He developed a reputation for agricultural interests, propagating plants for his nurseries, publishing articles and books such as his *Southern Rural Almanac and Plantation and Garden Calendar*, and generally keeping abreast of the latest developments in the field of agriculture. Affleck owned a large plantation known as Glenblythe near Brenham in Washington County. Before the war he was a successful planter with a very large cadre of slaves. By 1865 Affleck, well-educated and heavily involved in agricultural development, had adopted the full complement of anti-black racial attitudes common among white southerners. Using his wealth, his writing skills, and his experience at organizing work, Affleck developed extensive and well-thought-out proposals for importing white workers from Europe.<sup>18</sup>

While Affleck seemed to be open to new approaches and developing ideas when it came to agricultural techniques, he kept strictly to a racist belief in black inferiority. He had no qualms about expressing those opinions either, and did so frequently. An August, 1865, *Galveston Daily News* article quoted him as referring to “the animal nature of the negro.” He later wrote in a letter to the *News*, “I never had, nor yet have, any confidence whatever, in free negro labor.” He held out absolutely no hope in a prosperous Texas based on freed black labor. Probably those strong racist views nurtured the immense

energy he poured into promoting white immigration. The common phraseology of the time—a desire for a white man’s country—also filtered into his language. Envisioning that totally white land, he used the flip side of his racist beliefs to endorse the hard-working Scottish and English farmers. For Affleck, these European workers were all that the black failed to be. And in prejudicial fashion he extolled the virtues of these white Europeans to his fellow Texans. From his viewpoint the Scots were “cautious, prudent, persistent people” who would faithfully and thoroughly carry out any contract they signed.<sup>19</sup>

Affleck’s first goal was to travel to Scotland, then find and bring back twenty-five to thirty families to Glenblythe. In paternalistic fashion he planned to settle them on his land in “cottages” (a new name for the slave quarters?), furnish them with tools and animals, and allow them to work under their own selected foreman. He had heard of the movement to break up plantations into small farms and agreed that such was a possibility, but he preferred the larger enterprise. Plantation economy suited his sense of efficiency and organization. When later listing the advantages of immigrating to plantations in Texas, Affleck told his Scottish and English listeners of the almost “pre-packaged” opportunity available through his plan. Affleck went to Scotland and energetically pursued his proposals among the common folk. He published in Scotland a twelve-page pamphlet entitled *Texas and Her Resources*, which he must have given away free of charge. He filled six pages with descriptions of what he called his “adopted State” and then followed with six pages clarifying his proposition. In unique fashion he pointed to comparisons with other emigration opportunities in Australia, Canada, and various western states in the United States. He also stretched the truth, although his readers were probably not aware of it, when he referred to cotton picking as “light, pleasant and paying work.”<sup>20</sup>

While on his European trip he wrote back to the *Galveston Daily News* chronicling his work and sharing his hopes for the future. He bemoaned the unofficial nature of his trip wishing he held a formal position representing the state government, assuming he could accomplish more as an official ambassador of Texas. He anticipated speaking to the state legislature upon his return and suggesting a plan for aiding immigrants.<sup>21</sup>

Once back in his beloved Texas, Affleck met with fellow planters and presented his ideas to anyone who would listen. He continued to write letters to the Galveston newspapers. Planning the incorporation of a company to encourage immigration, he printed a six-page circular entitled *Immigration and Labor* dated May 21, 1866. These pamphlets circulated throughout south and east Texas suggesting how other farmers could participate in the enterprise.

Two months later he added another twist to his extensive scheme by issuing a two-page letter plus printed blank contracts for potential shareholders in a plan to export livestock to Europe. Cattle and immigration may seem distant interests, but for businessman Thomas Affleck they were very much complementary and he meant to explain that to fellow Texans. The main reasoning behind the plan was the key issue of transportation. Getting white laborers to Texas required expensive passage by ship. Affleck's solution meant sending livestock out of Texas to English ports and in return shipping back the very much needed white laborers. He admitted that his idea was an experiment but "one well worth trying." And he backed up his ideas with his own personal investment of time, energy, and money.<sup>22</sup>

Affleck's efforts illustrate one person's interest in immigration into Texas, and they illustrate his belief that concerted action could make that possible. The uncertainty of the postwar months and years left some people apathetic and doubtful about the future. But that same uncertainty propelled individuals like Thomas Affleck to step into action, doing something based on deeply held racist beliefs. Realizing that change was happening, Affleck came up with a plan and worked to implement it.<sup>23</sup>

While private individuals presented plans for stimulating immigration in 1865 and the years following, government also participated in this ongoing effort. No matter what the governmental authority in power at a specific time, assumptions of geographic mobility were a constant. During the nineteenth century, Texas rather quickly experienced a succession of different governmental authorities. Before 1835, Mexico held legal jurisdiction over the area now known as Texas. From 1836 to 1845 this same area became the independent Republic of Texas. Although incorporated into the United States of America in 1845, Texas later seceded from that Union and joined the Confederate States of America in 1861. By 1865, Texas again came under the power and authority of the United States government as the state was forcibly corralled back into the Union. While legal control may have changed over time, all governmental entities, except for Mexico from 1830 to 1834, encouraged population movements to the state. Statistics also document that the political and legal entity of Texas grew in size as people immigrated into the territory. Anglos moved onto Mexican land and eventually established an independent Republic. Additional people from overseas and from the states and territories of the United States migrated into the area. After Texas became a state within the United States, settlers continued to move into the state, swelling its population and tapping into its resources. Texas history has always been a history of immigration.

In the decade between 1865 and 1875 the issue of immigration was not the central concern for Texas or for the other southern states. Known historically as the era of Reconstruction, this long decade churned with changes in the black labor force, intrusion of northern influence on politics, and violence based on racist concepts of society. Texas existed squarely within this reconstruction tradition. Immigration fits into this larger picture as a minor but very significant side issue. Political decisions about suffrage, education, internal improvements, pardons, business incorporations, taxation, revenue, budgets, and land laws had to take into consideration the flow of people into and within the state. The Texas legislatures and constitutional conventions debated immigration concerns throughout this decade and the rest of the century.

Central to the early immigration efforts was the proposed supplanting of black freed people with white laborers. However, the issue became more complex as the years 1867, 1868, and 1869 arrived. The need to populate the great empty territories of Texas also received attention. The desire to create an influx of settlers, especially agricultural people, expanded. Cooperative efforts remained a possibility. However the main arena shifted to the political theater in the ten to twelve years after Appomattox.

Typically, Reconstruction history chronicles the initial control of southern state governments by Confederate leaders followed by radical Republican control followed again by the reinstatement of conservative Democratic Party–led governments. Texas participated in these reconstruction shifts. However, in spite of successive state constitutions in 1866, 1869, and 1876, Texas legislatures showed a rare continuity throughout the Reconstruction era in supporting formal efforts at enticing immigration to the state. Studies of other southern states reeling from the economic consequences of the Civil War are needed. To what extent they also urged in-migration has not been documented to date. While each political party throughout the South sought increased membership through migration, Texas’s experience was more complex due to its frontier, public lands, and immense size.<sup>24</sup>

Between 1866 and 1869 the state legislature, functioning under the authority of the 1866 constitution, passed several pieces of legislation directly dealing with immigration issues. A Commissioner of Statistics was charged “to organize a system for the promotion of immigration to the State of Texas.” His duty was “to collect information in regard to the mineral resources, productions, and populations of the State, and to prepare and publish such documents as may be calculated to furnish correct information about all the counties of the State, and inviting immigration from other States and coun-

tries.” Information-gathering tasks were perceived as one step in providing reliable data for the state’s public relations efforts. This ordinance reflects an interest in encouraging immigration and suggests the belief that immigrants typically made decisions based on adequate information. People were obviously choosing among alternative locations and Texas wanted to be one of the places under consideration.<sup>25</sup>

This 1866 session of the legislature also saw the passage of acts incorporating companies dealing with immigration. The legislature chartered the “Texas Land, Labor and Immigration Company” with its stated goal “to promote immigration to Texas, to facilitate the purchase and settlement of lands by immigrants, and to introduce laborers and skilled operatives into the State.” A few weeks later, the state legislature incorporated the “Western Texas Colonial Land Immigration Company,” which intended to “develop the resources of the State by disseminating reliable information, inducing emigration from other States and from Europe, furnishing labor, extending facilities to emigrants, and directing and determining the investment and employment of capital and enterprise to the State.”<sup>26</sup>

When the First Reconstruction Act in 1867 effectively discredited the 1866 Texas constitution, Texans were forced to create a new basic law for the state. The resulting 1869 constitution, acceptable to the northern Republicans, also valued government action to entice immigrants. It made specific provision for a Bureau of Immigration. A Superintendent of Immigration could be appointed by the governor for a four-year term at an annual salary of two thousand dollars. The legislature was given power to appropriate money “for the purpose of promoting and protecting immigration.” This portion of the 1869 constitution obviously and enthusiastically encouraged future legislation dealing with immigration.<sup>27</sup>

Debate during the long and involved constitutional convention of 1868–69 included a multitude of subjects and issues of interest to Texans. Black suffrage and civil rights were primary concerns among others. For the purposes of this narrative, a detailed analysis of the convention’s activities is not necessary. But it is most helpful to follow the events during the convention that influenced immigration recruitment in order to document the constancy of interest in bringing people to Texas. At the first full session of the constitutional convention, Governor Pease’s address was read to the assembled delegates. The governor referred to many important issues including crime, enfranchisement, school taxes, and state debts. One of his hopes was “that you will adopt efficient measures to encourage immigration to our State from foreign countries, and to give aid and encouragement to such works of internal im-

provements as the necessities of our people require.” Subsequent supporters of immigration, following the lead of Governor Pease, often combined their interest in peopling the state with support for internal improvements that would facilitate transportation and commerce.<sup>28</sup>

Relative to the issue of immigration the governor’s address also included the following optimistic observation:

We have reason to congratulate ourselves on prosperous seasons, and the prospect of abundant crops. The freed people are doing well, far better than their most ardent friends anticipated under all the circumstances by which they have been surrounded. The prejudice against them is gradually giving way to a better feeling. Many of those who prophesied ruin to the country from their emancipation are now compelled to admit that there is still some hope for the future.<sup>29</sup>

While not everyone would have agreed with Governor Pease, the sense of emergency and immediacy during those first few months at the Civil War’s end had dissipated.

Among the many committees established by the convention was one designated for immigration. Its chair was Edward Degener, representative for the western counties of Bexar, Wilson, Kerr, Bandera, Medina, Uvalde, Kinney, Maverick, Edwards, and Zavala. Degener was a German by birth, had served in German legislative bodies, and immigrated to Texas in 1850. He was a wholesale grocer in San Antonio. There were six other members of the committee. Julius Schuetze represented Fayette and Bastrop Counties. He was Prussian born, immigrated to Texas when he was seventeen, and was currently serving as a Bastrop County judge. H. H. Foster of Colorado County was a twenty-eight-year-old farmer and one of the convention’s native Texans. George W. Smith representing Bowie, Davis, and Marion Counties was only a three-year resident of Texas serving as a major in the Union occupation army in San Antonio. He was from New York State. Erwin Wilson represented Brazoria County, where he was a fifty-eight-year-old farmer. He was originally from Tennessee, though he had lived in Texas for over eighteen years. Nothing biographical is known about John Morse other than he was white and represented Shelby, San Augustine, Sabine, and Newton Counties. Stephen Curtis was the one black man on the committee. He was sixty-two years old, born in Virginia, and represented Brazos County. The forceful figure on the committee was its chair, who also sat on the Committee on Division of the State, the Political or Legislative Committee, and the Committee on Apportionment.<sup>30</sup>

The Committee on Immigration presented its report on June 18, 1868. It included the proposed wording of the constitutional provision followed by an extra five pages explaining their recommendations. The rationale for a bureau of immigration, the report said, came from the past tradition of the nation's interest in and encouragement of immigration. Noting population growth in the western territories of the United States, the committee's report then stated that, "the American slave States could not keep time with their successful sister free States." Pointing to recent political changes while adding the valuable advantage of the mild southern climate, the committee said it was now time for Texas to induce immigration southwestward.<sup>31</sup>

Money appropriated for the bureau was to be spent in three ways: "to defray the expenses of the Bureau of Immigration . . . to support agencies in foreign seaports . . . [and] to pay in part or in toto the passage of emigrants from Europe to this State, and their transportation on railroads in this State." The committee explained that, as a rule, agencies in the United States did not suggest options to the potential immigrant in his or her home country before those migrants purchased tickets via a more "circuitous route." The perceived need for funds to support the immigrants' actual travel came from the committee's understanding of "the unavoidable difference between freights from Europe to Northern seaports and our shipping places." These legislators were very aware of the disadvantages under which the southern states, including Texas, labored in terms of direct shipping routes with Europe. Debate ensued over various portions of the committee's recommendations. The ultimate constitutional provision eventually allowed for state financial support of the actual travel expenses. As to the issue of placement of Texas immigration agencies, the final provision expanded the potential inherent in the constitutional article by including the opportunity to establish agencies in seaports of the United States in addition to foreign seaports.<sup>32</sup>

The committee recommended the donation of land to immigrants. They proposed that the head of a family should receive 160 acres while a single male would be entitled to eighty acres "free of all costs whatever, other than the expense of surveying the same." The members saw this as a gift dependent upon the immigrants living there for at least three years and also noted that such occupation enhanced "the value and increased taxability of the lands bordering on the new location." They saw investment in attracting people as ultimately increasing the state's revenues. Their ability to see the long-range picture is something not often shared by legislators burning with interest over the moment's concerns.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, the report anticipated some objections to its proposals. Noting

that just one type of immigration was being encouraged by this constitutional provision, i.e. foreign immigration, they tried to explain:

It is not the wealthy foreigner, nor the merchant; not the industrial nor the experienced American citizen; immigrating from another State to Texas, who is in need of the protecting and assisting hand of the Bureau of Immigration, but such class of foreign labor to whom the trifling outlay for ocean transportation is a serious consideration.

What we are in need of, is a hard working thrifty population, which clings to the soil it has once undertaken to cultivate, without nomadic propensities and of unquestionable *loyalty to the Government of the United States*.<sup>34</sup>

This explanation seems to present a fairly narrow focus toward peopling the state. Such a view was not to remain the only one over the many years ahead in the late nineteenth century.

Violence was part and parcel of life in many parts of Texas. This was the case during the war years and in the immediate postbellum era. Texas still had a frontier—sparsely settled land touched by marauding Indians. Black/white tensions also existed as the freed slaves sought to carve out their position in Texas society. Government between 1865 and 1870 was often inadequate and laws frequently not enforced. Early on, newspapers noted the gruesome stories of violence and editorialized over them. Ferdinand Flake, an avowed Republican of German birth, wrote about this lawlessness regularly in his newspaper's columns. However, on November 28, 1866, he pointed out that overstating this tendency to violence could and would have negative results. He wrote that such statements would “prevent immigration, hinder our trade, destroy our good name, and mar our general prosperity.” As a typical newspaperman of the time he assumed a booster mentality for his adopted state and hoped that the growth of the state would not be harmed by the reports of lawlessness.<sup>35</sup>

Another Galveston booster was Willard Richardson of the *Galveston Daily News*; he also saw the connection between slowed immigration rates and reports of violence. His response was to blame the Republicans. In an editorial column of August, 1868, he wrote, “The object of the crime report of the Convention is to prevent emigration to Texas. The radicals have not given up the hope of ruling the State through the negro . . . they do not want white people to come in for fear their programme may have to be changed.” Richardson added, “Already the first crime report of the Texas Convention has been translated into foreign languages, to be scattered in Europe for the

purpose of keeping emigrants away from Texas.” What better can we expect from the radicals, Richardson sarcastically continued.<sup>36</sup>

This criticism of radical Republicans in Texas rested on two reports. Governor Pease presented one report to the United States House of Representatives (May 11, 1868). Another came from the constitutional convention as a report by the Special Committee on Lawlessness (July 25, 1868). The Committee on Reconstruction in the federal House printed the Pease communication, and thus it was available nationwide for publication in various newspapers and magazines. In seven separate documents covering twenty-eight pages, Pease disputed the military’s report that peace existed in Texas and begged for assistance in holding down violent occurrences throughout the state. The other report emanated from the Texas convention. It had a more limited initial impact, but according to Richardson still had tremendous influence overseas. Both reports distressed those seeking to present Texas in a positive light as the place for future settlers.<sup>37</sup>

How did the two political parties “line up” on the issue of encouraging immigration to Texas? Did they try to undermine each other’s work? Or did they see immigration in a positive light but argue about who should be attracted to the state and how that encouragement should be facilitated? These are difficult questions to answer. No crystal-clear picture emerges. A look at official party platforms as bare bones political statements suggests both parties held an interest in immigration. Their motives covered a full spectrum from desire for economic development to an increase in their party membership to transportation improvements to power in the legislature.

Meeting in Bryan on July 7, 8, and 9, 1868, the Democratic Party adopted a platform that included the following plank:

That we need more population, labor, and capital, as well as peace and civil government, for the development of the resources of our great State, and that our true policy is to invite immigration and capital from the Northern States and Europe, and to assure them of a friendly welcome, and we declare that statements that immigrants from the Northern States are not received with friendship and cannot expect security for life and property amongst us are made by the Radical party for political effect and are wilful [*sic*] perversions of the truth.

The Republican Party met in Austin on August 12–14 of the same year and its official platform had no separate statement about immigration. This meeting reflected the decisions of the moderate Republicans in office. A smaller group of Republicans, commonly referred to as the radical wing of the party, bolted

this convention and held a separate meeting on August 14–15. Led by E. J. Davis, E. Degener, and James P. Newcomb, this “other” Republican convention adopted among its eight resolutions the statement, “that the establishment of just and liberal provisions in our organic law, placing our State among the most progressive of the Union, with a rigid and exact enforcement of the laws, will encourage emigration, promote prosperity, and at an early day suppress lawlessness and violence.” The tone of their plank suggests the belief that as people immigrate into the area, the violence will subside. They thus saw the suppression of violence and the encouragement of immigration as complementary concerns. From the platforms in 1868 it would seem both parties were concerned about their image around the country as well as within the state itself. Even as they jockeyed for position and voter support, both parties seemed to be supportive of population movements into the state.<sup>38</sup>

During the succeeding years, the official voices of both parties continued to support immigration. The 1869 Radical Republican convention, spoke of, “condemn[ing] the demagogical use of the term of “carpetbagger” and other terms of reproach applied to strangers who may come among us, designed to keep alive the prejudices of the ignorant and deter immigration.” Two later conventions of the Democrats in 1869 and 1871 expressed positive feelings about immigration, especially white immigration. A small group of Democratic journalists met and wrote into their platform the statement, “we are in favor of encouraging European and American immigration, and pledge them our protection, irrespective of both place and political principles.” The larger Democratic State Convention held in Austin January 23–26, 1871, included as one of its ten resolutions: “The Immigration of the white races from all quarters of the world should be encouraged . . . uniformly in favor of a liberal policy toward all persons of foreign birth, who in good faith seek a home in our favored land.”<sup>39</sup>

Activity in the constitutional convention of 1868–69 also raises another historical question whose answer remains cloudy. Was there a connection between those who favored immigration to Texas and those who voted the question of division of the state? Texas came into the Union with the option to divide its large landmass into smaller states if it so desired. This possibility has been entertained throughout the history of the state, but received special interest at the 1868–69 constitutional convention. Frustration over violence in the state intensified feelings separating eastern and western counties. Western counties felt the need for frontier control against Indian raids and lawbreakers. The eastern counties struggled with racial violence as black/white tensions intensified after the war. Some representatives of each section

saw a division of the state as one way to cope with the perceived failings of the other section.

While the division issue was a complex political maneuver involving many disparate issues and supported by many Texans, some have suggested that differing sectional interests in bringing immigrants to the state played into the story. Yet voting records do not seem to indicate a clear-cut division by sectional representatives. Others have noted the argument that racial concerns were involved in the division issue. Yet again voting records note that of the nine black delegates at the 1868–69 constitutional convention, five voted for division and four voted against. One other piece of documentation provides an interesting insight. During the division debate at the 1868–69 convention, a printed copy of a proposed Constitution of the State of West Texas was laid on every delegate's desk one January morning. Article ten of that proposed document dealt with immigration. Its two sections look remarkably similar to the ultimate provision for a Bureau of Immigration incorporated in the final version of the 1869 constitution. It would seem that those hoping for a separate state of West Texas held similar if not identical views on immigration with those who were working to formulate a constitution facilitating re-admission of the whole state of Texas to the federal Union.<sup>40</sup>

The long and involved deliberations of the Texas constitutional convention finally came to an end in February, 1869. Debate over ratification kept journalists, politicians, and citizens wrangling with each other through the summer and early fall. At the polls in November and December, Texas citizens ratified the document and then proceeded to elect Edmund J. Davis as governor. Once all the paperwork and bureaucratic recordkeeping were complete, Texas rejoined the Union on March 30, 1870, in full partnership with all other states.<sup>41</sup>

Immigrants continued to move into Texas from 1865 to 1870. Just what specifically pulled them to this locale or pushed them out of their previous homes cannot be clearly explained. But it is obvious that the sentiment extant in much of Texas at the conclusion of the Civil War favored in-migration. Immediate concerns over substitutes for the freed blacks developed into ongoing energy at luring farmers to Texas, pushing back the lawless frontier, and stimulating economic growth. Discussion of immigration did not center on questions of whether or not immigration was desirable. Instead debate focused on how to facilitate this movement to Texas. Belief in cooperative action dominated this discussion. At first individuals encouraged the banding together of like-minded people. Eventually duly elected representatives developed constitutions and laws providing for governmental coordination of immigration

efforts. In 1860 Texas had 604,215 people, of which 420,891 were white. Despite the horrors, death, and destruction from warfare in the intervening ten years, that population figure rose in 1870 to 818,579 people, and of that total number 564,700 were white and 253,475 were black.<sup>42</sup> Texas and Texans saw the influx of people during the first decade after the Civil War as a positive movement. Their legislative body, governmental agencies, and private initiatives continued to nurture that feeling through the first five years of the 1870s.