

The Road to Revolution

Conventions and Petitions

Now that Santa Anna was becoming head of the Mexican government, Texans expected that the Constitution of 1824 would again be followed. The Texans believed that this was the time to ask for reforms. Each settlement was asked to send a representative to San Felipe de Austin. The delegates to this convention would discuss the concerns of Texans. They would then send their proposals to Santa Anna in Mexico City.

The Convention of 1832

Stephen F. Austin was elected president of the convention, which adopted several resolutions. The most important resolution asked the Mexican government to allow immigration from the United States once again. There was also a request to exempt Texas from paying certain customs duties. The delegates asked for better protection from the Indians, for the creation of public schools, and for the appointment of a land commissioner in East Texas. They also asked that Texas become separate from Coahuila so that it could have its own state government. William Wharton and Rafael Manchola were selected to present these resolutions to Mexico, however they were never presented due to a lack of support from the leaders in San Antonio.

The Convention of 1833

William Wharton was chosen as the president of this convention. He was the leader of a group that wanted to push harder and more quickly for changes in Mexican policy. Stephen F. Austin was not in favor of the convention, but he gave his support. One of the new members of the convention was Sam Houston from Nacogdoches. The Convention of 1833 adopted many of the same resolutions as the first convention. Except this time they wrote a constitution in the hope that Texas would be made a separate state.

Austin in Mexico

While in Mexico, Austin was never allowed to meet with Santa Anna. This was very frustrating. In October 1833, Austin wrote a letter to the San Antonio ayuntamiento. He told of his frustration in dealing with the Mexican government. He encouraged Texans to begin organizing a separate state government without waiting for official permission. This letter later caused much suffering for Stephen F. Austin. The situation improved the following month. Santa Anna met with Austin and agreed to nearly all of the resolutions of the Convention of 1833. However he rejected the idea of making Texas a separate state.

Austin is Arrested

During his return to Texas Austin was hopeful about the future of Texas. When he reached the city of Saltillo in northern Mexico, Austin was arrested. Mexican officials had read the letter he wrote to the leaders of San Antonio. The leaders thought the letter challenged their authority. For the next three months, he was held in solitary confinement. When he was finally released from solitary confinement, he was moved from jail to jail. After nearly a year in jail Austin was released on Christmas Day, 1834.