

Convention do no act which could impair that right, or could possibly be construed as an approval or ratification of the wrong. Let us not touch the subject, but let the shame and obloquy of the act rest where they properly belong.

Mr. Stoddert inquired whether an apparent acquiescence in the action of the convention of 1864 would preclude the people of Maryland from demanding compensation for their property?

Mr. McKaig did not want slavery, and did not believe there were ten men in Maryland who would vote to re-instate it, but he was not willing to place in a grand Declaration of Rights censure on those who had gone before us. He (Mr. McKaig) would now say, say nothing about slavery, but keep a dignified silence on the subject. Was slavery abolished by law? No, the body of men who came here and took the oath to support the constitution, which declares that private property shall not be taken for public use without compensation, ignored their oaths and wiped out at one blow thirty millions of private property.

Mr. Jones fully agreed with gentlemen that the act which had been committed was a violent, ruthless act, but slavery could never be re-established. The insertion of the pending article in the Bill of Rights was said by some gentlemen to be crawling at the feet of power and reflecting upon our ancestors. He did not see under what construction it could be tortured into any such meaning. The reasons why it should remain were to him all-convincing. It had been charged by our opponents that this Convention was called for the purpose of re-establishing slavery—the minds of the negroes had been inflamed and poisoned with this suspicion. They all knew that this charge was false and slanderous, and they should show the colored people who lived among us and with us that we had no such intentions. It should be our object to convince these people that we are their friends, and that these traveling missionaries from the North, who are going down among them preaching pestilent doctrines and alluring them from their industrial avocations, are their worst enemies.