

of it would appear. I can state without fear of contradiction that Prince George's county has furnished for the service of the United States, able-bodied men enough to fill the quota of our congressional district under all the drafts that have taken place. And why is it that we are not credited with these men who have been mustered into the service of the United States? It is because there is no person to take an interest in it with a view of seeing where they have been received into the service, and to what State, or to what district of this State, they have been credited.

Now General Birney, in his camp on the Patuxent had upwards of 10,000 able-bodied negro men recruited for the service of the United States. He was acting under the authority of the government of the United States. And I am not here to say that he was not authorized, or that the government was not authorized to take them for military purposes. A large number of those negroes, or the majority of those negroes then mustered into the service were from Charles, St. Mary's and Prince George's counties, and many were taken from the eastern shore. But the majority of the whole command were taken from those three counties. And I understand that the whole number credited to Prince George's county although there were upwards of two thousand taken from it, were seventeen. And there were other cases cited by my colleague.

In November of last year, there was a whole New York company came to our town and took up their station there and remained until April. They had wagons going constantly from our town to Bladensburg, and they were constantly taking off our servants. The officer who was in command stated that he was there recruiting under the authority of the United States. He got about one hundred and fifty men in our neighborhood; all whom he could induce to enlist, by any inducement he could offer, he prevailed upon to enlist. We took it for granted he was acting under the authority of the United States government, and no hindrance was offered by the people to his recruiting. He went about the neighborhood, saw the negroes, talked with them, and offered them inducements to enlist, and many of them did enlist. About the time he left in April, not having up to that time furnished certificates to parties whose servants he had enlisted, he was called upon to give them certificates. His excuse was that he had not the necessary forms, but would procure them and hand them over to the various owners. He left there, and Major Lee, of my neighborhood, three of whose servants had been enlisted by him, went to Washington to see about the certificates. He was there informed by the proper authorities that this New York officer had been there without the authority of the government. These men were placed to the credit of New York.

And I have heard of other instances where

men were thus enlisted and placed to the credit of Massachusetts and other northern States. They come in our midst and take our servants, pretending they were acting under the authority of the United States government, and we take it for granted that those men will be placed to the credit of Maryland. And when it is too late for us to notify the government and have it stopped, we find that they are credited to other States of the union.

Now, is it not right, is it not just, that an inquiry should be made into the matter? And an inquiry made under a resolution passed by this body would have a force greater than any inquiry of any set of men from any one of the counties of the State would have with the authorities at Washington.

Our servants have not only been taken away in this manner, but they have been drafted in our county in the last two drafts. And I do not think that there are fifty able-bodied men in our county now, either white or black, who have not been drafted; and I suppose the September draft will take the balance of them. That state of facts exist; we have furnished more able-bodied men for the service of the United States than has been the quota of our whole congressional district, had they been properly credited to our county. Let gentlemen reflect upon this, not come to a hasty conclusion that this is an effort on the part of the minority of this convention to accomplish some end that they do not understand at this time; let them reflect upon this state of facts. And then I ask them if there is not a great deal of justice in appointing the committee contemplated by this resolution.

I would not advocate such a resolution in this body, if I had not precedent for it in the action of this body upon other subjects. But we have precedent after precedent in resolutions offered upon the other side through the whole session of our body. And therefore the majority will not oppose it on that ground. If they want to accord justice to us, if they are willing that we should have right accorded to us, I think there is not a sensible man in the convention who will hesitate to vote for this resolution. There is nothing secret, nothing hidden in it. It is a simple inquiry with a view of arriving at some means by which this wrong can be remedied, and justice be done to every part of the State.

I find that in the draft that is to take place in September our congressional district is put down for upwards of three thousand, a larger number than any other congressional district in the State. And I will venture to assert that our district now has a smaller population than any other district in the State. I ask gentleman in fairness to look at this question, to give us this inquiry, and let us have the advantage of the inquiry emanating from this body; because in doing that we may accomplish some good to the State much more readily than if a number of gentlemen were to