

You will find every item of sovereignty claimed for the State, except what can be shown by the record to have been surrendered.

Two governments were formed. That idea was scouted at. Some gentlemen could not understand it. We have not all of us, during all our lives, been examining such questions. Some have been following one pursuit, and some another; and it is not remarkable that the idea should be to some gentlemen unintelligible. As Mr. Webster said, we have a political theory of our own, and institutions of our own. There is nothing in Europe analogous to it. This shall not rest upon my *ipse dixit*. I will read Mr. Webster's language:

"The people, sir, in every State, live under two governments. They owe obedience to both. These governments, though distinct, are not adverse. Each has its separate sphere, and its peculiar powers and duties. It is not a contest between two sovereigns for the same power, like the wars of the rival houses in England; nor is it a dispute between a government *de facto* and a government *de jure*. It is a case of a division of powers between two governments made by the people, to which both are responsible."

The people in the several States made a government for the regulation of the whole Union, to conduct their foreign intercourse. So far they surrendered their sovereignty. They retained everything else. Who protects you, gentlemen have asked, when you go abroad? The government of the United States. But what proportion of your citizens go abroad? Not one in 5,000. Now, I ask, if any one seizes my property—my negro, I was about to say, but any other property except my negro—or assails my reputation, who defends and protects me? Can a citizen of the United States now boast of the protection of the Government of the United States? It is like the negro—it is a *post obit* concern.

I believe that the Constitution is the act of the people of the different States; and I believe it is binding upon them. I believe in the doctrine that the people as well as individuals can bind themselves. I believe that as in a contract between individuals, where that contract has been fairly entered into, one party cannot legally release himself from it. So I believe here, that the people of the different States, as members of the States, and in their character as citizens of the several States, having entered into this agreement with each other, and having assented to it, as Mr. Webster argues in this speech, it becomes obligatory upon them, and no one State, any more than an individual, can withdraw himself from it. Though this Convention with one united voice may take me to Washington to swear allegiance to the government of the United States—not to the United States and the laws made

in pursuance thereof, but to the Government;—

Mr. PUGH. The Constitution of the United States and the laws made in pursuance thereof.

Mr. CHAMBERS. I am willing to do that. I am willing to acknowledge allegiance to the Constitution of the United States. I stand recorded upon that in 1850. I have lived by it, and God willing I will die by it. I cannot say the "Government!" now, though I might have said it in 1850; for in 1850 abolitionism meant the worst crime a citizen of Maryland could perpetrate against the State. Now, gentlemen boast that it will be enacted by the majority of the representatives of the people,—immediate, direct, uncompensated emancipation and abolitionism. Inasmuch as these changes have taken place, I cannot now declare my allegiance to the Government. I hear it all around me, that the President is the Government—no, I am wrong; the Government is now the President's bayonets. I cannot swear allegiance to the Government as the term is now understood.

For these reasons I differ from those gentlemen, if there be any, who think that the right of secession is involved here. I go for the right acknowledged by every man, and avowed from the time the declaration of rights was written by Mr. Jefferson in 1776 down to the present hour, without an exception, (and I do not know the man that denies it,) the right of revolution, whenever the people are so oppressed that they can no longer submit; the right of revolution, no matter what the consequences are, fight or no fight, death or no death. The people have, must have this right to this revolutionary movement, if they are so oppressed as not to be able to tolerate longer the inflictions imposed upon them.

But it is said, who is to judge of it? Is it not self-evident that if the party who imposes the restraints is allowed to judge of it exclusively, there will never be oppression. Is it possible to suppose that any administrators of government would ever say there was oppression, created by themselves on their own subjects whom they have sworn to protect? Mr. Lincoln says that this proclamation of his was unconstitutional; but it was issued. Was that oppression? Not at all. It was necessary. All these things are necessary. Bonaparte thought it necessary to assume the imperial crown. King John thought it necessary to exercise all the prerogatives he claimed, until he was forced by the barons of England to relinquish them. It is unreasonable to suppose that there can be such a thing as toleration of the idea that you are to surrender the right of revolution. Did Lord North doubt the propriety of what he did? Did his master, George III, doubt the propriety of what he did? Were the colonists to wait for them to decide that it was oppressive?