

bear, as a proper response to the very kind indulgence which I have experienced at the hands of the Convention.

The terms supreme and sovereign have been much contested. I have drawn up an amendment in the form of a substitute, in order to give my views in brief upon this subject. If it is the intention to acknowledge in a proper place, at a proper time, and under proper circumstances—as I have perhaps not less than a dozen times sworn to respect the authority of the United States, its laws and everything else done in pursuance of the Constitution—I have not the slightest objection to expressing it in such terms as may not be capable of misconstruction. Call it obedience, call it acknowledgment of sovereignty, call it allegiance or what you please, I acknowledge in the broadest terms my obligation as a citizen of the United States and a citizen of Maryland. I acknowledge my obligation to obey every article, every provision in the Constitution of the United States, and every article and every provision in every law passed in pursuance of the Constitution, and *ex gratia*, any order or proclamation or anything else, which that Constitution or those constitutional laws authorize the administrators of the government to issue.

There is one other consideration why this article should not be inserted. What is its object? If we are to judge from the speeches which have been made, it is to strengthen the arm of the government. Complaint has been made on all hands that we do not cheer the government, that we do not cheer the troops, that we do not oppose and abuse Jefferson Davis, that we do not oppose and abuse the rebels. We are not here for any such purpose. When gentlemen go out and get upon the stump, and talk to their friends, to induce them to shape their course in a certain way, it is all very well. But that is not our province. I was not sent here to eulogise the General Government or any of its branches. I was not sent here to denounce or to abuse by harsh epithets or mild, the enemies of the government. I am here to pass constitutional provisions which are to regulate the actions of posterity, not to defend the conduct of those who are now upon the theatre of action. That is not our business.

But the gentleman says, if I understand him, that this is to strengthen the arm of the Government. Does the Government want more strength than it has exhibited? Is not this Government now strong enough for the taste of any freeman? Does this Government, meaning the President, want its arm made stronger by this body or any other? I thought we lived in a day when the Government had exhibited a potential action that never mortal man had dreamed of. What was it that we complained of king George for? His government was too strong. He

acted without warrant of law. Our Constitution denounces all such action as utterly irreconcilable with the notion of liberty.

What do we see every day around us? Citizens who have lived among us, enjoying our highest offices and our highest respect, taken by day or by night, hurried off, confined for months, and then told it was a mistake. No charge is made against them. All this for what? What says the Constitution? "No man's property shall be taken except for public use, and then not without compensation." There is not a man here that does not know that article of the Constitution is violated. "No man shall be tried but by his peers, by indictment, and in the county where the offence was committed." I should insult the information of any gentleman here, were I to suppose him ignorant of case after case, where men have had their persons and their property arrested, and themselves charged, tried and punished, without regard to these provisions. Take the case of my friend over the way from Queen Anne, (Mr. Brown.) A party of soldiers, said to be under the command of a Methodist preacher, who was both a chaplain and a captain, at least for the time, took possession of his house, stables and corn house, and from day to day sent out a party to levy contributions on whom they would, and for what they would, under pretence of paying for an old dilapidated building not worth at the extent \$500, which somebody yet unknown and undiscovered, is said to have burned. For this offender the grand jury of the county had in vain made diligent inquiry, yet these soldiers there quarter themselves on this family until the sum of five thousand dollars is levied, of which sum they charged at first \$600, and afterwards graciously reducing the amount \$400 to this family who had entertained them—a family as quiet, as free, as any in the State, from any act of disloyalty or violation of law—and every dollar of these contributions would have been exacted but for the active and commendable interposition of the Executive of the State, who, to his honor be it said, has had the injury arrested before consummation.

This is the Government that wants strengthening. Sir, it is strong enough for me, and perhaps for other people. I may have to answer for the liberty I am now using, for aught I know.

I do not think, therefore, that this article ought to prevail. I have heard a great deal said about these terrible scoundrels, Jefferson Davis and his crew. I do not mean to say anything about that. But those gentlemen who have been most elaborate and most earnest in their denunciations of slavery, are gentlemen who have derived their notions elsewhere than in Maryland. They are from Pennsylvania, from Connecticut, or from some other State, where in their early lives they have been imbued with principles