

not in the range of the whole vocabulary of the English language, words strong enough or pungent enough to express the indignant surprise of that body, or the outraged feelings of the people of Maryland. Does history bear me out in this fact? Let me point to my authority. I will read from the Journal of the proceedings of the House of Delegates in 1861, the resolutions then offered.

You all recollect the circumstances under which that election was made. It was my first experiment in public life. I recollect being in the Senate at the time that Governor Bradford delivered his inaugural, in which he spoke of the unprecedented majority of 30,000 in favor of the Union party. The vote of the preceding year for the Presidential candidate, Mr. Lincoln, was 92,000 votes. In this hall, where we are now assembled, sat but six members of the opposition. Every other member, with the exception of these six members was a friend of the present administration. The resolutions to which I have referred were introduced in consequence of the excited and agitated discussion which had taken place in the city of Washington in regard to emancipation in the District of Columbia, and it was anterior to the signature of the President to the District emancipation bill. These resolutions were introduced by Mr. Price; and they were voted for by every solitary member of that body then present—58. The resolutions were these:

“The General Assembly of Maryland have seen with concern certain indications at the seat of the General Government of an interference with the institution of slavery in the seceded States, and cannot hesitate to express its sentiments and those of the people they represent, in regard to a policy so unwise and mischievous. This war is prosecuted by the nation with but one object, that namely of a restoration of the Union, just as it was when the rebellion broke out. The rebellious States are to be brought back to their places in the Union, without change or limitation of their constitutional rights. In the language of the resolution adopted by both Houses of Congress, at its extra session in July last, with remarkable unanimity, this war is declared to be prosecuted not ‘in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of these States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired, and that as soon as those objects are accomplished, the war ought to cease.’

“The objects and purposes of the war thus impressively declared, are those alone which the nation can rightfully contemplate in its prosecution; and the moment the object of the war changes from a simple restoration of

the Union, as known to the Constitution to something else in conflict with the guarantees in that instrument, from that moment the war itself changes its character. The duty of the government in a great crisis like the present is a very plain one—it is to preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States; and, thankful as we have reason to be, for our exemption from the devastation and ruin of civil war, we rely further upon the wisdom and firmness of the President in the discharge of the high and solemn trust committed to his hands, to resist and rebuke all attempts from any and from every quarter to convert this war into a crusade against the institution of domestic slavery as it exists in the Southern States, under the guarantees of the Constitution, or to take advantage of the troubled condition of our country, for the gratification of personal views or sectional prejudices.”

We had the honor, Mr. President, of serving together in the Senate on that occasion. Mr. Charles Goldsborough introduced at that session what was called a Convention Bill. I do not see the bill here, but I see the vote, and if I mistake in regard to that bill I hope the President will correct me. The last clause of that bill, if my memory serves me right, was that in the event of the people determining in favor of calling a Convention, this Convention when assembled should pass no law interfering with the existing relation of master and slave as now preserved by the Constitution of this State. Every member of the Senate, save and except the honorable President and Mr. Whitaker, voted in favor of it. Here is the record:

*Affirmative*—Messrs. Bayne, Billingsley, Blackiston, Denison, Everet, Goldsborough, of Dorchester, Harrison, Heckart, Jenkins, Lankford, Sellman, Smith, Townsend, Waters, Watkins, Willis—16.

My honorable friend from Calvert (Mr. Briscoe) was absent.

*Negative*—Messrs. Goldsborough, President, Whitaker—2.

This was in 1862. I know the argument the gentleman is going to urge in regard to that matter; that the Legislature of Maryland had no right to put in such a provision, that they had no authority to bind a Constitutional Convention. Granted. But what was then the state of the country. It was eminently proper that Maryland should then declare her opinion, her political status in regard to this great question, because it was the all-absorbing question of the country. She did so express herself. Although when the Senate bill reached the House of Delegates, that was expunged on the ground that they had no such constitutional or legal power; yet it did not change the state of public opinion. Recollect that a larger majority of Union members then represented the State of Maryland than represents them in this Convention;