

tance to which the State herself can equitably or morally make claim. It is undoubtedly true that public sentiment here for the last two or three years has strongly and very justly tended to the policy of emancipation; but I feel assured that it is not less true that nothing but the existence of the rebellion, and the intense desire of the loyal masses of our people to sever what they considered the chief bond of sympathy between that rebellion and any part of our population, ever induced them to adopt that policy in the immediate and unqualified manner that they did. But I advert to this consideration not as of itself furnishing the foundation of any claim by the State upon the National Government for indemnity, but only in connection with the fact that that Government itself has expressly held forth the promise of such an indemnity to any slave State that would but initiate a system of emancipation.

On the 6th of March, 1862, the President of the United States sent a special message upon this subject to Congress, the argument of which was that the rebellion was chiefly sustained by its hopes of co-operation on the part of the Border Slave States, and that to deprive it of that hope by converting those States from slave to free States would substantially put an end to it. To encourage such change of system by these States, the President incorporated in that message a resolution, the adoption of which he strongly recommended, which very soon afterwards passed both Houses of Congress in the very terms he proposed and which declared, "that the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State, in its discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such change of system."

That the object of this resolution, thus sanctioned by the Executive and Legislative authorities of the Government, was to encourage emancipation on the part of the Border States by assuring them that they should, in such case, receive pecuniary aid from the Government, to be disbursed as the State itself might think proper in compensating for the public or private losses occasioned by the change of system, no one will deny. If there be any meaning in the language quoted, it expressed a promise to that effect, and if any State can conscientiously claim a fulfillment of that promise, Maryland assuredly can, when, though influenced quite as much by the reasoning of the President as the resolution he recommended, she not merely inaugurated, but regardless of all personal sacrifices, thoroughly consummated her emancipation policy.