

Habeas Corpus has of course deprived them of the means provided by law for their deliverance, and unless your Honorable Bodies should see fit to relieve them, they are wholly without means of present redress. They therefore most respectfully and earnestly invoke the immediate interposition of Congress in their behalf. They repeat that they have administered their public trust faithfully, impartially and to the best of their ability, and have not used the police force under their control, nor have they permitted it nor contemplated permitting it be used for any other purpose, than the legitimate and faithful discharge of its duties, as prescribed by law. As private citizens, they invite scrutiny, likewise, into their conduct, in every respect in which it may be lawfully impugned, and they assert their readiness to meet, without a moment's delay, any charge which may be responsibly laid against their individual or official proceedings. As citizens of the United States, they therefore appeal to your Honorable Bodies for relief from oppression and unconstitutional wrong. As public officers of the State of Maryland, they protest against the usurpation of their official authority by an officer of the United States army and they protest the more strongly, because the usurpation against which they remonstrate is not an irresponsible proceeding of the officer in question, but the advised and deliberate act of the War Department itself. They are aware that the President of the United States has called upon Congress to sanction the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, and other acts which have been done by the Executive Department, upon its responsibility, without previous sanction of law. But the President has not asserted, in his message, any right on the part of the Federal Government to depose and appoint State officers, or annul laws of the States constitutionally enacted, nor has he suggested any power in Congress to clothe him with any such authority. He has asserted no right to do wrong to individuals, nor has he asked the interposition of Congress to such an end. But whatever may be the claims of the Executive, your memorialists respectfully insist that the demands of the constitution and of individual right and public liberty are very far above them, and they throw themselves therefore for redress and deliverance upon the justice and authority of the representatives of the people. They have no other recourse against arbitrary power and military force, and they demand, as matter of right, that their case be investigated by Congress or remitted to the tribunals of justice to be lawfully heard and determined.

CHARLES HOWARD,
WILLIAM H. GATCHELL,
JOHN W. DAVIS.

FORT McHENRY.