

and not even an official order promulgated commanding a resort to it here or prescribing the manner of its execution, without at least making known her earnest protest against the proceeding.

It is not improbable that your Excellency may have been informed that these proceedings are not so offensive to the general sentiment of our people as I represent them. To this I can only say, that, in my opinion, no policy adopted by the Government since the commencement of this Rebellion, has ever awakened such unequivocal opposition. With every desire on the part of our loyal population to sustain the Government in its war upon the insurgents, no convention and no primary meeting of any party, or of any fragment of a party, has, to my knowledge, yet ventured to express their approval of it. I am aware that a few have apparently calculated upon conciliating a support for it upon the ground that every slave enlisted will lighten the burthen of the draft and reduce the individual liability to conscription; but those who reason from such purely selfish premises do violence to that cardinal sense of justice prevailing in every well ordered community.

If a tax of any given amount were imposed upon the State, to be raised from the property of its citizens for the use of the Government, we might as well expect to see them justify the forcible and despotic seizure and appropriation of the funds of a selected few to make up the required amount, because it would diminish their own just share thereof, as to expect them to approve an arbitrary movement against the persons or property of their neighbors, because it might result in the exemption of their own.

But whilst I cannot avoid allusion to such assumed influences, suggested as they are at times in the current discussions of the subject, I would by no means be understood as imputing such calculations to your Excellency; I believe that in commanding or repudiating these proceedings, you will be governed only by the consideration of what the exigencies of the country imperatively require; and that you will not suffer such a policy to be continued, unless these exigencies do so require it;