

policy is that it will forever fix your position in the Union of States. Why is it that Maryland hesitates? Why is it that she vacillates in her course? Why is it that Jeff. Davis thinks he has a claim on you? He has no ground for any claim on earth, except through the institution of slavery. Abolish slavery, and Maryland will gravitate to a union with the Northern States as naturally as water flows down hill. Your position will be unalterably and unchangeably fixed. But as long as the institution of slavery exists among you, so long will it be uncertain where you are or what you will do. Abolish the institution of slavery, then, because it makes your position uncertain. Your sister States of the North do not trust you, because they do not know what position you actually occupy. Indeed there are many evidences of the uncertainty of our own position. We have within our borders a large population who I have no doubt would attach us to the Southern Confederacy if they could have their own way, and the only bond of sympathy is through the institution of slavery. Now, how many men are there in Maryland actually interested in this institution? Out of a population of over half a million of souls, there are only about 16,000 persons in the State of Maryland who own slaves to any extent, some of them owning only one or two slaves. And shall we be kept back from the proper position that awaits us for such a small minority of our population? I trust we will not. I hope the people of Maryland will rise to a full and proper appreciation of their own position and their own destiny. And I hope this Convention will reflect truly the sentiments of the people.

If the policy of the State has been changed, if, as the gentleman from St. Mary's (Mr. Billingsley) intimated by the resolutions of the legislature he read this morning, the policy of the State of Maryland has been changed, it has been because circumstances have changed. The circumstances of the country have changed, and we would be poor scholars indeed if we had not learned something in the three years that have just gone over us. The bloody war through which we are now passing, the change that has taken place in our circumstances, admonish us that we must change our position; that we must assume the position that properly belongs to us in the Union, if we would preserve our own peace and our own dignity, and secure the lasting blessings of prosperity for our people; and our people look for it; they expect it at our hands; they sent us here for that purpose; and we shall fall short of our mission if we do not carry out that purpose. We are bound by instructions which we cannot evade; those instructions are imperative to ingraft this article into the Constitution of our State, and abolish slavery forever in Maryland.

Then Maryland will march forward with

full promise and hope, with the full certainty that we will be second to none of the States of this Union; that we will be just what our position geographically, and in every other respect, warrant us to expect. Our railroads then, instead of carrying away our best material, instead of carrying away our young men of promise and enterprise and industry and thrift towards the setting sun to find homes which they were unable to obtain here, will bring immigrants from other States to us. Our lands now uncultivated will be bought up and improved. Manufactures will flourish, and every branch of industry will revive, and the State of Maryland, instead of occupying the position she now does, will become one of the most prosperous, most thrifty, and most influential States in the Union. Every motive that can induce us to act prompts us to pursue this course.

Thanking the Convention for their courtesy and kindness, I will now close.

Mr. CUSHING. Before the gentleman takes his seat I hope he will allow me to interrupt him a moment. I desire to refer to some authorities on the point referred to by the gentleman from Prince George's, (Mr. Belt,) in relation to the slave trade being kept open until 1808. In the Convention which adopted the present Constitution, Luther Martin, of Maryland, proposed to vary article 7, section 4, so as to allow a prohibition or tax on the importation of slaves. Mr. Rutledge said: "Religion and humanity had nothing to do with this question; interest alone is the governing principle with nations. The true question at present is, whether the Southern States shall or shall not be parties to the Union."

Mr. Pinckney went on to say:

"South Carolina can never receive the plan if it prohibits the slave trade. In every proposed extension of the powers of Congress, that State has expressly and watchfully excepted that of intermeddling with the importation of negroes."

"Gen. Pinckney declared it to be his firm opinion, that if himself and all his colleagues were to sign the Constitution, and use their personal influence, it would be of no avail towards obtaining the consent of their constituents. South Carolina and Georgia cannot do without slaves. As to Virginia, she will gain by stopping the importations. Her slaves will rise in value, and she has more than she wants. It would be unequal to require South Carolina and Georgia to confederate on such unequal terms."

"Gen. Pinckney thought himself bound to declare candidly that he did not think South Carolina would stop her importations of slaves in any short time; but only stop them occasionally, as she now does."

Mr. Rutledge, of North Carolina, said:

"If the Convention thinks that North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia will ever