

is, the consent of the governed. [Remember that the consent of the governed is the cornerstone of the American constitution and of American liberty.] much more does a union of co-equal sovereign States require, as its basis, the harmony of its members, and their voluntary co-operation in its organic functions.

The idea of "sovereign States" has been so much scouted by this convention that we almost fear to acknowledge the fact that we believe it once had a recognized existence in every State of the United States. But here we have Mr. Everett, acknowledging, in this letter of acceptance that there are such things as sovereign States; and it gives me courage and hope when I remember that year after year it was acknowledged as the generally accepted sentiment of the people of Maryland. And I think I could find a few paragraphs from older and more distinguished statesmen than Mr. Everett, uttered about the time of the formation of the government to the same effect. Such for instance as remarks made by Madison, Hamilton, Mason and others, which have frequently been referred to, and ought to be familiar to members of this convention. Gentlemen will remember the language of Mr. Douglas in his last senatorial effort, which it would probably be useless to read, but that such things are so little looked at at the present day. He says:

I don't understand how a man can claim to be a friend of the Union, and yet be in favor of war upon ten millions of people in the Union. You cannot cover it up much longer, under the pretext of love for the Union. War is disunion, certain, inevitable, final and irrepressible. Peace is the only policy that can save the country!

Peace was considered by very many in that day the only thing that could save the Union. It was the policy which should have prevailed, and the withdrawal of States should have been acquiesced in temporarily, for the purpose of restoring the Union by conciliation and compromise. We surely would have done better so, and take the chances of restoring it by such means, than to have inaugurated and continued for almost four years such a terrible tragedy as has been enacted in our land, how deluged with fraternal blood, with the hearts of the opposing sections, and the affections so intensely envenomed against each other as to be unwilling and utterly unfit to live together in union and harmony.

Other great statesmen have entertained and promulgated the same view. And at this point I would remind gentlemen of the views of Mr. Fillmore when last a candidate for President of the United States. Many gentlemen on this floor were his supporters, and I believe a majority of the present convention supported him. He expressed his views on the election of sectional candidates for president and vice-president upon his re-

turn from Europe at the complimentary reception given him in Albany, and I would be glad if I had his own language before me. He then declared that the election of sectional candidates for president and vice-president would be a sufficient cause for disunion; that the election of Mr. Fremont for president and Mr. Dayton for vice-president would be a sufficient cause for disunion of the States and would inevitably lead to it. To bring the matter home to the audience which he was addressing, he put the question to them, by a change of tables, and asked them to suppose themselves in the situation of the South, and that the South were to do this, and said they should have no others to rule over them, what would they do? Would not they dissolve the Union? And the unanimous reply was "we would." Gentlemen all over the State of Maryland will remember that speech. It was published as a campaign document and spread broadcast over the State, and read by all who supported Mr. Fillmore. The majority of this convention supported him then. They were with us then, although they have utterly changed since. The reasons for their change I am not able to understand.

I would remind gentlemen that the South made earnest efforts to prevent the collision that has since occurred. I would remind them that Virginia proposed the call of a convention composed of commissioners appointed by the governors or legislatures of the different States which had not seceded. She sent to that convention five of her ablest men. Most of the States were represented in that convention. I had the honor of a seat in that convention as a commissioner from Maryland. I have before me the journal of proceedings of that body. I am familiar with the votes of the commissioners of the several States of the North, and I know how persistently they opposed everything looking to a settlement or adjustment, which was likely to prevent the collision then so imminently threatening. I know too how earnestly gentlemen from the border States urged and hoped for something to be accomplished that would save the country from the scenes of bloodshed and anguish to which we have been subjected by the unhappy war in which we have been and are now involved. These efforts were not met as they should have been met by the representatives of the northern States. It appeared to be their settled purpose to defeat everything like an acceptable adjustment to the South. The doings of that convention will be more closely examined in the future than they have hitherto been. So also will all the efforts that have been made to prevent the great collision that has taken place, and each one will have accredited to him the merit that he deserves. No matter from what source these efforts came, whether from the North or from the South, due credit