

considerations which make that duty imperative.

I have the honor to be,
in your
highest consideration your
Excellency's most Obedient
Servant,
H. C. Breckinridge
of the Council

His Excellency
George Wolf
Governor of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg.

Council Chamber

Annapolis September 26th 1835

Sir,

I duly received yours of the 12th instant, in reply to mine of the 9th relative to the demand by Governor Wolf, upon Governor Thomas, for the surrender of Alvin Egard of Cecil County, as a fugitive from Justice. I have delayed answering your letter until now, that I might communicate to you Governor Thomas' determination in the case: which you will find in the enclosed copy of my letter to Governor Wolf.

In that letter I confined myself, strictly, to Governor Thomas' instructions, in stating the grounds upon which a compliance with the demand has been declined. In answering your letter, I feel myself at liberty to present further views of the matter.

I deem the question involved in the case one of very great importance, at any time, and particularly so at the present crisis, when Law and personal rights are so frequently and alarmingly set at naught and outraged. Strong indications have been manifested in the South of a disposition to resort to the Constitutional and legal provisions for reclaiming fugitives from Justice, to bring before Southern tribunals, as criminals, some of the principal members of the misguided Society of Pinnaculate abolitionists of the North. If the demand by Governor Wolf of Egard is a legal one, so would be a demand by the Governor of South Carolina, or any other State, of any member of the abolition Society, charged by presentment or affidavit, with the circulation of their writings, after it shall have been made penal by the Laws of such State to circulate them, within its limits, although such abolitionist may never have been within such State, or out of that of his birth and residence. There is probably no State in the Union whose citizens more decidedly disapprove and condemn the proceedings of the abolitionists, than do the people of Maryland — than I do myself. But they are entitled to equal rights, privileges and exemptions with any and every other class or denomination of the people of the United States; and it is a source of gratification to me that Southern, Slaveholding, anti-abolition Maryland has had a fit occasion, unconnected with the prevailing excitement, to decide that a citizen of one State cannot be legally demanded, as a fugitive from another, without having been charged with the commission of