

the first act of the session you are about to commence, would be entitled, "An Act to repeal the Stamp Tax"

But the representatives of the people of Maryland may always rely with certain confidence upon the support of their constituents, when, like your predecessors, (after testing the insecurity of the beaten path - the inutilty of further laws, based upon the pre-existing principle of taxation,) they at once (regardless of unjust censure, and with a proper reliance upon their own judgement, and the judgement of the people,) abandon the path which had hitherto only led to disappointment, and pursue a new course, leading to the redemption of the honor of the State, and the good faith of her Citizens.

I ask, gentlemen, I feel I may ask with confidence, your candid consideration of a measure which, when properly amended, will be of more practical utility, in the present monetary condition of the State, than any law upon the statute books.

It has been called the British Stamp Act, and denounced as anti-democratic; but I do not propose in addressing you, to consider such gratuitous & unfounded denunciations, for I am aware that you are too conversant with the history of your country, not to know that our fathers, in their opposition to the tyrannical impositions of the Mother Country, were governed by the principle "of resistance to taxation without representation," and that they opposed the Stamp tax passed by the British Parliament, not because it was a Stamp tax, but because they were unrepresented in the Parliament which passed it. And might be considered wanting in respect, were I to remind you that a similar law to the one now denounced as anti-democratic, was passed by Congress during the Presidential term of Mr. Madison, by the party who were then Democratic.

I will not, therefore, consider for a moment these mere denunciations against a measure so vitally important to the interest of your constituents, but will proceed to the considerations of such objections to the principle and policy of the measure, as have been in good faith, and with belief in their reality, urged against it.

It was said that the law was inconvenient, but the practical operation of the measure has clearly evinced the error of this assertion.

It has been urged that the law was unequal in its bearing, because the greater portion of the revenue derived from it was paid by the Mercantile interest. But this argument was certainly a two edged sword, for it was apparent, that if the fact were as asserted, the Mercantile interest only paid the greater portion of this tax, because of their ownership of a greater portion of the descriptions of property taxed, precisely as the landed interest paid a greater portion of the tax upon real estate than the Mercantile interest, because of their ownership of a larger proportion of that particular description of property. And the owner of real estate might as justly claim an exemption from taxation for that description of property, because he paid more than the Merchant, as could the Merchant from this tax because he received and owned more promissory notes, and consequently paid more than the land holder. The supposed unequal bearing of