

equally, so & if the principal would be entitled to the protection of his state, while pursuing his lawful property in a sister state, so are his agents acting legally for him, equally entitled to the protection of that state.

Unless Maryland shall contest every act of injustice inflicted in another state upon the agents employed by her citizens, to recover their fugitive slave property, it will be impossible hereafter for our citizens to enlist the aid or services of the citizen of a free state.

It is impossible for our citizens to enforce their rights to their fugitive slaves, if those, who assist them in the exercise of those Constitutional rights, are to be targets for malicious & unfounded prosecutions at home, while their principal, resident in Maryland, is shielded & protected by fact of not being caught, within the jurisdiction of the State, whence his property was reclaimed. It would surely be unmanly for the people of Maryland & unbecoming our character to permit those who have incurred danger & suffering abroad by aiding & assisting us to recapture our lawful property, to languish in the cells of a Penitentiary, if we have the legal power or moral influence, by any act of ours to procure a reversal of the unjust sentence or a release of the innocent prisoners.

I cannot therefore but consider it to be the bounden duty of the State of Maryland, first to save these men from unjust imprisonment, & next to test a question of great practical interest, which may frequently arise hereafter, & which concerns the dignity of the State & the safety of her citizens.

There can be no doubt of the validity of a law awarding a new trial in a criminal case & there is a precedent for such a law, in the decisions of Pennsylvania. Whatever action, may be taken on the part of the State, must be speedy, as Alberti is an old man in feeble health, suffering greatly from his imprisonment, & if not relieved, death will soon terminate his sufferings.

Baltimore, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, 1851.

Very Respectfully Submitted  
Robert J. Baile