

assignment of the principles, objects & purposes of such societies and what the same by this time with such measures as they may deem necessary for restraining such societies from violating the "letter & spirit" of the Federal Constitution or the Constitution of this State.

Resolved that the Committee be authorized to respectfully request the Governor to communicate to them any information he may possess in regard to such societies alluded to in his Message & the nature of the secrets they preserve.

Resolved that for the purposes of the inquiry submitted to them, the Committee be empowered to send for persons & papers if they may deem it necessary to their investigation.

Which were read & adopted.

By Order
Thos H. Kent of Cos.
Clerk

Executive Department

Annapolis, Md, January 23^d 1836

Hon. A. Kennedy,

Chairman of the Select Committee to whom was referred so much of the Message of the Executive as related to Secret Political Societies.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 22^d inst., enclosing a copy of the resolutions of the House of Delegates of the 13th inst. & requesting in compliance with one of said resolutions, that I would communicate to the Committee, such information as I may possess, touching the existence of Secret Political Societies in this State & of the nature & character of the secrets they preserve.

That I may occasion you no delay in entering upon the discharge of the duty imposed upon you by the House of Delegates, I wish to make you a prompt reply.

I give in the first place, to express to the Committee my sincere gratification, that the popular branch of the Legislature has seen fit thus promptly to respond to this portion of my Message & to institute an investigation relative to the matter therein briefly considered. The subject is one of great magnitude, in every point of view, affecting most deeply the honor of the State, as well as the peace & good order of Society, and unquestionably demands at your hands the most rigid and thorough examination.

I sincerely hope that no time may be lost and no proper effort spared in eliciting the truth in relation to the subject matter of the proposed inquiry.

I regret to perceive from the language of the resolutions of the House as well as from the debate to which they gave rise, that some misapprehension seemed to exist in the minds of some of the members of the House of Delegates, as to the particu-