

Barnum's Hotel
Baltimore Oct 27 1857

Hon Thomas Swann
Mayor of Baltimore

Sir

Representations from a large number of respectable citizens of the Emancipation of this City, added to my own conviction of my Constitutional duty, impaid upon me the obligation, respectfully to convey to you as the Mayor of the City as to what provisions should be made by you to guarantee personal security and the free exercise of suffrage by the legal voters at the approaching election.

The events of October 15th, 1857, at the Municipal and Presidential elections and the violence at the recent Municipal election, which practically disfranchised many thousands of the qualified native and naturalized voters of this City, conclusively establish the inadequacy of the existing City police to secure the elective rights and the personal safety of the voters. The Citizen has a right to good government. He surrenders his individual power of defense and pays his property taxes in consideration of the pledge made that he shall enjoy it, and I am resolute in the determination to exert any Constitutional power to fulfill the guarantee.

Subordinately you are like myself sworn in your sphere to put forth your powers in this behalf and I have come to this City to confer with you and ascertain what provision of an extraordinary character you propose to make to meet apprehended disorders of a character like those which have heretofore successfully defied the ordinary police force of the City. I shall be most happy if you can assure me of any detailed preparation on your part which will allay my solicitude and certify me that the Citizen may not have the occasion to reproach us as derelict in duty.

It will never do for a great Commercial Metropolis like this to be dishonored by the unchecked violence of mobs and it is necessary that the civil power should at once bring under subjection these one minded citizens whose acts and tampering the honor of the city and State and destroying the prosperity of our Commercial, Mechanical and manufacturing interests. Not doubting that you concur with me in these sentiments and will appreciate the sense of official duty from which I invite your cooperation, I have addressed you this letter and ask most respectfully and immediately reply.

Very Respectfully,
Yours Obedient

J. Matthews Lyon

Mayor's Office, City Hall
Baltimore Oct 28 1857

To His Excellency, J. Matthews Lyon,
Governor of Maryland.

Sir