

to possess. It has been falsely reported that I would be an applicant for office, under Mr. Smiley, and this rumor had been in long circulation before it reached my ears, and I then had the opportunity to denounce as an infamous, unfounded, slander.

It has been publicly reported that I had written a very objectionable letter, to Mr. Crittenden, upon the present condition of affairs.

As soon as I heard it I read and he at once signified his approval of its contents; but I have since directed it to be published, and you can read it for your selves. This spirit of defamation has gone so far that anonymous letters have been circulated in Anne Arundel County, stating that I had invited the Slaves to a public dinner on Christmas day, near this City.

You will doubtless hear many similar falsehoods, circulated with this same design of weakening your confidence in the Executive of the State by attempting to work upon your fears. For myself, I have lived long enough to know how to despise false reports. I may need only fear unfavorable reports when they are true. The men who have embarked in this scheme will spare no pains to carry their points.

The whole plan of operations in the event of the assumption of the Legislature, is, as I have been informed, already marked out - The list of ambassadors who are to visit other States agreed on - and the Resolutions, which they hope will be passed by the Legislature, fully committing this State to secession, and said to be already prepared.

Is it your will, my Countrymen, that the state should be exposed to the perils of adopting such a course? Are you - who are to bear the brunt of this fearful contest - who are to be forced to abandon your ploughs and forges the looms, to fight the battles of the Cotton States - who must leave behind your families, unprotected with the daily support which is only afforded them by your daily labors - are you desirous to be engulfed in this whirlpool of strife, before you have had time to breathe, and before every plan has been tried to avert the necessity of war?

If the people of the North were a foreign nation, we would first resort to negotiation, and, in the failure of that, to reprisals, before openly declaring war against them. Shall we be less forbearing to our brethren? If men alone were to be the sufferers in such contests, the consequences would be less deplorable, - but think of the helpless, timid women and children, who are to