

as ready, as their fathers were, and in the same way, and I trust, with the same success to resist such unconstitutional, unlawful and despotic proceedings. And while such is their determination, it is also their opinion, in my judgment, that "secession" - "withdrawal from the Union" - breaking up that Constitution and Union founded by our fathers, after the blood and anguish of the Revolution, and after the sad experience of disunion and the impotence of the old Confederation, is a thing not lightly to be undertaken before any tyranny is attempted, or outrage is consummated, and in the face of express denial of any such intention on the part of those to whom such designs are imputed, apprehensions - alarms - fears of what in fact never can happen do not justify a resort to armed opposition to the lawful powers. This is only sedition and rebellion, where the lawful authorities attempt no unlawful act - and it rises only to the dignity of Revolution when an intolerable oppression is thrown off by an injured people, to this last right (of Revolution) and its successful exercise in a justifiable case we owe our own independence; and, in such a case again, we should again be justified in a similar mode of remedy.

In a popular form of government where, at short intervals, and periodically, the places of power become vacant, to be filled anew by men freshly chosen by the people, the desperate remedy of war can be justified only by the most flagrant oppression and by outrage irremediable by the government itself. For to the People belongs the government instituted by them, and for their own benefit, and providing itself for the cure as well as prevention of injustice. To the People of Maryland belongs the right of determining for themselves whether the time has come, and the occasion, for their taking part in breaking up a government which their forefathers took such pains to establish; - and under which they have lived, and now live, in peace and happiness at home, and with protection and respect abroad.

I have no right to answer for them; but I may repeat to you my own conviction and opinion, that while the people of this state, having the same institutions, organization of labor, interests and sympathies as the other Southern states, must always regard with the deepest concern the action of those others as affecting their own position; they are not yet willing to follow the example which some of them have afforded, in withdrawing from the Federal Union. To them it has been the source of countless blessings. In disunion they can only be bloodshed and all the horrors of civil war, which they are not willing to encounter until all remedy fails, all hope is gone, and oppression becomes worse and more dishonorable than those things.

I beg leave to enclose to you copies of letters I have heretofore addressed to the commissioners from Mississippi