

thus preserve our soil from being polluted with the blood of brethren, Then, if war must be between the North and the South, we may force the contending parties to transfer the field of battle from our soil, so that our lives and property may be secure. It seems to me that independent of all other considerations, our geographical position forces us to this, unless we are willing to see our state the theatre of a long and bloody civil war, and the consequent utter destruction of every material interest of our people, to say nothing of the blood of brave men and innocent women and children which will cry out from our soil for vengeance upon us if we fail to do all that in us lies to avert the impending calamity.

The course I suggest has all the while been the sole groundwork of my policy. But for the excitement prevailing among our people during the past few days, I believe the object I have kept steadily in view during my administration would have been consummated. If it has failed, I have the full consciousness that, throughout the whole of my harassing and painful incumbency of the gubernatorial chair, I have labored honestly and faithfully for the peace, the safety, and the interests of Maryland, and of our common country. This consciousness has fully sustained me in all my troubles, and has enabled me to endure patiently all the cruel, unmerited, and heartless attacks that have been made upon my integrity.

I have also comfort in the conviction that my policy has been sustained by a large majority of the people, and nothing that has transpired since the recent lamentable occurrences within our state has shaken that conviction. A momentary frantic excitement took the place of reason and good judgment, and men for the time threw aside all prudent thoughts of the future in the burning desire to avenge what they considered wrongs.

I submit my suggestions to your wisdom, and I appeal to you not only as devoted citizens of Maryland, but as husbands and fathers, to allow that prudence and Christianlike temper, so honorable to all men, to guide your counsels; and I implore you not to be swayed by the passions which seem to be so fully aroused in our midst, to do what the generations to come after us shall ever deplore.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I ask your indulgence if I have omitted to present to you any other matter of interest in connection with the important subject which you are summoned to consider. The short time I have had in which to prepare this communication, and the turmoil and excitement around me may have caused omissions; if so, they will be promptly supplied where indicated by you.

Thomas B. Hicks,