

identify their property as a preliminary to a claim for future indemnity, in case such should be allowed.

Permit me, Mr. President respectfully to enquire for any Act of the National Legislature that authorizes such a proceeding, and whether it exists or not, to ask why it should be executed exclusively in Maryland!

In the absence of any order from any Department of the Government, which, to my knowledge, assumes to justify such action under any Statutory enactment, it is not perhaps proper for me to enter into the discussion of such authority; I cannot however forbear the suggestion, that if such power is conferred by any Act of the 34th Congress, as some have asserted, then it is being executed here with less regard to the interests of a State that has stood steadfastly by the Government, than has been observed towards others that have been the most conspicuous in the Rebellion.

When your Excellency by your Proclamation of the 1st of January last declared the Slaves of the States then in Rebellion free, you took the very proper precaution to advise the Citizens of those States, by another Proclamation a hundred days before, of the act you contemplated; you not only gave them this timely notice, but you therein also announced the purpose of indemnifying even in these rebellious States, all loyal owners who were to be deprived of their slaves; and you manifested a proper regard for the interests of industry by strongly recommending to the Slaves so liberated, to continue in all cases when allowed, to labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

You also took the precaution particularly to call attention to, and set forth at length in the first of your said Proclamations, the 9th & 10th Sections of the Act of Congress of 17th July 1862, which provides for the freedom of certain classes of Slaves belonging to Citizens engaged in the Rebellion or aiding and assisting it; and if the very succeeding Section of the same Act conferred as some contend, the power to enlist the slaves in loyal States and of loyal Citizens, or that power had been created by any other act — which for all practical purposes is equivalent to the emancipation of those enlisted — it is but fair to presume that such a power would not have been set in motion, without at least calling similar attention to its existence and the purpose of enforcing it. But without any such notice, or a notice of any kind, and after the free laborers of the State engaged to such an extent as Volunteers in the Country's service have left our Community almost destitute of Agricultural labor, the practice to which I refer, is fast stripping it of the little that is left.

Whilst I confidently hope therefore that you will not sanction this policy in any aspect in which it can be presented, I feel assured that if adopted at all, it will be only upon the ground that when an imminent public necessity exists, which can not be otherwise met, property of any description may be seized to provide for it — It is for your Excellency to say whether such an emergency exists at this time, and if it does, whether it exists only in Maryland or is to be relieved only by her resources — We desire therefore before our property is impressed in the manner stated, to be advised by your official order or Proclamation, that this urgent public necessity requires its seizure, and in providing for that public necessity we trust that not only will such proceedings be