

predecessors, by whom it was passed, if I should omit to refer to the act of the last session, chap. 280, imposing "the Stamp Tax," the only revenue measure adopted by them which has proved unacceptable to any portion of the people in any part of the State. If unmeasured denunciation—through the public press—from the hustings—and in every other shape which the ingenuity of its enemies could devise, could mislead the judgment of an enlightened people in reference to a measure so eminently calculated to promote their *individual interest* and the *public good*, the first act of the session you are about to commence, would be entitled, "An act to repeal the Stamp Tax."

But the representatives of the *people of Maryland* may always rely with certain confidence upon the support of their constituents, when, like your predecessors, (after testing the insecurity of the beaten path—the inutility of further laws, based upon the *pre-existing principle of taxation*,) they at once (regardless of unjust censure, and with a proper reliance upon their own judgment, and the judgment of the people,) abandon the path which had hitherto only led to disappointment, and pursue a new course, leading to the redemption of the honor of the State, and the good faith of her citizens.

I ask, gentlemen, I feel I may ask with confidence, your candid consideration of a measure which, when properly amended, will be of more practical utility in the present monetary condition of the State, than any law upon the statute book.

It has been called the *British Stamp Act*, and denounced as *anti-Democratic*; but I do not propose in addressing *you*, to consider such gratuitous and unfounded denunciations, for I am aware that you are too conversant with the history of your country, not to know that our fathers, in their opposition to the tyrannical impositions of the mother country, were governed by the principle "of resistance to taxation *without representation*," and that *they* opposed the Stamp Tax passed by the British Parliament, *not* because it was a *Stamp Tax*, but because they were unrepresented in the Parliament which passed it. And I might be considered wanting in respect, were I to remind *you* that a similar law to the one now denounced as *anti-Democratic*, was passed by Congress during the Presidential term of Mr. Madison, *by the party vote of the then Democratic party*.

I will not, therefore, consider for a moment these mere denunciations against a measure so vitally important to the interest of your constituents; but will proceed to the consideration of such objections to the principle and policy of the measure, as have been in good faith, and with a belief in their reality, urged against it.

It was said that the law was *inconvenient*; but the practical operation of the measure has clearly evinced the error of this assertion.

It has been urged that the law was unequal in its bearing, *because* the greater portion of the revenue derived from it was paid by the mercantile interest. But this argument was certainly a two edged sword; for it was apparent, that if the fact were as asserted,