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**MEMORIAL**

OF

**SUNDRY INHABITANTS**

OF THE

**CITY OF BALTIMORE.**

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JANUARY 10, 1820.

Referred to the Committee of the Whole House, on the Bill for the admission of Missouri into the Union.

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1820.



## MEMORIAL.

*The Memorial of the undersigned, inhabitants of the city of Baltimore, to the Congress of the United States, respectfully represents :*

That, feeling, in common with the rest of their fellow-citizens, a lively interest in the prosperity, happiness, and reputation of their country, and believing that its prosperity, happiness, and reputation, are deeply implicated in the question likely to be agitated in Congress, during its present session, respecting the admission of slavery into the states hereafter to be formed west of the Mississippi, they deem it to be their imperious and solemn duty, respectfully to communicate their views of this momentous question to the representatives of the nation. We consider that our obligation to do this, derives additional force from the circumstance of our being citizens of a slave holding state, and, consequently, not liable to that prejudice on this subject, which citizens belonging to non-slave holding states are often supposed to possess.

We are not unacquainted with the evils of slavery in a political, as well as in a religious point of view; we have witnessed the oppression and degradation of that unfortunate portion of our race, who are its subjects; but the pernicious effects of slavery are by no means confined to the slaves themselves: it has a destructive influence upon the power, wealth, and industry of the state, tending greatly to restrain the increase of the white population, and to diminish the value of property; for it is a well established fact in Maryland, that, in those sections where slaves are comparatively few in number, the population is most numerous, the land best cultivated, and the mass of the people most wealthy.

There is no doubt that slavery diminishes the amount of productive industry.

We know that *we are*, and we fear that our posterity *may be, cursed* with slavery; but, as lovers of our country, we would not willingly see this evil extended; as christians, we can never assent to the adoption of a policy calculated to increase the number of slaves, or perpetuate the evils of slavery.

We believe, that, to permit the extension of slavery in the country west of the Mississippi, would be the means of greatly multiplying the number of slaves, and greatly increasing the difficulty of relieving our country from slavery.

If admitting slavery into those western states would diminish, in proportion, the evil in the old states, we would not oppose it; but we are persuaded it would have no such effect. Without entering into a

labored discussion of this subject, or attempting to trace effects to their causes, we will merely state, as facts, that the states of Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi, have been mostly peopled with slaves from Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, and yet the slaves in these states have, in the mean time, rapidly increased; much more so than the white population. These new states have furnished a market for the old ones—have taken off their surplus slaves, and thereby promoted their increase. The same effect will be produced by extending the market beyond the Mississippi.

The history of our country proves, that the increase of the black population retards the increase of the white.

We cannot, therefore, perceive that Maryland, or any other slave holding state, would derive any benefit, in a political or religious view, from the permission of slavery in these new states.

It might be thought indecorous in us to enter into a labored discussion, to prove, to an American Congress, the iniquity and injustice of personal slavery, in the abstract—its repugnance to the principles of our government—to natural law, and revealed religion. It was not of choice in the people of this country, but of necessity, resulting from a policy which they could not control, that slavery became known amongst us. But, should our government adopt a policy calculated to increase, extend, or perpetuate, this national evil, it would, from that moment, be justly chargeable with its opprobrium.

We have too much respect and veneration for an American Congress, to believe, for a moment, that it will, intentionally, adopt a measure calculated to magnify, or perpetuate, the evil of slavery in our country.

We, therefore, confidently indulge the hope, that Congress, in its wisdom, will prevent the further introduction of slaves into any new state west of the Mississippi, which may be admitted into the American confederation.