

Resolutions of the  
Legislature of Ga.

James  
Mitchell  
Gov of Georgia

His Excellency  
The Governor of  
Rhode Island



Executive Department, Georgia,

Milledgeville, 29th December, 1835.

Sir :—In compliance with the request of the General Assembly of this State, I have the honor to transmit the subjoined copy of a Report and Resolutions, adopted at their late session, upon a subject of vital importance to the interests of the Southern States, and to the stability of the institutions of our common country.

Very Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

William Schley

## In the House of Representatives,

DECEMBER 19th, 1835.

THE Committee to whom was referred so much of the Governor's Message as relates to the movements of the Abolitionists of the North, have endeavored to bring to the consideration of the subject, that dispassionate deliberation its importance demands, and beg leave to make the following REPORT :

They would remark, that the formation of our glorious Union was a great experiment, made by patriotism in the cause of civil liberty. Thus far successful, its results have been most beneficial, spreading with unexampled profusion over our extensive country, blessings which distinguish her above all others. The offspring of common sufferings and common triumphs among the States, the preservation of this Union is dependent upon a community of sympathy and good feeling among their respective people. Any attempt by a portion of the people of one State to interfere, even indirectly, with the domestic institutions of another, has the inevitable tendency to destroy that feeling. Such attempt is an insult to the State aggrieved, and the motives which impel it, are at entire variance with that fraternal spirit which constitutes the people of these States, brethren of one great family. But when such attempt involves the safety of the people of a State—the robbery of their property—the desecration of their constitutional rights—the violation of their domestic peace—infatuation herself must admit, that such attempt, persevered in, will inevitably convert pre-existent good feeling into deadly hostility—the certain consequences of which, are a sundered Union, and all the horrors of civil commotion. That such attempt is being at this time made by certain fanatics, by the distribution of pamphlets, prints, circulars, annuals, almanacs, and every species of publication, your committee with mingled feelings of regret and indignation, believe cannot admit of doubt—yet it is a matter of heart-felt congratulation to the friends of Union, that the general and spontaneous expression of feeling which has burst from the patriotism and intelligence of the North, affords the cheering hope, that her people are prepared to “frown indignantly upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.” But notwithstanding the manifestation of this spirit, the movement of the domestic fanatic and foreign emisary, and the insidious means to which they resort, are fraught with so much peril to ourselves, our families, and our undoubted rights, that “stern necessity” and a just regard for the peace and harmony of our country demand that the people of this State, should, in temperate and respectful, but determined language, declare their unalterable determination to protect their domestic institutions and constitutional rights from all interference, direct or indirect, from any and every quarter. Upon this point, there can be no discussion—no compromise—no doubt. They found their rights upon the guarantee afforded by the Constitution of the United States—and if the provisions of that charter are to be sacrificed to the spirit of fanaticism, or the impulses of a false philanthropy, calamity and ruin will soon overwhelm this now happy confederacy. Impressed with the importance of the duty which devolves upon them at the present crisis, your committee, in addition to a bill in amendment of the laws regulating slaves and free persons of color within this State, would respectfully submit the following resolutions, with a single remark, that if a rigor heretofore unknown to our domestic legislation be found in the features of the bill they have introduced, it has been forced upon them, by the movements of men, who, assuming to be the friends, are indeed the most cruel enemies of those whom they have taken under their especial care :

1st. *Resolved*, That in this country, freedom of the press and freedom of speech are sacred and inviolable rights ; that in proportion to their sacredness and value, is the obligation to preserve them from the abuse of those who would prostitute them to the vile purpose of “enfeebling the sacred ties which now link together the various parts” of this happy Union.

2d. *Resolved*, That the people of Georgia stand prepared to protect the domestic institutions of her sister States from the unauthorized interference of individuals or combinations within her limits.

3d. *Resolved*, That the perpetuity of this glorious union, which has shed such blessings on us as a people, is only to be ensured by a strict adherence to the letter of the Constitution which has guaranteed to us certain rights with which we will suffer no power on earth to interfere—that it is deeply incumbent on the people of the North to crush the traitorous designs of the Abolitionists, and that we look with confidence to such movements on their part, as will effectually put an end to impertinent, fanatical and disloyal interference with matters settled by the Constitution.

4th. *Resolved*, That we hail the sentiments expressed by the resolutions of some of the recent meetings of the North, upon the subject of abolition, as the evidence of the existence of a right spirit among the great mass of our Northern brethren, and a determination on their part to discharge the duties imposed upon them by the Constitution of their country, and the exigencies of the times.

5th. *Resolved*, That the District of Columbia, and the several territories of the United States are the common property of the people of these States—that the right of exclusive legislation in the former, and the power to make all needful rules and regulations for the government of the latter, which are vested in the Congress of the United States, are derived from the Constitution, which recognizes and guarantees the rights resulting from domestic slavery, and that any interference by that body with those rights, will be unauthorized by, and contrary to the spirit of that sacred charter of American liberty.

6th. *Resolved*, That copies of the foregoing Preamble and Resolutions be transmitted by his Excellency to the President of the United States, the Governors of the respective States, and to the Senators and Representatives of this State in Congress.

Read, and *unanimously* agreed to,

JOSEPH DAY, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Attest—JOSEPH STURGIS, Clerk.

*In Senate*—Read and concurred in, 22d December, 1835.

ROBERT M. ECHOLS, President of the Senate.

Attest—ARTHUR A. MORGAN, Secretary.

Approved, 22d December, 1835.

WILLIAM SCHLEY, Governor.

Resolutions of the General Assembly  
of the State of Maryland.



His Excellency  
The Governor of Maryland.

*[Large decorative flourish or initial]*

Kentucky Resolutions on  
Abolition  
May 5. 1796

**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,**

FRANKFORT, KY. FEB. 23, 1836.

*Sir:*

*I have the honor of transmitting the subjoined copy of Resolutions of the General Assembly of this State, expressive of the opinions of that body, in relation to the several subjects therein mentioned.*

*Very respectfully,*

*I have the honor to be*

*Your most obedient servant,*

**J. T. MOREHEAD.**

## RESOLUTIONS RESPECTING ABOLITION SOCIETIES.

The select committee, to whom was referred so much of the Message of the Lieutenant and acting Governor, as relates to the Abolition Societies at the North, together with the Preambles and Resolutions of the States of North and South Carolina, in relation to the same subject, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report:—

That although your committee have not been able to ascertain the precise number and extent of such societies, yet they are satisfied of their existence, and that their object is to produce an entire abolition of slavery in the United States, by printing and circulating, through the post offices and other modes of communication, tracts, pamphlets, almanacs and pictorial representations; the manifest tendency of which, is to produce a spirit of discontent, insubordination, and perhaps, insurrection with the slave population of the country.

Your committee have not thought it a part of their duty to present to the House, upon this occasion, a formal vindication of the justice and propriety of the institution of domestic slavery. To do so, would involve a recognition of the right of those Northern Abolitionists to question it. For this institution, the people of Kentucky hold themselves responsible to no earthly tribunal, but will refer their cause to Him alone, through the mysterious dispensations of whose providence, dominion has been given to the white man over the black. He, alone, may judge of its compatibility with His will; and of its political expediency, we who witness its practical operation, are best competent to speak.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky, so long as she remains a sovereign member of this confederacy, can never permit another State to assail her local institutions, much less a combination of private individuals. If the States of this Union were bound together by no common tie, if the federal constitution were annihilated, every principle of international law would still prohibit the citizens of one State from interfering with the domestic policy of another. How much more forcible then, is their obligation to abstain from such interference, when we are united together by a common instrument, which guarantees to each State, where the institution of slavery exists, its perfect inviolability. Yet the strange scene is exhibited to the world, by the abolition societies of private individuals, combining to effect that, which the States, of which they are members, are restrained by the sacred provisions of the constitutional compact, from attempting. Had all this been the work of foreign incendiaries, meditating the most effectual mode of assailing our peace and quiet, whatever sentiments of indignation may have been inspired, it would have caused no surpris. But when it proceeds from those with whom we are united by every tie which can bind a people together in concord and affection, your committee cannot restrain the expression of surpris and mortification.

Your committee will not deny that recent manifestations of public opinion at the North, have inspired them with the gratifying hope, that the wild and fanatical spirit which guides and directs the conduct of the abolition societies, have not yet been imparted to the great body of the people; yet the history of the world too fatally attests the deep and irreparable mischief which may be effected by the organized action of a few zealous enthusiasts, especially when their minds become so heated and sublimated as to imagine themselves the spe-

and executors of the divine will. They *must* grow and strengthen, and whenever they become sufficiently numerous to exercise an influence in the political contests, by which a free people are perpetually shaken, the history of the American Union, with all the high and glowing visions which now gladden the heart of the patriot, will have been written.

Whilst however, your committee have been gratified with the spirit which has characterized the numerous and respectable meetings of our Northern brethren upon this deeply interesting subject, and their emphatic denunciations of the plans of those misguided fanatics, they would have been still more gratified, had they thought proper to interpose the more powerful and effectual remedy of penal legislation. But your committee do not entertain this hope, enough has transpired to convince them that under the miserably perverted name of free discussion, these incendiaries will be permitted to scatter their firebrands throughout the country, with no check but that which may be imposed by the feeble operation of public opinion. Your committee are as deeply impressed with the value of the high privilege which is secured to the citizen by the constitution of the country—the right of full and free discussion, as can be those who are prostituting it to such unhallowed purposes. But the freedom of the press is one thing—its licentiousness another; whilst the one is justly dear to every freeman, the other is the object of deep reprobation. It cannot be, that the right of discussion at the North, carries with it the right to excite a portion of the population of a sister State to rapine and murder. When the constitution of the country guarantees to every citizen the right to publish and speak his opinions upon all subjects, it wisely fixed the limitation that he shall be responsible for the abuse of that privilege. Your committee are unable to conceive a grosser prostitution of the freedom of the press, than the effort of the abolitionists to stir up a portion of the population of eleven States of this Union to rebellion and bloodshed. May we not, however, appeal to the constitution of the land in behalf of the tenure by which we hold our property, with the same confidence that they appeal to their constitutional right of discussion. The rights which are sought to be violated by these fanatics, are not less sacred by all the sanctions of the charter which binds us together, than is the unrestricted freedom of the press, to which they appeal, in vindication of their right to scatter their licentious productions among us.

Your committee would assure our brethren at the North, that this Commonwealth is still animated by the same ardent devotion to the Union of these States, which has ever marked her political history; but they feel that they would be violating the high trust reposed in them by the House, did they not in terms firm, yet respectful, admonish them of the certain and tremendous consequences which must attend this officious and dangerous interference with their domestic institutions. If, as your committee fear, all invocation upon the justice of the North be in vain, it remains for the Commonwealth of Kentucky to look to her condition—to declare to the world her determined resolution to maintain inviolate, her domestic institution, and make good that declaration by all the safeguards which legislation can create.

Your committee would respectfully recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

*Resolved by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, That this Commonwealth alone has power to regulate and control the subject of domestic slavery as it exists within her territory, and any attempt on the part of the Federal Government to interfere with it in any manner, would be at war with the solemn sanctions of that instrument which binds us together.*

*Resolved*, That the General Assembly views with unqualified reprobation, the formation of abolition societies at the North, for the purpose of circulating incendiary publications among the slaveholding States of the Union, as a violation of the original basis of the federal compact, and calculated to endanger the integrity of this Union.

*Resolved*, That any attempt by Congress to abolish domestic slavery within the District of Columbia, would be regarded by this Commonwealth as a breach of the implied faith of the Nation, towards the citizens of that District, and as an usurpation of power, which, if acquiesced in by the slaveholding States, must end in the ultimate disregard, by that body, of the constitutional tenure by which they now hold their property.

*Resolved*, That our sister States, where domestic slavery exists, be, and they are hereby assured of the earnest co-operation of the State of Kentucky, to resist, at all hazards, every effort to interfere with that subject, either by Congress, any State, or combination of private persons.

*Resolved*, That his Excellency, the Lieutenant and acting Governor be requested to transmit a copy of this report and resolutions to the Executive of each State, and to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress, with a request to said Executive, to lay the same before their respective Legislatures.

JNO. L. HELM, *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

CYRUS WINGATE, *Speaker of the Senate.*

Approved 1st March, 1836,

J. T. MOREHEAD.

By the Lieutenant and acting Governor,

A. P. Cox, Secretary.