

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DOCUMENTS

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THE LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE,

DURING ITS SESSION

A. D. 1836.

AUGUSTA:
SMITH & ROBINSON,.....PRINTERS.

1836.

SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

No. 45.

SENATE.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, March 1, 1836.

The Joint Select Committee, to whom was referred the Message of the Governor, communicating the Report and Resolutions of the Legislatures of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, on the incendiary proceedings of the Abolitionists in the non-slave-holding States,

REPORT :

That they have given to the subject the consideration which it demands from its importance, as interrupting the harmony and thereby endangering the Union of these States.

The federal compact owed its origin to the spirit of deference, conciliation and mutual forbearance, which pervaded the then independent States; and was formed for the purpose briefly set forth in the preamble to the Constitution, to insure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defence.

To insure these two great and all important purposes definite powers were conceded by the States, the Constitution of the United States was formed and the Federal Government created.

The powers then conceded are ample to effect the great objects of the Union; and though for defined purposes the several States form one great Nation, yet in other respects, they are to each other as sovereign and independent Nations; each State having a Constitution of its own, and yielding obedience only, to the enactments of its own Legislature.

Any interference, therefore, of a State or the inhabitants of a State with the domestic concerns of another State, is dangerous, as having a direct tendency to create jealousies between the States, and thereby weakening the attachment to the Union, which is our only security against domestic dissensions and foreign aggressions.

Slavery is a question in which we as a State have no interest; it is unknown in Maine, and those States who recognize its existence, have the exclusive control of the subject within their borders.

As one of these United States, it is not for Maine, or the citizens of Maine, to interfere with the internal regulations of any other independent State; no possible good can result from such an interference with affairs over which they can exercise no control.

That these are the sentiments of the great mass of the People of Maine is evinced by the numerous public meetings, which were held in every part of the State the past season; in proof of which, your Committee adduce the following Resolution passed unanimously at the meeting in Portland, the largest City in Maine, on the 15th of August last:—

Resolved, That it is the bounden and sacred duty of good citizens of every State, carefully and scrupulously to avoid all interference and attempts to interfere, and all manifestations of any intention or wish to interfere with the peculiar interests, concerns, laws and domestic policy of every other State in the Union; and that all such acts of interference, where they tend to disturb the quiet, to alienate the feelings, to provoke the jealousies, or to jeopardize the safety of the citizens of the States, made unwilling subjects of such officious intermeddling, deserve, and ought to receive the reprobation of every friend to his country.

Similar Resolutions have been passed at public meetings by the inhabitants of Augusta, Bangor, Hallowell, Brunswick, Bath, Waterville, and many others, too numerous to be mentioned; and we may with confidence assert, that however divided on other

great political questions, on this subject but one feeling pervades the State, and that the discussion of slavery has been arrested in Maine by public sentiment, more effectual in its operation than any law which could be enacted.

Under these circumstances and in consideration of the fact that no abolition paper is printed in Maine, your Committee would deem any legislation on the subject as uncalled for, unwise and inexpedient, as tending to excite a discussion which has subsided. They therefore report the following Resolutions, which are herewith submitted.

**CHARLES JARVIS,
LEVI JOHNSON,
FREDERIC GREENE,
RUFUS McINTIRE,
ELIAKIM SCAMMON,
OBED WILSON,
SEWALL LAKE,
STEPHEN C. FOSTER,
ALFORD RICHARDSON,
NATHAN C. FLETCHER,
CHARLES GORDON.**

STATE OF MAINE.

—●●—

RESOLVE relating to the discussion of Slavery in
the State of Maine.

Resolved, That the United States government
2 is a government of enumerated, limited and de-
3 fined powers all which are set forth in the Con-
4 stitution; and that all powers not granted in
5 that instrument are reserved to the States and
6 to the people.

Resolved, That the power of regulating Sla-
2 very within the confines of a State was not
3 granted, and therefore does not exist in the gen-
4 eral government.

Resolved, That excepting so far as they are
2 united for certain and defined purposes, the
3 States forming the confederacy of the United
4 States, are with respect to each other distinct
5 and sovereign States, each having a separate and
6 independent government, the action of which

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7 under the limitations of the Constitution of the
8 United States, and within the confines of the
9 State, is not to be questioned by any power save
10 the people of that State; and that any inter-
11 ference by a State or by the inhabitants of a
12 State, with the domestic concerns of another
13 State, tends to break up the compromises, and
14 disturb the harmony of the Union, and should be
15 discountenanced by every good citizen.

Resolved, That in Maine the discussion of the
2 question of the abolition of slavery having been
3 arrested by the decided expression of public dis-
4 approbation, and no abolition paper being print-
5 ed within the borders of the State, legislation
6 on the subject is inexpedient.

Resolved, That the Governor be requested to
2 forward a copy of this Report and these Reso-
3 lutions to the Executives of North Carolina.
4 South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, and to
5 the Executive of each of the other States, with
6 a request that they be communicated to their
7 respective Legislatures.

STATE OF MAINE.

IN SENATE, MARCH 1, 1836.

ORDERED, That 1000 copies of the foregoing Report, and Resolutions be printed for the use of the Legislature.

[Extract from Journal.]

Attest: WILLIAM TRAFTON, Sec'y.