

ABSTRACT

In 1832, the Maryland State Colonization Society officially seceded from the American Colonization Society. With this declaration of independence, the Maryland State Colonization Society embarked on a thirty year journey during which it failed miserably in its very purpose. The Maryland State Colonization Society failed to convince free African Americans to immigrate to Africa in order to pursue a life free of oppression and racism. Nevertheless, the Maryland State Colonization Society sustained an official and financial relationship with the Maryland General Assembly during this period. The thesis explores the underlying motivations and controversies which allowed the Maryland General Assembly to look to the Maryland State Colonization Society as the answer to its own sectional “crises.” Through the rhetoric and arguments published in the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, the Maryland State Colonization Society became a voice for moderation and compromise amongst the divisive and sectional viewpoints of the North and South. Providing a program which slaveholders and anti-slavery proponents could suit to their own beliefs, the white population of Maryland could believe that they had answered the “problem” of slavery and a growing free African American population. Through the Maryland State Colonization Society’s program, the population of Maryland made a deliberate and prolonged evaluation of slavery’s present and future role in the state. Consequently, this allowed the legislatures and leaders of Maryland to make the pragmatic decision to remain in the Union during the Civil War.

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THE PERSISTENT PRESENCE OF A SUCCESSFUL FAILURE:
THE MARYLAND STATE COLONIZATION SOCIETY AND
THE IMPORTANCE OF ITS EXISTENCE

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FOR MY WIFE, ANNA

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The Maryland State Colonization Society: A Malleable Program for a Diversified Community

In March, 1861, Dr. James Hall, the long time editor of the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, reflected upon the Annual Meeting of the American Colonization Society. On the eve of the Civil War, Dr. James Hall lamented that the United States could have avoided the war's pending carnage if it had only fully supported the colonization plan. With its democratic government, Christian sensibility, and guaranteed rights and freedoms for African Americans in the Republic of Liberia, Dr. Hall feared "over how many millions in the heart of Africa yet unreclaimed [sic], might they have floated, the symbols of civil and religious freedom, of progress, improvement, civilization, and Christianity."¹ Despite the claims concerning Liberia, the Maryland State Colonization Society (MSCS) did not have such great success convincing free African American to immigrate to Africa. Since the Maryland General Assembly's renewal of the state's 26 year appropriation in 1858, the MSCS found it nearly impossible to convince any African Americans of the benefits of Liberia. Consequently, the MSCS stopped any independent expeditions to the colonies within the year. At the same time, the Maryland General Assembly ended its financial and political support of the MSCS. As the official method of race control for the Maryland General Assembly, the MSCS existed as a lesson in futility. Despite the half a million dollars spent by the Maryland General Assembly, the MSCS only produced 1200 African American emigrants to the colonies.²

¹ Dr. James Hall, "Annual Meeting of the American Colonization Society," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 10 No. 22 (March 1861), 349.

² Penelope Campbell. *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831-1857*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 210,241.

The Maryland General Assembly incorporated the MSCS in 1832 in reaction to the Nat Turner Slave Rebellion in Southampton, Virginia. Over the next three decades, the MSCS worked simultaneously as an official arm of the Maryland State Government and a self-proclaimed humanitarian society, whose varied membership included some of the political and social elites of Maryland. On the one hand, the MSCS received continuous funding from the Maryland General Assembly for close to thirty years. The funding and support of the program in the legislature relied on the concerns of slaveholders with regard the growing free African American population of Maryland. Since many legislators owned slaves, they funded the program with the hope that the removal of free African Americans would secure their current slave property and the classification of Maryland as a slave state. By the outbreak of the Civil War, the Maryland General Assembly's support of the MSCS proved futile as Maryland would maintain the highest free African American population in the entire country.³

Various members who supported the MSCS as a charitable society did not view colonization as a means to secure the chattel property of slaveholders. In contrast, these members supported the MSCS as a means to place free African Americans in the best environment to support their economic and intellectual growth. The general support for this effort largely drew upon the Methodist Church of Maryland. Although the Methodist Church officially did not believe in the ability of whites and blacks to coexistence in the same country, they believed that colonization provided for the quiet separation of the races in the most compassionate and charitable fashion. Furthermore, historian Penelope Campbell describes the Baltimore based leadership of the MSCS as truly humanitarian. Among this group, John H.B. Latrobe and Dr. James Hall emerged as the voice of

³ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 242.

colonization in Maryland. John H.B. Latrobe, who would ascend to the presidency of the American Colonization Society, maintained a “singular absence of racism in [his] public statements and correspondence.”⁴ Accordingly, Latrobe believed that colonization would allow “Maryland, by her present efforts, [to] become a free state” setting the example for the entire nation.⁵ Additionally, commentators have described Dr. James Hall as the “actual dean [of the MSCS].”⁶ As the editor of the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, Dr. Hall maintained the message of the MSCS through monthly publications assuring supporters and detractors of the benefits of colonization for Maryland.⁷ Despite the inability of the MSCS to achieve its goals, this thesis focuses on the voice of the MSCS personified by the Latrobes and Halls of the Society, as expressed through the *Maryland Colonization Journal*.

In the historical analysis of the MSCS, some historians have analyzed the society’s failure to achieve substantial numbers of African American emigrants. Historian Aaron Stopak discussed that the MSCS failed to achieve its goals not because of a lack of widespread appeal or political support for its program. In contrast, Stopak pointed to the political alliance between the MSCS and the slaveholder dominated Maryland General Assembly. In order to maintain its funding, the MSCS utilized racially discriminatory rhetoric which appealed to this slaveholding population and caused African Americans to distrust it. Without the trust of African Americans, the MSCS found it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to convince substantial numbers of African Americans to immigrate. Ultimately, Stopak argued that the failure of the

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ William D. Hoyt Jr. “John McDonogh and Maryland Colonization in Liberia, 1834-35” *The Journal of Negro History* 24 No. 4 (Oct., 1939): 452.

⁶ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 193-4.

⁷ *Ibid.*

society remained its appeal to the southern slaveholding society and its lack of “understanding that it was possible to have equality and cooperation between the races in the United States.”⁸

In a similar light, Christopher Phillips argued that the free African Americans played the most important role in the failure of the MSCS. Phillips portrays a unique and “quasi”- free black society in Baltimore City, who became quite hostile to the plan of colonization. Phillips pointed to the same distrust between the MSCS and many free African Americans. Furthermore, Phillips revealed that many African Americans would not support a colonization plan because they felt that the United States was their home. Consequently, these free African Americans preferred to focus their energy on the acquisition of equal rights in their home instead of immigrating to a foreign land. In fact, Phillips described “the controversy in Maryland over colonization, both in vigor with which whites pursued the scheme... reveals a sea of change in the demeanor of the city’s black population.”⁹ Through various tactics and even coercive measures, the black population of Baltimore waged a program against the colonization plan. The anti-colonization plan achieved such a high level of success that the Maryland Colonization Society abandoned any recruitment efforts in the Western section of Maryland.¹⁰

Historian Penelope Campbell published the most comprehensive work on the failure of the MSCS in 1971, which continued to explain the MSCS’s failure. Through the work, Campbell chronicled the activity of the MSCS in order to establish its own colony in Liberia, its inability to convince African Americans to immigrate, its legislative

⁸ Aaron Stopak. “The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*. 63, no.3 (Sept. 1968), 282, 298.

⁹ Christopher Phillips, “The Dear Name of Home: Resistance to Colonization in Antebellum Baltimore,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 91, No. 2, (Summer 1996), 183,198

¹⁰*Ibid.*

relationship with the Maryland General Assembly, and the general administration of the society. Campbell's study spanned the entire existence of the MSCS as an independent organization, and focused on the failure of the society to meet its own goals. Overall, Campbell argued that the decision for independent action not only doomed the activity of the MSCS but also the ACS. The competition generated between a national organization and its most supportive state did not allow the distribution of manpower and time to achieve either organization's goals.¹¹

Nevertheless, Campbell expressed that the MSCS does not receive due credit from historians in the slavery debate. First of all, Campbell disagreed with many commentators that the MSCS only sought to rid Maryland of African Americans. If this were true, the MSCS would not have spent so much time developing the colony at Cape Palmas. Furthermore, Campbell credited the MSCS leadership with the foresight to see the potential problems of emancipation and the provision for a refuge. Despite meager results, Campbell recognized the success of the colonial destination as a chance to escape the oppression and racism of America.¹² Recognizing the general failure of the MSCS in regards to colonization, this thesis looks to the social and political impact which the mere presence of MSCS has on the growing slavery debate in Maryland during the antebellum. In other words, the thesis analyzes the importance of the MSCS's rhetorical contribution to the Maryland antebellum slavery debate as a means to temper the discussion away from the controversial and sectional solutions of the North and the South.

This thesis argues that very need for the MSCS and its message developed out of the unique economic, social, and political environment of Maryland in antebellum period.

¹¹ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 241.

¹² *Ibid.*, 242-3.

One particular historian, Barbara Fields, has extensively developed the portrayal of Maryland as a bastion for moderate politics in the mid-19th century. Fields contended that Maryland, as a border state, possessed sectionalism within its own borders with aspects of the North and the South dominating certain regions. As a buffer zone between the Northern and Southern states, Maryland had sections which relied heavily on the slave plantation system of the South while Baltimore and the northern counties economically expanded based on the industrial and mercantile leanings of the South. Consequently, Maryland attempted to internally reconcile conflicts surrounding the free labor system of Baltimore and the northern counties against the slave labor system of Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore. This interplay required political ideologies, which developed moderate stances on the important issues of the day, especially regarding the permanence of slavery and the “problem” of a growing free African American population. As one such moderate political view, Fields recognized the colonization plan as something on which white Marylanders focused a disproportionate amount of time and money despite its continued failure.¹³ Despite this recognition, Fields does not continue her analysis regarding the effect that colonization and the MSCS, in particular, had on the moderation of many Marylanders’ view on slavery and the coming Civil War. In contrast, Fields quickly references the general colonization plan as another example of Maryland’s commitment to the political center in the antebellum period.¹⁴

Many other historians have referenced the moderating and accessible nature of the colonization plan. On a national level, historian Eric Burnin maintains that most of

¹³ Barbara Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 10, 88.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 10.

white America did not believe that the white and African American population would be able to coexist in the absence of slavery. Nevertheless, some white Americans did not believe in the institution of slavery and wanted it removed while the slaveholding population wanted legislation protections of its preservation. The colonization plan provided a plan which both sides could interpret to meet their purpose. Those Americans opposed to slavery interpreted colonization as a gradual end to slavery. Meanwhile, the proponents of slavery viewed colonization as a means to protect their chattel property through the removal of the free African American population. According to Burnin, the colonization plan allowed anti-slavery and pro-slavery whites to interpret the colonization activities as simultaneously protecting and gradually destroying slavery. Historian Anita Aidt Guy argued that the MSCS played this very role in the state of Maryland. As developed in Fields' work, Guy presented the sectional and diverse nature of Maryland within its own borders with "a commercial and non-slaveholding orientation in its northern and western regions and a rural and slave owning outlook in southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore." Consequently, the plan of colonization had widespread appeal within the state of Maryland because it catered to the fears of each portion of the population with regard to the permanence of slavery or the growing free African American population. Furthermore, Guy stated that the MSCS played a significant role in the continuance of the anti-slavery debate in Maryland because it provided a tolerable political program for those for and against slavery. Guy, however, developed her theory through an analysis of the political activity of the MSCS.¹⁵

¹⁵ Eric Burnin. *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: A History of the American Colonization Society*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 1. Anita Aidt Guy. *African American History and Culture: Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery, 1850-1864*. New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997), 251.

This study will continue the evaluation of the MSCS initiated by these scholars. Much of the aforementioned historical scholarship on the MSCS focused on the political activity of the MSCS with regard to the Maryland General Assembly or its failure to gain the trust of African Americans to immigrate to Africa. There is no doubt that this study will rely on this information. This thesis, however, will rely heavily upon the voice of the MSCS leadership as expressed through the *Maryland Colonization Journal*. The MSCS began circulating the journal as a quarterly publication in 1835. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* transformed into a monthly publication within the decade under the direction of Dr. James Hall. Consequently, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* worked as the organ of the antislavery/humanitarian leadership of the MSCS stationed primarily in Baltimore. It presented the public with original works from the MSCS leadership and other important articles from a variety of national and local publications. Standing on its own, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* demonstrated the very development of the MSCS as a moderating force in antebellum slavery debate in Maryland.

Understanding that the raw numbers of African American emigrants negate a numerical success, the thesis will focus on the appeal of the program through the *Maryland Colonization Journal* as a malleable political alliance for the diverse population of the Maryland electorate. Utilizing Census information and various secondary sources, the thesis will present a diversified population deeply concerned about slavery and the growing free African American population. Ultimately, the flexible nature of the colonization plan prevented the intrusion of divisive views on slavery in the state. In fact, the writers and editors of the *Maryland Colonization Journal* actively fought the intrusion of these sentiments through their publication. Without these sectional

sentiments, the state of Maryland could make a prolonged evaluation of slavery's role in the state and Maryland's own role in the Union. As a result of this prolonged and pragmatic approach, Maryland made the decision to remain with the Union during the Civil War.

By the end of August, 1831, widespread pandemonium engulfed the entire slave-owning population of the United States. With the appearance of a solar eclipse in February, 1831, Nat Turner, a rebellious slave in Virginia, decided that slavery had to come to an end. In late August, Nat Turner and his followers ravaged the countryside of Virginia leaving 60 slaveholders and their families dead over a span of 48 hours. Within three months, Virginia slaveholders removed close to 326 slaves from Southampton County alone. By New Years Day of 1832, Virginia committed 392 manumitted slaves to the care and transportation of the American Colonization Society.¹⁶ In reaction to the Nat Turner Rebellion, the Maryland General Assembly incorporated the MSCS (MSCS) and committed over \$200,000 to the cause of colonization. From the inception of the colonization movement, the white population of Maryland demonstrated a commitment to its ideas. As a result of its unique position as a border state and the fear emanating from the Nat Turner Rebellion, the Maryland General Assembly institutionalized colonization in 1832 as the official state solution to the ills of slavery and the free African American population. This commitment remained solid until the Civil War.¹⁷

The colonization solution to slavery developed in the post-Revolutionary period when many slaveholders contemplated its moral and economic sustainability. In 1787, Thomas Jefferson expressed in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* that slavery provided more problems to the country than benefits. In essence, Jefferson argued that slavery was economically inefficient, politically divisive, morally unsound, and held great potential for revolt amongst the slave population. Nevertheless, Jefferson recognized that

¹⁶ Nat Turner eventually was apprehended by October 30. He and 16 of his followers were executed for their actions. John Hope Franklin, Alfred A. Moss, Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 164-5.

¹⁷ Penelope Campbell, *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971): 11-12, 35-38.

unconditional emancipation of the slaves posed more problems than the maintenance and protection of slavery. He developed a plan of gradual emancipation that included the following aspects: the abolition of the slave trade; a ban on the western expansion of slavery; and the containment of slavery in the South. Jefferson believed that the plan would encourage slave-owners in the south to utilize the program of colonization to remove their slave population back to the African continent, and he was not alone in his views. The Revolutionary War grew out of commitments to the natural rights of man, the exaltation of human freedom, and the equality of the citizenry, all of which challenged the very existence of slavery. Consequently, many Americans citizens in the North and the South developed “an increasing awareness and anxiety that the institution was morally indefensible.”¹⁸

In post-Revolutionary times, the geographical domain of slavery changed drastically. As the focus of slavery shifted to the growing Cotton Belt away from the Mid-Atlantic, a racial identity crisis developed in many areas of the United States. Prior to the Revolutionary War, two-thirds of the entire slave population of the United States lived in the Chesapeake Region, while the Northern states retained ten percent of the slave population.¹⁹ As the nation progressed into the nineteenth century, these two areas would not retain their slave population at those numbers. As the Northern states practically eliminated slavery, Maryland and Virginia together sent over 300,000 slaves to the Lower South, participating in one of the largest population transfers in the history of the United States. Consequently, the dominance and prevalence of slave labor and

¹⁸ Eric Burnin. *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: A History of the American Colonization Society* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005) , 7-10. Richard L. Hall, *On Afric's Shore: A History of Maryland in Liberia, 1834-1857* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2003), 9.

¹⁹ Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 6.

culture transitioned to the lower South and the Gulf States. This transition of slave labor cemented the geographic divide in the country into the North and South, a division which dominated the economic, social, and political debate of the nation for the next century. Along the divide, the former areas of slave domination, known as the border-states, acted as the geographical and metaphorical conduit through which the country would answer the questions of slavery.²⁰

The movement of the slave power to the South coincided with increased manumissions of many slaves in the Upper South, Mid-Atlantic, and New England. Lasting Revolutionary sentiments cajoled many slave-owners in these areas to free or manumit their slaves through state laws, court decisions, and constitutional amendments that outlawed slavery. The development of a substantial free African American population in each of these regions presented its own set of issues to white society. As their numbers increased, white populations developed the sensibility that “[y]ou can manumit the slave, but you cannot make him a white man.”²¹ In fact, many early anti-slavery advocates such as Samuel Hopkins seriously doubted the practicality and possibility of integration. Many states codified this sentiment through the expressed denial of African American political rights and participation. Maryland had to rewrite its suffrage laws twice in 1793 and 1810 in order to obtain this exact goal.²² As many state legislatures restricted the political identity of free African Americans, their population numbers grew throughout the nation. With this increased presence, free African Americans recognized the need to attain a social and economic identity in the United

²⁰ Paul Goodman, *Of One Blood: Abolition and the Origins of Racial Equality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 16-17.

²¹ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 191-2.

²² Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 7-8.

States. Nevertheless, white society's commitment to the racial ideology of slavery severely restricted the development of that socioeconomic identity.²³ U.S. Senator from Maryland, Robert Harper Goodloe, and many like-minded white citizens expressed the opinion that this population could demonstrate an "industry so great and [their] conduct ever so correct... [however], we never could consent and they never could hope, to secure two races placed on footing of perfect equality with each other."²⁴ In other words, much of white society did not believe that the United States provided any room for the advancement or achievement of a free African American population.

The scattered concern about the growing free African Americans population and the entire slave labor system motivated the development of the American Colonization Society by 1816. The movement, however, would need its original proponents to motivate the minds and actions of the larger population. As early as 1815, Robert Finley, a Methodist Minister in New Jersey, preached the virtues of colonization from his pulpit. Finley believed that colonization allowed white Americans to right the wrongs of their forefathers and fulfill God's intention to return African Americans to their homeland.²⁵ Upper South white slaveholders like President James Monroe, Henry Clay, Charles Fenton Mercer, Francis Scott Key, Robert Goodloe Harper, Henry Clay, and Dr. E.B. Caldwell took a more pragmatic approach to their support of colonization. Many like-

²³ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 191-2. Robert Goodloe Harper, *Letter From Gen. Harper, of Maryland, to Elias B. Caldwell, Esq., Secretary of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour, in the United States with their Consent*. (Baltimore: Printed for E.J. Cole by R.J. Matchett, 1818), 8-9. Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919), 31. One major problem addressed more in depth later remains the denial of social, economic, and political opportunities to free African Americans. In addition, the challenge that free African Americans posed to the very justification and existence of slavery. Penelope Campbell, *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831-1857* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 17-18.

²⁴Robert Goodloe Harper, *Letter From Gen. Harper, of Maryland, to Elias B. Caldwell, Esq., Secretary of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour, in the United States with their Consent*. (Baltimore: Printed for E.J. Cole by R.J. Matchett, 1818), 7. .

²⁵ Hall, *On Africa's Shore*, 11. Campbell, *Maryland In Africa*, 7-8.

minded men of the Upper South determined three possible paths to the issue of free African Americans and the persistence of slave labor. The possibilities included the amalgamation of the races, the physical separation of the races, or a race war. For the aforementioned individuals and many like-minded men, physical separation remained the only legitimate, practical, and humanitarian solution. In order to be successful, these men, reflecting the thoughts of Thomas Jefferson, paired colonization with a gradual and a structured emancipation plan. The colonization plan allowed whites to combine their growing awareness of the immoral conception of slavery with a continued perception of black inferiority. For those not moved by moral reflection, the plan removed the perceived threat of the free African American population. Nevertheless, many people still maintained that colonization relied on the unlikely supposition that African Americans would be able to support themselves. In order to garner legitimate support, the supporters of colonization required some successful examples of colonization.²⁶

Two major developments helped to convince many white doubters of a legitimate colonization plan for the United States. White people's perceived problem with free black population did not exist only in the United States. In Great Britain, the Sierra Leone Company developed in response to the large population of blacks in London. Many of these black residents immigrated to London following their allegiance to the British Army in the Revolutionary War. This company hoped to colonize much if not all of this population out of London. The Sierra Leone Company colonized Sierra Leone

²⁶ Physical separation remained the only legitimate solution because racial amalgamation was an insulting idea to much of the contemporary population and a race war would inflict too much physical harm on the entire population. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 199-200. Stephen T. Whitman, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early Maryland* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 148-150.

and transplanted a portion of the London black population to Africa by 1810.²⁷ Despite the paltry success of Great Britain's Sierra Leone Company, a free African American merchant and civil rights activist named Paul Cuffee led an expedition of free African Americans to Sierra Leone in 1816. Paul Cuffee achieved financial freedom as a Massachusetts merchant; however, he decided to choose complete independence in Sierra Leone over his political and social oppression in the United States. Although he achieved limited success in his colonization endeavor, he remained a revered pioneer of the colonization movement.²⁸ As late as 1857, one esteemed African American proponent of colonization described him as a pioneer whose "voyage helped to set the tone for the establishment of the American Colonization Society a few months later."²⁹

Both incidents demanded the attention of influential white intellectuals in the early part of the nineteenth century and eventually led to an organized political movement. On December 21, 1816, the first meeting of the American Colonization Society took place in Washington, D.C. in the hall of the House of Representatives.³⁰ This first gathering proved vital for the overall direction of the American Colonization Society. At various points, the issue of slavery engaged the members, who represented various allegiances to slavery. Robert Finley, the Methodist preacher of New Jersey and an original proponent of colonization, proposed that the work of colonization should result in the gradual abolition of slavery throughout the United States. In contrast, John

²⁷ Hall, *On Afric's Shore*, 10.

²⁸ Frankie Hutton, "Economic Considerations in the American Colonization Society's Early Effort to Emigrate Free Blacks to Liberia, 1818-1836," *The Journal of Negro History*, 68 (Autumn 1983): 376. Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 42.

²⁹ Although it is not authored, it is most likely the work of Dr. James Hall, the editor of the *Maryland Colonization Society* "Colonization Historical," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 9 No. 7 (December 1857): 108.

³⁰ The Founding Members of the American Colonization society included Francis Scott Key, Robert Finley, Elias B. Caldwell, Bushrod Washington, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, William Crawford, Ferdinando Fairfax, John Taylor, and John Randolph. Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 13-14.

Randolph, a Congressman from Virginia, expressed the need for colonization to strengthen slavery where it already existed. According to Randolph, the removal of the free African American population eradicated this population's bad influence on the current slaves. In every instance, the attending membership of the American Colonization Society sidestepped the issue of slavery altogether. Encouraged by Henry Clay, the Great Compromiser and Congressman of Kentucky, the American Colonization Society chose to ignore the issue, which developed as a double-edged sword for the society.³¹ Based on this compromise, the American Colonization Society demonstrated an "extraordinary chameleon-like character."³² The society's silence on slavery allowed for localized interpretation of their purpose to suit the population. In essence, Southerners could interpret the colonization plan as a means to secure slavery while Northerners looked to colonization as a logical and gradual means to emancipation. Nevertheless, this very flexibility would impede a continuous flow of financial contribution to the cause and would prove fatal to a legitimate national identity.³³

Despite the heated discussions concerning its position on the issue of slavery, the American Colonization Society (ACS) immediately realized that money remained the most important issue of the day. Initially, the society focused on the development of support within the political elite of Washington. Although the ACS gained the verbal commitment of many, it did not garner the financial support needed to establish a distant colony in order to transport thousands of former slaves. Shortly after its initial attempts

³¹ Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 14.

³² Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 18.

³³ Hutton argues that the flexibility of the American Colonization Society attracted a lot of support for its logical aspects. However, the lack of a firm position on slavery removed it from partisan politics. This very removal cut the ACS off from the large scale financial backing of one of the major political parties. Frankie Hutton, "Economic Considerations in the American Colonization Society's Early Effort to Emigrate Free Blacks to Liberia, 1816-1836," *The Journal of Negro History*, 68 (Autumn, 1983), 378.

in Washington, the ACS spawned a hierarchical system of organization with the purpose of increasing financial support through donations. The ACS developed state-level agencies which delegated powers of recruitment and fundraising to county-level auxiliaries.³⁴ In many of these areas, the ACS established women's auxiliaries which provided many vital functions for the initial development of the colonization. The women's auxiliaries remained popular because they provided a means of covert and appropriate political activity for many Southern women. These women, such as Mary Blackford of Virginia, viewed slavery as a destructive force because it "undermined the exercise of virtue of whites and blacks alike."³⁵ Furthermore, many white women's attempts to maintain slave order and obedience created "state of protracted domestic warfare," especially with the male slaves.³⁶ These white women believed that colonization's removal of slavery and its ill-effects, paired with the evangelical and missionary aspects of the movement, provided a legitimate engine for female political activity in the South. Consequently, they became involved with the ACS through outright donations to the colonization movement, designations to the ACS in their wills, or the provision manumitted slaves for emigration. Both Eleanor Potts and Henrietta Balton of Maryland demonstrated the support of Maryland women through donations made through their church and estates to their local colonization societies. Most importantly, the women of the ACS auxiliaries provided a consistent means through which the ACS would raise funds, while provoking many languishing male auxiliaries to

³⁴ Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 16-17. Hutton, 377-378. Prior to 1832, the Maryland General Assembly committed yearly contributions of \$1,000 a year. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 10-11.

³⁵ Elizabeth R. Varon. *We Mean to Be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998): 49-50.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

action. With its work to develop an infrastructure, the ACS demonstrated an initial multiregional and cross gender appeal as a solution to the troubling issue of slavery.³⁷

In response, white supporters in Maryland, especially Baltimore, demonstrated their commitment to the ideals of colonization. The ACS created one of the first six auxiliaries in Baltimore, Maryland in 1817. From its inception, the Baltimore chapter was very active in the financial development of the ACS. Furthermore, the Baltimore and Maryland auxiliaries persuaded the Maryland legislature to endorse the colonization plan by 1817. In the subsequent decade, these auxiliaries convinced the Maryland General Assembly to financially commit to the colonization cause of the ACS. The Maryland auxiliary quickly became the largest and wealthiest state society in the country through largely personal financial commitments of donors and the support of the state's legislature. Most important, the Maryland auxiliary provided some of the most enthusiastic and influential members of the ACS, including, Francis Scott Key and Robert H. Goldsborough. From the inception of the colonization movement, Maryland and Baltimore white intellectuals demonstrated a continued zeal for the advancement of

³⁷ Mary Blackford remained a strong opponent of slavery in the antebellum era, penning the *Notes Illustrative of the Wrongs of Slavery* which Elizabeth R. Varon describes as the “most thoroughgoing attack on slavery penned by a white Southerner in the antebellum era” aside from the exiled Grimke sisters. Mary Blackford actually developed the Fredericksburg and Flammouth Female Auxiliary in 1829. As we will see in the foregoing pages, these female auxiliary became quite vocal around the time of the Nat Turner Rebellion. Nevertheless, many of these auxiliaries began to focus on the education aspects of colonization as the overall/national plan lost steam. Mary Blackford's auxiliary eventually became the Ladies Society of Fredericksburg and Falmouth, for the Promotion of Female Education in Africa, demonstrating a national trend in the late 1830s. Elizabeth R. Varon. *We Mean to Be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998): 44, 46, 49, 51, 54. The donations of these two women were made to the Maryland State Colonization Society. Anita Ait Gu. *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery, 1850-1864* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997), 264-5.

the plan. Maryland's auxiliaries aforementioned loyalty and zeal for colonization owed much to the geographic position of Maryland as a border state.³⁸

Maryland remained a border state with southern tendencies. Other border states, including Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky lacked a unified Southern consciousness during the antebellum period, while providing the economic, political, and social transitional ground between the opposing ideologies of the North and the South. Consequently, many border-states did not rely on the tradition southern slave plantation economy. In contrast, these states promoted many Northern economic goals and some aspects of the free labor system. Slavery's lack of economic necessity challenged its very necessity in the border states, while encouraging the moral challenge to slavery which developed out of the Revolutionary War. As the century progressed, the border-states experienced increasing emancipation sentiments as the free labor systems developed. Nevertheless, the political dominance of slaveholders created protective legislation for slavery, while the general fear of the free African American population and the social enforcement provided by slavery continued its existence in border states. Maryland's experience as a border state mimicked the unique environment of the borders states through its own economically motivated sectionalism.³⁹

³⁸ Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 16-17. Hutton, 377-378. Prior to 1832, the Maryland General Assembly committed yearly contributions of \$1,000 a year. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 10-11.

³⁹ Avery Craven, "Coming of the War Between the States: An Interpretation," *The Journal of Southern History*, 2 (August 1936): 303. Barbara Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), xii. Richard Morris, "The Measure of Bondage in the Slave States," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 41 (September 1854), 219. Many Americans believed that slavery was not compatible with the aims of the Revolutionary; including, the natural rights of man, the exaltation of human freedom, and the egalitarianism of evangelical Christianity. Eric Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution: A History of the American Colonization Society* (Gainesville, FL : University of Florida Press, 2005), 4-5. Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 269. Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: The New York Press, 1974), 184-185.

By the time of the secession crisis of the mid-nineteenth century, Maryland had developed into one of the most important border-states between the North and the South. Simultaneously, Maryland experienced over 70 years of sectional tension within the state. These sectional issues developed out of predominant economic and resulting social and political factors set in motion during the Revolutionary War. Due to its geographic location and its developing economic, social, and political tension, Maryland developed four distinct sectional regions within the state. The city of Baltimore had virtually integrated into the “industrializing economy of the North.”⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the Northwestern counties of Maryland maintained such close economic ties to Baltimore through its grain production in a virtual free labor system that some historians neglect to make a distinction between the city and these counties. The Eastern Shore and Southern Maryland preserved much of the southern ties of Maryland through an agriculturally based economy dependent on slave labor. The divergent economic activities of these regions created the conflicting social and political aspirations of each region, especially concerning slavery.⁴¹ The sectional tensions within Maryland provided the perfect setting for a colonization movement which “could, at the same time appeal for support to the piety and benevolence of the North and, and to the prejudices and sordid interest of the South.”⁴²

⁴⁰ Frank Towers, “Secession in an Urban Context: Municipal Reform and the Coming of the Civil War in Baltimore,” in *From Mobtown to Charm City: New Perspectives on Baltimore’s Past*. Jessica Elfenbein, John R. Breihan, Thomas L. Hollowak eds. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002): 93.

⁴¹ Wright only divides the state into three sections; southern counties, eastern shore, and northwestern counties. William Wright. *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States*. (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson Press, 1973), 21. Charles Branch Clark *Politics in Maryland during the Civil War* (Chestertown, Md.: 1952), 6.

⁴² Augustus Washington, “African Colonization: By a Man of Color (From the Christian Statesman),” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851): 52.

Any analysis of the internal sectional tensions of Maryland has to begin with the northern economic aspirations of Baltimore. Baltimore possessed a unique position as a bustling commercial port city and the industrial center of the state. Its economy developed initially as a result of the demand for wheat during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Baltimore's unique geography provided a naturally protected harbor on the Chesapeake Bay with close proximity to the highly productive grain fields of the Mid-Atlantic. The city supplemented the commercial grain trade through increased trade with the West Indies. As the commercial demand for American wheat died out in Europe, Baltimore learned to expand its economic base into the industrial realms. From 1840 to 1860, Baltimore increased its industrial output threefold. This allowed Baltimore to employ over a half of the industrial workers of the state. This industrial complex combined with a rapid increase in population elevated Baltimore to the status as the most industrial city of the South and the 3rd largest city in the United States. The industrial, mercantile, and manufacturing ties to the North appeared to align Baltimore's economic and political future with the North.⁴³

According to historian William Wright, Baltimore City and the northwestern counties retained such close economic ties that there was no need to make a distinction between the sections. Both areas enjoyed a strong industrial base. While Baltimore produced 51 percent of the manufactured goods of the state in 1860, the northwestern counties produced 41 percent. Nevertheless, the true connection between the northwestern counties and Baltimore remained its agricultural production. The agricultural focus of this region remained grain and other food items. The seasonal

⁴³ Jean H. Baker. *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1973), 8-12. Barbara Fields. *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground* (New Haven: Yale Historical Publication, 1985) 41-43.

nature of the grain harvest made slavery impractical for the Northwestern Counties. Consequently, this fertile region employed a mechanized system that produced over half the state's wheat and one third of its corn and oats. The quantity and quality of the production of this region created a constant flow and a high demand of its agriculture. Baltimore acted as the main center of grain exportation for this region. Consequently, Baltimore and the northwestern counties developed a stable and viable economic relationship without a reliance on the slave system. This economic relationship would create the line upon which Maryland experienced its own sectional problems.⁴⁴

The social make-up of these two regions created a further distinction from the other sections of Maryland. The economic programs of both these areas required a great population increase. In 1840, Baltimore already possessed great diversity, and the population represented over twenty five percent of the total Maryland population. Baltimore consisted of over 100,000 whites along with 21,453 free African Americans and 7,595 slaves within the city. By 1860, the total free white population of Baltimore had increased by almost 80,000 people. Much of the population increase was due to immigration. By 1860, Baltimore City possessed a population of 52,415 foreign-born white persons. This foreign element created a heterogeneous populace in these two sections, accounting for 24 percent of the total population in the city while comprising over 28 percent of the free white population. The foreign immigrants consisted of German and Irish immigrants who entered Maryland through Pennsylvania or Baltimore.

⁴⁴ Wright only divides the state into three sections; southern counties, eastern shore, and northwestern counties. William Wright. *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States* (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson Press, 1973), 21. Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 8. The data set included "Percentage of Total Farm Value," Percentage of Manufacturing Value." U.S. Census Bureau, "The 1860 Census," *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 5/25/2007].

These immigrants did not have any ties to the slave system of the South nor its social or political ramifications. Furthermore, the immigrant's economic prosperity depended on the labor systems and economic goals of the North. As the 19th century pushed toward Civil War, Baltimore and the northwestern Counties created a strong and lasting social and economic bond to the North.⁴⁵

Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore followed a different economic program in the 19th century. These two areas relied heavily on agricultural endeavors with a virtual ignorance of industrial development. In 1860, these two regions combined accounted for only eight percent of the total manufacturing output of the state. The lack of industrial growth sustained a relatively homogenous population and a stagnant economy. The southern counties relied heavily on the marriage between slave labor and tobacco production. By 1860, southern counties upheld the traditional plantation system of the South with almost a quarter of the slaveholders owning more than 20 slaves. Given such large slaveholdings, whites of this region represented only 7.4% of the total white population of the state. Furthermore, the white population of this region remained stagnant for much of the antebellum period. While owning 53 percent of the total slave population of Maryland, this region provided the last remaining environment for the

⁴⁵In the 1840 census, the report did not differ between Baltimore County and City. Consequently, the increase in the free white population was most likely larger than almost 80,000. The data set included "Total Free Whites, Total Free Colored Persons, Total Slaves, Total Population." U.S. Census Bureau, "The 1840 Census," *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 12/03/2006]. Carleton Beals. *Brass Knuckle Crusade* (New York: Hasting House Publishers, 1960), 174. The Census data for 1860 only makes the distinction at foreign born free white persons. It does not further categorize the persons into nationalities. The total population of Baltimore at the time was 212,418 persons and the free white population equaled 184,520. The data set included "Total Population, Total Free Population, Total White Persons, Aggr. Free Colored Persons, Total Native Born White Persons, Total Foreign Born White Persons." U.S. Census Bureau, "The 1850 Census," *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. . [Accessed 12/03/2006]. The Maryland State Government actually encouraged the immigration of these German immigrants into the state. Charles Branch Clark *Politics in Maryland during the Civil War* (Chestertown, Md.: 1952), 6.

economic development of slavery. The southern counties, thus, remained an unchanged socio-economic area since the beginning of the state.

The Eastern Shore, however, experienced a transition in its economic organization. Even though it did not abandon slavery, the Eastern Shore transitioned its agriculture away from tobacco and the plantation system of Southern Maryland. Only 3 percent of the slaveholders in the Eastern Shore counties maintained slaveholdings above 20 slaves. However, the Eastern Shore did maintain 29 percent of the total slave population of the state. The Chesapeake Bay isolated the Eastern Shore from the rest of the state, and the emergence of Baltimore prevented a growth of manufacturing or commerce in the area. Agriculture continued to rule the economy; however, it consisted mainly of grains, fruits and vegetables produced by antiquated techniques and a reliance on slave labor. Consequently, the Eastern Shore possessed only 25 percent of Maryland's total value of farm land by 1860.⁴⁶ Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore possessed different agricultural systems. However, the historical connection of tobacco production, the reliance on agriculture and slavery, and the maintenance of a homogenous society aligned the interests of the two regions to the economic, social, and political goals of the South.⁴⁷

Despite the various economies of the state, slavery persisted in every one of the Maryland sections. The census data reveal that 93 percent of slaveholders in Maryland owned fewer than 20 slaves. Furthermore, the total slave population of the state, 87,189, virtually equaled the free colored population of the state, 83,942. Maryland had twice

⁴⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, "The 1860 Census," *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 5/25/2007]. Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 8.

⁴⁷ Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States*, 21.

the number of slave manumissions of any other state in the United States. The largest percentages of the free African American populations lived in Baltimore City and the Eastern Shore.⁴⁸ With a substantial slave population and an ever-expanding free African American population, whites required social control over the entire African American population. Even in Baltimore, slavery allowed white Baltimoreans to perceive that they maintained control over both the slaves and free African Americans living in the city.⁴⁹

The disproportionately small white population of Southern Maryland demonstrates the utility of slavery as a social control. Any form of emancipation placed the southern white population of Maryland at a decided disadvantage and perceived peril. Through the slave system, the minority white population controlled both the slave and free African American population. To many slaveholders, the slave system remained a benevolent system through which the white population controlled and developed an inferior and barbaric race through lessons of hard work and religion. Furthermore, the very existence of the system demonstrated the possible punishment for misbehavior of

⁴⁸U.S. Census Bureau, "The 1860 Census," *Historical Census Browser*.(University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 5/25/2007]. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity*, 11.

⁴⁹ Barbara Fields maintains that "the slave-economy had very little to do with the rise of Baltimore." Economic success depended on the expansion of commercial and industrial interests which utilized an irregular demand for labor unsuitable for slavery. The permanency of slave ownership was not compatible with the industrial labor needs of Baltimore. Fields does not deny the existence slave labor in some industrial capacity in Baltimore. However, Fields categorizes the occurrence as an individual occurrence. In other words, individual slaves could be important in isolated cases, however, the system of slavery was not vital to the economic development of Baltimore. Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery on the Middle Ground: Maryland during the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 42-54.. Christopher Phillips describes the large free African American community developed out of an original community of "quasi free" slaves. Christopher Phillips. *Freedom's Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790-1860* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 34-35. These manumitted slaves migrated into Baltimore City. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity*, 11. . Philips, *Freedom Port*, 34-35. In fact, the existence of free African Americans in Baltimore led to open attempts of whites to remove the African Americans from the city. By the 1850, Baltimore had participated in the development of a colonization program for free African Americans. Between 1840 and 1850, the 20 percent increase in the free African American population demonstrated the failure of the program. Furthermore, the racial fears of the population and the failure of colonization demonstrated to many whites in Maryland that the only means of control was a return to slavery or expulsion from the state. Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 52

the free African American population. Through the maintenance of the slave system, the minority white population preserved their economic and social systems. The whole state benefitted from the existence of slavery. With slavery intact, free African Americans always lived in fear of a return to slavery.⁵⁰

Some whites in Baltimore and the northwestern counties recognized the potential ills of slavery. These abolitionists pointed to its hindrance of economic development, the devolution and laziness of the “master race,” and the relative stagnant economies of the Southern and Eastern Shore counties. Nevertheless, they maintained racist ideals about the nature and potential of African Americans, slave or free, and would not support the assimilation the former slave labor into contributing members of the society. Many antislavery people feared that this integration would have an irreversible harmful effect on society. In their eyes, free African Americans did not possess the ability to develop as contributing members of Maryland’s society. Consequently, any discussion about the end of the slave system in Maryland would need a simultaneous movement to remove the entire African American population from the state. This remained a typical stance of most Americans in the early nineteenth century.⁵¹

Despite the growth of pro-industrial sentiment in Maryland, the slaveholders retained the political power of Maryland. This would prevent any legitimate movement to completely abolish slavery in its traditional sense. The results of the 1851 state constitutional convention demonstrated the maintenance of the Southern political power.

⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, “The 1860 Census,” *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 5/25/2007]. Branch, *Politics in Maryland During the Civil War*, 13. Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 11. Charles Wagandt Lewis, *The Mighty Revolution: Negro Emancipation in Maryland, 1862 - 1863* (Baltimore : The Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), 1-2. Whitman T. Stephen, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland* (Lexington: University of Kentucky, 1997), 157.

⁵¹ Gu, *Maryland’s Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 50-51.

Despite the positive growth of voting population in Baltimore and the Northwestern counties, these regions remained unrepresented in the state government. Consequently, the election result the Constitutional Convention of 1851 broke along sectional, not political allegiances. Baltimore and the northwestern counties increased their representation; however, the delegates of these areas continued to represent twice the number of people as the southern representatives in 1860. Furthermore, the slaveholding counties retained a virtual veto on any legislation or gubernatorial choice of the state. Since abolition required a unanimous vote according to the Constitution, this developed a problem for any antislavery advocate. As the decade continued, the northwestern section of the state experienced great economic development while the Southern counties jealousy clung to slavery. With the political power virtually in the hands of these slaveholding counties, abolition of the slave system became a virtual impossibility in Maryland prior to the Civil War.⁵²

With consistently high manumission numbers, slavery's total abolition remained a legitimate concern for the slaveholders of Maryland. The slave population in Maryland reached its zenith in 1810 and steadily declined over the next 50 years by 21%. The decline in the slave population occurred mostly through manumissions and interstate sale further south. Manumissions created a different problem for the white population of Maryland.⁵³ By 1860, Maryland possessed the largest free African American population in the United States. *The Maryland Colonization Journal* recognized the potential

⁵² Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 3-5. Wagant, *The Mighty Revolution*, 3-6. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 20-1.

⁵³ Manumissions developed out of the idea of a term slave. As a means of motivation and control, the master established a conditional agreement with the slave that their service existed for a term of time. After the term of service, the slave achieved freedom. Manumission also occurred through deed, in which the slave might achieve freedom in the death of their master. The state established age limits on manumissions in order to prevent the burden of a slave on society. Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 32, 36-7.

problem for the state in 1852. -Since the 1810 census, the author demonstrated that the free African American population increased ninefold while the white population only doubled in Maryland. At those rates, the author feared for a dominant free African American population in the foreseeable future.⁵⁴ The ever increasing free population would become a burden to the white population due its lack of economically viable skills and inherent inferiorities. Consequently, many Marylanders began to believe that emancipation on any level required the exportation of those emancipated.⁵⁵

By 1860, Maryland remained an oddity in the United States. The state experienced extreme economic sectionalism based on the growing reliance of a free labor system over a slave system. The emergence of the free labor system translated into different political and social goals of those sections. Despite the development of abolitionists' feelings, slavery persisted in Maryland as an institution of social control over the entire African American population, free or slave. Furthermore, the Southern counties retained political control over the state and any potential plan of complete emancipation. Individual slaveholders, however, undermined the system through the manumission of unprecedented numbers of slaves creating the problem of the largest free African American population in the United States. Consequently, Maryland needed a moderate political ideology which each section and individual could interpret for its own use.⁵⁶ Colonization provided such a program because it allowed both the gradual emancipation of the slaves while securing the property of those that chose to keep them.

⁵⁴ "Important Documents – Report and Bill: The Committee on the Colored Population of Maryland, submit the following report, and the Accompanying Bill," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 16 No. 16 (September 1852): 242.

⁵⁵ Whitman, *The Price of Freedom*, 140-2.

⁵⁶ Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919): 83.

Maryland's unique position in the antebellum period produced the perfect setting in which the Colonization ideology flourished. This unique environment motivated its financial and political commitment to the general cause of the American Colonization Society from its inception. Nevertheless, the Maryland auxiliary decided on independent action by the early 1830s due to the American Colonization Society's relative lack of success and the absence of sound financial management.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Aaron Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 63 No. 3 (September, 1968), 275.

“Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better”: The Failure of the American Colonization Society, Nat Turner, and the Road to Independent Action

The American Colonization Society initially demonstrated a potential for growth and success. The basic plan of the American Colonization Society required the development of a distant colony in Africa and the transportation of large numbers of former and freed African Americans to that colony. The American Colonization Society understood that such a plan required a large amount of funding. Consequently, the ACS attempted but failed to convince the federal government to directly fund the program, despite the support of President James Monroe. The ACS, however, did achieve certain successes through the interpretation of established laws to gain indirect funds from the federal government. The Slave Trade Act of 1819 provided one such example. One section of the law allowed the president to make accommodations for captured slaves found as contraband on merchant ships. Through a loose interpretation of this section, President Monroe conferred \$100,000 to the American Colonization Society in order to purchase land for a colony. Consequently, the United States purchased a strip of land for on the West Coast of Africa with the purpose of returning captured slaves to Africa. In actuality, President Monroe and the American Colonization Society established the colony of Liberia as the future destination for the African American population, free or slave, in the United States. The United States completely financed the first vital step of any colonization plan; the establishment of the colony.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 14-15. Charles Fenton Mercer, a member of the ACS actually introduced the The Slave Trade Act of 1819 based on a memorial from the Board of Managers of the ACS. The ACS enacted the law for the very purpose of developing a slush fund under the auspices of attacking the illegal West African slave trade. Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 54. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 7-8.

Under Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, the American Colonization Society enjoyed a time of financial stability and superficial success. Through the 1820s, the ACS enjoyed over \$264,000 in financial support. Furthermore, the ACS convinced the initial group of emigrants to make the journey to Liberia. Despite the initial economic and environmental hardships of the first group, the ACS remained confident in its plan and its appeal to the free African American population throughout the country. A small portion of free African Americans began to support colonization as the answer to the economic, political, and social problems which they encountered in daily American life. Initially, the ACS seemingly appealed to the politically-wise and economically-astute free African American population of the South. In fact, the majority of emigrants prior to 1827 included this population group, who would contribute to the organization and direction of the colony for years to come. With financial backing of the federal government, “many ACS supporters assumed that colonization was an integral component of the American system.”⁵⁹ Consequently, many state rights advocates, including future President Andrew Jackson, depicted the colonization program as part of a dangerously powerful and intrusive federal government. This association proved fatal to the financial stability of the ACS with the subsequent election of Andrew Jackson.⁶⁰

The election of Andrew Jackson cut off federal funding and exposed the ACS to the financial pitfalls of their organization. Immediately, Andrew Jackson decided that the work of ACS should rely upon the private donations and appropriations from state

⁵⁹ Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 17-18.

⁶⁰ The American System was a program in the early 1830s which hoped to establish programs of national economic development that included protective tariffs, a national bank, and federally funded roads, canals, and other internal improvements. Henry Clay, Congressman from Kentucky, was among the supporters of the American System. The American System did not have widespread appeal, especially amongst states rights advocates who Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 17-18. Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 89 -90.

legislatures. Notwithstanding, President Jackson argued that the ACS's success did not merit the federal funding which it received. President Jackson discovered that only a small fraction of the emigrants to the colony were rescued slaves. In Jackson's eyes, the government funded the ACS with \$264,000 for the expressed purpose of preventing the African Slave Trade, not the colonization of slaves from the United States. This money produced only 260 Africans rescued from slaver traders. President Jackson believed that the ACS incorrectly used the funds to colonize free African Americans and freed slaves. Consequently, he withdrew all federal funding and continued to block any legislative attempts with vetoes and pocket vetoes over the entirety of his presidency. The American Colonization Society lost all hope for federal funding with the block of Congressman Henry Clay's Distribution Bill in 1832.⁶¹

During this period of financial abandonment, the American Colonization Society lost any appeal amongst its target audience, the political active free African American population. The ACS maintained its benevolent purpose to aid "a class of society generally occupied in the most menial and unproductive offices, and already sufficiently numerous to render even unemployment not always attainable."⁶² Currently interpreting this expressed goal, some free African Americans held that "colonization was less an

⁶¹ The distribution bill sought to distribute the earnings of the sale of western lands amongst the states with the strong suggestion that the states use the funds for a gradual emancipation and colonization purpose. Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 18, 22-3. Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 22. In 1824 and 1828, the members of the ACS attempted to gain direct federal funding. In 1824, Ohio, Connecticut, and New Jersey state legislatures supported the financial support. The Southern portion of Congress denounced the attempt and opposed the use of federal funds for any colonization proposal. In 1828, the issue became the partisan debate between Clay and Jackson as described above. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 10.

⁶² Thomas Hodgkin, *An Inquiry into the Merits of the American Colonization Society and A Reply to Charges Brought Against it with an Account of the British African Colonization Society* (London: J&A Arch., Cornhill: Harvey A. Darton, Grace Church Street; Edmund Fry, Houndsdorch; and S. Highley, 32 Fleet Street, 1833), 5.

opportunity presented to them than a judgment placed upon them.”⁶³ Other free African Americans interpreted the society as a deportation company run by large slaveowners who wanted to secure their chattel property. In the 1820s, the ACS’s change in leadership confirmed many of these fears as the southern members, who mostly owned slaves, gained control. Furthermore, the initial reports from the first expedition of colonists returned grim reports of economic hardship, appalling death rates, and internecine warfare. In the new environment of Liberia, 29 percent of the first expedition died from new diseases alone. With each additional report, the ACS found it more difficult to explain the failures as part of the natural process of colonization. With each subsequent expedition group, the composition of emigrants demonstrated an alarming change to the ACS. In the 1820s, a large majority of the emigrants consisted of free African American families. These were families who were looking to settle and grow the colony. By the 1830s, the emigration groups consisted largely of manumitted slaves from large estates. This change in the composition demonstrated the growing reluctance of free African Americans about colonization. In other words, the ACS’ targeted group no longer wanted to emigrate.⁶⁴

As the educated African American population lost faith in the ACS, they began to attack the very goals and purposes of the society. The son of a southern slave and free African American woman published one of the most, if not most influential, attack on the American Colonization Society in September of 1829. David Walker’s *Appeal to the Coloured [sic] Citizens of the World* did not focus solely on the activities and goals of the

⁶³ Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 57.

⁶⁴ Much of the rhetoric flowing from the ACS involved a focus on the inferiority of African Americans and the need to remove the black element from society. Floyd J. Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Emigration and Colonization, 1787 -1863* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975): 54. Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 57.

ACS. Nevertheless, Walker allotted his last and longest section of the treatise on the colonization plan entitled “Our Wretchedness in Consequence of the Colonizing Scheme.” Walker echoed many of the same concerns that other free African Americans felt about the colonization plan; the need for equality in the United States not in Africa; the absurd notion that uneducated former slaves would Christianize and civilize Africa; and the need to recognize and reward African Americans for their vital contribution to America’s financial and political greatness.⁶⁵ In addition to these concerns, Walker wrote with a great intensity about two other subjects that made his book quite incendiary.⁶⁶

Walker viewed the actions of the ACS not as a benevolent society with the goal to eventually eradicate slavery. In contrast, Walker believed that the ACS worked to strengthen the slave system as it existed. Through the removal of the free African American population to Liberia, the ACS worked to “fix a plan to get those of the coloured [sic] people, who are said to be free, away from among those of our brethren who they unjustly hold in bondage, so that they may be enabled to keep them more secure in ignorance and wretchedness.”⁶⁷ In essence, Walker claimed that no African Americans could trust the ACS, and all should remain in the United States to claim their economic, social, and political freedom in this country. According to Walker, this would not be difficult. Walker extolled that “there is a day fast approaching, when (unless, there

⁶⁵ David Walker, *Appeal, In Four Articles; Together with A Preamble to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in particular, and very expressly, to those in the United States of America*, ed. Charles M. Wiltse (New York: American Century Series, Hill and Wang, 1965):45-50.

⁶⁶ Many commentators throughout the South, especially Virginia, believed that Walker’s book played a central and vital role in the development of the Nat Turner Rebellion which occurred in Southampton, Virginia on August 21, 1831. Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 48.

⁶⁷ Walker was not shy about attacking the individual members of the ACS in the process. Walker identified Henry Clay as a hypocrite because of his tumultuous and well documented rise from poverty and obscurity. Walker believed that Clay of all people should recognize the better alternative for African Americans in a lot similar to his. In addition, he identify Caldwell as falsifying the goals of the ACS. He believed that Caldwell was concerned only about the protection of his chattel property. Walker, *Appeal*, 46,47,52.

is a universal repentance on the part of the whites, which will scarcely take place, they have got to be so hardened in consequence of our blood, and so wise in their own conceit.)”⁶⁸ In other words, the United States needed to abolish slavery and create equality or face the wrath of God. Consequently, Walker’s *Appeal* remained a thorn in the side of the ACS because his book expressly informed Africans to not trust in the ACS and to be strong in the United States for God’s wrath would change their situation if they country did not change its own way.

In the same mode as Walker, many free African Americans and slaves questioned the validity of the ACS’s purpose and goals. Members of African American community refused conditional manumissions, demanded information from actual African American emigrants, importuned the release of their families as contingency of their emigration, and changed their minds about their commitment. Most importantly, the lack of any African American leadership in a benevolent society for African Americans troubled many African American leaders. Consequently, African American intellectuals, such as Samuel E. Cornish and William Watkins, openly questioned the purpose of the American Colonization society. By 1830, Cornish began to publish *The Rights of All*, an anti-slavery newspaper, which discouraged any further reliance on colonization schemes run by white people. If African Americans would emigrate, Cornish and other black leaders believed that African Americans should independently organize the plan. Consequently, the colonization plan of the ACS never gained the support of the predominant African American mind after 1830.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 49.

⁶⁹ Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 16-8. Samuel Cornish initially questioned the purpose of the ACS through the *Freedom’s Journal*. Meanwhile, William Watkins attacked the work of

Simultaneously, the ACS lost some influence amongst the politically influential white population, especially of the Northeast. As the ACS refused to officially comment on permanence of slavery, many former white supporters, such as William Lloyd Garrison, lost interest in the program as a valid solution. Garrison, initially a strong supporter of the program, initiated a program to expose the moral ills of the colonization program through multiple works such as *Thoughts on African Colonization* in 1832. Spurred by conversations with African American leaders such as William Watkins, Garrison attacked the American Colonization Society as “a conspiracy to send free people of color to Africa under a benevolent pretence... [but] [i]t is a conspiracy based upon fear, oppression, and falsehood, which draws its ailment from the prejudices of its people.” Although Garrison represented a radical immediate abolitionist sentiment, the public image of the American Colonization sustained blows for various reasons and lost influence. This faltering public image became especially troublesome as the American Colonization Society relied primarily on private donations and state appropriations.⁷⁰

Similar to Garrison, many white anti-slavery supporters of the ACS listened to the African American leaders who convinced these supporters to turn away from the ACS. These leaders persuaded these supporters that “racism underpinned slavery and colonization, that colonization stood in the way of emancipation, and that as long as Northern whites embraced both, there was no prospect for ending slavery in the United

the ACS in the city of Baltimore with works including “A Colored Baltimorean.” Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality*, 78, 83-84, 89-90.

⁷⁰ William Lloyd Garrison, *Thoughts on African Colonization* (New York: Arno Press and The New York Times, 1968): 10. Garrison’s views on colonization changed during his stay in Baltimore, Maryland as co-editor of the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. An eventual meeting with William Watkins and Jacob Greener in Maryland ended the cordial relationship between Garrison and the ACS. Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 37-40.

States.”⁷¹ Many leaders did not base this view completely in rhetoric. The American Colonization Society demonstrated in the early years that it lacked proper financial management skills to achieve their goals. In 1833, the Southern Leadership of the ACS spent the society into more than \$45,000 in debt. Furthermore, the ACS demonstrated an inability to convince large numbers of free African Americans to emigrate. Despite the initial \$264,000 from the federal government and various personal donations and state appropriations, the ACS emigrated groups of 11 and 10 slaves in 1825 and 1826 respectively. By the end of the 1830s, the entire African American population had increased to 2.9 million. This represented a 63 % increase since 1820 and 518% increase since 1770. At the same time, the society had only secured a total of 3,963 people for emigration. The loss of white and black moral and financial support, the failure to convince large numbers of African Americans to emigrate, and the mismanagement of the finances convinced many of the failure of the American Colonization Society in all aspects of their purpose by the beginning of 1840.⁷²

In response to the failure of the American Colonization in image and goals, many state auxiliaries seceded from the national organization in hopes of local success with their own population. Maryland led that charge for independent action. Later, an anonymous author in *The Maryland Colonization Journal* would reflect that “Maryland has sustained the cause, through good report, and through times of the greatest distress, which almost brought her to the brink of repudiation and dishonor.” Even though Maryland Auxiliaries existed since the beginning of the ACS, the Maryland Society began its journey of independent action in 1826 when the state provided funds for the

⁷¹ Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 3.

⁷² *Ibid*, 18. Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 23-25

colonization of 20 free African Americans.⁷³ In the following year, the Maryland Auxiliary Society organized all county societies of the ACS in Maryland under its direction. Throughout the year, the Maryland Auxiliary worked hard to develop personal contributions to the ACS in addition to the re-commitment of the Maryland General Assembly of \$1,000 to the cause. To the disappointment of the members in Maryland, the ACS was only capable of sending 12 emigrants from Maryland in 1828. In response, the Maryland General Assembly removed its appropriation, and many Maryland supporters believed that “they could never accomplish their purpose while dependent on the parent group to perform the task.”⁷⁴ A renewed interest in colonization developed with the organization of a Friends of African Colonization convention on February 21, 1831. From this date, the Maryland Auxiliary declared independent action with their finances. The Maryland Auxiliary required that the auxiliary apply their collections only to the colonization of freed slaves or free African Americans of Maryland.⁷⁵

Other interests and disagreements contributed to the independent action of the Maryland Auxiliary. The Maryland Auxiliary believed that the unique situation of Maryland demanded a more direct and intense activity of the colonization movement. Many white Marylanders felt that sectional disputes distracted the movement too much from their goals. In the transformation of the Maryland Auxiliary into the Maryland State Colonization Society (MSCS) in 1832, the independent state society resolved to use colonization to “hasten as far as the arrival of the period when slavery shall cease to exist

⁷³ “State Action on Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 9 No. 12 (May, 1858), 182.

⁷⁴ The other societies included New York and Pennsylvania. Burnin, 24. Aaron Stopak “The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 63(Sept., 1968), 276-7.

⁷⁵ Stopak, 277-8.

in Maryland.”⁷⁶ Consequently, the commitment of the state society drew many distinguished and politically influential members back to the cause of colonization in Maryland. The first election of MSCS included officers like First President George Hoffman of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and Vice President Thomas E. Bond, the founder of the University of Maryland Medical School. The initial leadership of the MSCS reflected the free labor economic leanings of the northwestern section of the state. Consequently, it hoped to squash the sectional issues of the American Colonization Society through a commitment to the eventual end of slavery, the removal of the African American population, and the promotion of white free labor.⁷⁷

The Maryland State Colonization Society (MSCS) would gain legislative support for its work. In 1831, The Maryland General Assembly established a statewide board of directors. It included key members of white society with the duty “to remove from the state of Maryland, the people of colour [sic] now free, and such as shall hereafter become so, to the colony of Liberia.” The board looked to catalogue and to systematically remove the free African American population. For example, the board required all sheriffs in every county to compose a list of all members of free African Americans under the penalty of \$200. The initial act of 1831 legitimized the work of MSCS through governmental decree. In order to convince the Maryland General Assembly to financially secure the re-emerging colonization plan, the MSCS would require the drastic

⁷⁶ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 18-20. Stopak, 282. In 1834, John H.B. Latrobe, who would become the president of the ACS during its reconciliation period with the MSCS, stated that “Maryland is now striving to establish the second branch of the proposition, and to prove that by means of colonies on the coast of Africa, a slaveholding State may be made a free state.” Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 97.

⁷⁷ The officers included First President George Hoffman of the B&O Railroad, Thomas Ellicot of the Union Bank of Maryland, Nicholas Brice, chief judge of Baltimore County, Thomas Bond, founder of UM Medical School, and Moses Sheppard, philanthropist of the Sheppard Pratt Hospital. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 19-20, 28.

events in the summer of 1831 in Southampton, Virginia, and its resulting panic to gain the public's support.⁷⁸

The Nat Turner Rebellion lasted from August 21 to August 23 of 1831 when the Virginia militia finally caught with Turner and his band of escaped slaves. In the intermittent days, Turner's band moved from farmhouse to farmhouse in Southampton, Virginia leaving "some sixty whites dead and others maimed and terrified in their wake."⁷⁹ Throughout the country, this event moved many whites to action. Logically, a strong political movement developed in Virginia. Normally removed from the realm of politics, many female auxiliary societies of the ACS petitioned the Virginia Legislature. One memorial from Augusta County implored the men of Virginia as the patriotic nature of their actions to develop and financially support a plan of colonization and abolition.⁸⁰ Similarly, this event galvanized the support of much of Maryland's white population. In addition to creating general fear among the white population, the Nat Turner Rebellion seemingly confirmed theories of impending slave revolts throughout the Maryland and the south.⁸¹

In response to the demands of the population, the Maryland General Assembly took "a leading part in African Colonization" through the allocation of \$10,000 per

⁷⁸ "An Act Relating to the People of Color in this State," *Maryland State Colonization Journal* 4(January 1849): 306.

⁷⁹ Varon, *We Mean to Be Counted*, 47.

⁸⁰ The Augusta County Auxiliary was not the only to petition the legislature. The Fluvanna County Auxiliary (recognizing that they had never had an occasion to appeal politically) expressed a fear of vulnerability in the presence of slaves. Furthermore, these women had the opinion that the increasing evils of slavery undermined their ability to exert domestic discipline. *Ibid.*, 49-51.

⁸¹ Nat Turner's Rebellion occurred on August 21, 1831 in the Southampton Region of Virginia. Nat Turner and his followers killed 60 white slaveowners within the first 24 hours. Eventually more than 100 slaves were killed. Nat Turner was found in late October and hanged by November 11 for his actions. Franklin, John Hope, Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, 8th Edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 164-65. In Virginia alone, 326 blacks were removed from Southampton County within 3 months of the rebellion. By 1832, Virginia had sent 392 blacks to Liberia. Between 1832-33, Virginia manumitted and sent an addition 600 slaves to Liberia. Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 19.

annum to the MSCS. Maryland superseded other states in its response to the Nat Turner Rebellion through an overall commitment of \$200,000 over 20 years. In addition to the financial commitment, the Maryland General Assembly relied on the MSCS to catalogue the African American population of the state, monitor deeded manumissions, remove (perhaps by force) any manumitted persons, and prevent the future immigration of any free person into the state. The financial commitment of 1832 linked any plan for the slave and free populations to the idea of colonization. In the end, the Maryland General Assembly and the MSCS hoped to provide a solution to the divisive agitation with regard to the slavery issue.⁸²

⁸² The 1832 legislation was the result of the Henry Brawner Committee. Initial proposals of legislation include prevention of any form of emancipation, appropriations for the removal of those already free, a police force specifically for the free and slave African American populations, and the complete abolition of slavery. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 32-7. "Colonization in Maryland," *Maryland State Colonization Journal*, 6(January 1852), 115. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 203

A Successful Failure: The Maryland General Assembly and Consistent Commitment to Colonization

In 1852, an author writing for the *Baltimore American*, warned Baltimore of the extremely divisive issue of slavery. In reaction to increased pro-slavery and abolitionist discussion, the author knew “of no consideration that could tend to afford us of any satisfaction in witnessing the continued agitation of the slavery question in the North or the South... [i]t is fanaticism, whether the effort is made by men at the North or at the South... it is treason.” That same year, the MSCS fought a battle to maintain its financial support from the Maryland General Assembly. At this time, the MSCS had little statistical proof of success. Over the previous 20 years, it had sent a paltry number of African Americans to the Cape Palmas or Liberian colony in Africa, even though Maryland possessed the highest free African American population in the entire United States. Nevertheless, the Maryland General Assembly renewed its financial commitment to the MSCS, and it would continue to support the MSCS until the beginning of the Civil War. The Maryland General Assembly understood the success of the MSCS might not lie in its actual production of emigrants to Africa. In contrast, the Maryland General Assembly continued its support in the face of utter failure because the MSCS’ colonization plan could remove the slavery debate from the state and prevent the development of widespread “treason” in Maryland.⁸³

An evaluation of the MSCS can look to a variety of factors in order to determine the success or failure of its program. On various levels, the MSCS experienced

⁸³ “Fanaticism North and South (From the *Baltimore American*)” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 10 (March 1852), 158. “Important Documents – Report and Bill: The Committee on the Colored Population of Maryland, submitting the following Report, and the Accompanying Bill,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 16 (Sept. 1852), 242-243.

successes. Over the thirty years of its independent action, it developed an independent colony and nation on the west coast of Africa, created and ran a joint stock shipping company, and acquired its own means of transporting emigrants. Most importantly, the MSCS continued to receive the official financial support of the Maryland General Assembly between 1832 and 1860.⁸⁴ If the evaluation focuses on the expressed goals and intention of the society, then the MSCS failed miserably. Between 1832 and 1860, the MSCS convinced only 1250 free African Americans or manumitted slaves to take advantage of colonization.⁸⁵ Despite economic, social, and political oppression in Maryland, the MSCS could not convince free African Americans of the benefits of colonization, due in part to the racist undertones of much of its message. Instead, many free African American chose to remain in Maryland and actively sought to restrict the success of the MSCS to gain more commitments to colonization.⁸⁶ Consequently, the MSCS became a successful failure. Despite embarrassing results with regard to its expressed purpose, the MSCS successfully and continually garnered the financial and political support of white Marylanders throughout the antebellum era.

In March, 1858, the Maryland General Assembly renewed its commitment to the colonization of Maryland's free African American and slave populations that had begun almost thirty years earlier. With its appropriation of \$5,000 per annum, the Maryland General Assembly would add to the almost half million dollars which it committed to the cause of colonization. Over the same thirty years, various parts of the United States

⁸⁴ . Penelope, Campbell. *Maryland in Africa: The Maryland State Colonization Society, 1831-1857*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 184.

⁸⁵ Aaron Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 63 No. 3 (Sept., 1968): 292.

⁸⁶ Christopher Phillips, "The Dear Name of Home: Resistance to Colonization in Antebellum Baltimore," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 No. 2 (Summer 1996): 198.

experienced fluctuating loyalties to the colonization plan. Initially drawing upon some of the best minds of the North and the South, the American Colonization lost support in both sections to the views of the immediate abolitionists in the North and the pro-slavery protectionists of the South. Nevertheless, Maryland maintained an official and large financial commitment to its independent plan of colonization orchestrated through the MSCS. Maryland maintained this financial commitment to colonization despite a general lack of success and persistent perceptions of the plan as wasteful and unintelligent. . Due to the paltry success of the MSCS, the appropriations of 1858 remained the last financial indulgence of the Maryland General Assembly with regard to the MSCS and its plan of colonization. As Barbara Fields expressed, “[c]olonization in Africa occupied the attention and resources of a state [Maryland] to a remarkable degree, considering how abjectly it failed.”⁸⁷

The overwhelming question remains why the Maryland General Assembly would continue to fund an endeavor for almost thirty years that did not demonstrate great returns. The answer does not reveal any level of blind appropriation or pork barrel spending. In contrast, the funding of the MSCS remained a heated topic for debate in the Maryland General Assembly allowing the legislature multiple opportunities to eliminate or curb the funding. Over the thirty years, the MSCS and the Maryland General Assembly sustained internal and external attacks upon the program from both pro-slavery

⁸⁷ Liberia and Cape Palmas were the two destinations established on the west coast of Africa as destinations for emigrants working with the American Colonization Society or the Maryland State Colonization Society. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 210,239-241. Aaron Stopak, “The Maryland State Colonization Society: Independent State Action in the Colonization Movement,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 63 No. 3 (Sept., 1968): 296. Barbara Jeanne Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland During the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 10. Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817-1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919), 98.

and anti-slavery proponents. In fact, the ability of the MSCS to maintain state appropriation for that length of time remains an amazing accomplishment in itself.

The MSCS maintained this funding because of its presentation of colonization as a long term plan and its subsequent rhetoric calling for and justifying the patience of the Maryland General Assembly and its constituents. The MSCS understood the relative time required to successfully establish a colony and convinced its target audience of its worth. Due to the cold response from free African Americans, the MSCS could not point to overall numbers of immigrants. In contrast, the MSCS pointed to promising achievements for its colony, including the establishment of Cape Palmas in 1833 and the colony's official autonomy in 1854. In the end, the leadership of the MSCS successfully distracted the General Assembly from the actual low number of immigrants through a discussion of the successful preparation of the colony for a time when African immigration would parallel European immigration. In fact, MSCS historian Penelope Campbell argues that the main occupations of the MSCS following the initial appropriation of the Maryland General Assembly became the maintenance of the established colony at Cape Palmas, its work to convince the General Assembly of its legitimacy, opening trade with Africa, and paying its debts.⁸⁸

The Maryland General Assembly and the MSCS established a relationship through legislation, which the General Assembly created in the wake of the 1831 Nat Turner Rebellion. This legislation created a financial commitment for the Maryland General Assembly and a custodial responsibility for the MSCS. These roles and this relationship would change very little over the following thirty years. Fearful of a similar

⁸⁸ Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society," 292-297. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 184.

rebellion in Maryland, the General Assembly wanted to remove the free African American population from Maryland. Consequently, the General Assembly provided \$200,000 to the MSCS to be distributed over the next 20 years. This “Act Relating to the People of Color in this State” incorporated the MSCS and bestowed upon the Board of Managers and the MSCS its basic duties and financial support which would endure for the next 30 years. With this money, a Board of Managers, consisting of MSCS membership, accepted the duty “to remove from the State of Maryland the people of color now free, and such as shall hereafter become so, to the Colony of Liberia in Africa.” In order to accomplish this goal, the Board of Managers’ responsibilities included monitoring and cataloguing the manumissions in Maryland.⁸⁹ Once catalogued, the state of Maryland empowered the Board of Managers to remove the emancipated slaves from the state through colonization. If the Board of Managers faced any opposition from the target population, the General Assembly empowered it to direct the county sheriffs to forcibly remove any manumitted slave who refused to emigrate.⁹⁰ In essence, the Maryland General Assembly placed full responsibility and power in the MSCS for the removal of the free African Americans for the next 20 years by any means necessary.

The debate concerning the state appropriations for the MSCS continued in the Maryland General Assembly throughout the laws 20 year duration. Immediately, this became an issue in 1833 when the Board of Managers and the MSCS proposed that the

⁸⁹ The basic intent of the law was to provide \$10,000 a year to the society for their activities to remove the free African American population from the state. “State Action on Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 12 (May, 1858): 183-5. “An Act Relating to the People of Color in this State,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 4 No. 19 (January, 1849): 306.

⁹⁰ Ira Belin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: The New York Press, 1974), 203.

creation of its own colony. The MSCS remained fearful that the ACS' inability to manage funds had translated into a mismanagement of its Liberian colony. Following the refusal of the ACS to investigate complaints by Maryland emigrants to Liberia, the MSCS moved forward with the establishment of their own colony and a complete separation from the ACS. On April 30, 1833, the MSCS voted unanimously to colonize Cape Palmas and sent a resolution to the Maryland General Assembly. According to the initial resolution submitted, the legislators hoped "hasten as far as they can the arrival of the period when slavery shall cease to exist in Maryland" by funding the colony.⁹¹ Disproportionately represented in the Maryland General Assembly, many slave-owning representatives questioned the resolution, especially with regard to its intentions concerning the end of slavery. Despite the resolution's language, many of these weary legislators supported the bill because of reassurances that the actions of the MSCS would secure their slave property and not usher in immediate abolitionism. This creation of their own colony demonstrated to historians such as Early Fox that "[h]ardly had the Maryland Society seceded before its policy began to differ from that of the American Colonization Society."⁹² With the purchase of the island, the MSCS could truly act as an independent society.⁹³

⁹¹Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society", 282

⁹² Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817 -1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919), 95-6.

⁹³ Stopak, 282-3. Early Lee Fox, *The American Colonization Society, 1817 -1840* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1919), 95-6. Anita Aidi Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery, 1850-1864* (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 270. Many of the Maryland emigrants to Liberia expressed problems with their arrival in Liberia, including; settled emigrants stealing their provisions, the existence of a semi-caste system based upon the arrival date, the drunken behavior of some of the leaders, and the mismanagement of the colony and its supplies. This rivalry would logically increase over the years and the two societies came into direct competition with each other over potential emigrants. At points, the ACS would make claims that the sole intention of the MSCS was the complete destruction of the ACS so that it could control the emigration movement. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 46-53, 110.

Despite their independence, new responsibilities, and the steady stream of cash, the MSCS found it difficult to achieve goals set forth in the 1832 legislation. The actual cost of expeditions proved more expensive than anticipated by the MSCS or the Maryland General Assembly. Nevertheless, the MSCS felt compelled to continue yearly emigration voyages to the colony as a visible sign of achievement. By 1833, only one year after its incorporation, the MSCS had only \$500 left while being \$6,000 in debt. Consequently, the MSCS relied upon the hefty pockets of its membership to avoid insolvency because the MSCS did not receive the anticipated personal contributions of citizens to sustain its developing plans. Many private citizens in Maryland, both rich and poor, believed that the contribution of the Maryland General Assembly represented personal contributions of every citizen. In addition to not securing personal contributions, the members of the General Assembly made it quite clear that the legislature retained the right to pull the funding to the colony at any time. In 1835 and 1836, the Maryland General Assembly came close to limiting or eliminating the state's funds for MSCS. Consequently, the MSCS quickly came to realize the financial issues that independent action brought with it even with a consistent and sustained appropriation from the state legislature.⁹⁴

The 1840s represented a decade in which the colonization plan virtually died in every state in the United States except for Maryland.⁹⁵ As the General Assembly continued to financially support the colonization plan, the MSCS had little luck in producing large emigrant numbers to either the Liberian or Cape Palmas colonies. In order to improve the numbers, the MSCS and the Maryland General Assembly

⁹⁴ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 98-9, 114-117.

⁹⁵ Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: The New York Press, 1974): 355.

considered and implemented a variety of tactics including the deportation of African American criminals and the removal of the restriction on slaves from out of state.

Despite these experiments, the MSCS convinced fewer than 300 emigrants to make the journey. With such low numbers, the Maryland General Assembly constantly re-evaluated the usefulness of the plan and the funding promised in the 1832 bill.⁹⁶

Nevertheless, the MSCS successively developed certain interests and projects throughout the decade that drew praise from even the strongest African American critics. In 1846, Dr. James Hall and the MSCS incorporated the Chesapeake and Liberia Trading Company, which would run as the main commerce line between the colonies and the United States. The Chesapeake and Liberia Trading Company would run the commercial shipping industry while maintaining a transportation route for the ACS and MSCS to Liberia and Cape Palmas. Dr. Hall and the MSCS created the joint stock company with the intent that African Americans would captain and crew the ships. In fact, the MSCS anticipated that African Americans would assume control of the entire company. Even Martin R. Delaney, an early African American proponent of abolition and equality, saluted the MSCS for the development of this program. In essence, the 1840s proved a difficult decade for the MSCS. Nevertheless, the MSCS weathered the storm and continued its activities in the development and the preparation of the colony in anticipation of a large scale migration of African Americans.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ One convict, Thomas Cooper, offered to emigrate and bring other persons with him, if the MSCS would secure his release. John Latrobe and the leadership of the MSCS vehemently opposed the attempt to turn the colony of Cape Palmas into a convict colony similar to Australia. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 190-1.

⁹⁷ The Chesapeake and Liberia Trading company remained successful for many years, providing a 10% dividend on stocks initially priced at \$1,000. The Company would fold in 1852 when it could not secure a ship for its business. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 183,. "The Liberia Packet Under Contract," *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 3 No. 14 (August, 1846), 208-10. Delaney's commentary prior to 1850 on colonization took the form of denouncing those who supported the activities of the ACS and other like

Despite the constant financial worries and the cold response from potential emigrants, the MSCS experienced various levels of success in the last decade prior to the Civil War. As described, the MSCS successfully maintained some level of appropriation from the Maryland General Assembly through the commencement of the Civil War. In 1851, the MSCS fully realized that it would need to impress the Maryland General Assembly if the appropriations of the original 1832 legislation would continue. Consequently, the MSCS made sure to accentuate the positives of its plan. Using the pages of the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, the MSCS made it evidently clear that the society used the state funds appropriately in the anticipation of a legitimate course of colonization with such achievements as Cape Palmas. Furthermore, the MSCS argued that “[t]he commerce between this country and Africa is already far, far greater than was the commerce between the old country and her American colonies after the same lapse of time.” According to the MSCS, the Maryland General Assembly needed to continue to fund the efforts in order to allow commerce to motivate individual free African American to actively seek colonization. At that point, the MSCS argued that the colony would no longer need to rely on the government.⁹⁸

In order to gain its continued support, the Maryland General Assembly required a report detailing the achievements of the colonization plan and the reasoning for the maintenance of the appropriations. The Board of Managers produced such a report in 1852 exposing the domestic benefits of colonization within the state of Maryland. With

minded societies. Floyd J. Miller. *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Emigration and Colonization, 1787-1863* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1975): 119.

⁹⁸ *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 5 No. 21 (February, 1851): 332-3. The MSCS argued that more good can be made of the continued support of the Maryland colony than in other more because with an attractive, healthy, and thriving colony, the day will come when the emigration of the free African American population will be performed through their own financial burden. “Report of the Managers of the State Fund: To the Honorable General Assembly,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 9 (February, 1852): 139.

its commitment to the plan of colonization, the Board of Managers argued that “the people of Maryland enjoyed total exemption... [from] the jealous apprehensions of the South, nor the blind fanaticism of the North.”⁹⁹ Consequently, the Maryland General Assembly decided to continue the original state appropriation for six more years. These funds contributed \$10,000 yearly with the stipulation that the monies would only be used to benefit free African Americans of Maryland who could demonstrate five years of residency prior to their application. The MSCS believed that the Maryland General Assembly approved the operation of the Board of Managers and the MSCS’ use of the state appropriation. Furthermore, the MSCS interpreted the continued support as the Maryland General Assembly’s recognition that the present measure of success did not relate to the aggregate number of emigrants to the colony but rather the present state and capacity of the colony.¹⁰⁰

In the last decade before the Civil War, the MSCS believed that they would witness a growing acceptance of colonization amongst the free African American population. First of all, the MSCS began to cooperate with the ACS in a more congenial

⁹⁹ The Board of Managers believed that (1) Maryland did not experience much of the sectional issues of the remainder of the country and (2) the commitment to colonization distracted the population of Maryland from such a discussion. “Report of the Board of Managers of the Maryland State Colonization Society,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 9 (February, 1852): 131.

¹⁰⁰ The MSCS had come under fire from the Maryland General Assembly for extending beyond the borders of Maryland to gain emigration. Many in the legislature wanted an affirmation that Maryland tax money was used to rid Maryland of their free African Americans. Furthermore, this very activity created further tension between the ACS and the MSCS because the ACS would naturally feel threatened by the extended activities of the MSCS especially in Northern States. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 96-7, 199. The new bill entitled an act to continue the State’s appropriation for the benefit of African colonization read “whereas, it is desirable that the said appropriation of \$10,000 per year, should be renewed and continued so that a policy of the State, in providing a home in Africa, for the emancipated slaves and free colored population, and for their removal thither, may be maintained and carried out. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 16 (September, 1852): 243-245, 256. In 1853, a commentator wrote that “[s]low colonization – colonization, which, like human growth, allows the frame to mature in muscular solidity – such colonization we repeat, has prepared the germ of the future colored nations which American philanthropy is planting in Africa... [i]ts only fault is that it might become too rapid.” “Our Colonization Society- Its Next Vessel (From the Baltimore America)” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 23 (April, 1853): 368-9.

manner, highly motivated by the election of former MSCS president John Latrobe as president of the ACS. With Latrobe as president, the MSCS felt confident that the national organization possessed leadership with a “thorough knowledge of the subject of Colonization, and ability and disposition to advance its interests.”¹⁰¹ In the following year, the colony of Cape Palmas followed the example of the Republic of Liberia and gained its full independence from the MSCS. The agreement relinquished any and all obligation between the colony and the MSCS. Furthermore, the MSCS turned over all public offices, forts, and munitions depots to the newly formed republic while the republic guaranteed the rights of citizenship to all new emigrants, including the standard distribution of new land. Within two years, the two republics merged into one as a means to ensure the safety and integrity of their borders in Africa. In a broad sense, both the ACS and the MSCS viewed the independence of each republic as a great victory against the abolitionists because it would do “a thousandfold, to establish the claims of the colored race to full stature of MANHOOD, in its broadest sense, than all the pompous declamations and arrogant pretensions of a few upstarts, who loudly claim equality of rights.” With the quasi-reunion of the two colonization societies and the independence and union of the two colonies, the Colonization argument re-emerged in the sectional crisis of the 1850s as a more legitimate answer to the ills of the country.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ “Annual Meeting of the American Colonization Society – Election of John H.B. Latrobe, Esq. President.” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 21 (February, 1853): 305-6. The MSCS elected Charles Howard, Esq. as the successor President of the society in Maryland. “Resignation of the President of the Maryland State Colonization Society and the election of his Successor,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 21 (February, 1853): 320-1. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 204.

¹⁰² “The Republic of Liberia (From the Baltimore American),” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 4 No. 11 (May, 1848): 171. “Articles of Agreement,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 7 No. 9 (February, 1854): 132. Stopak, “The Maryland State Colonization Society,” 297. The 1850s experienced a variety of different events which re-ignited the sectional debate over slavery, including the 1850 compromise, the Kansas Nebraska Act, Bloody Kansas, the Dred Scott Decision, and ultimately the John Brown Raid. Each of these events continued to breathe new life into the expulsion movement as a legitimate means to

As the deadline for the second appropriation approached in 1858, the MSCS demonstrated increased cooperation with the ACS, which resulted in a stable transportation system. The MSCS received a generous donation from Maryland resident and colonization supporter, John Stevens, for the construction of a boat committed solely to the transportation of emigrants. At the suggestion of the MSCS, John Stevens actually committed the funds to the ACS, which would allow the use of the potential ship by several different states. In 1856, the ACS completed construction on the ship, *Mary Caroline Stevens*, which would make regular emigration trips starting in 1857. Initially, the Maryland General Assembly questioned this new found cooperation because it wanted to use state funds for transportation of African Americans from Maryland. Even though the reunion produced a stable means of transportation, the Maryland General Assembly removed its funding in 1856 and 1857. Eventually, the Maryland General Assembly would place great limitations on the final appropriation provided by the Maryland General Assembly in 1858.¹⁰³

With reassurances from the MSCS and a commendation from Governor Thomas Hicks in his inauguration in 1858, the Maryland General Assembly re-committed themselves to yearly financial support that very year. The Maryland General Assembly, however, required the stipulation that “the appropriations now made shall be applied to

deal with the problems of slavery without having to expect to live in a society of free African Americans. Each of these events continued to breathe new life into the expulsion movement as a legitimate means to deal with the problems of slavery without having to expect to live in a society of free African Americans. Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (New York: The New York Press), 372-4.

¹⁰³ Stevens furnished the MSCS with debts owed to him for collections. The proceeds of these collections would fund the ship. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 205-209. Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 270. The shipping list of the November 1857 voyage demonstrated that the majority of emigrants now consisted almost solely of recently manumitted slaves and a lack of free African American families. “Emigrants from Maryland to the Ship Mary Caroline Stevens, which left Baltimore on the 4th November,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 7 (December, 1857): 107. “Meeting of the Maryland State Colonization Society,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 10 (March, 1858): 158.

the benefit exclusively of persons of color who shall have been bona fide residents of Maryland, for the space of five years next preceding their applications to become emigrants.” Governor Thomas Hicks, Esq. signed the act, which also now limited the yearly appropriation to \$5,000, which only covered transportation costs and first year expenses. With the recommitment of the Maryland General Assembly in 1858, the MSCS successively maintained the consistent, financial, and official support of the Maryland General Assembly in the potential solution of colonization up to the commencement of the Civil War. Despite the success of the MSCS to maintain the commitment of the Maryland General Assembly, it continued to fail at its intended goal: not the colonization of the free and enslaved African American population of Maryland.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ With the independence of the colonies in Africa, the Maryland General Assembly did not feel compelled to continue with funds to the maintenance or development of the infrastructure of these independent countries. “State Action on Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 12 (May, 1858): 187. Eventually, the Civil War would end the expeditions and the funding of such expedition. The MSCS used the remaining monies to establish in Liberia the James Hall School Fund. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 210.

The Rhetoric of Rejection: African Americans, the Distrust of Colonization

Dr. Eli Ayres, the first traveling agent of the MSCS, and the Board of Managers eagerly anticipated October 21, 1831. On that date, the MSCS planned to send nearly 60 African Americans on the society's first expedition to Liberia. As the group boarded the ship, the present members of the MSCS counted many fewer than 60 African Americans present for the expedition. Furthermore, members of the African American community of Baltimore actually boarded the ship, denounced the emigrants as "traitors to their race" and persuaded many committed emigrants to not leave the port on the *Orion*. By the time of the departure, only 31 emigrants remained on the ship. This was not an isolated incident. The MSCS believed that Baltimore "from various causes must take the lead" in the cause of colonization. Since the MSCS believed that the colonization movement was benevolent, it could not understand why "the free coloured [sic] population of Maryland has been rendered hostile [to colonization]." ¹⁰⁵ In fact, the African American population of Maryland, especially Baltimore, never supported nor accepted colonization as a legitimate solution to the constant oppression which they encountered on a daily basis. ¹⁰⁶

The MSCS's ability to convince free African Americans to immigrate to African colonies never matched the funds which the Maryland General Assembly provided for

¹⁰⁵ The MSCS believed that the large African American population, its large proportion of educated ministers/church leaders, and the eager population to learn from the ministers made Baltimore the perfect receptor of the colonization message. "The African Missions," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 7 (Jan. 1844), 98-99.

¹⁰⁶ Christopher Phillips, "The Dear Name of Home: The Resistance to Colonization in Antebellum Baltimore," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 No. 2 (Summer 1996), 197. Some of the committed emigrants could not make the journey because of inability to settle financial obligations or proof of their freedom. Dr. Ayres also claimed that many rural emigrants were "deterred by the misrepresentations of blacks from Baltimore City and neighboring counties." Aaron Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 63 No. 3 (Sept, 1968), 278.. "The African Missions," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 7 (Jan. 1844), 98-99.

the society for that expressed purpose. The statistical results of the MSCS convinced many people that the society remained a failure as the free African American population in Maryland expanded into the largest such population of any state prior to the Civil War. Free African-Americans did not buy into the message and goal of colonization in the antebellum period. Furthermore, free African Americans in Maryland actively and successively prevented the MSCS from truly spreading its message and gaining emigrants. In essence, many free African Americans believed that a self-proclaimed benevolent society such as the MSCS should allow for their improvement in the United States and take sincere and overt actions to end slavery and the unequal treatment of free African Americans. Since it never fulfilled the wishes of free African Americans, MSCS found it quite difficult to convince free African Americans to emigrate and truly accomplish its goals..¹⁰⁷

From the secession of the MSCS from the ACS, it expressly stated their desire to end the presence of slavery in Maryland. Throughout the antebellum period, the MSCS established and maintained the colony at Cape Palmas as a destination for freed slaves but also a geographic center through which it would destroy the African slave trade.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Only 1250 of free African Americans or manumitted slaves took advantage of the colonization plan offered by the MSCS. In 1849, the MSCS was only able to actually convince 10 total emigrants to leave the state of Maryland. Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society," 292. During a short period of time (1831-1845), there were 2,350 slaves freed in the state of Maryland alone with only 170 freed on the specific condition that they join the colonization of the west coast of Africa. Lawrence Herbert McDonald, "Prelude to Emancipation: The Failure of the Great Reaction in Maryland, 1831-1850" (Ph.D diss., University of Maryland, 1974), 22-23. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 204-5, 209. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom's Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790-1860* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997): 183.

¹⁰⁸ The colonies were positioned on the western coast of the African continent from which slave ships had set out to the United States. At the least, the very existence of the colonies disrupted the economic illegal economic traffic of new slaves to the United States. With established colonies and countries, they would actively prevent the shipment of slaves to the United States. "An important auxiliary in the diminution and ultimate destruction of the African slave trade will be found in the Republics which have been planted along the coast "Colonization – The Slave Trade (From the Baltimore American)" *Maryland Colonization Journal* 5 No. 12 (May 1850): 193.

Furthermore, the MSCS maintained that it “has been the uniform and consistent advocate of the gradual redemption of the state of Maryland from slavery, in a way, and in the only way compatible with the rights and privileges of her citizens.”¹⁰⁹ In its official rhetoric, the MSCS did not recognize the racial justification of slavery nor the doctrine that African Americans existed by nature in an inferior state. In contrast, slavery actually had created a situation for not only slaves but free African Americans in which neither group could hope to fully develop. The MSCS and other colonization societies believed that the white population throughout slavery had treated the African American population unjustly and had “perverted his [African-American population] high capabilities to his deeper and sadder degradation.”¹¹⁰ Consequently, the MSCS believed in the economic, social, and political potential of African Americans in the correct environment. In their present environment, white Americans denied African Americans the opportunity to develop intellectual and enterprising qualities to match the most productive groups of society. This situation resulted “because they are amongst the whites, and are, therefore, doomed.”¹¹¹ Consequently, MSCS believed in their duty to rectify the situation of the

¹⁰⁹ This article references the Charter of the Maryland State Colonization Society which stated that the MSCS look “to remove with their own consent the free people of colour [sic] and manumitted slaves to the land of their fathers, stamps it as one of the noblest, most exalted and most disinterested schemes of benevolence that has ever been projected by man.” “To the Clergy of the State of Maryland,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 1 No. 13 (June, 1842), 193-95. “Maryland is now striving to establish the second branch of the proposition, and to prove that by means of colonies on the coast of Africa, a slaveholding State may be made a free state.” Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 97. The heading of each edition of the *Maryland Colonization Journal* read “Nothing is more clearly written in the Book of Destiny, than the Emancipation of the Blacks.” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 1 No. 18 (November, 1842), 275.

¹¹⁰ Based on the justification of slavery, the stereotypes and influence of the white population directed the habits of the African American population which further degraded the entire African American population. “Report on the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 24 (May 1855), 380-381.

¹¹¹ The author (unnamed) described the freedom of manumitted African Americans as little more than the enslavement which they had previously experienced. *Maryland Colonization Journal* 3 No. 7 (January, 1846), 99-100.

African Americans. Due to the permanence of racism and discrimination, this rectification could not occur in the United States.¹¹²

As previously mentioned, several areas of Maryland neither relied upon nor supported the continuance of the slave system. Consequently, much of the population of these regions supported the idea of emancipation because they saw it as a redemptive process for whites. This belief in emancipation, however, did not coincide with beliefs in the permanence of a free African American population nor the extension of the full rights of citizenship. The MSCS still regarded the emancipation of slaves as “clearly written in the Book of Destiny.”¹¹³ Nevertheless, the MSCS adjusted their opening statement to express that “it is equally clearly written that the two races will never live in a state of equal freedom under the same government, so insurmountable are the barriers which nature, habit and opinion have established between them.”¹¹⁴ Quoting De Tocqueville and his work *Democracy in America*, another commentator recognized the shadow of oppression latent in the American experience for freed African Americans. “The negro makes a thousand fruitless efforts to insinuate himself amongst men who repulse him; he conforms to the tastes of his oppressors, adopts their opinions, and hopes by imitating them to form a party of their community.”¹¹⁵ Despite any personal efforts of free African

¹¹² “But Will They Go? (From the African Repository)” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 5 No. 17 (October 1850), 265. Based on the justification of slavery, the stereotypes and influence of the white population directed the habits of the African American population which further degraded the entire African American population. “Report on the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church on Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 24 (May 1855), 380-381. “Dr. Bethune Before the New York Colonization Society,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 5 No. 12 (May 1850), 196. In this selection from the 1846 *Maryland Colonization Journal*,

¹¹³ On the top line of the journal, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* published with a consistent message under the volume numeration. *Maryland Colonization Journal* 1 No. 18 (November, 1842): 275.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ In addition, the impression of inferiority begins at youth so that the majority of the free African American population would become ashamed of his own heritage and try to cut any ties with the institution of slavery. The article points to the recent internal evaluation of the African American community according to lightness of skin color. “Everyone of African descent values himself in proportion to the

Americans to assimilate, the color of their skin prevented any full integration into the white population. Consequently, the MSCS continued to view its work to emancipate the slaves necessarily linked to the colonization of freed slaves. Accordingly, the MSCS argued that emancipation, lacking the element of colonization, would prove more detrimental than the continuance of slavery for African Americans.¹¹⁶

According the rhetoric of the MSCS, emancipation without colonization would lead to a different form of servitude in which the freed African American became a slave to the community in which he or she lives. This servitude would suffice all aspects of the African American experience, including the ability to gain employment, to participate politically, or simply live in peace. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* took great strides to point not only the musing and theories on this subject, but rather to chronicle the actual events that demonstrated the deteriorating experience of African Americans not only in Maryland but every part of the United States. The journal paid particular attention to the northern free states and Canada, which many freed African Americans believed to be potential oases of equality due to their early abolition of slavery. Maryland provided multiple examples of the harsh realities facing the free African American population for *Maryland Colonization Journal*. In this middle ground, as Barbara Jeanne Fields described, the awkward intermix of southern and northern populations, ideals, and economic systems guaranteed that “free black people paid heavily for both their closeness to slavery and for their detachment from it.” Through their depiction of inequality or lack of advancement opportunities in Maryland or any

degree of white blood he has in his veins.” “What Becomes of Free Colored People,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 16 (September 1854): 253-4.

¹¹⁶Stephen T. Whitman, *The Price of Freedom: Slavery and Manumission in Baltimore and Early National Maryland* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 141. “(From the Baltimore American),’ *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 4 (October 1843): 59.

other proximate territory, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* and the MSCS hoped that freed African Americans would have no other choice than the African colonies.¹¹⁷

Throughout the antebellum period, the various levels of government in the state demonstrated a propensity to legally relegate free African Americans to second class citizens. The Maryland General Assembly demonstrated this tendency through multiple debates and enactments of politically, economically, and socially limiting legislation. In 1843, one representative of the Maryland House of Delegates mused that not a year went by that the legislature did not in some way limit the freedoms of free African Americans. Notwithstanding the actual enforcement of statutes, the Maryland General Assembly forbade the free African American population without a special license to own dogs, firearms, liquor or ammunition. Furthermore, free African Americans could not sell a variety of sundry goods without verification of ownership, could not freely move throughout the state, visit a tavern, hold a mass meeting after dark, or operate certain farm instruments without white supervision. The Maryland General Assembly in 1840 passed a bill which allowed the local sheriffs to arrest free African Americans without financial means of support and term them out as slaves for an entire year. The following year, the General Assembly prohibited any African American from receiving abolitionist mail by a punishment of ten years in jail. The House of Delegates in 1843 entertained but did not pass a bill concerning the complete and utter removal of all African Americans by compulsion from Charles County, Maryland. By 1852, African American communities

¹¹⁷ “Interesting to the Free People of Color,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 3 No. 16 (October 1846): 241. The journal continued to support these concerns well into the 1850s, stating in 1855 that “tyranny [of the general white population] only produces despair, and despair only begets stupor.” Consequently, the Liberian colony existed as the project of the African American because any mixture of race within the country would lead to the destruction of their race. “The African Race – Its Condition and Destiny (From the Christian Advocate, New York),” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 8 No. 5 (October 1855): 77. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 35.

feared legislation establishing an apprenticeship system for free African American children while permanently banishing any free African American who left the state. Even Baltimore, described by Christopher Phillips as the “refuge for free blacks,” participated in the political recognition of free African Americans as second class citizen. By 1858, the Baltimore Municipal Government re-categorized free African Americans and enslaved African Americans back into one official group of interest with regard to their municipal codes. Consequently, the various levels of government demonstrated through its legislation that white Marylanders did not welcome free African Americans or their success.¹¹⁸

The Maryland General Assembly did not act in a uniquely southern manner. As the free African American population grew in various free states, these states responded with similar legislative tools which seemingly encouraged colonization as the only suitable alternative, including: legislative threats of a return to slavery, an increase in the taxes free African Americans paid, and the further limitation on their economic, social, and political rights. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* reported that “[e]very state that

¹¹⁸ Mentioned earlier, Maryland quickly changed many of its laws regarding voting and citizenship following the Revolutionary because those laws specifically did not forbid African Americans from political participation or could be interpreted to guarantee the rights of African Americans. At one point, Maryland changed its Declaration of Rights provision which would guarantee the due process of law for free African Americans because it used the word freemen. Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 369. Goodman, *Of One Blood*, 7. For those African Americans hired out, the food and clothing provided by the hirer would be deducted from their pay. The following year, the hired out African Americans would have only 10 days to find additional work before the Sheriff could repeat the procedure for a whole other year. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 208-9. 317. The forbidden list of sale goods included pork, bacon, beef, mutton, corn, wheat, tobacco, rye, or oats. The verification of ownership had to come from a justice of the peace or 3 respectable members of society. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 35. Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 193, 235-6. “There are many, perhaps, who doubt the power of the Legislature to compel them to remove; and there are others who entertain scruples on the ground of humility.” “Report from the Select Committee, to whom was referred the subject of the Removal of the Free Colored Population of Charles County,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 8 (February 1843): 113-4. Perkins began this campaign at the Slaveholder’s Convention held in 1852 which sought to develop a permanent solution to the free colored problem of Maryland. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 14 (August 1852): 235.

has lately revised or altered her Constitution has been more liberal in extending rights to the white and less so to the colored man.”¹¹⁹ Taking a note from many southern states, many free states initiated legislation to prohibit the entrance of any additional free African Americans to the state. In particular, the Indiana Legislature created new additions to their Constitution which refused any new African American residents and claimed many contractual obligations to African Americans null and void. In addition to the potential migrant African American population, several free states sought to deal with their existing populations. Including those bastions of freedom in New England, these free states altered the language of their state constitutions in order to deny free African Americans any participation in the government or politics. These free states did not limit their anti-African American legislation to the political rights of that population.¹²⁰

The legislation of many free states sought to segregate the population by race in public transportation while excluding African Americans from military service or participation as jurors in the legal process. In one such instance, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* chronicled an incident in 1852, when the New York Omnibus refused Dr. Andrew Pennington, a prominent African American spiritual leader of New York City, a ride across town. Evaluating his own experience, Dr. Pennington expressed

¹¹⁹Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 316. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* argued that the slow removal of rights began at the inception of the Constitution, has not stopped, and would not stop until the free African American population was removed to their homeland. *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851): 54.

¹²⁰The MSCS argued that the actions of New England states, except Rhode Island, seemed especially troubling for the African American population because “[i]t was supposed that in New England the opposition to slavery was as decided, at least as anywhere else.” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 12 (May 1852): 183-4. “Black Law in Indiana,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 10 (March 1852): 159. According to the article, “[i]t seems that the republicans in Iowa do not carry their republicanism so far as to admit the negroes into a community of political rights with themselves.” In other the words, the same people working to destroy slavery through emancipation are not ready to provided the freed population with equal rights. The only allowance for the right to vote would be \$100 worth of personal property. Iowa denied free African Americans the right to vote in 1857 despite the dominance of the Republican Party in the politics and electorate of that state. “The Vote on Negro Suffrage in Iowa,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 9 No. 6 (November, 1857): 92-3.

that “it is simply and only because I am a black man, obediently carrying about on my person the same skin, with the same color, which the Almighty has seen fit to give me.”¹²¹ The *Maryland Colonization Journal* depicted similar oppressive experiences not only in the free states but also in Canada. In fact, the journal claimed that there were multiple examples of racial discrimination and segregation, including the flat out refusal of service to African Americans. Since the population of Canada consisted of the Anglo-Saxon variety, this very Canadian population does not provide the best destination for the runaway or free African American to escape the oppression of the United States. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* actively sought out and reported these experiences as a means to demonstrate to its own free African American population that African colonization remained its only choice for true advancement.¹²²

Nevertheless, Canada did provide sanctuary in North America from the most prevalent, alarming, and oppressive legislation for free African Americans: the Revised Fugitive Slave Law.¹²³ Enacted as part of the Compromise of 1850, the federal law barred any African American testimony in court, prohibited any citizen of the United States from aiding a fugitive slave, and required that the free states actively participate in the recapture of fugitive slaves. Most distressingly, the Fugitive Slave Law financially rewarded any judge who found an accused African American to be a fugitive slave. In

¹²¹ This was especially troubling to Dr. Pennington who described those allowed on the omnibus as white men of ill repute who were smoking cigars, chewing and spitting tobacco, and carrying large pets. In other words, the pets got service and he did not. “A Hard Case,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 17 (October 1852): 258-9.

¹²² Rev. Paul Quinn was required to ride on the outside of the omnibus when it was obvious that he had a severe illness. Rev. Dr. Payne Bishop and his wife were refused service and had to wait until a late hour for transportation despite ill health. Rev. John Garrow of New Orleans was flat out refused service. “Prejudice in Canada,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 16 (September 1854): 252-3. With similar dominate populations, African Americans could not expect an improved experience or situation. *Maryland Colonization Society* 6 No.12 (May 1852): 187.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

essence, the Fugitive Slave Law established tribunals during which it was easy and lucrative to re-enslave legitimately free African Americans. Consequently, thousands of former slaves and free African Americans migrated into Canada following its passage. Recognizing the willingness of free African Americans to migrate into Canada, the MSCS hoped to redirect their interest toward Liberia. With the United States Government reaffirming their defense of slavery through the Fugitive Slave Law and the discriminatory environment of Canada and the free states, the MSCS easily claimed that the commonality of race between enslaved and free African Americans would prevent any legislative extension of equality or inalienable rights in North America. Only in Liberia or other parts of Africa would the “colored people of this country ever find a home on earth for the development of their manhood and intellect.”¹²⁴

In addition to the legislatively mandated discrimination throughout Maryland and many free states, the MSCS and its journal identified and discussed other discriminatory situations for African Americans. The most important of these discussions concerned the access of freed African Americans to consistent and economically stable employment. In Maryland and especially Baltimore, the free African American population did not experience much trouble securing certain jobs labeled as traditional Negro work. Nevertheless, one visitor to Baltimore in 1830 remarked how the Irish had already begun to take many of the jobs that had been reserved for African Americans. The extremely

¹²⁴ In the tribunals, a white person would bring an African American in front of the judge. In front of that judge, the African American would not have the ability to testify in favor of his freedom. At the same time, judges were financially motivated to find that an African American was a fugitive slave because that finding produce a higher compensation for the judge than the finding of freedom. William H. Pease, Jane H. Pease, *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963): 7-8. Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995): 274-5. “African Colonization; By a Man of Color (From the Christian Statesman),” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851):50-52.

large influx of European immigrants into Maryland and Baltimore targeted these occupations and challenged the ability of African Americans to retain those jobs, especially ship caulking. According to Phillips, “the labor competition caused by the European immigration quickly revealed the fragile position which free Negroes occupied Baltimore’s economic structure.” Prior to 1850, the occupation of ship caulking provided an almost exclusive and highly skilled artisan profession for free African Americans in Baltimore. Baltimore, however, experienced stagnation in both the shipping and manufacturing businesses of the city between 1850 and 1860. Despite African Americans losing a majority of the jobs, many in the white population began to blame the free African Americans for their own loss of work.¹²⁵ In essence, the free African Americans experienced that “in the strife for bread the colored man will go to the wall.”¹²⁶

As competition increased over the economic opportunities, tensions between the two groups motivated failed political action, physical altercations and riots aimed primarily at the free African American population of Baltimore. At one point, the draymen of Baltimore decided to establish and maintain a lobby in the Maryland General Assembly in order to push through a petition denying African Americans access to their occupation. In addition, a series of violent altercations in and around shipyards between 1858 and 1859 destroyed the exclusivity of the ship caulking trade for free African

¹²⁵ Frank Towers, “Job Busting at Baltimore Shipyards: Racial Violence in the Civil War Era South,” *The Journal of Southern History* 66 No. 2 (May 2000): 221, 228-9. By 1860s, Baltimore housed over 2/3 of the state’s immigrant population. With the increase in European immigration, the white population of Baltimore increased 132,810 between 1830 and 1860. Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 195-198. Some of the hostility between white working class and free African Americans grew from the fact that many African Americans broke picket lines or underbid white workers for jobs because they had to survive some level of income. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 229-31.

¹²⁶ “Interesting to the Free People of Color,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 3 No. 16 (October 1846): 241.

Americans. As political clubs throughout the city organized these riots, some white shipyard owners began to remove free African Americans and replace them with white workers. In some areas of the city, the only African Americans who could get caulking jobs did so at the permission of white gang members.¹²⁷ Violent altercations between the free African American populations did not only occur in Baltimore. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* reported in 1851 alone that riots erupted in Boston, Philadelphia, Cincinnati and Hartford where the free African American population remained the main object of violence. These cities demonstrated the same level of segregation and job discrimination of many cities prevalent throughout the free states. Further more this did not represent Cincinnati's first foray into racially motivated violence. In 1841, a physical altercation between a group of whites and blacks ended in the stabbing of two white victims. In response, a group of white citizens prepared to arrest the two young African Americans. When confronted with resistance from the young men's neighborhood, a riot broke out between the two groups which lasted for 3 days. Prophetically, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* depicted the Cincinnati riots as "warnings too solemn to be disregarded."¹²⁸

¹²⁷ The African American draymen of Baltimore drew support from some local merchants and were able to counter petition. Eventually, the petitions were tabled in Annapolis. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 231. Frank Towers maintains that these particular violent incidents did not involve a white immigrant group attacking the African American dominated trade of ship caulking. Towers recognizes that German and Irish immigrants slowly replaced African Americans in various jobs, however, peacefully. In contrast, the ship caulking riots were a political move on the part of the Tiger Club as a means to increase the white working class electorate in the city. Meanwhile, the protection provided to the African American caulkers by shipyard owners who eventually supported the South in the Civil War demonstrated a wish to keep that working class electorate down by hiring African Americans who did not have the right to vote. Towers, 226.

¹²⁸ This is from a series of articles in the same issue of the *Maryland Colonization Journal* which did an analysis of the riots with articles entitled "Great Riot and Bloodshed in Our Streets" and "The Riots in Cincinnati." Great Riot and Bloodshed in our Streets," *Maryland Colonization Journal* 1 No. 4 (September 1841): 50.

As the antebellum era came to a close, the MSCS appealed to the sensibilities of the free African American population. By this point, the African American population of Maryland possessed persons who had known nothing but their own experience as free persons. The MSCS continued to express that the very color of these individuals limited them to singular occupational option of a laborer. Consequently, any African American who pursued higher education in the United States wasted their time. With the limited access that African Americans had to high level occupations, the skills of a highly educated African American would retrograde with the lack of work parable to his academic skills. In the end, this would leave him more miserable than those uneducated African Americans laborers. The MSCS pointed to the example of a highly educated African American named J.G. Hamilton who possessed the education and skill to participate in the Public Stock Exchange of New York. Despite these skills, the Public Stock Exchange forbade any member of that exchange to receive any money from J.G. Hamilton, denying him the use of the exchange based upon his color.

Furthermore, the MSCS discussed the experience of Henry Roberts demonstrating the lack of access to higher education. Henry Roberts gained admission into Berkshire Medical Institute of Massachusetts. Nevertheless, Roberts did not attend the medical institute in 1846 because the faculty deferred to the student body which voted to deny Roberts the medical education he sought. According to the MSCS, the lack of education, the oppressive legislation, and the discriminatory environment created a permanent caste in the United States out of which the free African American could never hope to climb. The MSCS never claimed to need or want to determine the morality of the discriminatory practices or laws, but rather address the problem which created this environment.

Consequently, the solution lay in the colonies of Africa which provided the “sacred soil of freedom... [where] [n]o matter what may be his rank, or how anxious his friends may be, to have him treated with respect, or ... to offer him the civilities to which gentlemen is [sic] entitled.”¹²⁹

The MSCS and its journal did not manufacture such stories as a persuasive tool to swell their emigration numbers. The experience of free African Americans remained horrible for many years past the end of the Civil War and the ratification of Constitutional protections. The reality of this experience even began to wear on the most ardent abolitionists who spent years denouncing the colonization plan. One such opponent, James G. Birney, well known abolitionist publisher of Ohio, reluctantly supported colonization in 1852 due to the discriminatory reality of the United States. Similarly to the MSCS, Birney began to see the condition of the free African American population as unendurable. Birney believed that American society had demonstrated its highest level of affection for the African American population. Even in the North, the population had not conquered its prejudices despite the general disdain for slavery. If the North had not overcome these such prejudices, than free African Americans could not hope for them to overcome them any time soon. Birney believed that this persecution would endure because “it must be remembered that the ‘oppressor’ here has ‘power,’ and that he has all the effective and official departments of the government on his side... and

¹²⁹ “Colonization –Mr. Latrobe’s Address (From the American),” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 5 No. 21 (February 1851): 331. “*Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851): 56-7. “Effects of Northern Abolitionism At Home,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 22 (April 1845): 351. “Berkshire Medical Institute,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 3 No. 16 (October 1846): 242-3. “Arguments for African Colonization,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 4 No. 20 (February 1849): 316. This article re-emphasized that in the United States, “he finds that he is not a man but a nigger.” “The Liberians in the United States,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 12 (June 1844): 179-80. “Mr. Birney’s Address to the Free Colored People of the United States,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 12 (May 1852): 180.

they will proceed as far as they may think necessary to accomplish their purpose.”¹³⁰

Consequently, Birney expressed that Liberia posed the only option in which the African American community could attain the equality which he desired in the United States. In other words, work for equality remained a fruitless pursuit in the United States.¹³¹

Despite the overall low numbers of emigrants, some free African Americans did enlist in the plan of the MSCS. According to historian Richard Hall, some free African Americans chose the African colonies in order to pursue a duality which they could not achieve in the United States. In the African colonies, the free African American emigrant felt that they could “be both Negro and American, without being cursed or spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face.”¹³²

These emigrants traveled to Africa in order to gain the opportunities of cheap or free land, economic opportunity, freedom in worship, and the betterment of future generations, similarly to the European immigrants of the same era.¹³³ As the Civil War

¹³⁰ Gerrit Smith, a friend of Birney and fellow abolitionist, commented after Birney’s address that Birney’s views were the result of his poor health and were entitled to little weight. The MSCS, however, jump upon the address as an abolitionist justification of their motivation to removal free African American from such an oppressive environment. “Mr. Birney’s Address to the Free Colored People of the United States,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 12 (May 1852): 177-81, 191.

¹³¹ . “Mr. Birney’s Address to the Free Colored People of the United States,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 12 (May 1852): 177-81, 191. “Even James G. Birney, the well known abolitionist, is out in a pamphlet addressed to the Free Colored People of the United States, advising them to emigrate to Liberia.” “Colonization v. Abolition (From the Frederick Herald),” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 10 (March 1852): 156. As time wore on, some abolitionists began to see the merits of various aspects of the colonization movement. For example, *The North Star*, a well known abolitionist paper, ran by Fredrick Douglass stated the introduction of Christianity and the work of the colonization movement to close the shore of Africa to the Slave Trade was “an aspect of Colonization we heartily concur and delight in.” “African Colonization (From the North Star)” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 5 No. 10 (April 1850): 2.

¹³² Richard L. Hall, *On Africa’s Shore: A History of Maryland in Liberia, 1834 -1857* (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2003): xvii-xix.

¹³³ Douglass warned the new found subscribers to the colonization scheme to revisit the nefarious intentions of the colonization scheme as a means of truly evaluating the benefits of submitting to the scheme. Dr. Hall supposes that Frederick Douglass and his talents would actually benefit his race more in Liberia, than the work which he performed in the United States to perpetuate a state of oppression “without a show of hope that things will become better.” Dr. James Hall, “Frederick Douglass and Augustus Washington,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851): 60-1.

approached and sectional tensions continued to rise throughout the nation, the colonization plan became slightly more appealing to the free African American population. Augustus Washington, one of the strongest African American proponents of colonization, exerted his voice in 1851 through the press. He argued that there was no higher cause for a free African American than to convince other African Americans to emigrate to the African Colonies in order to gain the rights denied them in the United States.¹³⁴ In addition, Martin Delaney, a former African American anti-colonizationist, promoted the general appeal of colonization for African Americans because the United States had become a contradiction in the belief and application of its governmental principles. Recognizing the permanence of racism in America, the free African American population found “[themselves] the very same position in relation to our Anti-slavery friends, as we do in relation to the Pro-Slavery part of the community.” The reality of the free African Americans had become so bleak, according to Delaney, that discrimination in the United States permeated even those groups dedicated to the elevation of the African American community, the immediate abolitionists.¹³⁵

Such discrimination occurring compelled African American community leaders of Maryland like Rev. Benjamin Jenifer, Thomas Fuller, Thomas Tilghman, and William

¹³⁴ Washington actually believed that the oppression present in the United States actually provided the benefit because “... this powerful Republic, by her oppression and injustice to one class of people, will plant in Africa a religion and morality more pure, and liberty more universal than it has yet been the lot of any people to enjoy.” Augustus Washington, “African Colonization; By a Man of Color (From the Christian Statesman)” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 4 (September 1851): 50-2.

¹³⁵ Delaney was specifically mad about the unwillingness of the white leaders of the abolitionist movement to continue overlook African American candidates for leadership roles in the organizations as they needed to be filled. Delaney believed that this lack of integration in even the abolition movement demonstrated that the very people looking to end slavery were not fully committed to the idea of equality and citizenship for African Americans. Martin Delany, “The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States,” *African –American Social & Political Thought, 1850-1920*. Howard Brotz, ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1995): 45. Much of Delaney’s change in heart from abolition to colonization resulted from his removal from Harvard Medical School in 1851 due to the petition of a student body unwilling to attend school with African American students. Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality*, 124-126.

Pindle to investigate the African colonies and return with favorable reports. Even Frederick Douglass admitted in 1851 that the colonization scheme had developed more friends amongst the free African American population. Furthermore, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* reported in 1852 that an African American association in New York City, representing one-third of the population, had begun to appeal to the white population for its monetary and legislative support of Liberian colonization.¹³⁶ In the final decade prior to the Civil War, interest increased as national events caused much of the free African American community to panic about a return to slavery. Following the *Dred Scott* Decision, more free African Americans expressed interest or participated in the colonization plan as the slaveholders of Maryland held a convention in which they mapped out more extensive controls on the free African American population. John Brown's Raid in 1859 and the impending war produced newspaper reports throughout Maryland that African Americans emigrating out of the state. Consequently, a larger portion of the free African American population began to embrace the legitimacy of the colonization plan as sectional tensions and discrimination became more pronounced throughout the country.¹³⁷

Nevertheless, the majority of the free African American population in Maryland and the United States refused to participate in the emigration plan of either the MSCS or the ACS. In 1852, a free African American Conference on colonization held in Baltimore demonstrated the range of arguments within the free African American

¹³⁶ Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 5-6. The journal remains non-descript about the actual name of the association, however, they do report that this association is appealing to all races, professions, etc. to contribute to their newly focused cause of colonization. "The Tables Turned – Appeal of the Colored People to the Whites on Colonization," *Maryland Colonization Society* 6 No. 10 (March 1852): 154.

¹³⁷ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 372-7.

population, especially in Maryland. The convention called upon and received delegations from free African American communities from across the state of Maryland. In essence, the African American leaders of Maryland called the colonization conference because the entire community recognized that their condition and experiences in Maryland and throughout the United States had deteriorated to a very low level. Consequently, the object of the conference “was to consult for the good of the colored race.”¹³⁸ During the conference, the members discussed many issues and problems of their experience, including increased European immigration, lack of political and social rights, and the relative failure of political action to resolve these problems. By the end of the convention, the delegates acknowledged the legitimacy of a colonization plan and resolved that Liberia existed as the only legitimate and permanent home of a successful emigrant. Nevertheless, the members made it adamantly clear that “the purpose of the conference is neither to counsel or deny the act of emigration... and that person can only be the judge as to whether emigration holds the key to their and their family’s happiness.”¹³⁹ Despite the success which the MSCS drew from the convention’s resolution, the activities of the conference demonstrated the clear resistance to colonization in much of the free African American population of Maryland.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ “Free Colored People’s Convention,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 14 (August 1852): 227.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, 229.

¹⁴⁰ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 357-9. The convention drew delegations from the following counties; Kent, Dorchester, Caroline, Northwest, Frederick, Harford, and Talbot. In addition, delegations came from East and Northeast communities in Baltimore. In terms of treatment, John H. Walker of Baltimore argued that the United States no longer lived under the same principles that inspired the Constitution and that Maryland’s legislation had “resulted in oppression to the colored race, each consecutive session.” The MSCS saw the conference as a general success because the conference discussed the legitimacy of colonization as a solution to the woes. During the conference, the members discussed the merits of the various destinations including the West Indies and Canada. Liberia was seen as the only possible destination to provide permanence. “Free Colored People’s Convention,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 14 (August 1852): 226-230. Phillips explains that the activity of the Baltimore delegation to the convention was so intimidating and disruptive that several delegates resigned the

As reported in the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, the convention itself attracted a large opposition within and outside of the meeting place. In the streets around the Hall, the author described “several hundred evil disposed and riotous blacks congregated, and nothing but the presence of a body of police prevented a general melee.” Within the meeting hall, a large and rowdy group of anti-colonizationists generally disrupted and shouted down various arguments and resolutions promoting colonization. “[A]mong some one or two hundred lookers-on the worst behavior was exhibited ever noticed at any public assemblage... [which] a few resolute officers could have filled the watch-house in a short time with the most deserving characters.”¹⁴¹ The *Maryland Colonization Journal* attributed much of the opposition to a false report that the MSCS actually organized and paid for the convention to occur. Despite the report, actual membership of the convention presented opposition to resolutions that even suggested the idea of colonization in Africa. F. Harris, a representative of Baltimore moved to strike a resolution that recommended Liberia as the place of emigration because it was contrary to his own as well as his constituents’ wishes. Consequently, F. Harris proposed that the convention reveal itself to the waiting population not as a discussion on solutions to the problems of free African Americans but rather a convention promoting emigration and

convention and left the hall. Christopher Phillips, “The Dear Name of Home: Resistance to Colonization in Antebellum Baltimore,” *Maryland Historical Magazine* 91 No. 2 (Summer 1996): 198. The Convention wanted to make it quite clear that any plan of colonization needed to acknowledge that a free African American choosing to emigrate would need adequate time in which they could properly prepare themselves for colonization. Gu, *Maryland’s Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 377. A successful African American Convention wholly supporting the promise of colonization in Liberia occurred in 1851 in Cambridge, Maryland. At that convention, the group pronounced that “thence to the subject of emigration to Liberia as their only hope of salvation form [sic] their present degraded condition.” “Colored Convention Meeting (From the Cambridge Chronicle)” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 1 (June 1851): 6-7.

¹⁴¹“Free Colored People’s Convention,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 14 (August 1852): 228.

colonization.¹⁴² The conventions demonstrated “[n]o issue at once divided and galvanized Baltimore’s black community more than colonization.”¹⁴³

In general, this activity of the colonization opposition at the 1852 convention represented the relationship between the free African American population and the MSCS. Despite the overt commitment of the MSCS to the end of slavery in Maryland, many painted the MSCS in the same light as the ACS as a tool of the slaveholders of Maryland to remove free African Americans to secure their chattel property. The actions of the MSCS did provide justification for such a belief. Needing the support of wealthy slaveholders throughout the state, the MSCS faltered in its commitment to emancipation. As previously described, the rhetoric of the MSCS presented little incentive for free African Americans to believe in the MSCS’s commitment. At many points, the MSCS discussed the danger of a growing free African American population, the economic threat of African Americans stealing jobs from the white population, statements about the permanent state of inequality in the United States, threats of compulsive emigration, and the use of insulting terms toward African Americans in general. In 1884, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* fully admitted that pro-colonization publications “held toward the coloured[sic] people a language which degrades them in their own esteem and begets a

¹⁴² On various levels, this very report demonstrates the general disdain for the MSCS within the free African American Community in Baltimore. “Free Colored People’s Convention,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 14 (August 1852), 228-30. The Baltimore Convention was actually quite representative of subsequent colonization conventions throughout the country. At the “National Emigration Convention of Colored People, held at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1854, the convention was not necessarily against the idea of colonization if they could control the process. As in Baltimore, this Convention was worried that the white colonization societies were a veiled attempt to remove the free African American population without a real concern as to the destination of the population or the ability to survive upon arrival. “The Cleveland Convention, Colonization in Ohio,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 18 (November 1854): 283-5.

¹⁴³ Phillips argued that despite the general and uniform African American opposition to the colonization plan, the 1852 convention represented an attempt amongst some African American leaders to rekindle support for the plan. In general, this attempt was a failure. Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 213.

feeling of resentment.”¹⁴⁴ Furthermore, the contemporary reports of the African colonies described the environment as hell on earth with exotic diseases, with dangerous and murderous native populations, and an unbearable climate. In comparison, many free African Americans found Maryland, especially Baltimore, quite tolerable despite the racism and oppression. Finally, the free African American community noticed the white complexion of the leadership of the MSCS. The very majority of support developing in the white community presented enough evidence for the free African American community to avoid the colonization plan of the MSCS. Therefore, a majority of the African American community found it quite difficult to believe the promises and benefits of the African colonies, which the MSCS espoused.¹⁴⁵

Lacking access to traditional politics, African American opponents to the MSCS and its colonization plan thwarted the attempts of the society to gain emigrants. Much of the opposition to the MSCS developed within the African American community of Baltimore, whose view on colonization the MSCS and its representatives were well aware. Much of this opposition developed into a complete refusal to cooperate with the MSCS. Following the plans and activities of the MSCS, African American opponents openly challenged or physically intimidated white or African American speakers supporting colonization, actively educated the African American community on the evils

¹⁴⁴ Hall, *On Afric's Shores*, xv. The journal split the responsibility for the lack of emigrants between the language described in the paragraph and the work of anti-slavery societies who impressed them with erroneous opinions. “The African Missions,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 2 No. 7 (January 1844): 98.

¹⁴⁵ The MSCS had to work constantly to fight the image of the African colonies, which they believed the Abolitionist had created. Stopak, “The Maryland State Colonization Society,” 289, 294-5. At its inception, the MSCS needed to qualify its commitment to the end of slavery in order to maintain the sustained financial commitment of the Maryland General Assembly, dominated by slaveowners. Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 270. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 201-5. This will be explored in more depth in the coming paragraphs, however, many free African Americans did enjoy considerable liberties due to a lack of law enforcement of oppressive measures and some access to employment. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 188.

of the plan, and contradicted and denied the promises of the MSCS through their own oratory and literary pamphlets. The reaction of free African Americans demonstrated a high level of organization and cooperation with abolitionist groups through its development and use of an informational and communication network emanating from Baltimore City into the surrounding counties. Discovering the itinerary of MSCS traveling agents, the African American community would send out its own agents to refute the claims of the MSCS and encourage hostility toward its agents. The first traveling agent of the MSCS, Robert S. Finley, immediately found the Western Shore of the Chesapeake Bay, especially Baltimore, extremely hostile to the colonization plan. Finley, who “was dismayed by the attitude of black residents in the region,” directly attributed this hostility to those African American emissaries from Baltimore. Due to the work of the African American community in Baltimore, the MSCS would eventually suspend all attempts to gain emigrants from the western shore of the Chesapeake.

The free African American community did not limit its relentless activities to the representatives of the MSCS. In areas where the MSCS successfully gained emigrants, this network sent representatives in order to convince the would be emigrant to renounce their commitment, going so far as to label emigrants as traitors to their race.¹⁴⁶ The rhetoric of the anti-colonizationists convinced a majority of the free African American that African colonization remained a dangerous and careless choice. Consequently, the free African American community demanded testimonials and evaluations of the

¹⁴⁶ One example of the refusal to work with the MSCS occurred in 1842, when Rev. William Watkins flat out refused to participate in an function with regard to the Colonization Convention that was occurring in Baltimore. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 176-8. Phillips argues that Baltimore’s free African American community was overwhelming poor, which created the economic commonality and solidarity to help it weather the storms of the 19th century with the later development of institutions and group identification. This would be the base from which the African American community would fight the colonization movement. Phillips, *Freedom’s Ports*, 4. Phillips, “The Dear Name of Home,” 181-3, 197. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 109.

emigration experience from actual emigrants in order to counteract the claims of the anti-colonizationists. Consequently, the MSCS actively sought written testimonials of the experienced emigrants in Cape Palmas and Liberia. The MSCS went so far as to bring back emigrants to the United States as agents to convince doubting free African Americans to emigrate. Despite the success of the MSCS to gain the testimonials and lectures of emigrants, many of these volunteers found that their messages fell upon deaf ears.¹⁴⁷ As the MSCS published more letters and provided speakers, it began to tire of such efforts. Despite the demands for such information, the free African American community disregarded or disbelieved any reports. Consequently, the MSCS found it difficult “to produce conviction upon their minds, that there is such a place as Liberia, and a government administered wholly by colored men.”¹⁴⁸ In the end, the black anti-colonizationist won the battle for the minds of free African Americans against the MSCS as its plan.

Finally, the free African American experience in Maryland and especially Baltimore remained a tolerable one despite the existence of oppression and political restriction. On the one hand, the African American community developed and maintained a viable political identity in Maryland despite lacking traditional political

¹⁴⁷ Many emigrants went on the journey with specific tokens which they would enclose in their letters home in order to demonstrate that their letter was the genuine article. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 102. The demand for testimonials and evaluations was expected of any organization which promoted the colonization plan. In 1848, the Thirty-first report of the ACS recognized that African American conventions in New York and Illinois wanted representatives of the African American community to investigate the possibility of Liberia is legitimate. “Extract from the Thirty-first Annual Report of the American Colonization Society,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 4 No. 9 (March 1848): 149-50. Rev. Johns Seys argued that the discussion of his experience in Liberia should have convinced the free African American community that Liberia was the place that God designated Africa. In contrast, the free African American community was more interested in “company of exotics... who can exhibit a few extra flourishes on the fiddle, or who can touch the keys of a piano with a little more ordinary pretension, then it is that we all agog.” “Rev. John Seys of Baltimore (From the Democratic Expositor of Springfield, Ohio)” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 19 (December 1854): 292-294.

“African American Correspondence” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 7 No. 3 (August 1853): 33-34.

outlets, such as voting and political office. Many white officeholders and community leaders listened to the free African American community because of the reliance upon the labor of free African Americans, even with the influx of European immigration. Even though African Americans lost many of their higher paying professions, Maryland's increased population provided many other opportunities for African Americans to remain economically stable. In fact, historian Frank Towers argues that some upper class white employers preferred to maintain their African American workforce because it limited the growing white working force, which actually possessed access to voting and political office. As the free African American community recognized this power, some members accessed and possessed certain items which the entire community associated with affluence, including: fancy carriages and the latest fashion. Furthermore, the African American community reinvested some of the earnings in the center of the political activity, the African American church.¹⁴⁹

In order to achieve such success, the African American community utilized an organization scheme centered on their church. As Christopher Phillips argued, free African American communities in the antebellum period represented "active and often conscious agents of change in the shifting social landscape" at the individual and institutional level.¹⁵⁰ African American churches provided the first organized political activity of the community in the post-Revolutionary era. As many free African Americans encountered institutional racism in white churches, free African Americans formed their own congregations. With the organization of the congregation intact with a

¹⁴⁹ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 208, 344-5. During the caulker riots of the late 1850s, some shipyard owners continued to support and employ African American caulkers because it would prevent the enlargement of the poor to middle class working class of Baltimore who could vote and had different political agendas. Frank Towers, "Job Busting at Baltimore Shipyards," 249-50.

¹⁵⁰ Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 1.

recognized and respected leader in the pastor, the church remained the vehicle for economic, social, political and religious action. In these churches, these activists “succeeded in bringing together from all parts of the city people with diverse occupations and backgrounds.”¹⁵¹ In addition to these churches, they developed institutions such as self-help societies and schools which expounded the message of African American self-improvement and reliance through hard work and sacrifice. Consequently, the free African American communities of Maryland, especially Baltimore, demonstrated the ability to be internally divided yet unified through vehicles such as the Church when faced with problems that required such action.¹⁵² In the colonization movement, the free African Americans found a cause through which to unify and defend the political power which they could wield.

Despite the strong presence of racial discrimination in Maryland, the actual experience of free African Americans remained tolerable in the antebellum era. As previously described, free African Americans experienced harsh levels of prejudice, oppression, and legislative restriction. Nevertheless, many free African Americans preferred their known experience in the United States to the unknown in Liberia. In Maryland, free African Americans remained an urban caste. Even though Baltimore never demonstrated a strong reliance on slavery, its experience in regards to slavery demonstrated high levels of autonomy for self-hire term slaves or runaway slaves which lived there. As Baltimore industrialized and manumissions in the city increased, the

¹⁵¹ Following the revolution, the Methodist Church drew a large portion of free African Americans into their congregations. As the 19th century moved on, the Methodist Church instituted racial restraints including segregation of seating, removal of African American decision making, and the refusal to allow burial of African American dead in Methodist cemetery. Consequently, the free African American community decided that independent action provided the means by which to legitimately gain the proper religious identity. Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 125, 143.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 3.

growing free African American community continued to live a relative autonomous lifestyle. In the face of the great economic growth of the early 19th century, white residents of Baltimore marginally paid attention to social controls such as the display of freedom papers, slave labor badges, or the 1794 prohibition of self hire.¹⁵³ As a whole, Baltimore's proximity to free states, its independence from slave labor cash crops, and a large non slave dependent electorate produced a relatively benign attitude toward the institution of slavery within the city. As the sectional tensions erupted over the antebellum period, the white population grew more distrustful and oppressive toward the free African Americans inside and outside of Baltimore. Nevertheless, slaves and free African Americans developed a strong confidence in their future in Baltimore as individuals and a collective group. In Baltimore, the free African American community found employment opportunities, proximity to their families, and the knowledge that their existence trumped the experience of a slave. In the end, this known and guaranteed experience provided better opportunities than the unknown fulfillment of promises in Liberia. Consequently, many decided to stay.¹⁵⁴

Faced with an unresponsive target audience, the MSCS provides a unique example of a successful failure. The MSCS expressly maintained the goal of complete and voluntary emigration of Maryland African Americans, free and enslaved, to the African colonies. In the light of this expressed goal, the MSCS failed miserably securing only a total of 1250 volunteers over a 30 year period. These low numbers represent the failure of the MSCS to recognize that with the proper approach, equality and cooperation

¹⁵³ Phillips estimates that over 50% of the free African American population of the south lived in urban situations just like Baltimore, which possessed the nation's largest free African American community. Phillips, *Freedom's Port*, 2, 32.

¹⁵⁴ The high rates of manumissions during the antebellum period demonstrate the benign attitude in Maryland toward slavery. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 23. Phillips, 81.

between the races could occur in the United States. Nevertheless, the evaluation of the MSCS activities should not end with the total number of emigrants to Africa.¹⁵⁵ Despite the failure in its purpose, the MSCS demonstrated various successes in the maintenance of the financial support of the Maryland General Assembly, the establishment of a new nation in Africa, the running of a joint stock trading company, and the development of independent transportation to support emigration.¹⁵⁶ Differentiating from the ACS, the MSCS continuously maintain the goal of eradication of slavery in Maryland. Consequently, the greatest success of the MSCS related to their ability to exist and maintain a presence for so long. This presence would provide the safe haven within which Maryland could discuss slavery and abolition while slowly moving to a political mindset free from a reliance on slavery.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁵ Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society," 292, 298.

¹⁵⁶ Campbell. *Maryland in Africa*, 184.

¹⁵⁷ Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 280.

Persistent Presence: The Maryland Colonization Society and the Coming of the Civil War

Arriving at the President Street station on April, 19, 1861, Union troops from Massachusetts and Pennsylvania began to march through Baltimore in order to catch a train on the other side of town. None of the Union troops would make this next train. Over the following four hours, Baltimore erupted into violent action against the Union army which produced the first casualties of the Civil War in that city. During this time, “a crowd of a thousand jeered, set up barricades, and physically assaulted Massachusetts and Pennsylvania volunteers as they tried to move along Pratt Street.”¹⁵⁸ By the end of the altercation, the municipal government of Baltimore declared armed neutrality as the state of Maryland appeared closer to secession.¹⁵⁹ Only 9 months later, the Maryland General Assembly contradicted Baltimore’s proclamation with the duty “to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States.”¹⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Augustus W. Bradford, the newly elected governor, reaffirmed that Maryland “can come to no other conclusion than that for the people to declare unconditionally for the Union.”¹⁶¹ The “Pratt Street Riots” marked the end of a decade plagued with economic, social, and political turmoil for every state in the country. Maryland’s decision to remain in the

¹⁵⁸ Frank Towers, “Secession in an Urban Context: Municipal Reform and the Coming of the Civil War in Baltimore,” in *From Mobtown to Charm City: New Perspectives on Baltimore’s Past*. Jessica Elfenbein, John R. Breihan, Thomas L. Hollowak eds. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), 107.

¹⁵⁹ The people of Baltimore directed their violence at Union volunteers of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts on their way to protect the nation’s capital. This is famously recognized as the Riot of 1861, and many historians have interpreted this action as representative of the true Southern leanings of Maryland prior to the Civil War. The subsequent actions of Maryland through its legislature which had multiple opportunities to join the Confederacy painted a rather different picture. *Ibid*.

¹⁶⁰ “State Secession debates: Maryland: reel 8: nos. 42-45,” UMCP HBK Maryland Room Maryland Microfilm JK3816 .S76

¹⁶¹ House of Delegates, “Preamble and Resolutions, Inaugural Address of Hon. Augustus W. Bradford, Governor of Maryland; Delivered in the Senate Chamber, Before the Senate and House of Delegates, January 8, 1862.” (Annapolis: Thomas J. Wilson, 1862).

Union grew out of its own sectional debate between the agrarian slaveholding sections of Southern and Eastern Maryland with the growing industrial powerhouses of Baltimore and the northwest counties. With a renewed interest in its plan, the MSCS (MSCS) played its most important role, as it had played for the 20 previous years. The MSCS provided the appropriate forum and compromising solution in which Maryland residents could legitimately discuss the possible end of slavery. By the end of the decade, the continued presence and activity of the MSCS significantly reflected the attitude in Maryland toward slavery and its subsequent support of the Union in the Civil War.¹⁶²

In the 1850s, Maryland experienced constant political turmoil between forces which represented the political leanings of the North and the South. The population of Maryland represented almost every population category which one found throughout the rest of the country. Consequently, the various political ideologies established some level of political relevance in Maryland.¹⁶³ Maryland could have developed into a heated and violent battleground for the slavery debate. Nevertheless, Maryland's political rhetoric never transformed into any sustained physical violence as experienced in "Bloody Kansas."¹⁶⁴ The MSCS's mere presence as a statewide force and the rhetoric of its leadership allowed Maryland to have an appropriate and potential solution that could appease the interests of opposing views. Penelope Campbell, MSCS historian, argues that the MSCS and other colonization societies "proved too inconsequential to affect slavery either by removing the hated free black class or by strengthening the bonds of

¹⁶² Anita Aids Gu, *Maryland's Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery, 1850-1864* (New York & London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 280.

¹⁶³ Jean H. Baker. *The Politics of Continuity: Maryland Political Parties from 1858 to 1870* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1973), 8-12.

¹⁶⁴ . In Kansas, warfare developed between the anti-slavery and pro-slavery factions who battled for the territory. John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 215

servitude.”¹⁶⁵ The Maryland General Assembly, however, continued its sustained financial support for the colonization movement which simultaneously worked for the end of slavery while advocating the state’s prominent role in any decision about the protection and continuation of slavery.¹⁶⁶

The first political struggle of the 1850s developed out of the State Constitutional debate and its subsequent destruction of the political party system in Maryland. As Maryland revised its State Constitution, factions developed based upon regional loyalties instead of political association. The constituencies of Baltimore City and the northwest counties looked to expand their representation in the state legislature while Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore looked to protect their controlling interests. Consequently, *The Sun* commented that the voter’s choice in the 1851 Municipal Election needed to rely on the character of the candidate and not the corrupting influence of party affiliation. The deterioration of political ties spread the following year when Maryland denied a Whig candidate its electoral votes for the first time in four presidential elections. This election marked the dissolution of the Whig party on a local and national level, leaving over 35,000 Whigs with no political alliance. This collapse presented the Democratic Party with the opportunity to dominate Maryland politics. This decade, however, would demonstrate an overall regional shift in party allegiance. In the counties of Southern Maryland, former Whigs joined the Democratic Party. Meanwhile, the

¹⁶⁵ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 242.

¹⁶⁶ “General Report,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, Baltimore, February 1850 5 No.9, 130-1. Stopak, 282-3. Gu, *Maryland’s Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 270. In 1854, Senator Stephen Douglas proposed the Kansas Nebraska Act. In effect, it was supposed to be a compromising piece of legislation which would repeal the Missouri Compromise and allow the citizens of the new states of Kansas and Nebraska to determine through their state legislature for their acceptance of slavery. John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 215.

traditionally Democratic dominated areas around Baltimore gave their allegiance to the emerging Know Nothing Party.¹⁶⁷

As the decade progressed through important elections for the nation, state, and Baltimore, the Know Nothings developed a strong political presence within the areas with economic leanings of the North, including Baltimore and the Northwestern counties. Over the span of the decade, the Know Nothings won the mayoral election in the city of Baltimore, the governorship of Maryland, the lottery commissioner, a temporary majority in the Maryland General Assembly, and the presidential electoral votes of the state for Millard Fillmore.¹⁶⁸ The American Party or the Know Nothing Party emerged with a nativist agenda in response to the rapid increase in European immigration. By 1850, the influx of German and Irish immigrants, who were overwhelming Catholic, represented 11 percent of the population, and the Know Nothings classified them as the “paupers and criminals of Europe.”¹⁶⁹ With the rapid influx of predominately Catholic immigrants to the city, the Know Nothings developed their appeal through opposition to public funding

¹⁶⁷ Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 3-5. “The Municipal Election,” *The Sun*, 8 October 1851. “Satisfaction with the Presidential Result – The National Whigs and General Pierce – Rebuke of Seward Faction – The Webster Influence in Massachusetts – Cause of Scott’s Defeat – The Prosperity of the Country,” *The Sun*, 5 November 1852. “Political Parties,” *The Sun*, 18 August 1853.

¹⁶⁸ Millard Fillmore won the electoral vote of Maryland in 1856 when the Know Nothings won the mayoral election and a majority of the city council in Baltimore. In 1857, the Know Nothings won the election of governor, lottery commissioner, and the majority in the Maryland General Assembly. “The Election,” *The Sun*, 12 October 1854. *Clipper*, 5 November 1856. Maryland State Archives, OR-23-11-83. See also, Benjamin Tuska. *Know Nothingism in Baltimore 1854-1860*. (New York: 111 Broadway, N/A), 16. Originally printed in the Catholic Historical Review of July 1925 and obtained from Towson University. “The Election Yesterday,” *The Sun*, 9 October 1856. See also, Tuska, *Know Nothingism in Baltimore*, 15. Laurence Frederick Schmeckebier. *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland*. (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1973), 71. See also W. Darrell Overdyke *The Know Nothing Party in the South* (Binghamton: Vail Ballou Press: Louisiana State University Press, 1955), 265.

¹⁶⁹ Baker, *The Politics of Continuity*, 6. Mayor’s Communication” *Clipper*, 22 January 1850. Maryland State Archives, OR-23-11-76. Between 1850 and 1860, the amount of Catholic churches doubled. The data set included under religion “Roman Catholic Churches, Total Value of Roman Catholic Churches,” at the Maryland County level. At this time, the Census did not have values for the city but did maintain the data for the county. U.S. Census Bureau, “The 1860 Census,” *Historical Census Browser*. (University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center) <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html>. [Accessed 12/03/2006].

of Catholic schools in addition to support for immigration restrictions and longer probation periods of naturalization.¹⁷⁰

Maryland Know Nothings achieved political success despite any bold stance on the issue of slavery. The Know Nothing political platform “represented a pro-Union distraction from pro-slavery and racial politics that both Northern and Southern Democrats increasingly stressed.”¹⁷¹ This platform diverted voting populations from the issue of slavery by concentrating on the growing “immigrant problem.” This desire to avoid extremism appealed to many white voters amongst the Maryland population. In 1850, the *Clipper* newspaper of Baltimore warned the southern radicals that their stance on slavery might lose Baltimore and Maryland’s support for the protection of their rights. Furthermore, the *Clipper* informed southern politicians that “Maryland will not assist –in any shape or form – to dissolve the Union nor will she join any Southern Confederacy.” In 1855, Henry Winter Davis, the most famous Maryland Know Nothing, clarified that the Know Nothings would not tolerate any agitation of the slavery issue in national politics.¹⁷² The Know Nothings hoped to defend the Union from the sectional fanatics of the southern Democratic Party and northern abolitionist movement. Coincidentally, the rise of the Know Nothing Party in Baltimore and the Northwestern counties of the

¹⁷⁰ The battle over the Kerney Bill galvanized the political support for the Know Nothing Party. This bill called for partial public funding of Catholic schools and a reevaluation of the use of the Bible in “public” schools. *Reasons for abandoning the old Whig and Democratic parties and united with the American Party./By a genuine Clay Whig.* (Baltimore: Mills & Cox, printers, 1856), 8. Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections Reading Room, Rare E 435. R29. Henry Winter Davis. *Principles and objects of the American Party.* (New York: s.n., 1855), 26-29. Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections Reading Room, Rare JK 2341 .D263. “Local Matters,” *The Sun*, 19 August 1853. Henry Winter Davis. *Principles and objects of the American Party.* (New York: s.n., 1855), 26-27. Maryland Historical Society, Special Collections Reading Room, Rare JK 2341 .D263. See also Carleton Beals. *Brass Knuckle Crusade: The Great Know Nothing Conspiracy: 1820-1860.* (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1960), 8

¹⁷¹ Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 5. Beals, *Brass Knuckle Crusade*, 13. Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland*, 62.

¹⁷² Southern Ultraism,” *Clipper*, 24 January, 1850. “Mr. Merrick’s Resolution,” *Clipper*, 8 January 1850. Maryland State Archives, OR-23-11-76 Henry Winter Davis, *The origin, principles, and purposes of the American Party.*, (S.I.:s.n., 1855). Maryland Historical Society, Rare JK 2341 .D262

Maryland occurred during a period in which the Maryland General Assembly recently renewed its financial support of the MSCS for 6 years at \$10,000 per annum.

The renewal of the Maryland General Assembly's support of colonization grew out of a revitalized interest in the colonization plan locally and nationally. Many papers across the state approved the decision of the Maryland General Assembly, including the *Planter*, *Port Tobacco Times*, *Baltimore American*, and *Frederick Examiner*. In the same year, MSCS eagerly watched the organization of a "Colored Convention on Colonization" in Baltimore, which many viewed as representing the growing appeal of colonization in the African American community. Furthermore, various states in the North renewed their support for the colonization plan, which "Maryland [had] done more, far more, than any State of the Union... [and] still maintains the cause." John Latrobe, the president of the MSCS, received the presidency of American Colonization Society in 1853. Latrobe's elevation to the national presidency started a period of increased cooperation between the MSCS and the ACS. This cooperation brought exciting developments, especially the construction of the *Mary Caroline Stevens*, whose sole purpose remained the transportation of emigrants to the colonies. With these events, the MSCS appeared to have exhibited a true ability to effectuate change for colonization in the near future. With this developing solution for slavery, the "people of Maryland [could] enjoy a total exemption from all agitation in regard to [the slavery issue]"¹⁷³ during the time of political change, which slavery should have defined. In other words,

¹⁷³ "Report of the Board of Managers of the Maryland State Colonization Society," *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 6 No. 9 (February 1852), 131.

the Know Nothings did not need to address or develop a solution to the slavery question.

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The free labor rhetoric of the MSCS and its provision of a gradual plan to end slavery made it quite appealing to the northern leanings of the Know Nothing Party. As early as the 1830s, publications such as the *Niles Register* recognized the natural struggle that would exist in Maryland between the coexisting free labor and slave labor systems. The *Niles Register* printed that “[c]ompetition with slave labor devalued all labor in Maryland which was detrimental to both white workers and employers in the state.”¹⁷⁵ At the time of the *Niles* argument, the colonization movement demonstrated support for the free labor system. Charles F. Mercer, a founding member of the ACS, argued in 1829 that free labor always demonstrated an economically cheaper and more efficient system which would check the advancement of slavery in the state. Dr. Eli Ayres, the first traveling agent of the MSCS, further stated that one of the most important goals of colonization related to the dominance of free labor in Maryland. Referencing its superiorly cultivated lands, Dr. Ayres argued that Harford County was “proof that free men, who felt an interest in their labors, were superior to slaves.”¹⁷⁶ The MSCS continued to support and develop this argument for a free labor system as a main aspect

¹⁷⁴ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 194-208. “Report of the Board of Managers of the Maryland State Colonization Society and the election of his Successor.” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 21 (February 1853), 323. “Resignation of the President of the Maryland State Col. Society and the election of his Successor,” *Maryland Colonization Journal* 6 No. 21 (February 1853), 320-1.

¹⁷⁵ Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 30. Christopher Phillips, *Freedom’s Port: The African American Community of Baltimore, 1790-1860* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 189.

¹⁷⁶ Dr. Eli Ayres utilized a lot of free labor rhetoric in his travels throughout Baltimore City and the Northwestern Counties. On these travels, Dr. Ayres sought the financial support and contributions of white citizens, not necessarily the commitment of African Americans to a colonization expedition. Campbell, *Maryland in Africa*, 24-25.

of its colonization program during the antebellum period.¹⁷⁷ Quoting from the *Spartansburg Express*, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* revealed that it was “glad to witness [the] evidence of the natural and inherent repugnance between free and slave labor.” Furthermore, John Latrobe looked to the not so distant future economic situation in which it would be cheaper in every line of work to have free white labor than the slave labor. The MSCS made a strong argument that only colonization would provide the legitimate means through which white free labor would gain control of each method of labor in the United States.¹⁷⁸

Despite the appeal of the MSCS message to members of the Know Nothing Party, the two groups never formed any official, political alliance. Furthermore, the establishment of any such official association would have prevented the effectiveness of the MSCS. According to historian Anita Gu, the MSCS “played such a significant role in Maryland’s antislavery activity by promoting a policy in which nonslaveowners and slaveowners could tolerate.” In other words, the MSCS appealed simultaneously to both the Know Nothings and the Democratic Party in Maryland. The MSCS gained the support of Know Nothings because colonization would entice slaveholders to manumit their slaves, rid Maryland of slavery, and develop a white free labor economy. Concurrently, the MSCS gained the support of Democrats who saw colonization as a means to rid the state of the free African American element, which undermined the

¹⁷⁷ Fox, *The American Colonization Society*, 23.

¹⁷⁸ “The Negro Mechanics – The Remedy (From the *Spartansburg Express*), *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 7 No. 16 (Sept. 1854), 255. Consequently, “[n]o American statement, then, dealing with the great interest of the country, now and for the future can longer look upon the African Colonization as a mere scheme of visionary philanthropy.” Latrobe, J.H.B. “Address of J.H.B. Latrobe, Esq., President of the American Colonization Society,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 7 No. 9 (Feb. 1854), 137.

productivity and sustainability of their chattel property.¹⁷⁹ The persistent presence of the MSCS and its growing role in the political climate of 1850s provided a common ground in which the voting public might legitimately discuss the slavery issue or ignore it all together. As border states, including Maryland, focused their attention upon the growing population of free African Americans, the MSCS provided the practical means through which to alleviate the state of its “perceived problem.”¹⁸⁰

The Democratic Party in Maryland experienced its own transition and re-organization during in the 1850s. Historian Jean Baker argues that the Democratic Party experienced such a shift in membership during this decade that it was difficult to find “pure” Democrats in the party by 1860. Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore emerged as the Democratic strongholds by the time of the Know Nothing’s acquisition of the Governor’s house in 1857. The Democratic Party responded to the slavery question as decidedly pro-slavery, however, the Maryland chapters found the slavery issue too divisive to emphasize it as it complete platform. Like the Know Nothings, the Democratic Party understood the need to focus on national issues concerning the preservation of the Union and the Constitution. The Democratic reclamation of political power relied on two major events in Maryland. First of all, the Democratic Party capitalized on the disorganization of and corruption in the Know Nothing Party. Furthermore, the events surrounding the John Brown Raid produced a fear amongst the white Marylanders concerning the spread of radical abolitionist thought. The Democratic

¹⁷⁹ Gu, *Maryland’s Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 280. Christopher Phillips, “The Dear Name of Home: Resistance to Colonization in Antebellum Baltimore,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 91 No. 2 (Summer, 1996), 185. In many parts of the country, a majority of Know Nothing organizations would merge primarily with the Republican Party. In fact, the Know Nothing Party found the weight of the slavery issue to much the further North the party attempted to maintain its influence. The Republican Party was dominated by free labor ideology. Foner, Eric, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 245-247.

¹⁸⁰ Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 352-3.

Party, however, misinterpreted this political victory as a referendum to protect the slaveholders of the state. In the following months, the Democrats failed to realize that the majority of Maryland's population opposed draconian laws to protect the slave interest of the state.¹⁸¹

The Democratic Party began to take back the political power of Maryland through its attack upon corrupt political tactics of the Know Nothing Party. Initially, the Know Nothing party relied on the overt use of violence. Following the 1856 and 1857 elections, *The Sun* reported on riotous activity around the polls during which "not only were people maimed but life was taken on several instances."¹⁸² In addition to the violent tactics in 1857, the Know Nothing Party orchestrated the reception and collection of illegal votes, the movement of poll centers, and the use of a marked ballot.¹⁸³ By the 1858 mayoral election, the Know Nothings replaced a show of force with practices of intimidation and enhanced levels of disorder.¹⁸⁴ Thomas Swann retained the position as the mayor of Baltimore while the Know Nothings retained their majority in the state legislature. The Democratic Party appeared powerless against the Know Nothings until their attempt to alter the State Constitution in 1858.¹⁸⁵ Fearful of Baltimore City

¹⁸¹ Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 5-23. Don E. Fehrenbacher, "Roger B. Taney and the Sectional Crisis." *Journal of Southern History*, 43, 4 (Nov. 1977): 557-565. David Grimsted. *American Mobbing, 1828-1861: Toward Civil War* (New York: Oxford Press, 1998), 219. Overdyke, *The Know Nothing Party in the South*, 209. McDonald, Lawrence Herbert. *Prelude to Emancipation: The Failure of the Great Reaction in Maryland, 1831-1850*. University of Maryland, Ph.D., 1974. History, 38.

¹⁸² "Local Matters," *The Sun*, 9 October 1856.

¹⁸³ A marked ballot allowed the mobs around the election offices to easily determine the decisions of the voters. If an incorrectly marked ballot approached, they would have little success in the reception of their vote. Tuska, *Know Nothingism in Baltimore*, 15-18.

¹⁸⁴ Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party in Maryland*, 97.

¹⁸⁵ Many believed that the activity of the Know Nothings represented a power grab by the city of Baltimore to incorporate an abolitionist/Republican political regime in the state of Maryland. Many feared the expansion of political power in the city. Frank Towers, "Secession in an Urban Context: Municipal Reform and the Coming of the Civil War in Baltimore," in *From Mobtown to Charm City: New Perspectives on Baltimore's Past*. Jessica Elfenbein, John R. Breihan, Thomas L. Hollowak eds. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), 95

claiming more representation in the General Assembly, an attack on the Know Nothing party materialized outside of the city under the guise of election and municipal reform against the overt and undemocratic tactics of the Know Nothing Party. Under the banner of reform, the Democratic Party regained the state legislature in the election of 1859. The Maryland General Assembly replaced the mayor of Baltimore with an appointed board of commissioners as the head of police. Without the means to control the police, the Know Nothings lost the ability to control the election. With election reform as the centerpiece of their campaign, the Democratic Party reclaimed the Maryland General Assembly and the City of Baltimore.¹⁸⁶

Frank Towers argues that the actions of the Democratic Party in Baltimore became interwoven with the advancement of slavery and state's rights. The election of the 1859 Democratic majority followed John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry in October. The resulting mass hysteria hit every single part of Maryland and even caused the Baltimore press to end its traditional silence on the slavery issue. Nicholas G. Penniman argues that the John Brown Raid motivated the press "to cover the story in remarkable depth and breadth."¹⁸⁷ In addition, the daily press began to address the growing implications of such an event for the nation, including the potential problem with the ideals of the Republican Party.¹⁸⁸ In the midst of this environment, the Democrats planned to limit the power of the pro-Union working class while advancing the agenda of the wealthy Southern sympathizers. In essence, the Democratic Party believed that they

¹⁸⁶ William Wright. *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States*. (Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson Press, 1973), 23. Grimsted, *American Mobbing*, 229. Schmeckebier, *History of the Know Nothing Party*, 103-113.

¹⁸⁷ *The Sun* actually devoted 26 columns and a single reporter to the story. Nicholas Penniman, "Baltimore's Daily Press and Slavery, 1857-1860," *Maryland Historical Society* 99, 4 (Winter, 2004), 504-505.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

could address and permanently end the slavery issue through legislation. Nevertheless, white Marylanders, encouraged by the persistent presence of the MSCS, soon demonstrated that their support of the Democratic Party did not reflect a desire to permanently protect slavery within the state. Through its work to promote the colonization option and to oppose this Democratic legislation, the MSCS continued to maintain a moderate stance through which the state could discuss an acceptable solution to slavery and the free African American issue.¹⁸⁹

Following the 1859 election, the unofficially dubbed “John Brown Legislature” possessed such a Democratic majority that it could practically pass any legislation. Furthermore, the Democratic Party, under the leadership of Curtis M. Jacobs, an Eastern Shore planter with over 200 slaves, controlled the Committee on Colored Population, which retained the regulatory power over the MSCS. Immediately, the Democratic Party successfully passed legislation which limited the potential influence of abolitionism in the state. Weary of the growing radicalism of Congressman Henry Winter Davis, the John Brown Legislature passed a law forbidding any Maryland Congressman from electing a Radical Republican for the Speaker of the House. In addition, the General Assembly forbid any Maryland Congressman from supporting Hinton Helper’s 1857 work *The Impending Crisis of the South*, which sought to prove that slavery had degraded

¹⁸⁹ Frank Towers, “Secession in an Urban Context: Municipal Reform and the Coming of the Civil War in Baltimore,” in *From Mobtown to Charm City: New Perspectives on Baltimore’s Past*. Jessica Elfenbein, John R. Breihan, Thomas L. Hollowak eds. (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 2002), 94, 115. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 76-7. On October 16, 1859, John Brown and his army of former slaves and free men (no more than 50 men) raided the federal arsenal at Harper’s Ferry, Virginia. John Brown’s raid had begun in Maryland. After a standoff, the federal troops overwhelmed John Brown. John Brown and most of his men were tried and hung. Franklin, John Hope, Alfred A. Moss, Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African American* 8th ed. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 216-7. Baltimore’s mass hysteria grew out of a raid on an African American’s caulker’s ball in which the caulkers possessed many pictures of the now dead John Brown and a bust inscribed with “The martyr – God bless him.” Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 207. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 352-3.

and impoverished southern whites.¹⁹⁰ These laws prevented any national association between Maryland and abolitionist behavior of the North. Nevertheless, Maryland's support for slavery-biased legislation soon waned as the Democratic Party proposed regulatory and restrictive legislation within the state of Maryland. The failure of the Democratic Party revealed not only the growing disagreement between nonslaveholders and slaveholders, but the internal inability of the slaveholders to express a single voice on the issue.¹⁹¹

The conflict between slaveholders and nonslaveholders slowly emerged in the development of the "Jacobs Bill" between 1858 and 1860. Based on the recommendation of the Committee on the Colored Population, the Maryland General Assembly authorized a statewide referendum to determine the fate of legislation, which would severely limit the choices and freedoms of the free African Americans in Maryland. Curtis M. Jacob, Chairman of the Committee on the Colored Population, described the legislation as necessary when "[t]he times portend evil to the civil liberties of the country, and all patriots should be on alert."¹⁹² This legislation developed out of the Eastern Shore Slaveholding Convention of 1858 in Kent County, which hoped to protect the slaveholding interest of Maryland against all adversaries "come from where they may."¹⁹³ During this convention, the representatives turned their attention to the problem of the

¹⁹⁰ The Democratic presence in the Maryland General Assembly was so strong that it achieved a 48% pass rate of all roll calls. Baker, *The Politics of Continuity*, 27-29.

¹⁹¹ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 82-3.

¹⁹² Curtis M. Jacob, *Speech of Col. Curtis M. Jacobs, on the free colored population of Maryland, delivered in the House of delegates, on the 17th of February, 1860* ([Annapolis, Printed by E. S. Riley, 1860](#)), 2. accessed 10/31/09 <http://www.archive.org/details/speechofcolcurti00jaco> .

¹⁹³ Eastern Shore Slaveholders' Convention and Negro Legislation in Maryland." *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 18 (Nov. 1858), 273 – 274.

free African American population and looked to the restoration of this free population to state of servitude.¹⁹⁴

In the following year, the Eastern Shore Convention successfully organized a statewide convention. This Statewide Convention resolved that the control of the free African American population only needed “the due enforcement of statutes on this subject already existing.” In contrast, the resolutions of the Eastern Shore Convention lost favor and emerged as the minority report. Nevertheless, the John Brown Raid of the following year propelled Curtis M. Jacobs and many likeminded men into the General Assembly. Consequently, the latent minority report of the statewide convention gained favor within in the Committee on the Colored Population. The Jacobs Bill passed the House of Delegates by a margin of 38 to 14 and the State Senate by a margin of 13 to 6. With this vote, Curtis M. Jacobs felt that the General Assembly provided an answer to a “question that involves the industrial and social interests of the State, and on that presents issues of the greatest magnitude to our people.” Curtis Jacobs, however, would soon find out that the reaction of Maryland in the wake of the John Brown Raid did not constitute a permanent change in the moderate approach of Maryland toward slavery and free African Americans.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ The discovery of the abolitionist John Bowers in Kent County caused the initial paranoia that organized the Eastern Shore slaveholders’ convention. A captured runaway slave identified John Bowers as the man from whom he received his forged papers. Mr. Bowers was tarred and feathered and forced to leave the county. In order to accomplish the protection of slavery, this Eastern Shore convention called for a statewide convention to devise a memorial on a system to accomplish the removal of free African Americans from their current situation. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 63- 67. The *Maryland Colonization Journal* recognized that the slaveholders of the Eastern Shore did have a legitimate complaint with regard to the great difficulties and severe losses that they experienced in the recent political turmoil. In addition the *MCJ* recognized that they had a right to protective legislation. However, they debated that the legislation must be practicable and the resolutions did not seem practical at all. “Eastern Shore Slaveholders’ Convention and Negro Legislation in Maryland.” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 9 No. 18 (Nov. 1858), 273 – 274. .

¹⁹⁵ The minority report proposed the essence of the Eastern Shore Convention, give the free African American the choice of remaining in the state as a slave or leave. In addition, it hoped to develop a

Marylanders voted overwhelming against the Jacob Bill in the 1860 election. This vote proved to Curtis Jacobs “that the people of Maryland [were] not fully aware to the great principles involved in this question.”¹⁹⁶ In actuality, this result demonstrated to the John Brown Legislature that a majority of the Maryland population opposed such repressive laws intended to regulate the free African American population. The Jacobs Bill essentially sought to protect the slaveholding interest of the state permanently while forcibly removing or enslaving any free African American who refused to submit to its regulation. More specifically, the law included various regulatory provisions; including, the appointment of three commissioners to control and manage the free African American population, the requirement that free African Americans hire themselves out for a year, the indentured servitude of free African American children between the ages of 4 and 12, and the re-enslavement of any African American who refused to comply with the law. Most disturbing to actual slave holders, the bill “would repeal all legislation regarding the manumission of slaves and make the process unavailable to the slave owner... even by a will or deed.” The *Maryland Colonization Journal* prophetically argued that this measure would exact more injury and/or humiliation to Maryland than any extreme proposal of abolitionists or slavery supporters. With such a provision, the *Maryland Colonization Journal* predicted that not even a slaveholder would support such a law that restricted the

police force with the sole purpose of regulating the slaves. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 75. “It was highly inexpedient to undertake any measure for the general removal of our free black population from the State... the removal would, as the Committee believe, be far greater than all evils the people of Maryland ever suffered from them.” In conclusion, the convention could not recommend the expulsion of the free African American population from the state. “Slaveholder’s Convention,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 10 No. 2 (July, 1859), 22-24. Lawrence Herbert McDonald, *Prelude to Emancipation*, 224. Curtis M. Jacob, *Speech of Col. Curtis M. Jacobs, on the free colored population of Maryland, delivered in the House of delegates, on the 17th of February, 1860* (*Annapolis, Printed by E. S. Riley*, 1860), 10. accessed 10/31/09 <http://www.archive.org/details/speechofcolcurti00jaco>.

¹⁹⁶ Curtis M. Jacob, *Speech of Col. Curtis M. Jacobs, on the free colored population of Maryland, delivered in the House of delegates, on the 17th of February, 1860* (*Annapolis, Printed by E. S. Riley*, 1860), 10. accessed 10/31/09 <http://www.archive.org/details/speechofcolcurti00jaco>.

free use of their property. In addition to the restriction on property rights, many slaveholders viewed the bill as an embarrassment and were appalled by the existence of potential laws which “were hooted out of a convention of slaveholders, and ridiculed by the press.” The results on election day reflected that very same fact.¹⁹⁷

The Jacobs Bill contained many provisions which the entire voting population found offensive. Following the introduction of the bill, Barbara Fields argues “[p]ublic reaction was immediate, intense, and hostile.”¹⁹⁸ The John Brown Legislature, however, refused to recognize certain important facts of the Maryland electorate in 1860. Small-scale slaveholdings dominated throughout the state. Furthermore, many slaveholders, fearing the loss of property rights, manumitted substantial populations of their slave populations and sent them North. In addition to the possible ill-effects, the slaveholding population understood the tenuous political position which they retained within Maryland and its growing industrial base. The slaveholders understood that the Jacob’s Bill did not represent an appropriate piece of legislation around which to rally. Above all arguments, the Jacobs Bill seemed overtly and unnecessarily cruel to free African Americans, some

¹⁹⁷ Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 380. McDonald, *Prelude to Emancipation*, 38. In addition to the listed requirements, the law required the establishment a judicial like proceeding (without due process rights) that would meet in December of every year to judge compliance and the loss of a job subjecting the unemployed person to a sale for a year’s service to the highest bidder. In essence, this law would create at the least term slavery for every single free African American in the Maryland. “The Free Negro Law,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 10 No. 16 (Sept. 1860), 253. The *MCJ* argued that this measure was actually more injurious to the state of Maryland than any other abolitionist plan while more humiliating than any extreme pro-slavery plan. “No More Manumission,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 10 No. 12 (May 1860), 193-4. Andrew Boyd, *To Mr. Jacobs, Chairman of the Committee on the Colored Population, in the House of Delegates of Maryland : a few thoughts, on those most monstrous propositions before the Legislature, to expel the free colored people from the state, unless they voluntarily become slaves--if they decline, to sell them into slavery by compulsion : to sell their property, in the counties to sell their churches, and place the same in the treasury for a school fund to educate our children &c. &c* (Baltimore?: s.n., 1860), 1. <http://www.archive.org/details/tomrjacobschairm00cros> accessed 10/31/09.

¹⁹⁸ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 23-25.

of whom knew nothing but freedom.¹⁹⁹ Consequently, “[a]t the very moment in the state’s history when the interest in the slavery question was greatest, the people of five Southern counties” voted three to one against the Jacob Bill.²⁰⁰

With a large portion of the population owning no slaves, the Jacobs Bill relied upon sustained fears of slave revolt in order to gain the support of the rest of the Maryland. Marylanders soon replaced their fears of slave revolt with fears of the potential economic ruin. The free African American population continued to provide a large and essential free labor force for the entire state. Newspaper commentary on the Jacobs Bill estimated that the 9 out of every 10 free African Americans would leave the state if the bill passed. Even prior to the actual vote on the referendum, the northern and western sections of the state reported substantial numbers of free African Americans migrating out of the state. Dr. James Hall, writing in the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, argued that the loss of the free African American workforce would actually encourage radical abolitionist thought. Needing to sustain its economy, Dr. Hall argued that immigrants and other people from the North who possessed “interests and feelings adverse to our State institution and manner of life” would fill those jobs and distort the present political stability of the state. By the time of the referendum, one commentator “repudiate[d] it as one of the grossest calumnies to say that one-tenth, or one in a hundred

¹⁹⁹Ninety percent of the slaveholders in the Maryland by 1960 did not own anymore than 15 slaves. The largest slaveholder in Maryland fell within the 300 – 500 category and that was the only slaveholder in the entire state that qualified for such a classification. Many small scale slaveholders feared that the bill would compel them to aggrandize their current holdings. Consequently, the small slaveholders knew that they would not be able to afford the increase in their holdings. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 23-25.

²⁰⁰ Andrew Boyd, *To Mr. Jacobs, Chairman of the Committee on the Colored Population, in the House of Delegates of Maryland : a few thoughts, on those most monstrous propositions before the Legislature, to expel the free colored people from the state, unless they voluntarily become slaves--if they decline, to sell them into slavery by compulsion : to sell their property, in the counties to sell their churches, and place the same in the treasury for a school fund to educate our children &c. &c* (Baltimore?: s.n., 1860), 1. <http://www.archive.org/details/tomrjacobschairm00cros> accessed 10/31/09.

of the people approve of the proposition of Mr. Jacobs.”²⁰¹ With regards to the Jacob’s Bill, the John Brown Legislature failed to provide legislation commensurate with the desires of its population. The majority of Maryland, however, reacted in a rather predictable manner. In the persistent presence of the MSCS, the Maryland population demonstrated one more time that it did not support nor need any extreme/immediate solution to slavery or the free African American problem.²⁰²

The MSCS had provided this same assurance during the 1850s when other contemptuous incidents ignited sectional debate on slavery throughout the country. The debate concerning the Kansas-Nebraska Bill and the subsequent violence in Kansas developed such animosity in the slavery debate that the Whig party collapsed in its wake. During the same year, the *Maryland Colonization Journal*, quoting the *Baltimore American*, demonstrated its aversion to “the extremes to which the New York Tribune and cognate journals in the North have driven abolition agitation, their threats against the Union, denunciations of the South, and their avidity...for the formation of a powerful

²⁰¹ Andrew Boyd, *To Mr. Jacobs, Chairman of the Committee on the Colored Population, in the House of Delegates of Maryland : a few thoughts, on those most monstrous propositions before the Legislature, to expel the free colored people from the state, unless they voluntarily become slaves--if they decline, to sell them into slavery by compulsion : to sell their property, in the counties to sell their churches, and place the same in the treasury for a school fund to educate our children &c. &c* (Baltimore?: s.n., 1860), 1. <http://www.archive.org/details/tomrjacobschairm00cros> accessed 10/31/09.

²⁰² Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground*, 23-5, 83-5. The common goal and theme of the Jacobs bill remained the end of the manumission process. This restriction caused a quick reaction that many manumitted the slaves prior to the possible passing of the law. Gu, *Maryland’s Persistent Pursuit to End Slavery*, 388-92. Dr. Hall additionally recognized the absurdity of the claim that the re-enslavement of an already free man who may have never experienced slavery in closer quarters. *Maryland Colonization Society*, 10 No. 9 (Feb. 1860), 143-4. Mr. Boyd analogies any voter who chose to support the bill to an actual dog. Andrew Boyd, *To Mr. Jacobs, Chairman of the Committee on the Colored Population, in the House of Delegates of Maryland : a few thoughts, on those most monstrous propositions before the Legislature, to expel the free colored people from the state, unless they voluntarily become slaves--if they decline, to sell them into slavery by compulsion : to sell their property, in the counties to sell their churches, and place the same in the treasury for a school fund to educate our children &c. &c* (Baltimore?: s.n., 1860), 1. <http://www.archive.org/details/tomrjacobschairm00cros> accessed 10/31/09.

sectional party.”²⁰³ Recognizing the growing tension around the Kansas – Nebraska Act, the MSCS reassured the Maryland public that the work of the society remained “the removal of emigrants, not the discussion of the motives for emigration.”²⁰⁴ Furthermore, the MSCS reaffirmed that it would continue to refrain and remove itself from any detailed argument for or against slavery within the state of Maryland. In contrast, Maryland had made its decision with regard to slavery and the free African American population, and the MSCS would continue to fulfill its promise to maintain the political and social stability of Maryland.²⁰⁵

The MSCS carried this calming rhetoric into the controversy surrounding the *Dred Scott* Decision. In 1857, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney decreed through a majority ruling that African Americans “were not looked upon as citizens by the contracting parties who formed the Constitution.” Instead of ending the discussion on slavery, this decision actually stimulated sectional debate throughout the country. With increased sectional tensions, the *Dred Scott* Decision actually breathed new life into the colonization movement. In between 1858 and 1860, the American Colonization Society alone increased its immigration numbers by two and half times the emigrants it achieved in the prior 30 years. The MSCS continued to create the moderate ground in Maryland with appeals to both extreme viewpoints on the issue. In the same month as the *Dred*

²⁰³ The article went on to say that “our readers to [sic] need more than a reference to bring them forward in all their insane violence.” “The Revival of the Slave Trade,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 7 No. 14 (July 1854), 211.

²⁰⁴ The MSCS understood that the improvement of their task required an improved relationship with the African American community. For Maryland Colonization had become a necessity, not an activity to be retained by party values or lines. *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 7 No. 9 (Feb. 1854), 141-144.

²⁰⁵ Eric Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 31. In 1854, Senator Stephen Douglas proposed the Kansas Nebraska Act. In effect, it was supposed to be a compromising piece of legislation which would repeal the Missouri Compromise and allow the citizens of the new states of Kansas and Nebraska to determine through their state legislation on their acceptance of slavery. In Kansas, warfare developed between the anti-slavery and pro-slavery factions who battled for the territory. John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher, 2000), 215.

Scott Decision, the MSCS emphasized the unlimited potential of African Americans while arguing the benevolence and benefits of the colonization scheme for the African American race. Despite great promise in the mercantile and mechanical pursuits, the free African American population would never achieve this full potential in the racially charged and unfriendly environment of the United States. A commitment to emigration and colonization would provide the correct environment for the advancement of African Americans, but also provide the chance to bring civilization and Christianity to the African continent.

Understanding the force of the *Dred Scott* Decision, the MSCS opined that “the only hope, therefore, is to direct the mind of master and slave, as well as of the free colored people to the land of the progenitors of the colored race, as the place where, and to the colonization cause... which God doubtless intends them.”²⁰⁶ With its commitment to colonization, the MSCS and Maryland could simultaneously support the essential doctrine of *Dred Scott* while denying many of the racial undertones that motivated it. Colonization would remove this portion of the population that never possessed any political rights while masking the action with a high level of benevolence and appreciation of that very population. With the partial appeasement of both extremes, the MSCS provided the moderate stance which allowed Maryland to remain relatively free of overt political sectionalism on the issue of slavery.²⁰⁷

As the Civil War drew near, the MSCS lost its political influence within the state of Maryland. Following the financial support of 1858, the Maryland General Assembly

²⁰⁶ “Reports on Colonization: To the Baltimore Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 8 No. 22 (March 1857), 342.

²⁰⁷ Phillips, *Freedom’s Port*, 188. Harry S. Blackiston, “Lincoln’s Emancipation Plan,” *The Journal of Negro History*, 7 No. 3 (July 1922), 257-8. Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters*, 372-4. Burnin, *Slavery and the Peculiar Solution*, 30.

never renewed its financial commitment. Furthermore, the Civil War and its outcome would negate the need for a colonization plan. Nevertheless, the work of the MSCS over the previous thirty years provided the atmosphere in which Maryland could legitimately discuss the issue of slavery or ignore it altogether. Within this framework, the state of Maryland continued to choose the moderate and prudent political road as the Civil War forced Maryland to take a side. The presidential election of 1860 provided a preview of this very path. The 1860 election presented Maryland with a choice between four different candidates; including, John Breckinridge from the Democratic National Party, Stephen Douglas from the National Democratic Party, John Bell of the newly formed Constitutional Union Party, and Abraham Lincoln of the Republican Party. In essence, the only two candidates that mattered to Maryland were Bell and Breckinridge.

According to historian William Wright, many Marylanders perceived a vote for Breckinridge as a vote for solidarity with the South, while support Bell demonstrated the support of the Union and the economic benefits that accompanied such a commitment. Breckinridge carried the state by less than 1,000 votes with support from areas with high slave-holding. John Bell still drew 44 percent of the states votes, drawing much of his support from former Know Nothing strongholds. With this election, the Maryland electorate demonstrated both a preference to appease the slaveholder and the unionist. This appeasement, however, would not violate their commitment to entire Union and the Constitution.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Dr. James Hall, "No Title," *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 10 No. 24 (May 1861), 337. The Democratic Party experienced the destruction of the sectional debate in the selection of their nominee for the 1860 election. Because of different arguments concerning the protection of slavery, the Democratic Party actually had two conventions in 1860. The members of the Democratic Party seeking more protections for slavery chose John Breckinridge to represent them. The more moderate and northern representatives of the Democratic Party supported Stephen Douglas (famous the Lincoln- Douglass Debate and the Kansas Nebraska Act). Large groups of Know Nothing party members throughout the border states

The Civil War developed out of the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 with not one electoral vote from a Southern state. As Southern states chose for secession, the choice of Maryland remained in limbo. As early as 1856, Maryland Governor Thomas Ligon negatively replied to a convention of slave state executives because it was too premature in the sectional debate on slavery. Furthermore, Gov. Ligon expressed the need for Maryland to be very cautious in its movement on the subject. This cautious approach personified the general program of the MSCS and it defined the activity of Maryland throughout the secession crisis. Various different opinions developed along the full length of the political spectrum in Maryland. Nevertheless, Maryland never succumbed to an extreme decision. Furthermore, many Maryland leaders, such as S. Teackle Wallis of Baltimore, believed that the Maryland should play the role of peace broker between the North and the South. With reference to the 1860 election, Wallis believed that the unique approach of Maryland to slavery could provide the blueprint for peace throughout the country.²⁰⁹

Maryland sustained this moderate stance even in the face of political forces which created the perfect atmosphere in which Maryland could secede. On April 12, Confederate forces fired upon Ft. Sumter. In response, Lincoln made a call for volunteers three days later. Even though Lincoln called the troops only for protection of Federal

formed the Constitutional Union Party. Losing the attacks on Catholicism and immigration, the Constitutional Union Party defended the Union and the Constitution over all other things. Last of all, the growing and northern based Republican Party presented Abraham Lincoln. Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 34- 47. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States*, 25-26.

²⁰⁹ Gov. Thomas Ligon, Annapolis, to Henry A. Wise, 26 September 1856, UMCP HBK Maryland Room Archives, Maryland Manuscripts, MDMS 22.02. Four major views on secession developed in Maryland during the months leading up to the Civil War. Some Marylanders supported the outright retention of Maryland in the Union with an ability to militarily suppress the illegal action of secession. Other Marylanders wished to remain in the Union; however, they felt that the Union should allow Southern states to secede in peace. A third group believed that Maryland's best option existed in the formation of a Border State Confederacy. Last of all, some Marylanders believed that the secession with the Confederacy remained the only option for Maryland. The major pockets of support for each of these viewpoints developed across geographic lines. Wright, *The Secession Movement in the Middle Atlantic States*, 15.

property, many Maryland citizens saw this as an act of war. These citizens made it clear that they did not want Maryland used a transportation depot for federal troops through their violent response on April 19. After three weeks of armed neutrality and fervent discussion of secession, the Federal Army under the direction of Benjamin Butler took full control of the City of Baltimore. Virginia seceded from the Union the following day. On April 29, 1861, the voters of Prince George's county placed a memorial in front of the House of Delegates "praying the Legislature (if in its judgment it possesses the power,) to pass an Ordinance of Secession without delay." The vote of the House of Delegates was a resounding negative to the report. The following February, the House of Delegates produced a "Preamble and Resolution on the subject of the state will pursue in the present rebellion." In this statement, the House of Delegates described Jefferson Davis, "a pretended President of a pretended Confederacy," while asserting that secession was an "unfounded and gross calumny upon the people of the State, who, sincerely lamenting the madness and self inflicted misfortunes of our brethren in the South." The Maryland General Assembly chose to stay with the Union.²¹⁰

The decision of Maryland to remain in the Union during the Civil War demonstrates a pragmatic and moderate evaluation of the best interests of the state. Despite the traditional ties to the South through the Southern Counties, the Eastern Shore and the existence of slavery, Maryland made a decision in its economic future. In terms of slavery, Maryland's secession would have accelerated the destruction of slavery in the

²¹⁰ *Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Delegates, in extra session.* (Frederick: Elihus S. Riley, 1861) 21-22. "State Secession debates: Maryland: reel 8: nos. 42-45," UMCP HBK Maryland Room Maryland Microfilm JK3816 .S76. Towers, "Secession in an Urban Context," 107-108. See also Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 53. *Journal of the Proceedings of the House of Delegates at a special session, December, 1861.* (Annapolis: Thomas J. Wilson, 1861) 587. "State Secession debates: Maryland: reel 8: nos. 42-45," UMCP HBK Maryland Room Maryland Microfilm JK3816 .S76.

state. In 1861, William H. Collins argued that Maryland, as the forefront of the Southern Confederacy would now exist as the easiest route to freedom without any hope of an enemy North honoring property rights on the slave.²¹¹ Furthermore, the most prosperous economic areas of the state held ties to the Northern states. The most productive and valuable farm land existed in the agricultural centers of the Northern and Western counties. At the same time, 92 percent of the manufacturing output came from these same counties and Baltimore City. The advancement and development of these industries relied on continued ties to the North industrial complex.²¹²

Maryland was not a completely southern state that was forced onto the Union side during the Civil War. In contrast, it was a highly sectional state positioned in the middle of the country that enjoyed and demonstrated traits of both the North and the South. In the end, Maryland chose the Union, with encouragement from federal intervention, because the majority of the state believed it to be a moderate action. Through this pragmatic and moderate approach, Maryland saw its retention in the Union as the best route to simultaneously protect the slave property of the state while maintaining its strong economic and developing social ties to the North. This decision, overall, represented the same moderate and compromising approach that developed in Maryland over the thirty year existence of the MSCS toward slavery. As the Civil War ignited, Dr. James Hall and MSCS argued the importance of colonization to the state of Maryland and the nation at this darkest hour when “the war going on in our house once, happy, but now sorely distracted country.” Colonization, just like the decision to stay with the Union, “tramples upon the rights of none, but like that truest of all charities, which thinketh no evil to its

²¹¹ *An address to the People of Maryland by William H. Collins of Baltimore. Fourth Edition* (Baltimore: James Young, 1861), 10. UMCP Maryland Room Rare E440.5 C7 1861.

²¹² Baker, *Politics of Continuity*, 54.

neighbor, it has endured for many years, and must continue to endure and hope for all things for the objects of its peculiar care.”²¹³

Throughout the 30 year existence of the MSCS, it cannot claim any direct successes with regard to the end of slavery or many of its own expressed goals. The MSCS developed a comprehensive colonization program which hoped to answer the slavery question for Maryland. The MSCS founded its own colony, developed its own means of transportation, and founded a new country in Africa. Nevertheless, the MSCS failed for 30 years to achieve its most important goal and its reason for existence. The MSCS never convinced large or even substantial numbers of African Americans to emigrate to Africa. The MSCS never gained the trust of the African American population because it refused to imagine a time when it would be possible to have equality and cooperation between the races in the United States. Despite the meager results, the MSCS persisted for over thirty years with consistent support from the Maryland General Assembly. With its continued existence, the state of Maryland relied upon an institutionalized solution to slavery question. This institutionalized interest catered to the needs of both a slaveholding South and an industrial, free labor North. The promise of a moderate solution to slavery removed extreme sectional debate from the rhetoric of Maryland politics and provided the blueprint of how to compromise the solution. With this blueprint, Maryland calmly and moderately reacted to each of the major crises that challenged the political stability of every state in the nation. Without the presence of the MSCS, Maryland may have succumbed to the extreme pressures of the sectional debate and experienced more violent altercations throughout the 1850s. The persistent presence of the Maryland State Colonization demonstrated the greatest success

²¹³ “No Title,” *Maryland Colonization Journal*, 10 No. 24 (May 1861), 377.

of the society because it alleviated the tensions of sectionalism and allowed Maryland to legitimately and calmly discuss the issue of slavery.²¹⁴

²¹⁴Stopak, "The Maryland State Colonization Society," 298.

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