THOMAS J. LEMAY. PROPRIETOR AND PUBLISHER.

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the great purpose for which it was es- ment from which mischief would be tering it in the same spirit in which it my seat, and content myself with yea

the great and leading inferests of the to conjecture the reasons for my votes: we have there. whole country were considered, and in but entertaining no fear of that kind, the sperit of liberality and compromise I must ask permission to state, as were adjusted and settled.

They were settled upon principles the course I shall pursue. that ought to remain undisturbed so. In doing this, I shall not address bearings, was left, exclusively to the agitation and excitement must cease. respective States, to do with as they what then ought we to do, as most might think best, without any interfer- likely to put an end to those angry ence on the part of the Federal Gov- feelings which now prevail? ernment. This, it is admitted, by In my opinion, we should refuse to Maryland and Virginia.

been foreseen, that the District of Co- which we have no power. lumbia would be formed out of a tract But these are petitions asking Conof country ceded by those States, and gress to abolish slavery in this District.

it seems this is unfair. Let us for a individuals, nor the public shall us moment consider the circumstances of them. I will not weaken the honora the country, and the situation in which ble members argument by going over it.

we are all placed. In various quarters of the Union there destroying the interest of any of the were assemblages of people, who ex- States. pressed their opinions with great free- | Members of Congress, Executive, panied by a bill, which is now upon agitators, and charged with unneces district. sarily producing excitement? If not,

or nay, to every question proposed by When the Constitution was framed others, leaving every person at liberty no more power to abolish it here than By our 24th Rule, when a petition is briefly as I can, some of the reasons for

long as the Constitution lasts, which I myself to Senators coming from either hope will be forever; for although lib- the East or the West, the North or the erty may be preferable to the Union. South, in particular, but to the Senate, vet I think the Union is indispensable the whole Senate, because if it is deto the security of liberty. At the for- sired, as I believe it is, that we should mation of the Constitution, slavery ex- remain together as one people, secure, isted in many of the States; it was one prosperous, happy and contented, the of the prominent interests that was whole country, every section of it has then settled. It, in all its domestic a deep interest in this matter, this

every gentleman who has addressed receive these petitions. It is a mere you, is now the case, in every slave- question of expediency what disposiholding State; therefore, it is only urg- tion we shall make of them. All who ed that Congress has the power to a- have yet spoken admit that Congress bolish slavery in the District of Colum- has no power whatever over slavery in bia. It should never be forgotten that the respective States. It is setiled. when the Constitution was formed and Whether slavery is right or wrong, we adopted, what is now the District of have now no power to consider or dis-Columbia, was then comprehended cuss. Suppose, then, a petition were within two of the slave-holding States, presented, to abolish slavery in the States, would we receive it? 'Assured-Constitution had been adjusted, it had asking us to act upon a subject over

situated in the centre between them, Have we the power? I think not. I it had been asked of the Members of consider the argument of the Honorathe Convention, what do you intend ble Senator from Virginia, Mr. Leigh, as to the District? You have placed upon that point, conclusive. It has the question of stavery in the States, not been answered, and I do not been the question of stavery in the States, not been answered, and I do not been the question of stavery in the States, not been answered, and I do not been the question of stavery in the States, not been answered, and I do not been the pelong. In all this I fer it to a committee who reports that it is unreasonable, and ought not to be newspapers courteously found fault the sentiments relating to it, which have been around by the sentiments relating to it, which that Congress shall have the power to private property, even for public use, not the purity of their motives; the In each of these cases, the comabolish slavery in the District?— without making just compensation to sect to which they belong is worthy plaint of the petitioner had been heard, abolition pamphlets was found in our years, come to your knowledge-I ould not every man have answered the owner. No fund is provided by of all the eccomiums passed upon it. I considered and decided on. In most populous and respectable city, deem it therefore proper, to furnish It has been said that when petitions which may be liberated, and the and do not feel that in my composi- dress for what he supposed a grievance, and discreet citizens immediately re to abolish slavery are presented to Constitution never gives Congress the tion there is a particle of unkindness but each leaves him equally at liberty sorted for redress, to the same summademand the question whether they shall out, at the same time, furnishing the have us do that which we have no period. be received, and thus produce discus- means for its accomplishment. To sion, are agitators, and produce excite- liberate slaves is not taking them for ment on this delicate subject. To me publicuse. It is declaring that neither mischief. This, these petitioners do on the same subject:

This District was intended as the There are twenty-four States, sev- place where the great business of the eral Territories, and this District, nation should be transacted for the Thirteen of these States have no slaves, good of the whole. Congress, under the other eleven have slaves; in fact, the Constitution, is placed here to letheir slaves constitute a large item of gislate upon those subjects enumerated belongs to the nature of free governall the property they own. During the and specified in the Constitution, that past year, it has so happened, that we might be able to protect ourselves, many ne expapers, pampulets, and pic- and the officers residing here, and be torial representations made their ap- out of the reach of the laws of any pearance, and through the mail, and by State. It was never intended that we other means, extensively circulated in should have any local legislation, exthe Slave-holding States. By these cept such as would meet the wants and means, a spirit of discentent was crea- the wishes of the people residing withtel, which occasioned much excite- in the ten miles square. We should have a right to make known their subject to which they refer. ment and disorder in various places, never permit this place to be convert- grievances, real or imaginary. We In each of the other three, we remary manner, to put to death several plans would be devised, or carried into white persons, and a number of slaves. operation, that will have the effect of

dom. In the course of the fall and and Judicial officers, were to come winter, many of the State Legislatures from any, and every section of the have been in session—they have been Union. From the slave-holding, and addressed on this subject by their re- the non-slave-holding States, and their spective Governors. They have ex-pressed publicly their opinions—the this ten miles square, as it was in the this ten miles square, as it was in the resident, in his message, has invited States from which they respectively he attention of Congress to it-the came. They would bring their habits Senate has referred that part of the and their domestic servants with them. message to a Special Committee, which Those from the non-slave-holding has made a lengthy report, accom- States their hired servants, and those from the slave-holding States their our docket, and must, in due course, slaves, and who can believe it was inbe discussed, and either passed or re- tended to vest the power in Congress jected. Are all these to be called to liberate them if brought within the

Again, the right of property in slaves how is it that members of Congress in the States is sacred and beyond the are to be thus charged when petitions power of Congress to interfere with, in re presented that we must in some any respect; yet if it be conceded ode dispose of? Each of us must that we have the power to liberate them uggest such mode as we think most in the District, we can as effectually rrect, and none can justly be liable ruin the owners as if we had the power any such charge. If there is any to liberate slaves in the States. By wrong, it is found in those, who, in abolishing slavery here, we not only uch a state of public feeling, will make a place of refuge for runaways, press their petitions upon us. The but we produce a spirit of discontent petitions are forwarded to members and rebellion in the minds of slaves in the feel it their duty to present them; the neighboring States, which will when presented, others think it their soon spread over all, and which can- The truth is, we have the power in tions of which are to be spent entirely

express his opinion, as to what it is best to do, and that a Senator dare not express his opinion without being laible properly of our masters are slavery in the District, and no where asking my opinion as to the constitutional concerned, we have no right to exercise would we be bound to receive power of Congress to interfere with the subject of Slavery in the District of Columbia, we make no right to exercise the same liberality. to consure? I hope not.

This is a delicate subject: would that one half of them is concerned in a capant he allowed to receive petitions from a copy of a Correspondence with certain citi
With great deference for the opinion of others, I think the force of their master, ion of others, I think the force of their france or Germany. Would gentle
This is a delicate subject: would that one half of them is concerned in a plot to destroy the lives of their master, ion of others, I think the force of their france or Germany. Would gentle
The consumption of the control o to God, it had not been pressed upon plot to destroy the lives of their master, ion of others, I think the force of their France or Germany. Would gentle sense of the Le, same point. State, who may desire to become subscribers, will be strictly required to pay the whole argument rests on a plain tioners, we must dispose of it. To endount of the year's subscription in advance, able us to do so, we must think upon districtly required to pay the whole argument rests on a plain tioners, we must dispose of it. To endount of the year's subscription in advance, able us to do so, we must think upon districtly with or without law they are invested three fines for one dollar, and twen think, and our reasons for so thinking.

They argue as if we never became receive petitions from editions from editions from the distriction of the Le. same point.

They argue as if we never became receive petitions from editions from editions from the distriction of the Le. same point.

They argue as if we never became receive petitions from editions from editions from the distriction of the Le. same point.

They argue as if we never became receive petitions from editions from editions from the bediened of the Le. same point.

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They argue as if we never became processes the processes are also as a plain to produce their freedom, and immention to produce their freedom.

They argue as if we never became processes for the Le. same point.

They argue as if we never became produce their freedom, and immention to produce their freedom.

They argue as if we never became produce their freedom and immention to produce their freedom.

They argue as if we never became produce their freedom.

They argue as if we never will be likely to do mischief. Every the disquiet and anxiety of mind occa-ed.

slavery in one of the States. We have was prudent to adopt this course. . . the law would operate?

we have no power to do or to do that which and specifies what he wishes to be which will be productive of a great and done with it after it is received. If know is, that our peace has been very no member objects, for the purpose of much disturbed by them, whether few topic, will, we have be afficient apology for to receive them.

but by presentment, or indictment.— reading and then arge his reasons why through the mail, and by other means.

Suppose a petition presented here, it should not be received.

This rule establishes no new doc-live together as one people, they must asked to pass a Bill of attainder.— Manual at page 140.

Ought we to receive the petition?— What is the right of the petitioner? It consists in his having free permission to make known to Congress what food, or dare not go to sleep, lest the we, to receive any such petition? I petition, or making some other distant, most certainly, we ought not. position of it, which in their judgment free as ours, where the laws should and feelings upon the delicate and inought exercise it? I trust not. Thuse When we refuse to receive a petipower to do, and if we had the power. by exercising it, we should do infinite not desire. They have discharged what they think is their duty by having their petitions presented; Ionly dis-

cannot receive them. But it is further insisted, that the right of petition is a sacred one, that petitioners. ment, and existed before the formation of our Constitution, and that in- mittee make a report upon them. strument did not give the right to petition, but intended only to secure it.

charge mine when I say, consistent-

can pass no law, we can make no rule, tain the petitions, place them on our to abridge or destroy that right,

so far from it, they say, that if the being re-sent and re-presented. language of the petitioner is disre- I think that plan is the most advisa-

which I can never yield my assent. trict. Are we to be exalted above our embut if it contains matter which is to ing any opinion whatever. destroy the slave property in this Dis-

arguments. I deny that there is any such distinction to be found in a single a general law, operating throughout

the solemn conviction that if this Gov- harm, and if I believed in what I proon this subject, should have a power petitions have been publicly read, their this matter they were our constitu-To me it seems that we ought to der discussion; has any man denied ceive petitions on this subject when ceat these netitions precisely as we our right to do so? Not one; the they are presented on healf of those to your right to do so? Not one; the they are presented on healf of those to your right are received as the second of those to your right to do so? to abolish slavery have been long untablished, it can only be, by adminis- produced, I would close my lips, take treat these petitions precisely as we our right to do so? Not one; the they are presented on behalf of those would do, if they prayed us to abolish only doubt suggested is, whether it upon whose property alone, it is said

ed of without formally propounding Their newspapers, their pamphlets By the Constitution no man can be the question of reception: but if any and pictorial representations have been held to answer for a criminal charge member objects, he may call for the plenty. They have come to us

trict had been guilty of a crime, and trine, it is founded in good sense, is stop. It is vain to reason with peothat he was so influential that he could perfectly consistent with the right of ple about the liberty of speech, and of not be reached by the ordinary forms petition, and is laid down as the cor- the press, when their lives are put at

body from making a speech against the he esteems a grievance, and to ask servants will cut the throats of himprayer of the petitioners, would we them to provide a remedy. When his self, his wife, and children before he receive it? Suppose a petition to be petition is presented, the duty of Con- awakes, he will not endure it; and offered asking us to establish a parti- gress commences. That consists in when he can lay hands upon those who cular religion in this District, or to pro-hibit any publication in a newspaper quainted with the contents of the will not wait for the ordinary forms of on the subject of abolishing slavery, petition, and granting its prayer if it law to redress him. He takes the unless it was previously approved of be just and consistent with the public laws into his own bands, and every Suppose when all the details of the ly we ought not, because it would be we, to receive any such petition, or making some other dis-

which is from the Society of Friends, right of petition, than we do when we

Four modes have been suggested by

and is to refuse to receive it. The second is to receive them, lay ly with what I feel to be my duty, I

The third is to receive them, and

The fourth is to receive them, refer

I prefer the first, because, when we refuse to receive the petitions, they are This is sound doctrine, and has my returned to those who sent them, and

But what do gentlemen mean when at any subsequent session they ar they speak of the right, of Petition? here, and it will be competent for any Do they mean that when the petition member to move their reference to a is presented that we must receive it, committee; whereas, if returned to the and do that which is prayed for? No. petitioners, if they ever again make Not one member contended for this; their appearance, it must be by their

reflect seriously upon this matter .- will not interfere with slavery as it We are about to establish a doctrine to exists in the States and in this Dis-

If these petitions are received, I ployers? Is our dignity to be of high- then think the disposition of them proer consideration than the property and posed by the Senator from Pennsylgraceful conduct on the Senate or any would be far preferable to laying them of its members we may not receive it, silently on the table without express-

This is the doctrine contained in the cerns of the District of Columbia. both instances to receive the upon property within their own lives, and those of their petitions, but in exercising it when we square. Now if we were in form, as of the U. States, and this delicate subject, every officer of wives and children. I beseech gentle. I beseech gentle. Washing the country of the U. States, and the country of the U. St always to act most liberally in receivabler when acting on this question

SPEECH OF JUDGE WHITE. thing depends upon the temper with sioned by a loss of confidence in his remaining slaves. It cannot have the Abolition Petitions.

Will be likely to do mischiel. Every thing depends upon the temper with sioned by a loss of confidence in his remaining slaves. It cannot have been doing for the last few weeks is full proof of it. These duct towards the people here, as if in most reasonable, when we are called time.

we have there.

I think in either case we ought to restition and what the petition is fuse to receive them. I hold that if the member must briefly there are two classes of abolitionists, and that public opinion will some put has the confidence of the member must be received them. He then the petitioners ask us to do that which makes that the petition must be received them. Honorable Senators have told us the petitioners ask us to do that which asks that the petition may be received, small in numbers. Genslemen, I

This rule establishes no new doc- live together as one people, they must of law in court, and therefore we are rect pratice by Mr. Jefferson in his hazard. When the domestic circle is

The honorable Senator from Mississippi has shown us something of the who urge the reception of this petition, tion, we no more destroy or impair the feelings of his State, which has sufferhave spoken most highly of the peti- receive the retiton and lay it upon the heard of punishing persons in Missistioners and the class of citizens to table, or reject the prayer of it, or re- sippi, without legal trial, we thought or of being in political communication with it. Their columns were not long have been avowed by myselfand by the Constitution to pay for slaves respect and esteem them most highly, neither instance has he obtained a re- and an assemblage of our most orderly you with the substance of them, betowards them: but I think they would to renew his petition at any subsequent ry process which had been used in our sister State.

which to dispose of this and all others something on this subject. I know of or to any extent, with the subject of only one attempt to establish a press slavery in the states; The first we have been considering, for such publications in any slave holding State. The neighbors of the doing so in the District of Columbia; gentleman informed him that his press and hem on the table and there let them would be productive of mischief, and he must not establish it in their town currence in the sentiments expressed

must end in consequences to be for-

ever regreted by us all.

MR. VAN BUREN'S LETTER. CORRESPONDENCE

Richmond, March 5th, 1836. Sir: Your opinion on the Slave Question, in real sentiments on the District question. I take the liberty, therefore, of requesting a candid avowal of your opinion on the consti-tutional rights of the inhabitants of the Dis-by appeals to the fears of the master and

With great respect, Your obedient servant, J. B. MALLORY

these petitions? No more than we and to send you here with, in reply thereto,

think, and our reasons for so thinking. thus deprived of his property without tition, or could consider and decide slaves within their own State? As- paper In the event of its being so publish-It is not by speaking upon it we any chance for an indemnity, besides upon its merits until after it is received suredly not. If that be, so, is it not answer thereto, may some at the tone answer thereto, may appear at the same

I am, sir, very respectfully, Your obedient servant, M. VAN BUREN.

James B Mallory, Esq.

North Carolina Correspondence. to your views on a topic which mose sitally affects our immediate welfare and hapiness, have thought proper to propound to you, the following interrogatory, to which we wish

the liberty we have taken.
(Signed,) JUNIUS AMIS, JOHN WALL,

C. YELLOWBY, SMAL. B. SPRUILL, JAS. W. PUIZINN, Jackson, Feb. 21d, 1836. MARTIN VAN BUREN'S REPLY.

Washington March 6th, 1836 Gentlemen-I have the honor to ace knowledge the receipt of your letter appprizing me of the deep anxiety. which is felt by a portion of your feliow citizens, as to my views upon a topic vitally effecting their immediate welfare and happiness, and of the importance of their being possessed of a thorough knowledge of them; and asking me to say, whether I do or do not believe that congress has the constitutional power to interfere with, or abolish slavery in the District of Co-

I am not only willing, but desirous, teresting subject with which your question is connected; and I shall enleavor to acquaint you with them in the fullest manner in my power.

fore I reply to your more specific inquiry. The avowals to which I refer were-

1st. An opinion that Congress has Public opinion may have done no right to interfere in any manner,

2d. Against the propriety of their

he answered that he held it a high by the citizens of Albany, in public then instantly reject the prayer of the duty which he could not dispense with, meeting, the most important of which to proceed, and he would doso. They are as follows, viz: "That the Conreplied if he did they would consider stitution of the United States carries them to a committee, and let that com- it their duty to demolish his building, with it an adjustment of all questions and sow his types broad cast in the involved in the deliberation which led streets. This manifestation of public to its adoption, and that the comproopinion he respected. He knew that mise of interests in which it was foundthis is sound doctrine, and has my hearty assent.

The people are sovereign, members all hope that Congress ever can, or age their agents, or servants; they ever ought, to have any law upon the L have understood, he is now published and participate in the benefits of which those with whom he had to deal would ed, its binding in honor and good faith, it is the source,"-"That the relation of I beg gentlemen to consider that it Master and Slave is a matter excluis of no consequence to us whether the sively belonging to the people of each : files in the custody of our officer, and abolitionists, in their States, are many State within its own boundary, and that or few; their publications are nume- any attempt by the Government or peorous; they have already produced ple of any other State, or by the General much mischief, and if persisted in, Government, to interfere with or disturb it, would violate the spirit of that compromise which lies at the basis of For myself, on the subject of the the federal compact."-"That we can disposition, we may make of these pe- only hope to maintain the Union of the speciful to the body, or to any mem-ble, and will be most likely to calm that it may be such, as will most tend ence with the laws, domestic policy titions, I can have no other wish than States by abstaining from all interferber of it, we may, and ought to refuse the disturbance in the slave States, to allay excitement, and restore that and peculiar interests of every other How is this? I beg that we may all, in every quarter, that Congress common interest of our whole country. which tends to alienate one portion. harmony, which is so essential to the State"-"That all such interference, of our countrymen from the rest, deserves to be frowned upon with indignation by all who cherish the principles of our revolutionary fathers, & who desire to preserve the Constitution by the exlives of those who send us here? If a vania the next best—that is, immein the South, and perfectly satisfactory. But,
mary of your friends are in doubt as to south. cated the conduct of those who are at-

tempting to coerce their brethren in oth-There is another aspect in which triet of Columbia. Do you mean to say, when to the passions of the slave; and that destroy the slave property in this District, and in eleven States of this Unthis question may be viewed that has you say that you are "against the propriety they could not but consider them as ion, and also to endanger the lives, had great influence on my own mind.

and dwellings of every citizen within Congress sits here as the Legisla- Constitution to interefere with the state would, by all constitutional means, exture of the whole Union, and also as the only Legislature for the local concerns of the District of Columbia.

These petitions do not ask us to make a ceneral law, operating throughout.

These petitions do not ask us to make wick.

I have the hoperto he.

Constitution to interceder with the state question. Any reply which you may think properto make, will find me here for the press of such measures: "—"That whilst they would maintain inviolate the liberty of speech and the freedom of the press, they considered discussions. liberty of speech and the freedom of the press, they considered discussions, which, from their nature, tend to inflame the public mind and put in jeop-ardy the lives and property of their fellow-citizens, at war with every rule Washington, March 11th, 1836. of moral duty, and every suggestion of sit: I have the honor to acknowle ige humanity, and would be constrained.