

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF  
SB-0076 LEGAL HOLIDAY - MARYLAND EMANCIPATION DAY-ESTABLISHMENT  
EDUCATION, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS  
FEBRUARY 27, 2020

THE REASON WE NEED TO CELEBRATE MARYLAND EMANCIPATION DAY IS BECAUSE THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF SLAVERY EXISTED.

AS A REMINDER, SLAVERY WAS THE CRUEL, HYPOCRITICAL, HELLISH, NON-CHRISTIAN, ANTI-FAMILY, PRO-HATRED, BLOODY, KILLING, MURDERING, RAPING, GENICIDAL, ANGRY, LEGAL, NEGATIVE, DE-HUMANIZING, DEADLY, HOMICIDAL, WHITE SUPREMIST, LIE THAT EVER EXISTED. HOWEVER CRUEL SLAVERY BUILT THIS COUNTRIES WEALTH AND MADE AMERICA WHAT WE CALL GREAT. THEN SLAVERY MUST BE GREAT.

THESE DESCRIPTIONS ARE NEEDED TO REMIND PEOPLE THAT SLAVERY EXISTED BECAUSE IT WAS THE SYSTEM CONTINUES TO BE DESCRIBED IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS BY HISTORIANS. FOR EXAMPLE, CONFUSED CONFEDERATE PRO-DIXIE REVISIONIST EXPLAIN THAT THE CIVIL WAR WAS NOT FOUGHT BECAUSE OF SLAVERY. FOR YEARS I WONDERED HOW THIS COULD BE BUT IT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND THAT IF A PERSON WAS TAUGHT TO UNDERSTAND THAT ANOTHER PERSON WAS NOT HUMAN FROM BIRTH THEN RATIONALIZING SLAVERY AT ANY POINT IS JUST A MATTER OF EXPRESSING THAT THE CIVIL WAR WAS ABOUT PROPERTY AND NOT PRESERVE TO THE SYSTEM THAT IT WAS. AGAIN, SLAVERY IS THE GREATEST STAIN AND SHAME THIS COUNTRY AND ANY NATION THAT EVER HOSTED SLAVERY ON IS SHORES HAS IN THEIR HISTORIES.

IT IS THE GREAT HYPOCRISY. THE PROPHET FREDERICK DOUGLASS, A NATIVE OF MARYLAND, FORMER ENSLAVED HUMAN BEING WHO BECAME A PART OF THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT ASKED "IS SLAVERY THE ENEMY OF BOTH THE SLAVE AND THE SLAVEHOLDER."

"What is to be thought of a nation boasting of its liberty, boasting of its humanity, boasting of its Christianity, boasting of its love of justice and purity, and yet having within its own borders three millions of persons denied by law the right of marriage?... I need not lift up the veil by giving you any experience of my own. Everyone that can put two ideas together, must see the most fearful results from such a state of things..."

WE MUST ALSO REMEMBER THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR THE CAUSE TO END SLAVERY. THE MANY LIVES LOST IN THE HOLOCAUST OF THE TRANS-ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE THAT STARTED OFF THE COAST OF WEST AFRICA. AGAIN, KILLING, HOMICIDAL AND EVEN SUICIDAL IN SOME CASES BECAUSE THERE WERE MANY WHO REFUSED TO BE ENSLAVED AND SAW FREEDOM AS DEATH. AS YOU KNOW, IN THE TRADITION OF THIS COUNTRY THE ACTIONS OF MY ANCESTORS HAVE BE USED IN WORDS LIKE:

"GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH AND LIVE FREE OR DIE." MY ANCESTORS ACTUALLY PUT IT INTO ACTION.

SO WE REMEMBER THE GREAT GENERAL FRANCOIS-DOMINIQUE TOUSSAINT LOUVETURE, THE PROPHETS NAT TURNER, GABRIEL PROSSER, DENMARK VESEY, HARRIETT TUBMAN AND ALL THE TRUE PROFILES OF COURAGE OF WHITE BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO WORKED IN

THE BACKGROUND, INVISIBLE AND IN SILENCE. AND THE ONES LIKE THE PROPHET JOHN BROWN WHO GAVE IT ALL AT HARPER'S FERRY.

THEY ALL WORKED IN A NETWORK OF PAIN THAT BROKE THE SYSTEM THAT LED TO THE DRED SCOTT TRIAL AND DECISION, THE CIVIL WAR AND THE 13TH, 14TH AND 15TH AMENDMENTS.

THEN THERE IS THE FACT THAT MARYLAND WAS NOT 100 PERCENT FOR LEAVING THE UNION OR IN SUPPORTING THE EMANCIPATION OF ITS ENSLAVED PEOPLE. IN FACT ACCORDING TO MIRANDA SPIVACK OF THE WASHINGTON POST: WHILE OTHER STATES PUSHED ANTI-SLAVERY AGENDAS TO BOTH GAIN SOLDIERS FOR THE CIVIL WAR AND TO MOVE THE COUNTRY FORWARD - MARYLAND DID NOT ACT UNTIL 1864. AND EVEN THEN THE OUTCOME WASN'T ALL THAT CERTAIN.

THE ACTUAL VOTE WAS TIPPED IN FAVOR OF EMANCIPATION BECAUSE OF THE ABSENTEE BALLOTS OF SOLDIERS FIGHTING FOR THE UNION WERE COUNTED. EVEN THEN THE FINAL TALLY WAS 30,174 FOR EMANCIPATION AND 29,799 AGAINST. THAT IS A DIFFERENCE OF 375 VOTES.

THIS IS A LESSON ON BOTH THE HISTORIC REALITY OF MARYLAND AND THE CONTINUED CULTURAL CONFLICTS OF THIS STATE.

FOR EXAMPLE, IN MY SHALLOW RESEARCH I ALSO LEARNED THAT MONTGOMERY BLAIR WHO WAS ONE OF THE ATTORNEYS IN THE DRED SCOTT DECISION WHILE SUPPORTING DRED CASE WOULD CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE MAINTAINING SLAVERY AND OPPOSED THE STAUNCH ABOLITIONISTS OF THAT DAY.

THERE ARE MANY OF DETAILS ABOUT THESE GREAT CONFLICTS OF MARYLAND PAST BUT THE FUTURE SHOULD INCLUDE CELEBRATING THE EMANCIPATION AND FREEDOM OF ALL THOSE WHO SURVIVED SO THAT THE DECOLONIZATION AND RE-EDUCATION CAN CONTINUE.

THE NAACP MARYLAND STATE CONFERENCE OF MARYLAND SUPPORTS THE FAVORABLE PASSAGE OF SENATE BILL 0076.

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