



The April 19, 1861 riot resulted in the first casualty list of the war. Eight rioters, one innocent bystander and three soldiers were killed, twenty four soldiers and an unknown number of civilians wounded.

Senator Pinsky, members of the Committee,

my name is Edward Papenfuse, formerly the Archivist of Maryland

I come to you today in support of Senator Cheryl C. Kagan's bill to abolish the State Song, *Maryland My Maryland*.

If those who violently stormed the U.S. capitol on January 6, 2021 had the mental capacity to rapturize their efforts in a poem and place it to music, they could not do better than James Ryder Randall did with what is now our State Song, *Maryland My Maryland*.

In April 1861, at the age of 22, a professor of English and the Classics at a small college in Louisiana, Randall was so sympathetic to the riotous Baltimore mob that attacked the Massachusetts soldiers on their way to the defense of Washington, that he wrote a stirring account of their "patriotic gore."

As he explained in a letter written in 1884 on stationery "borrowed" or stolen from the United States Senate:

"One April Day I received the Delta newspaper of New Orleans containing an

account of the attack on the Massachusetts Regiment that first passed through Baltimore. This account excited me greatly. I had long been absent from my native city, and the startling event there inflamed my mind that night."

Randall's response was a poem that has been labeled the "Marseillaise of the Confederacy," sung by soldiers charged with defending the institution of slavery, and by Marylanders as the State Song since 1939, when the legislature rejected Governor Nice's veto, passed the bill again, and it was signed into law by Governor Nice's successor.

As the *Afro-American* headlined its reporting of Governor Nice's veto:

Original Words Stir Sectional Prejudice by reference to "Tyrants" "Vandals" and "Northern Scum." *Afro-American*, January 14, 1939.

In fact Randall's words do more than stir sectional prejudice. They glorify the actions of the mob as "patriotic gore", they enshrine a world in which slavery was considered righteous, and mob violence a virtue.

As Jack L. Levin lamented in an op ed piece in 1993 entitled "...A hateful state song," all those who were being urged

"not to "cower in the dust" were the owners and exploiters of some 84,000 slaves still in bondage in Maryland when the song was written ...

How many more generations of peaceful youngsters [adults, and sports fans] must be incited to "avenge the patriotic gore that flecked the streets of Baltimore"?"

It is time to put Maryland My Maryland back on the shelves of the Archives, there to be interpreted as an artifact of a past that I fervently hope is behind us.

This is not the first time that I have advocated consigning "Maryland My Maryland" to the history books. I hope it is my last, and that you will give your whole and unqualified support to Senator Kagan's bill.

Edward C. Papenfuse,  
Maryland State Archivist, retired

Text of Maryland My Maryland by James Ryder Randall:

The despot's heel is on thy shore  
Maryland, my Maryland  
His torches at thy temple door  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Avenge the patriotic gore  
That flecked the streets of Baltimore  
And be the battle queen of yore  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Thou wilt not cower in the dust  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Thy beaming sword shall never rust  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Remember Carroll's sacred trust  
Remember Howard's warlike thrust  
And though thy slumberers with the just  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Dear mother, burst the tyrant's chain  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Virginia should not call in vain  
Maryland, my Maryland  
She meets her sisters on the plain  
"Sic semper" 'tis the proud refrain  
That baffle's minions back o'Maine  
Maryland, my Maryland  
Arise, arise in majesty again  
Maryland, Maryland, my Maryland