

A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

JUNE 22 - 28, 1862

Our New State.

The correspondence of several of our exchanges indicates a strong probability that the new State is to fall through in Congress. The Senate Committee on Terri-

Days after the U.S. Senate began debating West Virginia's quest for statehood, Virginia Gov. John Letcher issued a call for 10,000 men to defend western Virginia from enemy occupation.

In so doing, he blasted Union supporters for their disgraceful constitutional violations, "their utter perversions of truth, their reckless disregard of justice and of the rights of property, and their departure in numerous instances from the usages of civilized warfare, the invasion of our homes, and the murder of our peaceful citizens."

Letcher accused Union supporters of violating Virginians' constitutional rights against baseless searches and seizures, as well as denying

them their rights to a free press, freedom of religion and trials by jury.

Such actions, he said, rendered any hopes of reconciliation "odious to our sense of honor and abhorrent to our feelings."

"It has produced an estrangement as enduring as if there was an impassable gulf between us," he concluded.

The governor urged citizens to "redeem our fair State from the hand of the oppressor. Make up the force now called for, and be prompt in your action."

This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.

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