

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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MISSION 2: "Flight to Freedom"

"The Transportation of Free Blacks to Africa" (1850)

In 1850, Kentucky enacted a new state constitution that required newly freed blacks to leave the state (free blacks were considered a threat to slave holding interests). The change helped to revive interest in "colonization," a plan to settle former slaves in the African colony of Liberia. This editorial from a Maysville, Kentucky newspaper in favor of colonization was reprinted in the Ripley Bee in Ohio.

The Maysville Eagle...contains a well written article on the subject of the Transportation of Free Blacks to Africa. The Eagle thinks that considerations of policy, as well as of justice and humanity should induce the next Legislature to appropriate an annual sum, say \$20,000, to this purpose.

We think the suggestion a good one....The rigorous provisions which have been incorporated into the New Constitution, relative to the emancipation of slaves, would seem to render something of this sort, if not necessary, at least highly expedient and proper. The Convention having established a decree of unconditional expatriation against all emancipated slaves, it would seem to be due to justice and humanity, that having denied them a place on own soil, where they were born, we should adopt some measure towards providing them a refuge and home elsewhere.

Every consideration forbids that we should desire to impose upon our sister States a class of population which we consider a dangerous and mischievous element of our own community. We have no right to suppose that other States will submit to have this nuisance thrust upon them. We know they will not. They ought not, and it does not become us to ask it of them.

Where, then, are the liberated Blacks to go? Are they to have no home? Are they, after a laborious life of servitude spent for our advantage, to be thrust forth houseless vagrants on the face of the earth? Justice to the poor negro himself, as well as respect for our own character, forbids the idea. Humble though he may be, the slave has claims upon our justice and humanity, which ought not to be disregarded.

If an arrangement can be made by which, without material inconvenience to the Public Treasury, an annual sum could be set apart and appropriated to the settlement of our liberated slaves in Liberia, we hope it will be done.

Source: *Maysville Post Boy*, reprinted in *Ripley Bee*, November 2, 1850, p. 3.
