

### 1831. DENOUNCING COLONIZATION

In the 1820s, many White Protestant congregations in the New York area regarded the end of slavery as the will of God, but were concerned about the future of newly freed African Americans and about life in an interracial community. One proposal was to send formerly enslaved Africans to live in colonies on the West African coast. Members of the New York branch of the American Colonization Society included Charles Andrews, the director of the African Free School in New York City and John Russworm, an editor of the African American newspaper *Freedom's Journal*. Most abolitionists and the leadership of the African Episcopal Church opposed colonization plans. In 1831, meetings were held in New York City, Brooklyn and Trenton, New Jersey to protest against the idea of colonization. At the New York meeting, Samuel Ennals charged that the proposals represented a denigration of the character of Black people. Many African Americans abandoned the African Free School in protest over its directors support for colonization. This article appeared in *The Liberator*, February 12, 1831 and was reprinted in H. Aptheker (1973). *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*. Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, v. 1, 109. Sources: Hodges, G. (1999). *Root & Branch, African Americans in New York & East Jersey, 1613-1863*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 215-216, 241-243.

We solemnly protest against that Christian philanthropy which, in acknowledging our wrongs, commits a greater by vilifying us. The conscientious man would not kill the animal, but cried, "mad dog," and the rabble dispatched him...A difference of color is not a difference of species. Our structure and organization are the same, and not distinct from other men; and in what respects are we inferior? ...We are content to abide where we are. We do not believe that things will always continue the same. The time must come when the Declaration of Independence will be felt in the heart, as well as uttered from the mouth, and when the rights of all shall be properly acknowledged and appreciated. God hasten that time. This is our home, and this is our country. Beneath its sod lie the bones of our fathers; for it, some of them fought, bled, and died. Here we were born, and here we will die.