

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 236

Commemorating the 175th anniversary of the abolition of slavery in the
British Empire on August 1, 1834.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 3, 2009

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. HARKIN, and Mr.
BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered
and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 175th anniversary of the abolition of
slavery in the British Empire on August 1, 1834.

Whereas the United States and the United Kingdom have be-
come beacons of freedom and democracy around the
world;

Whereas the history of the people of Africa is inextricably
tied to the histories of the United States and the United
Kingdom;

Whereas, for centuries, millions of people from Africa and
their descendants were enslaved in the United States and
the territories of the British Empire;

Whereas the slave trade spanned many regions of the world,
including Africa, the Caribbean, the United States, and
territories of the British Empire;

Whereas the people of Africa forced into slavery were dehumanized, humiliated, abused, and often separated from their families to be sold;

Whereas the institution of slavery, predicated upon racist beliefs, infected and corrupted the social fabrics of the United States and the United Kingdom;

Whereas the Underground Railroad embodied courage, hospitality, and fortitude, and served as an impetus for the abolition of slavery;

Whereas the Underground Railroad provided a means of escape from slavery by incorporating a network of abolitionists, secret routes, and safe houses throughout the United States and the territories of the British Empire;

Whereas the efforts of Harriet Tubman and like-minded abolitionists in the Underground Railroad helped tens of thousands of slaves escape to freedom during the early 19th century;

Whereas Harriet Tubman demonstrated her fearless devotion to liberty during her service as a conductor on the Underground Railroad and was responsible for leading fugitive slaves through the countryside to safe houses;

Whereas Harriet Tubman became known as “Moses” among slaves and abolitionists because her estimated 19 trips in the decade following her emancipation in 1849 to States that permitted slavery led to the liberation of approximately 300 slaves;

Whereas the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 jeopardized the safety of escaped slaves in the United States;

Whereas the establishment of Underground Railroad safe houses in Canada, a territory of the British Empire, provided a safe haven for escaped slaves;

Whereas the abolition of slavery in the British Empire on August 1, 1834, established a chief terminal for the Underground Railroad and laid the foundation for the eventual abolition of slavery in the United States;

Whereas the Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada, served as an important center of abolitionist activity and served as the final destination for many escaped slaves;

Whereas many freed slaves became members of Salem Chapel British Methodist Episcopal Church and settled in the community; and

Whereas the abolition of slavery in the British Empire influenced the United States by setting the precedent that the dehumanizing practice of slavery would not, and could not, be tolerated if a Nation is to conform with the fundamental tenets of democracy and equality for all people: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the fundamental importance of
3 the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in the
4 history of the United States and Canada; and

5 (2) celebrates the 175th anniversary of the abo-
6 lition of slavery in the British Empire on August 1,
7 1834.

○