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Defence of Massachusetts

Anson Burlingame (1820 -1870)

Read by: D.S. Harvey
 Length: 49 minutes
 Language: English

Genre: Speeches
 Style: Solo

Product Formats and Options				
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“Defence of Massachusetts” is a speech given by Anson Burlingame in 1856. In this speech, Burlingame defends the state of Massachusetts against accusations of being a hotbed of abolitionism and radicalism. He argues that the state’s residents are not radical extremists, but rather deeply committed to the principles of freedom and equality. He also contends that the state’s anti-slavery movement is rooted in a desire to uphold the Constitution and the principles of the American Revolution, not in a desire to incite violence or chaos. Burlingame also stresses on the point that the abolitionist movement in Massachusetts is a peaceful one, and that the state’s residents should not be judged by the actions of a small group of extremists. He concludes by calling on his fellow citizens

to stand up for their rights and to defend the state’s reputation against unjust accusations.

Anson Burlingame (November 14, 1820 – February 23, 1870) was a prominent American lawyer, politician, and diplomat. He was born in New Berlin, New York, in 1820. After studying at Middlebury College in Vermont, he went on to study law at the Harvard Law School. He was admitted to the bar in 1843 and began practicing law in Massachusetts. Burlingame began his political career in the 1850s, serving as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives and later as a member of the United States House of Representatives. He was a strong advocate for abolition and was a close ally of Abraham Lincoln. In 1861, President Lincoln appointed Burlingame as the United States Ambassador to China. In this role, he played a crucial role in improving relations between the United States and China and helped negotiate the Treaty of Tientsin, which opened China to American trade. After serving as Ambassador to China, Burlingame returned to the United States and continued to be active in politics. He was a delegate to the 1864 Republican National Convention and was a strong supporter of President Lincoln’s re-election. Burlingame passed away in 1870. He was remembered for his tireless efforts to improve relations between the United States and China and for his commitment to the abolition of slavery. He has been recognized as one of the most important American diplomats of the 19th century.