



***Constitution of the Hartford Auxiliary Colonization Society***

Hartford: Lincoln and Stone, 1819

"Anti-Slavery in New England" Digital Collection

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<http://www.library.umass.edu/spcoll/digital/antislavery.htm>

The Hartford Auxiliary Colonization Society was a local organization of the American Colonization Society (ACS), which had been established in 1816 by prominent Southerners to repatriate free blacks to Africa. The ACS was popular with both southern slave holders, who feared the growing numbers of free people of color in the United States, and many white abolitionists of the time, who saw the ACS as a means to achieve a gradual end to slavery. Although many African-American leaders criticized the ACS for abandoning the struggle for racial equality in the United States, by the 1830s over two hundred state and local ACS auxiliaries had been formed, and its roster included many of prominent political and religious leaders in the United States.

The speech of the Hartford auxiliary's founding president, John T. Peters, which is contained in this pamphlet, launches the Hartford auxiliary on a note of high optimism. Peters argues that an African colony would act as a civilizing and Christianizing influence on the inhabitants of Africa, would serve as sentinels in ending the continuing African slave trade, and would lead to the eventual gradual emancipation of African Americans. Peters expresses no doubt that America's free blacks would prove equal to this task, for while some might consider them "incapable of the finer arts of civilization, or of self-government...we trust that in New-England, we have no such prejudices or opinions to encounter."