

THE TRUE REPUBLICAN, OR AMERICAN WHIG.

"THE TRUTH OUR GUIDE—THE PUBLIC GOOD OUR END."

[Vol. I]

WILMINGTON, (N. C.) TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1809.

[No. 11.]

From the National Intelligencer.

The following are original letters of the illustrious Washington, most eminently adapted to the present crisis. The sentiments are sterling; such as that upright man felt from the bottom of his soul.—Were he now alive, what terrors would not his indignant frown strike into the hearts of those wretches, who, for the base purposes of disaffection, of errant Toryism, of foreign attachments, dare to invoke his name: who, with the flexible malignity of the serpent, turn and twist themselves into endless contortions to deceive and seduce the unwary; who assert and retract, retract and assert, the most profligate falsehoods, with the intemperance and impudence of a stage player.

Mount Vernon, July 20, 1774.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 17th was not presented to me till after the resolutions (which were adjudged advisable for this country to come to) had been revised, altered, and corrected in the committee; nor till we had gone into a general meeting in the court-house, and my attention necessarily called every moment to the business that was before it; I did however upon the receipt of it (in that hurry and bustle) hastily run it over, and handed it round to the gentlemen on the bench, of which there were many; but as no person present seemed in the least disposed to adopt your sentiments—as there appeared a perfect satisfaction and acquiescence to the measures proposed (except from a Mr. Williamson, who was for adopting your advice, literally, without obtaining a second voice on his side)—and as the gentlemen to whom the letter was shewn advised me not to have it read, as it was not like to make a convert, and repugnant (some of them thought) to the very principle we were contending for, I forbore to offer it otherwise than in the manner above mentioned, which I shall be sorry for, if it gives you any dissatisfaction in not having your sentiments read to the country at large, instead of communicating them to the first people in it, by offering them the letter in the manner I did.

That I differ very widely from you, in respect to the mode of obtaining a repeal of the acts so much, and so justly complained of, I shall not hesitate to acknowledge; and that this difference of opinion may probably proceed from the different constructions we put upon the conduct and intention of the ministry, may also be true; but as I see nothing on the one hand, to induce a belief that the Parliament would embrace a favorable opportunity of repealing acts which they go on with great rapidity to pass, in order to enforce the tyrannical system; and on the other observe or think I observe, that government is pursuing a regular plan at the expence of law and justice, to overthrow our constitutional rights and liberties, how can I expect any redress from a measure which hath been ineffectually tried already. For, sir, what is it we are contending against? Is it a sin paying the duty of 3d. per lb. on tea, because burthensome? No, it is the right only we have all along disputed, and to this end we have already petitioned his majesty in as humble and dutiful a manner as subjects could do; nay more, we applied to the House of Lords and House of Commons in their different legislative capacities, setting forth that as Englishmen we could not be deprived of this essential and valuable part of our constitution. If then, as the fact really is, it is against the right of taxation we now do, and (as I before said) all along have contended, why should they suppose an exertion of this power would be less obnoxious now than formerly? And what reason have we to believe that they would make a second attempt whilst the same sentiments filled the breast of every American, if they did not intend to enforce it

if possible? The conduct of the Boston people could not justify the rigor of their measures, unless there had been a requisition of payment and refusal of it, nor did that measure require an act to deprive the government of Massachusetts Bay of their charter, or to exempt offenders from trial in the place, where offences were committed; as there was not nor could not be a single instance produced to manifest the necessity of it. Are not all these things self evident proofs of a fixed and uniform plan to tax us? If we want further proofs, does not all the debates in the House of Commons serve to confirm this? And hath not gen. Gage's conduct since his arrival (in stopping the address of his council, and publishing a proclamation more becoming a Turkish Basha than an English governor declaring it treason to associate in any manner by which the commerce of Great Britain is to be effected) exhibited unexampled testimony of the most despotic system of tyranny that ever was practised in a free government? In short, what further proofs are wanting to satisfy one, of the designs of the ministry, and their own acts; which are uniform, and plainly tending to the same point—namely, if I mistake not, avowedly to tax the right of taxation—what hope then from petitioning, when they tell us that now, or never, is the time to fix the matter? Shall we after this whine and cry for relief, when we have already tried in vain, or shall we suppose it and see one province after another fall a sacrifice to despotism? If I were in any doubt as to the right which the Parliament of Great Britain had to tax us without our consent, I should most heartily coincide with you in opinion, that to petition and petition only, is the proper method to apply for relief; because we should then be asking a favour, and not claiming a right which, by the law of nature & our constitution, we are in my opinion, indubitably entitled to; I should even think it criminal to go farther than this, under such an idea; but none such I have. I think the Parliament of Great Britain hath no more right to put their hands into my pockets, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into yours for money; and this being already urged to them in a firm, but decent manner, by all the colonies, what reason is there to expect any thing from their justice?

As to the resolution for addressing the Throne, I own to you, sir, I think the whole might as well have been expunged; I expect nothing from the measure, nor should my voice have accompanied it, if the non importation scheme was intended to be retarded by it, for I am convinced as much as I am of my existence, that there is no relief for us but in their distress; and I think, at least I hope, that there is public virtue enough left among us to deny ourselves every thing but the bare necessities of life, to accomplish this end; this we have a right to do, and no power upon earth can compel us to do otherwise, till they have first reduced us to the most abject state of slavery that ever was designed for mankind. The stopping our exports would, no doubt, be a shorter cut than the other, to effect this purpose, but if we owe money to Great Britain, nothing but the last necessity can justify the non-payment of it; and therefore I have great doubts upon this head, and wish to see the other method, which is legal and will facilitate these payments, first tried.

I cannot conclude without expressing some concern, that I should differ so widely in sentiments from you in a matter of such great moment, and general import; and should much distrust my own judgement upon the occasion, if my nature did not recoil at the thought of submitting to measures which I think subversive of every thing that I ought to hold dear and valuable—and did I not find at the same time, that the voice of mankind is with

me. I must apologise for sending you so rough a sketch of my thoughts upon your letter. When I looked back and saw the length of my own, I could not, as I am also a good deal hurried at this time, bear the thoughts of making off a fair copy.

I am, dear sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

GEO. WASHINGTON.

To BRYAN FAIRFAX, Esq.
at Louiston.

HEAD QUARTERS,

VALLEY Forge, March 1, 1778.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of December came safe to my hands, after considerable delay in its passage.

The sentiments you have expressed of me in this letter are highly flattering—meriting my warmest acknowledgements, as I have too good an opinion of your sincerity and candor, to believe that you are capable of unmeaning professions, and speaking a language foreign from your heart; the friendship I ever professed, & felt for you, met with no diminution from the difference in our political sentiments. I knew the rectitude of my own intentions and believing in the sincerity of yours, lamented, though I did not condemn, your renunciation of the creed I had adopted. Nor do I think any person, or power ought to do it whilst your conduct is not opposed to the general interests of the people, and the measures they are pursuing. The latter, that is our actions, depending on ourselves may be controlled, while the powers of thinking originating from higher causes, cannot always be moulded to our wishes.

The determinations of Providence are always wise—often inscrutable—and tho' its decrees appear to bear hard upon us at times, are nevertheless meant for gracious purposes. In this light I cannot help viewing your late disappointment; for if you had been permitted to have gone to England, unrestrained even by the rigid oaths which are administered upon those occasions, your feelings as a husband, parent, &c. must have been considerably wounded in the prospect of a long perhaps lasting separation from your nearest relatives—what then must they have been, if the obligation of an oath had left you with out a will?

Your hope of being instrumental in restoring peace would prove as unsubstantial as mist before a noon day sun; and would as soon dispel; for believe me, sir, Great Britain understood herself perfectly well in this dispute, but did not comprehend America. She meant, as Lord Cumberland in his late speech in Parliament, clearly & explicitly declares, to drive America into rebellion: that her own purposes might be more fully answered by it; but take this along with, it that this plan originating in a firm belief founded on misinformation, that no effectual opposition would or could be made; they little dreamt of what has happened, and are disappointed in their views.

Does not every act of the administration from the tea act to the present sessions of Parliament declare this in plain and self evident characters? Had the commissioners any powers to treat with America? If they meant peace, would Lord Howe have been detained in England five months after passing the act? Would the powers of these commissioners have been confined to mere acts of grace upon condition of absolute submission? No. Surely not! They meant to draw us into what they termed rebellion, that they might be furnished with a pretext to disarm, and then strip us of the rights and privileges of Englishmen. If they were actuated by principles of justice, why did they refuse, indignantly to accede to the terms which we humbly supplicated before hostilities commenced, and this country deluged in blood, and now make their

principal officers, and even the commissioners themselves say that these terms are just and reasonable, nay, that more will be granted than we have yet asked if we will relinquish our claim to independence. What name does such conduct as this deserve? And what punishment is there in store for the men who have distressed millions—involving themselves into ruin—and plunged numberless families into inextricable woe!—Could that which is just and reasonable now, have been unjust four years ago? If not, upon what principles I repeat, does administration act? They must be either wantonly wicked and cruel, or (which is only another mode of expressing the same thing) under false colors are now endeavouring to deceive the great body of the people by industriously propagating an idea that Great Britain is willing to offer any, and that we will accept of no terms; thereby hoping to poison, and disaffect the minds of those who wish for peace, and create feuds and dissensions in consequence—in a word having less dependence now on their arms than their arts, they are practising such low and dirty tricks, that men of sentiment and honor must blush for their part. Among other measures in this way, they are forging letters and publishing them as intercepted ones of mine, to prove that I am an enemy to the present measures of this continent, having been deceived, and led on by Congress in hopes that at length, they would recede from their claims and withdraw their opposition to Great Britain.

Dear sir your most obedient and affectionate,
GEO. WASHINGTON.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS

Read by Mr. Troup, in the House of Representatives, received from gentlemen of the first respectability in Georgia.

"For six or eight months last past, there has been an extensive scene of smuggling carrying on between the United States and Florida. Upwards of twenty large cargoes of provisions, cotton and timber have sailed from Amelia Island for Britain and her possessions. There is at this moment, near twenty sail of British vessels in the waters sailing into St. Mary's river, all of them loading with timber, naval stores, cotton and provisions. Most of these vessels are strongly armed,—several of them mount 20 guns. In addition to this I frequently receive correct information of armed vessels being at anchor on our coast receiving cargoes from our base unprincipled inhabitants and foreign speculators. If some method cannot be fallen on to put a stop to this smuggling trade there is no use in keeping the embargo on. For through the channel of the Florida the English will receive important supplies. East Florida in itself is equal to furnishing Britain with a very considerable quantity of naval stores, such as tar turpentine &c. rosin, &c. and many people in that province are now engaged in that business. Great Britain will not feel the loss of her trade to the Baltic in its full extent—if she can keep an open trade (as at present) with Florida. From thence she can have the best of Pine timber, live oak, and red cedar for her navy—boards, staves, and shingles for her islands. These things in my humble opinion, call for the attention of our government.

"In case of a war with either, or both, of the belligerent powers I am of opinion that it would be a wise measure in the United States to take immediate possession of the Floridas to prevent the English having a footing there; of drawing the supplies they so much want for their navy, &c.

"You can readily form a judgment of the wants of the British, from the encouragement they give in Florida, and the enormous prices to obtain these supplies. The following are the ready money pri-