

*Am. Edition*

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*From the Washington Federalist.*

We have not had, nor do we expect to have, sufficient leisure to attend particularly to the president's message as the different subjects contained in it deserve: we cannot however forbear making a few remarks, arising from a cursory perusal.

It is well known to have been heretofore customary for the President, at the commencement of every session of Congress, to deliver his speech *personally*. This by some has been said to be an imitation of British precedent, an assimilation to monarchy, in opposition to true republicanism. But of this we believe *Mr. Washington* to have been as good a judge as Mr. Jefferson, and far more of a republican. The President's neglect of a personal address appears rather than otherwise an innovation intended to catch some childish applause. What were those "circumstances" that rendered his presence in the Capital "inconvenient?"

The address is concluded by again using the unmeaning French expression of "accept the homage of my high respect and consideration." It were far better sacredly to pay to the *people* this homage of respect and consideration.

The first glance at the Message discovers the President's anxiety to seize popularity. The whole performance bespeaks this the great object. Hence the most popular things are touched to gain the approbation of the unreflecting multitude. Every Magistrate who touches the purse, touches the feelings and excites the hatred of the people, however urgent the necessity: hence the general dislike harbored against those who levy taxes, and hence the universal popularity of those who endeavour to cause a cessation of taxes. The President's consciousness of this readily explains the reason of his message being directed almost wholly to the recommendation of alterations of our laws relative to the internal revenue, and to the pretentiously unnecessary expenses of that part of the Judiciary lately established, and permanently fixed according to the constitution.

Premising these things, we see the policy of the President in directing the attention of the Legislature to the internal revenue, and so strongly urging its total destruction; a measure that may catch popular attention for a moment, but which may prove exceedingly injurious. The President says that, without this internal revenue, the remaining sources of revenue will be sufficient to defray the expenses of government, pay the interest of our public debts, &c. We are informed that two heavy instalments of the Dutch debt become due in the years 1802 and 1803, amounting to nearly two millions of dollars each year. However the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, giving the amount of our internal and other revenue, will better enable us to judge of the expediency or inexpediency of destroying the internal revenue. Yet it ought not to be forgotten that this revenue arises not from the purses of the poor, as suggested by Mr. Jefferson, but from the rich; it ought not to be forgotten that even if our foreign debts, or the support of government, did not require its continuance, there are very many useful, important and necessary modes of expending it; the public roads, national institutions, &c. &c. How differently does Mr. Jefferson reason in his Notes on Virginia. In how many ways, for public utility, does he say money can and ought to be expended; and how easily, does he assert, can sums much larger than the amount of our internal revenue, be raised for such purposes, without the nation's feeling loss or sustaining an injury. He did not then reason like a man greedy of an illusory and short lived popularity, at the expense of a constitution, or the destruction of a government.—It ought not to be forgotten how soon, in a contest with our Spanish neighbours, or otherwise, this revenue may be wanted; nor how difficult it will be to commence it again.

The revenue arising from the postage of newspapers is insignificant: the trouble immense. We printers will certainly have no objection to its being stopped.

The President has one laughable argument in favor of destroying the revenue; he speaks of wars, "which might not perhaps happen but from the temptations offered by that treasure." This is like advising a man not to attempt becoming rich, lest such riches might be a temptation to lawsuits.

The observations of the President relative to Tripoli are correct, but needlessly

circumstantial. It is certainly expedient that our armed vessels should have liberty not only to *repel* but to *capture*, and act on the *offensive*.—The President says that we seek peace, "from a *conscientious desire* to direct the *energies* of our nation to the *multiplication* of the human race."—All will feel grateful to Mr. Jefferson for reminding us of our natural propensities. We wish all would adhere to this *multiplying* object in an honest and lawful way.

The President condemns in an indirect yet most severe and unjust manner, the administrations of Washington and Adams. He speaks of "agencies created by Executive Authority," "useless things" "general tendency to multiply offices and dependencies, and to increase expence to the ultimate term of burden which the citizen can bear." Whole "general tendency" is here audaciously ment? How artfully yet foolishly cautious is Mr. Jefferson in many of his declarations, where the total destruction of justice urges a meanly ambiguous expression. This low cunning of expression marks, of late, all the President's communications. His Predecessors never needed such.

The President tells the legislature not to separate till they have done for the militia *every thing* that could be done, *were an enemy at our door*. How much is this? The expence of twenty regular regiments, properly accounted and disciplined, would be compared with the expence of preparing the militia as proposed.

"The judiciary system of the United States, and especially that portion of it recently created, will of course present itself to the contemplation of Congress." How will the judiciary present itself, *of course*? We are however happy to be informed that this daring and most destructive attack on the Constitution is properly appreciated by the democratic members of the house; many of whom, it is said, have declared their unwillingness to go to such lengths with the destroying Executive. If an attempt should be made to interfere here, farewell to our government: the time will have come when those innovations are made which Gen. Washington prophetically foretold would precede the total destruction of the government.

The President speaks very well on the subject of Juries. Juries by lot are supposed to be the most impartial: and probably some law will be passed to establish this most eligible mode.

As a literary performance, we can truly say it is the least incorrect of his writings. He has wisely "corrected the procedure" with regard to rhetoric. He does not metamorphosize metaphors and disguise figures, with such rashness and cruelty as heretofore. He does indeed in one instance introduce a figure, and, as usual, makes bungling work of it. He speaks of Agriculture, Manufactures, Commerce and Navigation, these four *pillars* of our prosperity, then most thriving &c. As well might a man talk of a *flourishing pair* of Andersons.

TO ANDREW STERRETT,  
Lieutenant and commander of the U. States  
Schooner Enterprise.

WASHINGTON, DEC. 1, 1801.

SIR,  
The secretary of the navy, the regular organ for the present communication, being absent from the seat of government, for causes which may detain him for some time, I do myself the pleasure without further delay, of expressing to you on behalf of your country, the high satisfaction inspired by your conduct in the late engagement with the Tripolitan cruiser captured by you. Too long, for the honor of nations, have those Barbarians been suffered to trample on the sacred faith of treaties, on the rights and laws of human nature. You have shewn to your countrymen that the enemy cannot meet bravery and skill united. In proving to them that our past concessions were from a love of peace, not a dread of them, you have deserved well of your country, and have merited the high esteem and consideration of which I have now the pleasure of assuring you.

TH: JEFFERSON.

Baltimore, Dec. 3, 1801.

SIR,  
I do myself the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your excellency's letter of the first instant.

It has been my greatest ambition to discharge my duty as an officer of the American navy, at all times, with promptness &

fideliy; to have received my country's & your excellency's approbation of the late conduct of a faithful and Barbarian enemy, achieved by the valor and good conduct of the officers and crew I had the honor to command, is a reward which I estimate beyond my merits; but of which I shall ever cherish a grateful recollection, particularly for the very flattering manner in which your excellency has been pleased to convey it.

I have the honor to be  
with profound respect  
your excellency's  
obliged humble servant,  
ANDREW STERRETT.  
Lieutenant and commander of the U. States  
Schooner Enterprise.

## CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, December 14.

Mr. Nicholson, called up the resolution concerning Timothy Pickering, Esq. Mr. Nicholson, on further consideration of the subject, was convinced that the resolution ought not to refer to Mr. Pickering *alone*, he would therefore offer another resolution, that a committee be appointed to enquire whether the monies drawn from the treasury have been faithfully applied and accounted for: as by law appropriated, and to enquire what rules or regulations are further necessary.

Mr. Bayard. He thought the resolution expressed in too general language, and involved an almost endless investigation: He wished to know if the gentleman meant an examination of all the monies & appropriations, or of the secretaries of state alone, and if the secretaries of state only, he wished to know whether the committee proposed were to go back to the commencement of the federal government.

Mr. B. said he did not doubt, nay he knew, that money had been appropriated to use not at the time of the appropriation, allowed by law, that the public service required it, but Congress afterwards justified such conduct.

Mr. Bayard declared that the gentleman (Mr. Nicholson) had done honor to himself as well as to Mr. Pickering, by his candid declaration of his belief that Mr. Pickering had ever conducted with the strictest honesty and integrity as a public officer; he considered such a declaration from such a gentleman, as sufficient to satisfy every mind on the subject; sufficient to silence all the vile slanders and base falsehoods that had been circulated.

Mr. Nicholson. He said he had made the resolution general, in order to comprehend also the war and navy department, as well as the department of state; though his first resolution was intended only for Mr. Pickering; as the department of state was more easy of investigation than the others; he however now wished the resolution to extend to all.

Mr. Giles. He had always been in favor of making such enquiries; he was the first who advanced the propriety of such enquiries on the part of the house, tho' his former propositions on that head had been treated with disrespect. Disbursements of public money always excited the sensibility of the people, they were ever anxious to know to what uses their money was put. He was much pleased with the resolution, as it would go to all the former secretaries &c. and as it would silence all calumnies from all quarters. He had no disposition to suspect a want of integrity; but he believed that in some or all departments, practices had been introduced that were extremely incorrect, and might be injurious. He wished that all the doors of information might be opened, that all might obtain knowledge on these subjects. He did not know why this had not been done before: it is certainly high time it was done: not from any regard to individuals, but from the obligations each member was under to his constituents, and all to the public; they were bound to make these enquiries: he should therefore give his hearty approbation to the resolution extending to all. He conceived that all the modes of transacting business, and the expenditures of all money ought to pass in review before that house; and that he should himself bring forward a resolution in a short time to this effect, making a standing law for this purpose.

Doctor Mitchel. He was pleased with the resolution. It was the duty of the house to silence these calumnies; or it offi-

cers had conducted amiss, it ought to be known, though he was far from suspecting any corruption. If nothing were lost or mispent, still he wished to know the situation and mode of public accounts. It was also necessary to enable the comptroller to settle his accounts, as he was sometimes obliged to hesitate, for the want of vouchers. The object of the resolution he tho't twofold; to make enquiries, and to make rules for correcting irregularities.

Mr. Bacon followed Doctor Mitchel, with similar arguments.

Mr. Bayard. He congratulated the gentlemen on the appearance of unanimity in this enquiry. The gentleman (M. Giles) was mistaken in what he said of his attempt, formerly to make these enquiries; he remembered no instance of that gentleman's bringing forward any resolution, of that kind, that was disrespectfully treated in this house; for his part he never did nor ever should oppose such: He considered such enquiries as answering valuable purposes, both as giving information to the people, and operating as a check on public officers.—He should have no objection to Mr. Giles's intended resolution, but he believed it would be more difficult than that gentleman imagined to form regulations that would in all instances apply; it had been, and ever would be the case, that sometimes more money would be wanted than was appropriated by law, and sometimes not so much. Considering our vast extent of country, and the multiplicity and uncertainty of public business, there could be no remedy for this in many instances. There was sometimes a redundancy, or deficiency, the redundancy had sometimes been taken to supply a deficiency elsewhere; and such will often be the case of public business must suffer; and it would certainly be injurious to apply restrictions in all instances. He would mention one instance. The Commissioners of this City had expended all the money appropriated to completing the buildings and preparing for the reception of Congress. What was to be done? In the office of the Secretary of State there was an excess of appropriation. The Secretary conceived himself justifiable, in converting this excess to the supply of the deficiency; and thus prevent an injury to the public.

[It might also have been asked what appropriations were made for the removal of the public offices from Philadelphia to Trenton, during the time of the fever?]

Mr. B. observed, that from sources on which he could depend he was enabled to assure the house that the accounts of Mr. Pickering were settled, except some small sums for which the vouchers could not at present be obtained, though it was well known that the money was appropriated as directed by law: nor did Mr. Pickering owe the public one farthing. But the resolution comprehends too much. He wished it only to extend to the heads of Departments.

Mr. Giles. He was gratified with the calmness and temper with which this session had commenced; he hoped it would continue to distinguish all their deliberations. He rose principally to say that the gentleman (Bayard) was incorrect in his statement relative to his (Mr. Giles's) not having introduced a resolution formerly to make enquiries into the state of the public offices; but this was before Mr. Bayard was a member of the house.

Mr. Giles said, he did not doubt but it was sometimes justifiable to appropriate money to uses not authorized by law; yet officers thus appropriating ought ever to call on the next Congress to decide the necessity or propriety of such appropriations. The resolution does not go to define sufficiently the duties of the committee as it now stands, the committee, will be obliged to go back twelve years. It ought to limit the duties of the committee and specify to what they should attend.

On motion, carried, and a committee of seven appointed.

A communication was received from the Secretary of the Treasury, containing a list of appropriations necessary for the year 1802, and sundry other documents.

The house then resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the state of the union, Mr. Morris in the chair.

Mr. Smith introduced a resolution, the purport of which was the repeal all laws laying discriminating duties on tonnage and goods.

Mr. Dennis thought the house not ripe for a discussion at present.