

THE NORTH-CAROLINA MINERVA, AND FAYETTEVILLE ADVERTISER.

FAYETTEVILLE:—PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY HODGE AND BOYLAN.

Vol. II.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1798.

NUMB. 99.

From the PHILADELPHIA GAZETTE.

Mr. Brown,

FROM the report of the secret committee, now published by order of the House of Representatives, it appears, page 14, that on the 13th of July, the Spanish minister, the Chevalier d'Yrujo, called on the committee and made a communication marked A. B. C. in the appendix to the report, page 133, and of which the following is an exact translation, viz.

"Copy of a declaration made to the minister of his Catholic Majesty, by Citizen Bluchet, an inhabitant of the Tennessee."

1. "That there have been enlisted by the person called Chisholm, an English agent and an inhabitant of Tennessee, 1000 inhabitants of that state, who are destined for an attack on the ports of Baton Rouge, of New Orleans and of Louisiana."

2. "That Chisholm has reconnoitred the whole of Louisiana and of the two Floridas, and has taken steps for engaging the Creek and Cherokee Indians to turn their arms against the Spanish possessions."

3. "That Chisholm has obtained a list, which he now holds, of 1500 Tories, or English royalists at the Natchez, who have engaged to take up arms in favour of the English the moment they shall appear to attack Lower Louisiana, and to march from thence against Santa Fe."

4. "That there is now assembling, on the Lakes, a force composed of 500 English regulars, 700 Canadian militia in pay, and 2000 Indians to be commanded by Brandt."

5. "That this force is to descend the Illinois river, and attack St. Louis and New Madrid: from whence, following the course of the river St. Francis, and Arkansas, it is to march against Santa Fe."

6. "That Chisholm has procured six field pieces, of some which were to have been employed in General's expedition, and has lodged them in the hands of his agents on the Tennessee river."

7. "That the rendezvous for the Americans, is fixed at Knoxville on the Tennessee, on the 1st of July."

8. "That confidentially Chisholm, who has made the proper dispositions on all these heads, has reported them to the minister Laffon, who was to take his passage on the 28th of March from Philadelphia to London by board of a vessel cleared out for England in order to communicate his project to the government, and demand ships and money for its execution."

"Finally, as proof of what he has alleged, Citizen Mitchell placed in my hands an official letter from Chisholm, a copy of which is herewith annexed."

Done at Philadelphia, July 12, 1797.

This date of July 12th, 1797, evidently refers to the time when the Chevalier d'Yrujo made a copy of this communication for the purpose of being presented to the committee, & not to the time when the communication itself was made to him. The copy which I examined, is in the hand writing of the Chevalier: and as appears by the report, as above cited, was presented to the committee the next day; viz. July 13. There is in the margin of the paper, a note also in the hand writing of the Chevalier d'Yrujo, which by some accident does not appear in the printed copy, and which states that the communication was made by Mitchell to the minister on the 20th of March. This distinction of dates is important; & it is further confirmed by the communication itself: in the eighth clause of which it is stated, "that Chisholm, having made his dispositions, &c. was to sail from Philadelphia to London on the 28th of March." The term "was to sail," (*devoit partir*) manifestly refers to a future day; and consequently the communication was made before the 28th of March, and while Chisholm was still in Philadelphia. This also is a circumstance important to be remarked. It is, moreover, evident, that the Chevalier d'Yrujo, having received this communication on the 20th of March, as appears from the above mentioned note, must have known that Chisholm was to remain in Philadelphia eight days after this disclosure of his designs took place.

Why then did not the Chevalier d'Yrujo communicate this discovery to our government on the 20th of March, and in all the details in which he has received it? Chisholm was yet in Philadelphia, and might have been arrested. The dispatches with which he was charged might have been examined. The whole scheme might have been arrested and broken up in its infancy. Was it so uninteresting to us, that the minister of a friendly nation could have thought it not worth disclosing? Certainly not; for it was, if real, to involve our neutrality and our peace; and even if fictitious, as in all its most material parts it has appeared to be, still it might become the ground of misunderstanding and jealousies between us and our neighbors, and a motive or a pretext for delaying the execution of our treaty with his own nation.

In this latter way we find that he actually did use it. Instead of disclosing it to our own government, which could have crushed it at once, he concealed it from us, and lost no time in notifying it to the Spanish governor of Louisiana, who immediately made it a pretext for retaining the forts, & refusing to execute any part of the treaty.

It is evident therefore that the Spanish minister did not wish to see Chisholm's projects defeated, but to find in them a pretext for withholding the posts on the Mississippi.—There is little doubt of his being under the orders of a malignant Frenchman, known for his unbounded hatred to this country and its government, and generally considered as the secret agent of France in this country. In this transaction therefore we may plainly discern the traces of French hostility and intrigue, which, for the purpose of ruling this country, unceasingly attempts to excite its people against its government, and foreign nations against the country itself.

Should it be said that the Chevalier d'Yrujo did give our government this information, I answer, No. On the second of March he spoke to the Secretary of State of "the just reasons which he had for suspecting that an expedition was preparing on the Lakes on the part of the English," the object of which was "to attack upper Louisiana, and take, by surprise, the posts of St. Louis and New Madrid," and declare that the proofs which he had been able to obtain after the first verbal mention of that subject, a few days before, had confirmed him in his suspicion that the English troops, meditating this Coup-d'etat, intended to pass thro' some parts of our territory.

In answer to this he was assured by the Secretary of State, on the 11th of March, that the government of the United States had no knowledge of any circumstances indicative of such a design, and would pursue all proper measures for protecting the neutrality of their territory.

Nothing further passed on the subject till the 21st of April following, one month after the Chevalier d'Yrujo had received Mitchell's communication, and twenty three days after the time at which, as he knew himself, he was to sail for London. On that day, he wrote a second letter to the secretary of state, which ran in the following words:

"While I possess new reasons for believing that it is intended to carry into effect the expedition against Upper Louisiana on the part of the English, by violating the territory of the United States, as was manifested to you in my letter of the 2d of March last, I must add that I know, to a certainty, that the English have made propositions to General Clark, of Georgia, in order to avail themselves of his influence in that state, together with some other persons, for making a diversion, or serious attack, against Florida; and as by your letter of the 11th of last month, you assure me that the United States would take the necessary measures for causing their neutrality to be respected, I do not doubt that in consequence of this my information, the executive government will take proper steps, in order that Georgia also should not infringe the laws of neutrality to the injury of the possessions of the king my master."

Here there is not the smallest hint of the information received from Mitchell, which related to this very subject, and which it was so important to our government to possess. No hint is given of any details, nor is any single circumstance bro't in view whereby the government could be led to suspect that its own citizens were engaged in the project; or directed to the proper sources of information. By this conduct, which, to speak the most tenderly of it, was most disingenuous and unfriendly, our government was kept wholly in the dark about a plot, of the most serious import to its interests and its peace, which, to the knowledge of the Spanish minister, was then going on, and which he was himself using as a pretext for refusing to execute a solemn treaty.

Such throughout this affair, has been the conduct of this person, who with a neglect of decorum whereof diplomatic history, before the French republic, never furnished an example, has dared to insinuate that our government was desirous of conniving at enterprises formed, in the heart of our country, against the possessions of Spain.

Nor has his conduct been less marked with a disregard of truth, than with a neglect of decorum. On the 26th of March 1797, the secretary of state wrote to him, by order of the President, requesting to be informed what steps had been taken for withdrawing the Spanish troops from the posts on the Mississippi, pursuant to our treaty with Spain, the ratifications of which had then been exchanged nearly eleven months. To this inquiry, on so important a subject, was delayed to answer for a month; a delay which the ordinary forms of civility between individuals, would have for-

bidden in the case of a private note on the most trivial subject. At length, on the 17th of April, he answered in four lines, saying "that not having received letters from the governor of Louisiana for many months he knew nothing about the matter;" and that "an indisposition, from which he had not yet recovered, had prevented him from replying sooner!" Prevented for a whole month, by an indisposition, from writing a note of four lines, in answer to an important inquiry from the president of the United States! Yet that indisposition neither confined him to his house, nor prevented him from seeing Mitchell, on the 20th of March 4 days after the inquiry from the President had been made, from examining him, and taking down his examination in writing, at considerable length, with his own hand.

Such was the conduct of this person, who made it a part of his insolent accusations against the secretary of State, that a communication of his own, made on the 2d of March, and requiring careful examination, was not answered till the 11th of March; also during this short period, of 9 days, one President had gone out of office and another come in, and all the hurry of business attending the close of a session of congress had intervened!

But why, it may be asked, did this minister depart from his system, and lay before the committee a copy of Mitchell's communication? It certainly was not for the purpose of giving information by which our government might be enabled to act; for had that been the motive, the disclosure would have been to the executive, in March, while Chisholm was yet in the country, and with his papers, might have been arrested. The information was withheld when it might have been useful, and was brought forward at a time when it was comparatively of little importance, at a time too, when the explosion having taken place, and the discovery being made by other means, the Spanish minister might have supposed that the best method of avoiding the possibility of appearing as a party in the business, by reason of his concealment, was to turn informer, and tell what he knew about it. It is, probably, in this way of thinking that we must search for the motive of his conduct.

As to this communication of Mitchell, it has appeared to be utterly false in all its most material points. Every body now knows that no collection of troops ever was attempted on the lakes, or elsewhere on our frontier, and not a shadow of evidence has appeared to prove that Chisholm had procured any cannon, or engaged any persons, at the Natchez, or elsewhere, to join in his project, except Blount. The whole story came from Chisholm, who told it to Mitchell, and who, from the report of the committee, and the examinations which are annexed to it, appears to be a lying babbling fool, entitled to no credit or attention, nor obtaining any from a single person who knew him. And yet this is the story, thus derived, and thus supported, which, without proof, without inquiry, and without disclosure to our government by whom alone the proper inquiries could be made, and the proper steps taken, is made the pretext for refusing to execute a solemn national treaty, whereon depends many important rights and interests of two countries, and perhaps their peace.

The people of the United States will discern the hostile head whereby this machinery is secretly moved; and while they cannot help bestowing some small portion of indignation on the contemptible agent who is ostensibly employed they will find in these transactions, new motives for repelling, with energy and watchfulness, the open and concealed aggressions of his directors.

CIVIS.

PUBLIC NOTICE.

IN pursuance of an act of the General Assembly, held in the city of Raleigh, will be sold on twelve months credit, at public auction, to the highest bidder, at the Market-House, in the town of Hillsborough, on the sixteenth day of April next; the house commonly called and known by the name of the Blue-House, the Lot and all other houses thereunto belonging, situate in the said town of Hillsborough.

The law requires that good and sufficient security shall be given by the purchaser for the purchase money.
HENRY SHEPPERD, Com'r.
Hillsborough, Jan. 20.

NOTICE.

ON the 22th day of February next, a number of NEGROES belonging to the heir of Thomas England, deceased, will be hired out to the highest bidder—terms will be made known on that day.

R. COCHRAN, Guardian.
Fayetteville, January 27.