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[Concluded from our last.]

In the mean time let us rejoice that the political tie which bound us to them by treaty is now dissolved. There is no event, short of the attainment of our independence, which ought to be celebrated with more real joy. The gordian knot is cut, it has emancipated us from the dire necessity we were under of engaging in their continental European wars, and of sacrificing the lives and treasures of our citizens in the defence and guarantee of their West-India possessions. It is a great, a most important act; and is superior, in my estimation, to any victory, however decisive, that we have ever gained. Should any event hereafter happen which may separate their West-India islands from the parent country, we are no longer bound to spill the blood of our citizens, and for their benefit alone to reduce them to a state of dependence on them.

Having shaken off the shackles of this treaty of alliance, the only one by which we were encumbered, I will venture to say that there cannot be again any occasion for our adopting a similar mode of uniting ourselves to any other nation for many years: certainly not in a permanent degree, though it may very probably occur for a short and temporary conjuncture. The true basis of our politics should be to avoid giving offence to any people, by not forming treaties of alliance with others; for such a union places the nation allied in a doubly injurious point of view, in as it relates to their own affairs, and secondly, to those of the nation with whom they are combined. By keeping ourselves therefore unconnected by this kind of treaty, we shall not excite the suspicions or jealousies of other nations; and we may command the assistance of Rival Powers, whose interests will lead them to affect and maintain our independence and prevent us becoming an accidental agreement to their adversary. This we experienced in our revolutionary war; and this we shall again experience, by the aid the British will afford us against the French, should the latter with their usual tenacity enter into a war with us, because as Talleyrand reported to them upon his return from America, we are a weak and insignificant People. Canada, Nova Scotia, and the English West-India islands would be endangered by a French invasion of the country; and the immense and yearly increasing trade of the British nation with this country, would inevitably be lost to them by the success of the Gallic arms. I therefore repeat to you that the British must assist us, as their own interest would lead to it. In the convoys which they at present voluntarily and readily supply us with to protect our trade, you see at once the spring of such motives, and the principles of such assistance. We may lay this down then as an axiom in our politics that the rivalry and jealousy of these powerful nations, their perpetual and reciprocal resentment which has subsisted for so many ages, and which probably will never subside, their ambitious councils for a decided superiority, will always prove potent stimulants to the voluntary exertions of that people, for whose advantage it will be that we should remain free and independent States. Were England and France at peace to-morrow, and were the French to declare war against us in the course of a short time thereafter, I do aver that the power of Great Britain, grounded down as she is, with the continuance of the present calamitous state of her affairs, must engage her efforts, and that immediately, in union with us to oppose French hostilities in this country. Let us not therefore, Gentlemen, be alarmed at the idea of entering into a temporary treaty of alliance with Great Britain, if our affairs and our security should lead to the necessity of it. We may retain our tranquility, and ensure our independence, even by shewing no disposition of embracing every means in our power, that we can possibly adopt. For it is praiseworthy to obey the first law of nature, and consult our self-preservation, even by the hands of our ancient enemies. Such is the policy which have ever guided, and which will ever guide nations in their intercourse with each other; and as we have illuminated the political firmament with an additional planet, so we must expect to be influenced by the same laws, and to be subject to the same aberrations, as have affected the old system, in our commercial and political relations with them.

I cannot, gentlemen, but congratulate you on the rising confidence of our countrymen in the administrators of our government, and on their general approbation of the energetic measures that have been pursued by the public constituted authorities of our State. Glad am I that the veil which concealed the measures of the French nation has been rent asunder, and that the eyes and ears of our community have been, though lately, opened. Where, let me ask you, would you place your hope of freedom and In-

dependence? In a French Directory, French Partizans, or in the friends of your Country? I will not insult your understandings, by answering the question for you; but the coincidence of opinion, the universality of sentiment which the people of the United States now breathe with respect to French conduct; the great change which has taken place in the House of Representatives of the United States shall make the response for me. Long, very long, may we remember, that the French charged our friend and countryman, General Pinckney, with being bribed and corrupted with British gold. Long may the impression remain on our minds, that he was threatened to be imprisoned whilst he was extending to them the peaceable olive branch. Little did they know that the two most eminent of his qualifications were integrity and fortitude. May we long recollect their unbounded haughtiness after the capture of Mantua; their unparalleled baseness in endeavouring to separate one of our envoys from the rest, and their late condescending humility in repeatedly entreating the return of Mr. Genay. These events be assured, will not make a less impression on the Gallic leaders, than they will on ourselves. They will rankle in their hearts and you will never be forgiven for not having joined them in their general career for the destruction of Great Britain. "What will they say, find such a petty government as the United States of America dare to reject our offers and to controul our supreme will? Shall they who are of no more consequence than Generals or Generals, in the great political scale of nations, presume to recede from our friendship and protection?" Since we have dared to do so, Gentlemen, let us remember that our only hope of peace is in the immediate preparation for war. I mentioned to you above that we had incurred the resentment of France because we would not join her to oppose Great Britain from the lot of nations. Had I time to spare, I could show you from the irresistible proofs of history, that our safety, our very existence as a separate people depend upon the equality of power and the rival jealousies of France and England. When Carthage, the only competitor of Roman greatness, was destroyed, the whole world bowed the knee to the unrivalled power of the Globe. Could France succeed in the annihilation of Great Britain, the same tempest would sweep away your freedom and your independence. The analogy is too striking not to be perceived in a moment, without a long, though it would be an interesting dissertation.

I must not omit mentioning to you the rising navy of the United States, and of recommending to our citizens the belief that it is the best and most natural defence of our country, and the most efficacious mode of preventing an invasion. The more barriers we have between us and our enemies the greater probability there is of our keeping off the danger longer, and of our being successful in some of these preparatory efforts. Look at the formidable fleets of Great Britain, which have ever prevented every attempt of their enemies to land in any considerable force on their soil, altho' they are only 20 or 30 miles distant from them; and let us learn a lesson of wisdom even from our enemies.

I cannot conclude, Gentlemen, without adverting to the Alien and Sedition Laws passed at the last sitting of Congress; they have been so grossly misrepresented for sinister purposes, that they deserve to be placed in a proper point of view, that the citizens of our State may see that they have nothing more to apprehend from them than from a law against Burglary, or any other crime, and which I do suppose every good member of society would wish to see at least punishable. The alien law has no other subjects in view than foreigners, perhaps intriguing spies, who may be endeavoring to excite discontent, insurrection and revolt in our country. Where is the injury then done to the American citizen, whom our constitution protects and still secures, notwithstanding that law; how unfair, how ungenerous then has been the conduct of those who have represented this law as unconstitutional, when it cannot affect our own citizens, nor their rights. Be assured, Gentlemen, that from Baron de Kalbe, down to Volney the same pursuits have been attended to in the travels and excursions of these people.

The sedition act has undergone the same fate, and by way of excellence is called the gag law, and it is said, that it restrains every press in the land. The first part of the charge is not founded in truth, for the law does not apply to the liberty of speech at all; but you may still speak what you please; it however, you exceed certain bounds you are punishable to be sure; not by this law but by the common law of the land. As to the second part I am certain that there is not a citizen of this country, who can be of opinion that he has a constitutional right of publishing

false, scandalous, and malicious libels against any one in the community; much less then should he have this privilege when it is done with an intent to stir up sedition and revolt in the State. Should not a man who is guilty of so gross an offence as that of exciting disturbances, even in the small circle of a town or village, be punishable by law? certainly he should; and would you wish then that those who may endeavor to throw a whole nation into revolt or insurrection should escape? Is it material how the offence is originated, provided it is done with the intention of exciting disturbances, whether they take arms in the first instance, or induce the citizens thereto by false, scandalous and malicious publications? I will only add, Gentlemen, that the jury before whom such a trial is to be had must find the accused guilty of having written, printed, uttered, or published such false, scandalous and malicious writings against the government of the United States, or either house of the Congress of the United States, or of the President of the U. States, with intent to defame or bring them into contempt or disrepute, or to excite against them the hatred of the good people of the United States, or to stir up sedition, or to abet the hostile designs of any foreign nation. Remember, that the present distractions in Europe have been brought about by the writings of Atheists and Blasphemous Philosophists. If you would wish to see your country become the theatre of these incendiaries, then declare to the world that you will permit this unconstrained license of the press, and stamp it with the mistaken impression of Liberty.

I regret, gentlemen, that I have consumed so much of your time, but the critical situation of our public affairs demanded these observations of me; and indeed I conceived it a duty due to myself, that you should know my sentiments on this important occasion. As one of your principal magistrates, it became me to declare to you, in this most candid and explicit manner, my abhorrence of French principles, as my actions in the last war gave you the strongest proof of my detestation of English oppression; and that I am willing to take an active and decided part against any nation whatever, who shall have the temerity of demanding contributions of us, of seizing our property when neutral, of treating our seamen as pirates, or of attempting to invade our country, and reducing us to a condition of dependence, and unqualified slavery.

*I have received the most undoubted proofs that the Baron de Kalbe was dispatched by the Duke de Choiseul as early as the year 1756 to Philadelphia to sound the inhabitants and endeavour to detach them from the mother country.—Winthrop's Voyages, page 363.*

*One of the wretched expedients to which party work has driven the oppositionists to the alien law, is the circulation of a report, that the President of the United States, under that act, has authority given him to send all our negroes out of this country; for as they are not citizens they must be aliens. What profound wisdom! What Jacobinical sophistry!*

*The enemies of our peace and happiness have represented the word uttered to mean speaking; but a reference to our act of assembly, where the word is used in similar circumstances, will show at once the impropriety of such construction: the word utter in the technical language of the law means to dispense, to disseminate publication, or libels, or bills of exchange: It has ever been of a man's right even punishable for speaking a forged bill of exchange? and yet the act says he is punishable for uttering a forged bill of exchange. Uttering here then, as well as in the sedition act, means nothing more than passing or giving out to the people, forged bills of exchange, or false, scandalous, and malicious libels.—Happy Carolinians! that you have nothing more to apprehend than these feigned visionary dangers.*

*Be it enacted, that if any person from and after the 25th day of March 1737, shall utter or publish as true, any false, forged, or counterfeited deed, writ, judgment, &c. with intent to defraud any person, knowing the same to be false, forged, or counterfeited, being the act in law by conviction, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and suffer death as a felon, without the benefit of clergy.*

Extract of an act of assembly, N<sup>o</sup>. 650, §3, p. 147 public laws of South Carolina.

## NOTICE.

THE Commissioners appointed under the act of Congress, entitled "An act to provide for the valuation of lands and houses, and the enumeration of slaves within the United States," for the State of North Carolina, will take notice, that I have appointed the first Monday in December next, for the first meeting of the Board, in the city of Raleigh; when and where they will please to attend, in order to enter upon the duties of their appointment.

JOHN SKINNER, 1st Com.  
Edenton, November 1.