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FROM THE SPIRIT OF SEVENTY-SIX.

Correspondence between the President of the United States and James Monroe.

[CONCLUDED.]

Richmond, March 22d, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure to receive your letter of the 10th instant, the day after my return from Albemarle. It is distressing to me, to discuss with you the topics on which it treats, but in the state in which things are, it is certainly best to come to a perfect understanding on every point, and to repair on both sides any injury which may have been received. To do you an injury, or indeed any one in the administration never entered into my mind, for while I labored under a conviction not only that I had been injured, but that the friendly feeling which you had so long entertained for me, had ceased to exist, I never indulged any other sentiment in consequence of it, than that of sorrow. At present I am happy to say, that all doubt of your friendship for me, having experienced any change is completely done away, and that the only anxiety, which I feel, is to satisfy you, that the impression was not taken on slight ground, nor imputable to communications made me by persons out of the administration.

The mission in itself of Mr. Pinkney, or any other person, would not have produced such an effect. It resulted from a chain of circumstances of which that measure was only a part. When I left Madrid, I communicated to Mr. Madison in aid of our public dispatches, every idea which I had formed of the state of our affairs there, in all their relation, by sending him a copy of my private journal, and adding in private letters what it did [not] contain. Altho' it was my earnest desire to get home, and look to my private concerns, which I proposed to do, soon after my return to London, I intimated to him, that I was willing in consideration of the existing crisis to act in any situation in which I might be useful. On my return to London, I found that the seizures which had commenced in my absence had imposed on me a new and important duty. I resisted them and not without some effect. By announcing to the British minister, my intention to return to the United States that autumn, I assumed the character for every essential purpose of a special envoy; with which Mr. Madison was made acquainted, as he was likewise, with my determination to remain there till the business was concluded. The evidence before him seemed to be satisfactory, that as nothing could be gained, of the existing ministry, but by force, any change of the attitude taken on our part, was likely to do harm, and that if the ministry retired, the danger of such an effect, would be increased by a change of attitude. This latter idea was strongly urged, in a private letter to him of the 2d of February, 1806, with my earnest advice against such a mission. As the ship by which that letter was sent, arrived at Philadelphia, on the 26th of March, I concluded that he had received it by the 30th. It was written in consequence of intelligence from the United States that such a mission was decided on by the government. As I had received no answer to any of my communications from Madrid, or London, after my return, nor any acknowledgment of my services at either place, or expressions of a desire, that I should come home or remain there, it seemed by the measure alluded to, as if it was considered, that I was rather in the way than of use, to the administration. Its reserve to me for so long a time, and the appointment of an associate, after the receipt of my private letter of February 2d, and a public one of nearly the same date, and after the change in the administration was known, made a deep impression on my mind to that effect. Special missions were never well received by those on the ground, and perhaps never will be, while men are governed by those useful passions, which stimulate them to virtuous actions. Such a mission reduces the resident minister, however respectable, for his talents and character to a cypher, from the moment it is known that it is contemplated, and if it does not destroy him, it is because his character is sufficiently strong to bear the shock. The footing on which I had left my country, a consciousness of the zeal and integrity of my conduct in the public service, and of my personal attachment and devotion to the administration, with a firm belief that no change could be made to advantage, may possibly have increased my sensibility to the measure. Had such an one been contemplated I tho't that I should have been the first to hear of it in a private letter from yourself or Mr. Madison, but I had to gather the intelligence from the newspapers, the correspondence of others, the hints of Lord Holland, and even of Mr. Fox. Mr. Madison's first letter to me on any important subject, which was of the 11th of March, 1806, almost ten months after I had left Madrid, and eight after my return to London, was received on the 25th of April. It seemed to be intended to announce the proposed measure, and from its stile, taken in connection with the preceding circumstances, contributed greatly to confirm the impression which they had already made. The facility which it afforded to my departure appeared to me to be the strongest feature in it.

The letter which Mr. Pinkney brought me, which was delivered to him and by him to me open, was in the same tone. It stated that I was included in the special mission, but that Mr. Pinkney had a separate commission with him, to take my place in case I chose to return home. It expressed no desire that I would remain and join in the negociation. The joint commission seemed also to be peculiarly adapted to favor that object, as it authorised one commissioner to act singly in the absence of the other, in which it differed from those which I had carried with me abroad, they giving that power to one in case only of the death of the other. I could see no reason for his bringing with him a separate commission, to succeed me in the ordinary mission, if my immediate return had not been contemplated, as sufficient time would have been allowed for supplying it if I remained and joined in the negociation, before it could be concluded, or for the variance in the conditions of the joint one. All these circumstances tended to convince me that the administration had withdrawn its confidence from me, and that it really wished to get rid of me. I was struck with astonishment at the idea, and deeply affected by it, as it was utterly impossible for me to trace the cause.—Had I followed the impulse of my feelings it would have been, to have withdrawn on the arrival of Mr. Pinkney; but many considerations of great weight admonished me to pursue a different course. I had much communication with Mr. Fox, and entertained great hopes, that through him our affairs might be settled to advantage. It did not seem probable, that any other person could derive the same aid from those communications that might be done by a party to them. By remaining I tho't that I might give support to the administration at home, which I most earnestly wished to do. For these and other reasons of the same kind, I resolved to remain and unite in the negociation with such character as might be sent, of which I gave Mr. Madison information in my letter, of the 29th of April, which was written a few days after the receipt of his of March the 11th, and in which I gave him distinctly to understand that, that measure would be no cause of disagreement between the administration and myself. I remained and acted accordingly, and did every thing in my power to accomplish the views of my government and country, and finally concluded with Mr. Pinkney, the best treaty which it was possible to obtain of the British government. In uniting in the negociation and signing the treaty, I committed my reputation on the result, and it is only by the course which the business afterwards took, that any unpleasant occurence has arisen between the administration and myself.

These were the circumstances which produced the impression which I have acknowledged in the commencement of this letter, that your friendship had been withdrawn from me. But the assurances which you now make me and the perfect knowledge which I have of your rectitude and sincerity have completely effaced that impression, and restored to my mind, that entire and friendly confidence, which it had always been accustomed to cherish.

I am perfectly satisfied, that you never meant to injure me, and that a belief, that I had suffered by any act, to which you were an innocent party, would give you great pain. Still the circumstance of my having signed a treaty which was disapproved, for imputed great defects; in having exceeded our powers, in signing it, which I should not have done, but in a firm belief that I promoted thereby the best interests of my country, and of the administration, while I exposed myself to great responsibility by the measure, have given a handle to those who have wielded it, with great effect against me. You can little imagine to what extent the mischief has been carried. I could give you many details which it would be as painful for you to read, as for me to recite.

When I say that I was depressed in a country which I had so long served with fidelity and zeal, I could not be indifferent either to the cause, or the consequences resulting from it. My sensibility was naturally increased, by the excitement of those on the ground, who by taking part in my favor, had essentially compromitted themselves.

I replied to the denunciation that was circulated against me here for improper purposes to many of my friends, who called on me in decisive terms and complained earnestly of the injury done me by it. The sum of these conversations, which were always of a nature confidential, it is not in my power to recollect with precision. It is possible that on some cases I may have expressed myself with too much heat, and in others been misconceived. You may however be assured, that my sole object was to do justice to myself in a case of a peculiar hardship, and that I never went beyond that limit. * * * * * *

I am happy that we have had this explanation with each other. It has satisfied me, that I had misconceived your feelings and disposition towards me.—Nothing remains but to prevent as far as possible all further inquietude. From the period above mentioned of peculiar excitement, I have been attentive to this subject, and shall pursue it still great care, to estimate the acts of my friends by the intention only.—Being satisfied on that point I can bear with patience any consequences which may casually result from them. I am aware that under free governments it is difficult to avoid those of the kind alluded to, for perhaps no important good was ever altogether free from some portion of alloy. I am however equally aware, that evils incident to the system, if indeed there are any, even to the individual who suffers under them, are trifling, when compared with the great blessings which it imparts.

I am my dear sir, &c. &c.

JAMES MONROE.

P. S. From an expression in your letter, that you had not supposed, that I had entertained any objection, to the association of any one with me, in the business at London, I perceive that you have not read, or if you have read, that you have forgotten my letter of February 2d, 1803. I therefore send you a copy of it, which I have to request that you will be so good as to return me after perusing it.

Washington, April 11, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

An indisposition of periodical headach has for some time disabled me from business, and prevented my sooner acknowledging your letter of March 22, and returning that of February 2, 1806, which it inclosed. The receipt of that of March 22, has given me sincere pleasure. Conscious that I never felt a sentiment towards you that was not affectionate, it is a great relief to find that the doubts you had entertained on that subject are removed by an explanation of the circumstances which produced them. Some matters however appearing from your letter, not yet sufficiently understood I have conceived that a more minute detail of the facts bearing on them would completely disarm them of all misconstruction. * * * * * *

You observe that the letters from hence containing no expression of a desire that you should come home or remain there, and the facility afforded to your departure by the commissions to Mr. Pinkney, seemed to authorise an inference that you were considered as in the way of the administration. The truth however, was thus: Your letters from Madrid, in 1804—5, expressed your anxious wish and intention to come home on your return to London. My extreme wish was that you should remain there, and I hoped by not being in a hurry to answer that manifestation of your desire, time might produce a change in your mind. But as soon as it was known (during the session of 1805—6) that yourself and Mr. Madison were both contemplated as candidates for the succession to the presidency, I became apprehensive by declining longer to assent to your return, I might be suspected of a partial design to keep you out of the way. This produced the acquiescence in your desire to come home, which then took place, and the commission to Mr. Pinkney to succeed you whenever you should determine to come: and these motives clearly show themselves in my letter of March 16,* which says, 'I shall join Mr. Pinkney, of Maryland, as your associate for settling our differences with Great Britain. He will be authorised to take your place whenever you think yourself obliged to return. It is desirable for *your own*, as well as the *public* interest that you should join in the settlement of this business, and I am perfectly satisfied that if this can be done so as to be here *before the next meeting of Congress*, it will be greatly for your benefit. But I do not mean by this *to overrule your own determination*, (i. e. either to stay or come home) which measures to be taken here will place in perfect freedom."—Here you will perceive how much I wished your aid in the joint commission, and that your longer continuance there could not but, in itself, be desirable, but that I did not ask it from an apprehension that your return before the next Congress might be important to your higher interests.

I consider it now as a great misfortune that my letter of March 16, did not go on to you. It would, I trust, have corrected the inferences of a change in my affections towards you, drawn from a combination of circumstances, which circumstances were produced from very different causes, and some of them from the strength of those very affections of which you thought that they noted a diminution, a desire to conform your movement, in point of time, to what I deemed your best interest. I have gone thus minutely into those details from a desire to eradicate from your mind every fibre of doubt as to my sentiments towards you; and I am persuaded they will satisfactorily solve every circumstance which might at any time have occasioned doubt. I have done it too, the more cordially, because I perceive from your letter that disposition to a correct view of the subject which I knew to be inherent in your mind. What I have hitherto said has been confined to my own part only of these transactions. Yet it would be a criminal suppression of truth were I not to add that in the whole course of them, Mr. Madison has appeared to be governed by the most cordial friendship for you, has manifested on every occasion the most attentive concern for whatever might befriend your fame or fortune, and been as much alive to whatever regarded you, as a brother could have been. * * * * *

I salute you with great and unchanged affections.

A Copy.

(Signed) TH: JEFFERSON.

Richmond, April 18, 1808.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure to receive some days past your favor of the 11th and that of the 13th to day. Being perfectly satisfied by the explanations and assurances which you had given me in your preceding letters, that I had taken an improper idea of your disposition towards me, the details contained in your last one were not necessary in that view. I receive them however, with great interest, because, in giving them, you afford me a new proof of your friendship... * * * *...

I am, Dear, Sir,

With great respect,

Very sincerely your friend,

JAMES MONROE.

* This letter was sent to Col. Newton, at Norfolk, to be forwarded to Col. Monroe by a particular vessel; but the opportunity being lost, it was sometime afterwards returned to the President.

FROM THE CHARLESTON CITY GAZETTE.

Concluded from the Star of Nov. 8.

In the heat of party and faction there is no knowing how far revenge and disappointed ambition will carry men; how far it will make them disregard their own and the dearest interests of their country. It is said to be a fact, that old Baron Steuben, and Alexander Hamilton, and several others, before the formation of the Federal Constitution, did take upon themselves to apply to the Prussian minister at the Hague, to offer the government of the United States to prince Henry of Prussia, old Frederick the second's brother; that a long consultation took place on the subject, and that the prince declined it. The person who mentioned this, said that he had understood col. Monroe knew all the circumstances and had expressed the utmost indignation at it.—I have no doubt our government knew it: and if party will carry men such lengths how necessary, and indeed indispensable may it prove to the salvation of your liberties, to keep the Presidential commands in hand purely civil: you cannot, and must not reason from the case of General Washington; he was characterized by more uncommon endowments and fortunate temperaments, than can be again expected; you had already tried him, and seen him not only voluntarily, but with pleasure resign his command; you had, besides the love of country, something to bind him infinitely beyond riches or power, he was at the head of every thing like fame and character in the world; as the successful hero of the American revolution he vied with any name, ancient or modern, and this was a treasure more valuable than crowns or commands. He was aged and had no children, and had remarkable command of himself—you could trust him. Besides, in his situation, it was a compliment not to be avoided: he had claims no other general can have, and the world would have branded you with ingratitude, if you had not done it.

But try not the experiment too often; keep your generals, your strict disciplinarians, and men fond of military pursuits, for the field when you may want them; your able and deeply read lawyers for the bench; but place your Executive chairs in hands long and ably trained to political science, have the ambition to let it be said you have a President long known both in Europe, and America, as a profound and able statesman, his experience and talents, honored the cabinet and legislature.

If you elect gen. Pinckney, you elect a man without the least experience in the business and department of your government—you will not only have a President totally new in his business, but you will have new secretaries—you will lose Mr. Madison, Mr. Gallatin in the treasury, Mr. Smith in the Navy, and general Dearborn in the military department. At a moment when you may be on the eve of war, every thing will be new and every thing thrown in confusion. The very idea of losing such men as Madison and Gallatin to the administration at this time ought to rouse every republican; there is not an impartial or moderate federalist that does not allow that they and Jefferson are among the greatest men in your or any country. It is enough that a high sense of love of country and republican duty deprives us of Jefferson: to his irreparable loss do not let us add that of his able coadjutors; continue them, and you are sure of his advice and assistance and co-operation with them when necessary. You will still have Jefferson in your councils; but should the reverse take place, you will have Timothy Pickering, Jonathan Mason and a dozen other New-England Timothies and Jonathans, taking their places and regulating your southern affairs; and here, owners of estates in Georgetown, and South-Carolina District, let me ask you, in whose keeping and under whose care would I you rather have your lands, and negroes and southern estates, under the care of Virginians or Marylanders, North and South Carolinians and the Southern States, or New-Englanders, the bitterest foes you can possibly have of one species of your property. View it as you please, the question will not bear consideration. I fear my having doubted you for a moment, or even thought it necessary to write the letter I have to you will be deemed instructive and that you will say there was no occasion for it. You are not so uninformed as not to be convinced of every thing I have said and to know much stronger reasons than I am able to adduce.

Another very important objection to General Pinckney is this.—That at all times, but more particularly at the present, we ought to have a President in the chair as perfectly impartial to France and England as possible; with them are our most important relations, and it depends upon their conduct to us whether we can longer enjoy the blessings of peace. Mr. Madison we know is per-