

Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, February 5, 1799, from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO JAMES MADISON MAD. MSS.

Philadelphia, Feb 5, 99.

I wrote you last on the 30th of Jan; since which yours of the 25th is received.

At the date of my letter I had only heard the bill for the eventual army read once. I conceived it additional to the *Provisional* army &c. I must correct the error. The bill for the provisional army (about 10,000 men) expires this session without having been carried into execution. The eventual army (about 30,000) is a substitute. I say *about* 30,000 because some calculate the new establishment of a regiment we are now passing to a little over, & some a little under 1,000 officers & privates. The whole land army contemplated is the *existing* army 5000. The *additional* army 9000. The *eventual* army 30,000. And the *volunteer* army, the amount of which is not known. But besides that it is 44,000 men, and nobody pretends to say that there is from any quarter the least *real* danger of invasion. These may surely be set down at 500 dollars per annum a man though they pretend that the existing army costs but 300. The reason of that is that there are not actually above 3000 of them, the 5,000 being merely on paper.

The bill for continuing the suspension of intercourse with France & her dependencies, is still before the Senate, but will pass by a very great vote. An attack is made on what is called Toussaint's clause, the object of which, as is charged by the one party and *admitted* by the other, is to facilitate the separation of the island from France. The clause

Library of Congress

will pass however, by about 19. to 8., or perhaps 18. to 9. Rigaud, at the head of the people of color, maintains his allegiance. But they are only 25,000 souls, against 500,000, the number of the blacks. The treaty made with them by Maitland is (if they are to be separated from France) the best thing for us. They must get their provisions from us. It will indeed be in English bottoms, so that we shall lose the carriage. But the English will probably forbid them the ocean, confine them to their island, & thus prevent their becoming an American Algiers. It must be admitted too, that they may play them off on us when they please. Against this there is no remedy but timely measures on our part, to clear ourselves, by degrees, of the matter on which that lever can work.

The opposition to Livermore was not republican. I have however seen letters from New Hampshire from which it appears that the public sentiment there is no longer progressive in any direction, but that at present it is dead water. That during the whole of their late session not a word has been heard of Jacobinism, disorganization &c. No reproach of any kind cast on the republicans, that there has been a general complaint among the members that they could hear but one side of the question, and the great anxiety to obtain a paper or papers which would put them in possession of both sides. From Massachusetts & R. I. I have no information. Connecticut remains riveted in her political & religious bigotry. Baldwin is elected by the legislature of Georgia a Senator for 6. Years in the room of Tatnall, whose want of firmness had produced the effect of a change of sides. We have had no report of Yard's being dead. He is certainly living.

A piece published in Bache's paper on *foreign influence*, has had the greatest currency & effect. To an extraordinary first impression, they have been obliged to make a second, & of an extraordinary number. It is such things as these the public want. They say so from all quarters, and that they wish to hear *reason* instead of *disgusting blackguardism*. The public sentiment being now on the screen, and many heavy circumstances about to fall into the republican scale, we are sensible that this summer is the season for systematic energies & sacrifices. The engine is the press. Every man must lay his purse & his pen

Library of Congress

under contribution. As to the former, it is possible I may be obliged to assume something for you. As to the latter, let me pray & beseech you to set apart a certain portion of every post day to write what may be proper for the public. Send it to me while here, & when I go away I will let you know to whom you may send, so that your name shall be sacredly secret. You can render such incalculable services in this way, as to lessen the effect of our loss of your presence here. I shall see you on the 5th or 6th of March. Affectionate salutations to mrs. Madison & yourself. Adieu.