

**Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, May 10, 1798,
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Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

TO JAMES MADISON MAD. MSS.

May 10, 98.

* * * No bill has passed since my last. The alien bill now before the Senate you will see in Bache. I shall make no comment on it. The first clause was debated through the whole of Tuesday. To judge from that we cannot expect above 5. or 6. votes against it. We suppose the lower house will throw it out & proceed on that which they have prepared. The bill for the provision of army is under debate. It will probably pass or be rejected by a very minute majority. If our members were here it would be rejected with ease. The tax on lands, slaves & houses is proceeding. The questions on that will only be of modification. The event of the N. York elections is not yet absolutely known, but it is still believed we have gained 2. more republicans to Congress. Burr was here a day or two ago. He says they have got a decided majority of Whigs in their state H. of R. He thinks that Connecticut has chosen one Whig, a mr. Granger, & calculates much on the effect of his election.

An election here of town officers for Southwark, where it was said the people had entirely gone over to the tory side, showed them unmoved. The Whig ticket was carried by ten to one. The informations are so different as to the effect of the late dispatches on the people here that one does not know what to conclude: but I am of opinion they are little moved. Some of the young men who addressed the President on Monday mounted the Black (or English) cockade. The next day numbers of the people appeared with the tricolored (or French) cockade. Yesterday being the fast day the black cockade again appeared, on

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which the tricolour also showed itself. A fray ensued, the light horse were called in, & the city was so filled with confusion from about 6. to 10. o'clock last night that it was dangerous going out. I write in the morning & therefore know nothing of the particulars as yet, but as I do not send my letter to the post office till night, I shall probably be able by that time to add some details. It is also possible some question may be taken which may indicate the fate of the provisional army. There is a report, which comes from Baltimore, of peace between France & England on terms entirely dictated by the former. But we do not hear how it comes, nor pay the least attention to it.

P. M. By the proceedings in Senate today I conclude the alien bill will pass 17 to . The provisional army has been under debate in the lower house. A motion was made to strike out the first section confessedly for the purpose of trying the fate of the bill. The motion was lost by 44. to 17. Had all the members in town been present, & the question in the house instead of the committee, the vote would have been 45. against the bill & 46. for it. No further particulars about the riot appear. * * *