and knew this to be the line of our conduct, there would have been a propriety in advising your writer to spare his subsequent remarks. "Our minds are not wrought into any situation" which does not correspond with the real happiness of our common country. We duly appreciate the struggles of Jerseymen in the cause of Freedom, and we duly value the Prize which the joint struggles of Americans procured.

We recollect with exquisite pleasure the times, when, like a band of brothers, our citizens soldiers returned with laurels from the well fought field, and when our counsellors were a band of patriots, firm, united and free. To restore the councils of New-Jersey to this happy situation is the object of our warmest desires, and therefore we shall not take your advice and desist from the measures we have taken; we will continue to pursue every lawful method to unite and harmonize the state. We will not "cut in sunder the knot that ties" us together, but we will draw it closer and closer, that by our united efforts we may attain to this desirable object nor shall we destroy the instrument so elegantly called "fatal"—No, gentlemen, we will preserve it as a remembrancer for our children, to shew them that their fathers in a day of discord and dissention, exerted their best endeavors to restore order and harmony to society, and they were willing to sacrifice their private opinions on the altar of public good.

We have thus, gentlemen, in a cool and dispassionate manner, and in language plain and undisguised, conveyed to you our sentiments in reply to your answer to our propositions, and we do solemnly appeal to the searcher of all hearts, before whose tribunal we must appear to answer for all our conduct, that the tranquility and lasting happiness of New-Jersey are our only guides on this momentous occasion.

From what you have said, gentlemen, we cannot have any further intercourse with you but on the floor of the joint-meeting, which you call "the constitutional place of conference."—There, gentlemen, we will meet you—and there, we trust, we shall evince to you the sincerity of our declarations, and the uprightness of our intentions.

We are, gentlemen,
with sentiments of due regard,
Your most obedient servants,

Ephraim Martin, John Outwater, Peter D. Vroom, Samuel Hough, Thomas Clark, Ebenezer Newton, Peter Ward, Thomas Blanch, Isaac Kipp, Simon Wyckoff, Gershem Dunn, Joseph Falkinburge, John Combs, Erkuries Beatty, William Coxe, Fred. Frelinghuysen, John Lacy, Benj. Vaneleve, Abel Clement, William Pearson, Samuel W. Harrison, Samuel French, Stephen Burrowes, James Van Duyn, William M'Eowen, William Stockton.

Trenton, November 24, 1802.

To Messrs. *Lambert, Little, Parrett, Welsh, Moore, M'Cullough, Pennington, Linn, Howell, Shaver, Dickerson, Corwin, Ogden, Kitchel, Day, Darby, Godwin, Smith, Rea, Burroughs, Pierson, Bargen, Knott, Cox, Scudder, Gordon.*

Address of Governor St. Clair *to the Convention of the North Western Territory.*

Mr. President, and
Gentlemen of the Convention,

You are now an organized body, and I am happy that you are so, *in whatever manner it may have been effected.* As the act of congress had not prescribed the mode, I came to clear that difficulty; —you got over it without my assistance, and I am perfectly satisfied; but, before you proceed to business, I request to be heard a few words.

When I look round upon this assembly, and consider the purpose for which it is convened, and carry back my thoughts for fourteen years when the affairs of this country were committed to me—when your numbers were only about thirty men—a wilderness before them to subdue, and surrounded by numerous tribes of savages, who, though at peace, were far from possessing friendly dispositions, and soon afterwards at open war, I am filled with astonishment and with profound gratitude to the Almighty Ruler of the Universe, who led them through all the difficulties they had to encounter, and has made of that small handful a great people, and brought them to that point from which they are to take their station on the theatre of America as a nation. To you, gentlemen, as their representatives, it belongs, if you think proper to take it upon yourselves, to form for them that constitution, which, while it secures their political liberty, is to be the foundation of their welfare and respectability. The task is arduous as it is important, and it cannot be doubted that you will bring to it patient and candid investigation, true patriotism, and mutual good will and condescention. To the present moment, gentlemen, I have looked forward with pleasing hopes, though not without a mixture of fear and anxiety, and my endeavours have not been wanting to lay a foundation for the great work before you, in morals and in a regard to the institutions of religion, for it is an eternal truth, that without morality there can be no religion, and without religion no people can be happy. My feelings, gentlemen, you can appreciate, for most of you are fathers. They have been those of a father, who saw the day drawing nigh which was to send a son, over whose education he had long watched with all the varied emotions of parental affection, into a world where dangers awaited him at every step, and where the first would probably be decisive of his future fortune.—These cares and anxieties for your constituents, gentlemen, have occupied a considerable portion of my life, and have cost me many a toilsome day and sleepless night; but the pleasure I have in reflecting that they were not entirely thrown away is very great. It pleased God to favor my endeavors and make me frequently, the instrument of good to them, and of averting the evils that hung over them.

It is, gentlemen, too much the fashion of the times to complain of oppression when none is felt. The frame of your present government, it is true, is not so popular as that of the greater part of the United States, or as you may have wished, but it is as much so as is consistent with the colonial state, and I can with honest pride assert, and for the truth of the assertion I appeal to the whole people, that it has been administered with gentleness, and with one single view, the good of the whole; so far as it depended upon me, the laws have been executed faithfully and without rigor, and by gentle means the spirit of obedience to them and a love of order, without which civil society cannot subsist, has been endeavored to be introduced. It was my duty to procure the good of the whole people, and it has been my only ambition to fulfil that duty. Errors, no doubt, I have fallen into. They were errors of the head, not of the heart. They will be judged with candour, and viewed, I trust, with even some indulgence.

I could indeed have wished, gentlemen, *that our political barque had been to launch in gentler weather and under better auspices,* for I see a storm approaching, in which, if she be not overset, she may at least suffer damage. Party rage is stalking with destructive strides over the whole continent. That baleful spirit destroyed all the antient republics, and *the United States seem to be running the same career that ruined them, with a degree of rapidity truly alarming to every reflecting mind.* But she is on the ways and cannot now be stopped. May that gracious being, in whose hands are the issues of all things, shed the kindest influence upon her, and while she will add to the number of confederated states, *be the means of bringing the whole back to the genuine love of their country and of each other,* and may he inspire each of you, gentlemen, with the spirit of your station, and pour out upon you that wisdom which is necessary to the conducting the business entrusted to you, to a happy end.

It would be the height of impropriety in me to attempt to direct you in your deliberations, but I may be allowed to offer you some advice. The act of Congress under which you are convened has determined the object on which they are first to be employed, to wit, whether it be or be not expedient, at this time, to form a constitution and frame of government. That being determined in the affirmative, which I presume it will be, you are at liberty to proceed and make that constitution, or to pass an ordinance for the election of representatives for that purpose. But you are further at liberty, gentlemen, to confine the constitution to be made, to what is called the eastern division of the Territory, or to extend it to the whole Territory. *That the people of the Territory should form a convention and a constitution, needed no act of congress. To pretend to authorise it was, on their part, an interference with the internal affairs of the country, which they had neither the power nor the right to make. The act* is not binding on the people and *is in truth a nullity, and could it be brought before that tribunal where acts of congress can be tried, would be declared a nullity.* To all acts of congress that respects the United States, (they can make no other) in their corporate capacity, and which are extended by express words to the Territory, we are bound to yield obedience. For all internal affairs we have a complete legislature of our own, and in them, are no more bound by an act of congress, than we would be bound by an *edict of the first consul of France.* Had such an attempt been made upon any of the U. States, in their separate capacity, the act would have been spurned from them with indignation. We, I trust, also know our rights and will support them, and being assembled, gentlemen, as a convention, no matter by what means it was brought about, you may do whatever appears to you to be for the best for your constituents, as freely as if congress had never interfered in the matter, and it may be a strong motive to you for so acting, that by this very act about *five thousand people are divested of the rights they were in possession of, without a hearing—bartered away, like sheep in a market—*transfered to another government, and thrown back into a stage of it which has been loaded with every epithet of opprobrium which the English language affords. But that act holds out certain propositions, which were, no doubt, expected to operate upon you, and by some have been thought to be advantageous. The first is that the section No. 16 in every township, shall be granted to the inhabitants of such townships for the use of schools. It is to be observed that the sections No 16 in every township are already given for the use of schools, in as complete a manner as they could now be granted by the congress. All that is wanting is an act to authorise the President to make patents, and that would be wanting were they now to be given by act of congress. The grant of these sections was a part of the terms on which the country was settled, and they cannot be resumed because the contract has been complied with on our part, and if the congress has either granted, sold or otherwise disposed of any of them, the act is void. The second proposition is, that the salt springs with the sections which includes them, near to the Sciota and Muskingum rivers, shall be granted to the state for the use of the people, provided the legislature shall never sell or lease the same for a longer term then ten years. It is a happy thing for us that providence has been pleased to place an article so necessary to the life of man as salt, in the bosom of our country. These springs have been worked for a great many years, and though nothing has been paid for the privilege of working them, salt has always been extremely dear; now unless the persons to whom they may be leased pay for their lease, no revenue can be derived from these salt springs, and if they do pay for them, the amount paid, and probably much more will be laid upon the salt, so that instead of a benefit, this gift would prove an injury, and an injury that would fall unequally. The whole people to whom the rent would accrue, would reap a very small advantage at the expence of those who, from their local situation, must depend on those springs for their salt. The third is, that the twentieth part of the net proceeds of the lands within the state, sold or to be sold after the 20th June last, shall be applied to the laying out and making roads from the navigable waters emptying into the Atlantic, to the Ohio, to the state and through it. *This proposition is a mere illusion. It holds out the prospect of an advantage that never will be realized.*—The application of the money is to be made by congress, in which we shall have very little weight, at any rate, and *it is coupled with conditions that would defeat it while they insult us.* The first condition is, that until another census, that is for nearly nine years to come, we shall submit to have only one member in the house of representatives of the United States. The next is that every and each tract of land, sold as aforesaid, (the twentieth part of the price of which is to be laid out on roads) shall be exempt from every species of taxation by authority of the state, whether for state, county, township, or any other purpose whatever.—The state shall derive no aid, as to revenue, from those lands. While they may be taxed by congress for the express purpose of raising a revenue. But those lands are solemnly pledged for the redemption of the public debt, a proportion of which we must pay. The money then pretended to be given by congress, for roads, if congress had the right so to apply it, which they have not, must come from ourselves; but where are we to find it? The reservations amount to a great part of the soil and are not subject to taxation. The lands sold after the 20th June last, if you close with this proposition, will not be subject to taxation for five years, and what is there besides, except a very small moveable property in a country without trade, from whence our revenue is to be derived, and that moveable property taxed already as high as it can possibly bear, for county and township purposes. It is evident that the whole expense of the government must be laid upon the lands appropriated before the 20th june last, for experience has taught us that we have no other resource but a land tax; but such a land tax would fall so unequally, it would never be borne.—But, gentlemen, *why are conditions attempted to be imposed upon us, before we can obtain a right which is ours by nature and by compact!* Were conditions imposed upon Vermont or upon Tennessee; before they could be admitted into the union? There were none attempted. Why then this odious distinction in our case? It is past a doubt that the Territory contains the number of people, which, by the compact with the U. States, or the terms of settlement, is necessary to entitle it to become a state and a member of the union, on an equal footing with the original states; and the gentlemen in congress who brought forward and advocated those propositions, admitted that if there was not the number at that time, there certainly would be before another session of congress, and that then was the only time to saddle us with conditions, or as they termed it, to make a good bargain with us, for if once we had the necessary number, it would be no longer in their power.

Form then, gentlemen, or direct a new election for the purpose, a constitution for the whole territory—assert your right to a full representation in the councils of the nation—direct the legislature forthwith to cause a census to be taken; it will not require much time if set about in earnest. Let your representatives go forward with that in their hands, and demand the admission of the territory as a state. It will not, it cannot be refused. But suppose it should be refused, it would not affect your government, or any thing you had done to organise it. That would go on equally well and perhaps better. It was, I think, eight years after the people of Vermont had formed their government, and exercised all the powers of an independent state, before it was admitted into the Union.—The government was not retarded a single moment on that account. It would be incomparably better that we should be deprived of a share in the national councils for a session or two, or even for years, than that we should be degraded to an unequal share in them for nine years; but it will not happen. *We have the means in our hands to bring Congress to reason, if we should be forced to use them. If we submit to the degradation, we shall be trodden upon, and what is worse, we shall deserve to be trodden on.* I will leave these reflections on your table, gentlemen, to be made what use of you may think proper.

Ar. St. Clair.

For the National Intelligencer.

THOMAS PAINE,

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Letter the Fourth.

AS Congress is on the point of meeting, the public papers will necessarily be occupied with the debates of the ensuing Session, and as in consequence of my long absence from America, my private affairs require my attendance (for it is necessary I do this or I could not preserve as I do my Independence) I shall close my address to the public with this letter.

I congratulate them on the success of the late elections, and that with the additional confidence that while honest men are chosen and wise measures pursued, neither the treason of apostacy, masked under the name of federalism, of which I have spoken in my second letter, nor the intrigues of foreign emissaries, acting in concert with that mask, can prevail.

As to the licenciousness of the papers calling themselves *federal*, a name that apostacy has taken, it can hurt nobody but the party or the persons who support such papers. There is naturally a wholesome pride in the public mind that revolts at open vulgarity. It feels itself dishonoured even by hearing it, as a chaste woman feels dishonour by hearing obscenity she cannot avoid. It can smile at wit, or be diverted with strokes of satirical humour, but it detests the *blackguard*. The same sense of propriety that governs in private companies governs in public life. If a man in company runs his wit upon another it may draw a smile from the persons present, but as soon as he turns a blackguard in his language the company gives him up, and it is the same in public life. The event of the late elections shews this to be true; for in proportion as those papers have become more and more vulgar and abusive, the elections have gone more and more against the party they support or that supports them. Their predecessor, *Porcupine* had wit. These scribblers have none. But as soon as his *blackguardism* (for it is the proper name of it) outrun his wit, he was abandoned by every body but the English Minister that protected him.

The Spanish proverb says, "*there never was a cover large enough to hide itself,*" and the proverb applies to the case of those papers and the shattered remnant of the faction that supports them. The falsehoods they fabricate, and the abuse they circulate, is a cover to hide something from being seen, but is not large enough to hide itself. It is as a tub thrown out to the whale to prevent its attacking and sinking the vessel. They want to draw the attention of the public from thinking about or enquiring into, the measures of the late administration and the reason why so much public money was raised and expended. And so far as a lie to day, and a new one to-morrow, will answer this purpose it answers theirs. It is nothing to them whether they be believed or not, for if the negative purpose be answered the main point is answered to them.

He that picks your pocket always tries to make you look another way. Look, says he, at yon man tother side the street, —what a nose he has got!—Lord yonder is a chimney on fire! D'ye see yon man going along in the salamander great coat? That is the very man that stole one of Jupiter's satellites and sold it to a countryman for a gold watch, and it set his breeches on fire. Now the man that has his hand in your pocket does not care a farthing whether you believe what he says or not. All his aim is to prevent your looking at *him;* and this is the case with the remnant of the federal faction. The leaders of it have imposed upon the country, and they want to turn the attention of it from the subject.

In taking up any public matter I have never made it a consideration, and never will, whether it be popular or unpopular, but whether it be *right* or *wrong*. The right will always become the popular if it has courage to shew itself, and the shortest way is always a strait line. I despise expedients; they are the gutter-hole of politics, and the sink where reputation dies. In the present case, as in every other, I cannot be accused of using any; and I have no doubt but thousands will hereafter be ready to say, as Gouverneur Morris said to me, after having abused me pretty handsomely in Congress, for the opposition I gave to the fraudulent demand of Silas Deane of two hundred thousand pound sterling, *Well! we were all duped and I among the rest.*

Were the late administration to be called upon to give reasons for the expence it put the country to, it can give none. The danger of invasion was a bubble that served as a cover to raise taxes and armies to be employed for some other purpose. But if the people of America believed it true, the cheerfulness with which they supported those measures and paid those taxes, is an evidence of their patriotism, and if they supposed me their enemy, though in that supposition they did me injustice, it was not injustice in them. He that acts as he believes, though he may act wrong, is not conscious of wrong.

But though there was no danger, no thanks are due to the late administration for it. They sought to blow up a flame between the two countries; and so intent were they upon this, that they went out of their way to accomplish it. In a letter which the secretary of state, Timothy Pickering, wrote to Mr. Skipwith, the American consul at Paris, he broke off from the official subject of his letter to thank God in very exulting language, that *the Russians had cut the French army to pieces.* Mr. Skipwith, after shewing me the letter, very prudently concealed it.

It was the injudicious and wicked acrimony of this letter, and some other like conduct of the then secretary of state, that occasioned me, in a letter to a friend in the government, to say, that if there was any official business to be done in France, till a regular minister should be appointed, it could not be trusted to a more proper person than Mr. Skipwith. *He is,* said I, *an honest man, and will do business, and that with good manners to the government he is commissioned to act with, a faculty which that Bear Timothy Pickering wanted, and which the Bear of that Bear, John Adams, never possessed.*

In another letter to the same friend in 1797, and which was put unsealed under cover to Col. Burr, I expressed a satisfaction that Mr. Jefferson since he was not president, had accepted the vice-presidency; *for,* said I, "*John Adams has such a talent for blundering and offending, it will be necessary to keep an eye over him.*" He has now sufficiently proved that though I have not the spirit of prophecy I have the gift of *judging right;* and all the world knows, for it cannot help knowing, that to judge *rightly*, and to write *clearly*, and that upon all sorts of subjects; to be able to command thought, and, as it were to play with it at pleasure, and be always master of one's temper in writing, is the faculty only of a serene mind, and the attribute of happy and philosophical temperance. The scribblers, who know me not, and who fill their papers with paragraphs about me, besides their want of talents, drink too many slings and drams in a morning to have any chance with me. But, poor fellows! they must do something for the little pittance they get from their employers. This is my apology for them.

My anxiety to get back to America was great for several years. It is the country of my heart, and the place of my political and literary birth. It was the American revolution that made me an author, and forced into action the mind that had been dormant, and had no wish for public life; nor has it now. By the accounts I received, she appeared to me to be going wrong, and that some meditated treason against her liberties lurked at the bottom of her government. I heard that my friends were oppressed, and I longed to take my standing among them; and if other "*times to try men's souls*" were to arrive that I might bear my share. But my efforts to return were ineffectual.

As soon as Mr. Monroe had made a good standing with the French government, for the conduct of his predecessor had made his reception as minister difficult, he wanted to send dispatches to his own government by a person to whom he could also confide a verbal communication, and he fixed his choice upon me. He then applied to the committee of public safety for a passport; but as I had been voted again into the convention, it was only the convention that could give the passport; and as an application to them for that purpose would have made my going publicly known, I was obliged to sustain the disappointment and Mr. Monroe to lose the opportunity.

When that gentleman left France to return to America, I was to have come with him. It was fortunate I did not. The vessel he sailed in was visited by a British frigate that searched every part of it, and down to the hold for Thomas Paine. I then went, the same year, to embark at Havre. But several British frigates were cruising in sight of the port who knew I was there, and I had to re-