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ADDRESS

Of the NATIONAL CONVENTION *to the* FRENCH PEOPLE.

26th June, 1793, *2d Year of the Republic.*

CITIZENS,

YOUR Representatives, faithful to their duty and to their engagements, have completed the Constitution, and are about to convoke the primary assemblies. This is their answer to the enemies of equality and liberty.

The National Convention having discharged the first, the most urgent, and most sacred of its duties, will in a few days lay before the nation the causes of the divisions which have agitated the Republic at large; causes which have so long withheld from the order of the day the most important objects of deliberation, and, by reviving civil discord, inspired foreign powers with the hopes of making conquests against a Republic torn by factions.

But whilst a legal convocation is about to re-unite you into primary assemblies, in order to lay the eternal basis of liberty and equality, the foundations of a republican government; those who have constantly betrayed their country, are now giving the signal of civil war in all parts of the Republic.

War maintained by fanataciſm not making a progreſs ſufficiently rapid, they give a new colour to the insurrections which they excite; they mislead by the idolatry of persons and reputation, and the delusion of political opinions, those whom religious fanataciſm could not seduce.

Could they carry their designs into execution, France would soon be given up to greater horrors than Poland experienced, which underwent the yoke of three tyrants, without having drawn the sword. She would destroy herself in the presence of the combined powers and of their armies assembled on our frontiers: instead of a fertile country and flourishing cities, she would present only the horrid spectacle of fields of carnage and heaps of ashes.

Citizens, the traitors who did their utmost to mislead you and to hurry you away into their revolt, propose to you to march against Paris and the National Convention. Can Paris be an object of hostility to the Republic? Is it not the asylum of your brothers and the cradle of liberty? Like you, the citizens of Paris wished for the constitution; they have denounced the authors of the evils with which France is oppressed.

When on the 20th of June last year, Paris proclaimed the dangers of the country and the conspiracy of the last of its kings, some administrators, traitors to their country, usurping the sovereign powers, offered to reinforce the guard of the conspirator, and to send numerous battalions against Paris. France was soon undeceived. The federates of the 83 departments, when arrived at Paris, found none but brothers there, and shared with them the dangers and the glory of overturning the throne.

In like manner, when France shall be fully acquainted with the causes and events which necessitated the denunciation of the 31st of May and the decree of arrest passed on the 2d of June, against 32 members of the National Convention, she will approve the wisdom and the happy result of these measures.

Can the dissolution of the Convention be the object of your wish? Is it proposed to you to abolish it?

What government would then remain to you? Whither would you rally? What would become of eleven armies assembled on the frontiers and on the coasts? Can the action of government be suspended for a single day? Should the departments disown the Convention, the Republic would be without a government, without a central administration; the armies would disperse; foreign powers would invade our territory: Frenchmen would turn their arms against themselves, and the Republic would be annihilated.

Citizens, your most dangerous enemies are those who precipitate you into civil war.

Those magistrates whom you had chosen to maintain the police and to discharge the municipal functions, those administrators whom you had elected to execute the laws and to be the agents of government, have seized upon the government itself, and have grasped at the national sovereignty. Your rights, your interests have been abandoned and sacrificed. In many of the administrative assemblies your service has been wholly neglected, whilst the only objects of concern were deputations, plots, coalitions, & projects of war against the Republic.

Those functionaries did not look on as their brothers and fellow citizens, five hundred thousand Frenchmen who have devoted themselves to the defence of liberty against tyrants. By intercepting the artillery, ammunition and provisions, they exposed them to perish to no purpose, and without cementing with their blood the foundations of the Republic.

Generous warriors whom so many treasons have not astonished, you have constantly rallied to the standard of the Republic and to the tree of liberty.

You have surmounted by your courage, the obstacles which La Fayette and Dumourier had opposed to your success. A new conspiracy detected, is the last crisis through which you were to pass, in order to conquer and establish liberty.

You also expected a constitution which your arms will make Europe respect; the stability of a free and acknowledged government will ensure you success; the constitution will powerfully support your arms, and will conduct you, through victory, to peace.

In the midst of her agitations and disorders, France counts but a small number of conspirators. The mass of citizens, always pure, inspired by sentiment, enlightened by eternal reason, has preserved itself from seduction and error.

Those administrative bodies, whom traitors had stirred up against the Republic, recollect at last, that they have a country, and that they can have none other than the Republic.

The National Convention has received from several departments, recantations which will prove to posterity, that the virtuous man may be misled, but that he opens his eyes to the light before his error becomes hurtful to society and humanity.

The examples, whilst they warn us to repress confusion at its first appearance, and to be severe towards the factious and the conspirator, make it the duty of a humane legislator to receive with indulgence the deluded fellow citizen, and to offer only instruction to those who have always been attached to their country, and who want only to be informed in order to resume their rank among good citizens.

Citizens who have sworn to be free, who wish to have a country, a constitution, rally to the National Convention, who pledges itself to preserve the Republic one and indivisible.

EXTRACT *from the* NEW-BRUNSWICK ADVERTISER: *being part of an* ADDRESS *on a very interesting subject.*

"LET me now be indulged in speaking a few words on the prospect there seems to arise of a war between Great-Britain and the United States, which seems to be the design of the President's proclamation to avert. It appears to me and I presume to every thinking man in the United States, that we have had and still have an indirect war with that restless and designing nation, nearly since the signing the late peace—through their unjust detention of the western posts—which it was presumed at that treaty they really meant to give up in the course of a year or two—taking a reasonable time for their Indian traders to call in their property from the distant regions. It is true that that part of the treaty is loosly worded, and not so explicit as a bargain school-boys would have made in the transfer of a top, a ball, or a marble—yet I think the honest unsuspecting hearts of our commissioners thought the Britons as honest as themselves, and that they would soon give up those posts according to the true intent and meaning of the treaty, and I can by no means impute their conduct, as has been surmised, to British gold dust blinding the eyes of their understanding in the signing that article.

From this cause, without a doubt arising in the mind of any sensible man I have conversed with on this subject, springs the war with the Indians, for it is well known that at those posts they are supplied not only with arms and ammunition, but with every article they stand in need of for their savage depredations, in which the United States have suffered the loss of thousands of men, women and children, besides the expenditure of at least five millions of dollars, and in this present year, I doubt whether the account will be closed under two millons, and perhaps the lives of many of our worthy fellow citizens, which money should have been applied to pay our just debts: add to this, their late and present depredations on the ocean, perhaps not less than 150 of our vessels, taken by them, from our honest merchants, and unjustly detained, to the ruin of their families, and our unarmed seamen treated in an inhuman manner. Now if we are to bear all this without a prospect of redress, and our hands to be tied up, let us strike out from our new made calendar the Day that has been kept in remembrance of our birth as a nation, and turn to lick the dust that despots are preparing for us. If the Britons wish to be at peace with the United States, let them come forward and shew an example of justice and humanity, by immediately giving up Niagara, Detroit, and all the extent of country they ceded to us by the late treaty of peace; but so long as they hold those posts, they certainly war in a dastardly manner against us. And let our government also come forward and shew an example of justice to the natives, and this terrible and expensive war will soon cease. It is true that we as private citizens cannot judge fully of these matters, not knowing the secret springs of government, but so far as they have come to our knowledge, we as free citizens have a right to judge for ourselves, and may and ought to remonstrate to Congress whenever they are in session, which I trust will be very soon. There seems indeed a general dread of war crept, I know not how, among us: I would here ask, have the Americans lost their virtue? Are they callous to insults from a bankrupt nation? In my humble opinion, we never had nor perhaps never will have a time, for humbling the English (if Congress thinks it proper to take time by the forelock to do their country ample justice) like the present time; but if it can be done by proper negociations, and the United States at the same time fulfil with honour their treaty with the French nation, our allies; in the name of humanity, so be it.

Upon the whole, I beg to be indulged in moving this very respectable audience, that a resolve may be made that a dutiful petition be prepared and sent to the Father of our country, intreating him to issue his request to both branches of the federal government to meet sooner than their late adjournment was settled at, as we conceive the critical situation of our country calls for the immediate best counsels of our wisest citizens at this present time.

And also that a Resolve be immediately made by us, that we enter into the spirit of his proclamation, so far as to assure him that we will not directly or indirectly fit out any vessels for the purpose of war, and that so far as our power can be lawfully exerted, we will discourage any overt act that may be attempted among us, until Congress thinks it proper to unloose our hands."

Governor HANCOCK's *Speech to the Legislature of Massachusetts, at the opening of their Sessions on the 18th of September instant.*

Mr. *President*, and Gentlemen of the Senate,
Mr. *Speaker*, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,

THE Proclamation by which the General Court is convened, contains a copy of a civil precept. The service of which on me, and on the attorney-general, was the principal reason of my exercising this part of that authority devolved on me by the constitution.

The suit commenced by WILLIAM VASSAL, if the commonwealth is held to answer thereon, must be decided on principles very interesting to its welfare as a state.

I cannot conceive that the people of this commonwealth, when they, by their Representatives in Convention, adopted the Constitution of a General Government, expected that each state should be held liable to answer on *compulsory civil process*, to every individual resident in another state, or in a foreign kingdom. Three Judges of the United States of America, having solemnly given it as their opinion, that the several states are thus liable, the question then has become highly important to the people.

I did not find myself authorized in virtue of my office as governor of the commonwealth, to appear, either by myself or by my substitute, in any court of justice, either to deny the authority of the court over this government, or to submit to its jurisdiction in a point, which I cannot, at present, consider as settled. Nor did I conceive that any other person could have that authority, without a special appointment by the legislature for that purpose.

The service of this process being laid before the Council, they advised me to call the two Houses into session. My opinion accorded with their advice, for several reasons; some of which are too obvious to need repeating—others I will suggest to you.

The demand of William Vassal, if I am not mistaken, in his design and in the tendency of the process, will involve and conclude a question of legality, on the mode of confiscating the personal estate of that class of people, who, in our laws, are denominated ABSENTEES. It is therefore necessary, that effectual measures should be speedily adopted, to prevent a determination, which may so greatly injure the interest, and so disagreeably affect the feelings of the citizens of this commonwealth.

Should you, gentlemen, be of opinion, that by the constitution of the United States, the Commonwealth may be compelled to answer on this process, you will make such provision for defending against the suit, as shall appear to you to be proper and expedient.

Should you consider the commonwealth not to be thus liable, your deliberations will be such, as will tend to procure to the constitution, under which this authority is claimed, a more favourable and a more unexceptionable construction. But it may happen that your investigation may lead you to conclude, that the constructions given to the judiciary power of the United States, by three of the judges, is right, according to the letter of the constitution, and yet, that it will tend to the promotion of peace and harmony in the Union, and to the preservation of our federal government, so happily established, to procure such alterations in the judiciary articles, as may secure the States severally, in the enjoyment of that share of sovereignty, which it was intended they should retain and possess. In this last case you will direct your measures to that point.

From these considerations, I considered it as absolutely necessary, that you should be in session at an earlier day than that to which the general court stood adjourned. Your deliberations on this subject will take some time, and though Congress will meet on the first monday in December, yet their session may be short. You could not, therefore, after the last Wednesday in January, have time to do what will be necessary. The court too, where this suit is pending, will be in session early in February, and the result of the business will be then expected.

I avoid giving an opinion either on the question, whether the commonwealth is liable to be sued, or whether if it is so circumstanced, an attempt to procure an alteration, is eligible. Yet I consider it to be of the last importance to the happiness and interest of the United States, as well in their united, as in their separate capacity, to have this point, properly, satisfactorily and finally settled. It is true that states, kingdoms, and empires ought to do justice; but it is as true, that there are certain inherent principles in the constitution of each, which can never be surrendered, without essentially changing the nature, or destroying the existence of the government.

I believe that the commonwealth of Massachusetts, from the generosity and good feelings of its citizens, will be always ready, as far as the people's ability shall admit of, to do justice to all men. Yet in order to preserve the peace and safety of the Union, and to establish in the bosoms of other nations, a confidence in the rectitude of this, it is very proper that there should be a tribunal of justice, independent of the particular states, which may be resorted to in certain cases. This was intended to be provided for by the federal constitution: but whether the present case is properly before that tribunal, according to that constitution, or whether the process under consideration, is within the intendment of that provision, you will consider.

Whether the provision in the Federal constitution for the extension of the judiciary power to states, is intended to be exercised in matters of civil contract, or in other matters which took place before the government was formed; or whether it is intended only to give a remedy for such injuries as may take place by force, and may therefore have a tendency to destroy the peace of the Union, or involve the nation in a war with foreign powers, is of consequence enough to demand a consideration. If the judiciary power of the Unis