

45

Paris 19<sup>th</sup> you 1786

[Sept 29, 1786]

Business of importance prevented me to answer sooner your letter of the 16<sup>th</sup>. indeed it gives me pain to answer it at all, but I am forced to it by its content, part of which seem to me to be dropt either inadvertently from your pen than from your heart or politeness, to which I am long ago accustomed to pay all the Justice & price they do deserve.

you say Sir, that you have nothing to do in the money's Department & that it is to Mr. Grand that we must make application for the arrears due to us by Congress; indeed you know that application has often times been made to him as the Banker of Congress, but we could never consider him under any other character.

Nearly if we were to consider our notes from the united States of north america as a plurality of funds plac'd by their representatives on Mr. Grand with his consent & our own, we would have no right to apply to Congress or to their envoy in France, even in case of a war in person —

of a total Bankruptcy on the part of Mr. Grand,  
But we would fall on him & take the benefit of the  
Law against him -

we would have a right to the same conduct, if the  
funds remaining in the hand of Congress, they had  
made with our consent & that of Mr. Grand, a contract  
with him to pay us the interest of those funds.

But neither of those Cases is our - Congress  
owe us money, the debt is a debt of honour &  
Justice, they pass a contract with us which is a  
security from them to us for the debt & the punctual  
payments of the interest - the part in those contracts,  
which concern Mr. Grand, is nothing else but  
Bills of exchange drawn on him by Congress  
for certain sums which are to be paid to  
us every first day of January, we present  
those Bills when they are due, Mr. Grand  
refuse to pay them, how shall we & the whole  
world call this, without doubt a plain protest  
of the Bills drawn by Congress: to whom  
must we direct our complaint, of having  
been deceived, for a bill of exchange which is to  
be protested is a deceit, but it is drawn

By private men or governments, the difference is  
only in the consequence, But the same words belong to  
the same thing, and even the most academical education  
can not have a man to confess the truth of the assertion.  
Then we must direct our complaints, not to a Board of  
treasury who never answer & never pay, is firm  
unpolite & afterwards unjust, not directly to Congress  
who is much too far to receive them & so justice the  
2<sup>d</sup> day of January when we are not payed the  
first, but to those who represent that all body  
in France, while there are any, & it will be  
impossible, unless you have positive orders from  
Congress not to meddle in the engagements they have  
contracted with us, to persuade our nation & any  
other, that it is not on you that we must call  
on the occasion; if you have such an order, Sir,  
it will be necessary & candid to render it publick,  
then the Correspondence may cease with you and  
take an other course. But if you have not such  
order, the Correspondence must continue untill  
we are payed —. There are two way. of corresponding  
Sir, one which patience dictated by my respect  
for the representatives of North America my love

for that country, politeness <sup>Rowena</sup> towards you  
personally & regard for your Nation, had prescribed  
to me; when that one ceas'd, there remain an other  
of a more public nature which indeed was much  
against my inclination as against any in the world,  
But which must however be made use of as the  
last resource - you are master of the choice, But  
certainly, Sir, our right to reclamation, complaint  
& payment, is to well supported by the conduct  
of the officers of Congress & by the disagreeable and  
troublesome situation it put us under, for us to be silent.  
permit me Sir to assure you that while you shall  
be considered in France as an envoy from the Abbe  
the Congress, if I had apply to you, & if I shall be always  
happy to do it with that confidence & regard  
which your character inspire -

I will pass to morrow at Mr. Grand, & give you  
an account of the reception I shall meet with -

I have the honour to be

Sir

your most obedient servant  
G. Mandé de la Courville