

Dear Sir,

Middletown Dec^r 14th 1798.

For several days after you left this I continued to mend so slowly that it was hard to tell the succeeding day whether I was better, but at length a pleasing change took place and I mended so fast that at this time I feel as well as I have done for some years past at this season of the year and my flesh is pretty well restored. Your family are also well, they were over here yesterday.

The few outrageous Liberty men in these parts or perhaps more properly our pretended Patriots, since they have not been able to find a person who would venture to try his fortune as a Candidate, are very much consoled with the idea that your honor will pass a law to elect the members of Congress by a general ticket, and speak of it as a measure which is sure to take place. That you may have many among you who would do anything which might promote their views, I have no doubt, yet I cannot well bring myself to believe that a majority will be found in the Virginia assembly that will agree to a measure evidently intended to favor and encourage Party, particularly at this time when it must be known to all that a Base and violent Nation is watching for a moment when it may with any prospect of success make a strike on us.

It is reported here that John Taylor of one a member from Carolina obtained leave to bring in a bill to prevent the operation

of the Seditious law on yourselves, I trust this law even if it could have
any effect will not be thought necessary by a majority of your house
for surely you cannot have so many among you disposed to
Sedition. If however I am mistaken and if you feel yourselves possessed
of a power to pass laws which are to controul the Government it
will certainly be wise in you to introduce a clause "that the French
Government shall no longer plunder the good ~~people~~ Citizens of this
Country, nor shall they send any Agents here for the purpose of intrigue"
and they ought to be laid under a very heavy penalty for violation
of this law, it must be a heavy sum or I doubt they will not mind it,
for the Capture of a few vessels will enable them to pay us millions.

But to be serious if it is true that such a Bitch has been brought in it
really appears to me exceedingly hard that we should be obliged to pay
some where about 200 men, two dollars each per day to be employ'd in
such frivolous & silly business. I call it frivolous & silly because I should
suppose it impossible that it could ever answer the end he proposes.

The people of Virginia must be more willing dupes than I can suppose
them to be not to see at once into the Mans Motives and will think
in the end bring him into contempt. What purpose can he ~~think~~ expect
that he can do like this is to answer but to please and divide the people
of this Country and thereby place us in such a situation as to become an
easy prey to the French Government. Does he not know that the laws
of a State cannot controul those of the General Government: he does know
it and the people must have too much penetration to be taken in by such
a project. Now to hear from you frequently, I am anxious to know
the temper of our State Rulers. We lost old Seyler a few days ago—
Nothing else worth mentioning occurs.

Yours affectionately
Nevin Powell

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Major Burr Poole

On the General Assembly
at

Richmond

May 21
at
Richmond