

Dear Sir,

Maddeburg Jan^y 2^d 1799.

A Report has got into circulation here that a large Majority of you have been bitten by a mad dog and that John Taylors life in particular was despised of, for that he had been seen to foam at the Mouth. And what makes the matter still more lamentable is that the animal which has done the mischief keeps so close within his den that as yet no hold can be got on him. How long Providence may suffer this brute to remain amongst us as a scourge & terror to ~~us~~ poor sinners, he best knows. It is a doubtful matter whether Mr. Taylor had not better passid the resolutions which he brought in or they Originally stood, ^{for} if a scuffle with the General ^{Government} was the object the sooner that point is settled the better, they certainly are very silly as they stand and will be laugh'd at by about 12 or 13 of the States.

I cannot for my soul find out from whence the opinion is taken th that the States are coparty in the Contract formed with the General Government, in vain have I looked ~~into the~~ ^{into the} ~~constitution~~ ^{constitution} to find it. As far as I am able to form an opinion on the subject, the people have formed both Govern-ments, that of the States for local purposes & the other for National ones, and their Representatives go into each with all the powers of the people to promote their interest & secure

their rights, peace & happiness, ^{so far as respects their respective limits,} in the General Government various
modes are adopted for the Appointment of those who are to administer
it. The President is chosen by Electors, & the Senate by the State Legislatures
and this is all I can find that the State Governments have to do in
the business except that of considering amendments to the Constitution
when they shall be referred to them or in joining the other States in requiring
a Call of a Convention. Here then we see the power of the State Governments
defined and to aim at, or assume any more is usurpation and ought
to be checked by the people. It is wonderful to me to hear it said that
because the people have thought proper to elect their State Legislatures
to choose their Senators to Congress that this gives them power
over that Government, as well might it be said that the County Court
has power over the Militia, because the law gives them ~~power~~
the Appointment of the Officers. Or why may not the Electors of the
President must occasionally superintend his conduct? I have heard it
said by some, that you possess this Power because you are the
Representatives of the people, but if there is any weight in this argument
it will apply equally to the Owners of the poor. They too are Representatives
of the people, and at their Annual Meetings might with the same
propriety spend a month or two in examining into the conduct of
the State Governments, & thus may we have to pay one set of Representatives
a dollar per day for watching those of the State Governments & three two
dollars per day for watching those of the Genl. Government & three six
dollars a day when a large part of their time w^d be taken up in defending
themselves. I believe the best way will be for each to mind their own business
leave the people to take care of the Governments which they have
made, if they are not capable of doing this, they are not fit to govern &
I am assured the thing w^d not be mended by making Guardians of our

State Legislatures. Mr. Taylor's project of taking the tax off the Slaves
shows at once that his views are to throw the burthen of tax's on the
free laborers of this Country, & this will certainly be the case for most
landlords have resolved that the tax's shall be paid by the Slaves,
nor can this be prevented, for if Mr. Taylor should introduce a Clause
that the landlord should pay the tax, they will have nothing more
to do but to add something more to the Rent. Why black laborers
should not pay a share of the tax's surely no good reason can be
given, nor can I see any good reason why Negroes of 12 years
of age should be excluded, they are property & a man ought to
pay in proportion to his wealth & I think the holders of this kind
of property ought to be satisfied with them under 12 being
spread.

I wish you w^d bring up with you the day of the month when
Mr. Jefferson was elected Governor in 1779 & 1780 and also the day on
which Genl. Nelson was elected in 1781. I want to be satisfied on this
point & Mr. Stewart the Clerk of the house can easily give it
to you or about you when to find it. You have been silent as to the
Project of a Genl. Ticket for the Election of members of Congress, I suppose
the thing has not yet been bro' forward & perhaps they are waiting for a
thin house about the close of the session, it has been agitated much
talked of here. I have also been enquired of, as to the fate of the Foreign
Petition for holding the next Election at Nashville. We all remain
here much as usual.

Yrs Affectionately
Seven Pence

Mr. DeLong's Paid 30

June 2, 1799

Major Burr & Powell

with assembly

Richmond.

Wm DeLong 1st June 1799
a paper lost place between Marshall 1791.
Feb. 1799 the Journal of what is lost during
the 11th Feb. 1799 in the over Books 1799