pleasure would be exercised with discretion and that those principles & rights would be invariably observed. It is an incompetent recompense to a person who has been injured by the Executive, to be told that the Constitution permits the injury, if the power intrusted was thereby abused and the principles of the Constitution violated, and it is an unbecoming measure in the Administration to defend by the argument what it cannot justify of power, at the tribunal of reason and justice.

I have been injured by the Administration & have a right to redress. Implications of misconduct have been by it raised against me, & I have a right to vindicate myself against them. I have invited you to state and substantiate your charges if you have any, and I repeat again the invitation. You suggest that you have facts & information which warrant this procedure let me know them, as likewise your informers, that I may be able to place this act of the Executive, and

Copy of a Letter from James Monroe to Timothy Pickering Esq. Hd Qrs

Philad. 19th July 1797.

Sir

I have been favored with yours of the 17th Inst. and answer it without delay. — If you supposed that I would submit in silence to the injurious imputations that were raised against me by the Administration, you were mistaken. I set too high a value upon the blessing of an honest fame, and have too long enjoyed that blessing in the estimation of my Countrymen, to suffer myself to be robbed of it by any description of persons, and under any pretence whatever. Nor can I express the astonishment which the present conduct of the Administration excites in my mind; for I could not believe till it was verified by the event, after having denounced me to my Country as a person who had committed some great act of misconduct

and censured me for such supposed act by deprivation from Office, that when I call'd upon you for a statement of the charge against me, with the facts by which you support it, I shou'd find you disposed to evade my demand & shrink from the enquiry, upon what principle does the Administration take this ground, and what are its motives for it. do you suppose or contend that the power committed to the Executive by the Constitution to remove and censure a public Minister or any other public Servant, has authorized it so to do, without a sufficient cause? or that the Executive is not accountable to the public and the party injured in like manner as it is accountable for any other act, it may perform by virtue of the Constitution? upon what principle is a discumonation founded which presumes restraints in certain cases against the abuse of Executive power and leaves that power without restraint in all other cases? and how do you designate

nate, or where draw the line between these two species of power, so opposite in their nature and character? this doctrine is against the spirit of our Constitution which provides a remedy for every injury.

It is against the spirit of Elective Government, which considers every public functionary as a public Servant. It becomes the meridian of those Countries only, where the Monarch inherits the territory as his patrimony and the people who inhabit it as his Slaves

That the right to censure and remove a public officer was delegated to the Executive with peculiar confidence, is a motive why it should be exercised with peculiar care; for the more confidential the trust which is committed to a Public functionary, in a responsible station, the greater circumspection should be use in the discharge of it — it was not intended thereby to dispense with the principles of justice, or the unalienable rights of freemen, in favor of Executive pleasure, or the contrary, it was expected that that

and my own conduct in the light in which they respectively merit to stand.

The situation of the United States has become in many respects a very critical one and it is of importance that the true cause of this crisis be distinctly known. you have endeavoured to impress the public with a belief that it proceeded in some respects from me. why then do you evade the enquiry! Is it because you know the imputation was injust and wish to avoid the demonstration of a truth you are unwilling to acknowledge! or that you fear a description which may throw light upon a topic heretofore too little understood

I am, with due respect,

Sir,

Your obed Servt

Jas Monroe

Timothy Pickering Esq

(Signed)

July 19. 1797

Colol: Pickering