

# MARYLAND GAZETTE.

T H U R S D A Y, S E P T E M B E R 27, 1798.

To the FREEMEN of the CITY of ANNAPOLIS,  
ANNE-ARUNDEL and PRINCE-GEORGE'S counties.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,  
THE True Whig of '76, in his address to you, contends "Mr. Sprigg's votes do him honour, that his conduct, as your representative in congress, needs only to be fairly and candidly stated to be generally approved." A critic, who read this passage, judged it ought to read, *disapproved*, to render it correct.

The True Whig gives us a probable and a very alarming hint.—He asserts, "the friends of arbitrary power at one period, will shew themselves to be the enemies of liberty at another."—The most arbitrary, and the most presuming power now on earth, and the most dangerous to our repose, is France, and the friends of that lawless power in this country are not yet convinced of it. They may, however, conformable to the laid intimation, convince us yet to our cost, they are the real enemies of liberty. The author, I dare say, would construe the sentence differently. Men who read and hear with a different spirit, generally view things through a different medium, or understand from different impressions. Impartiality is a virtue the best of us find it difficult to attain. It is indeed frequently hung too high to be easily reached. I, however, profess myself a frierid, and invite the question to be fairly decided in the list of argument and reason. For the present I only contend Great-Britain, the power alluded to, is not a tyrannical government, or the Tories enemies of American liberty. They are all manifestly the fall friends of the present administration, and decided foes of France; and that founding the charge at this time is *unwise* and *ungenerous*. The True Whig further informs us, those who support Mr. Sprigg's election are admirers of the great and illustrious Washington, "that they will respect and revere his name and character as long as liberty shall be deemed a blessing, and patriotism a virtue."—I with this beautiful sentiment, this affectionate declaration, had been further animated, by annexing the following words, and, we approve, and will support, in the time of *emergency and danger*, his *political opinion*, at the risk of our lives and fortunes.—The illustrious Washington, I dare believe, enjoys the approbation of the good and wife every where.—His merits and his virtues will meet the plaudits of admiring ages also.—But methinks in his life-time, his delicacy forbid the sound of popular praise.—I am sure he would rather hear of our exertions and of our *unanimity*, than our praises. The venerable general, however, will, in his turn, esteem the men who will strengthen the arm of government; who are disposed to retaliate, not invite, the aggressions of France; who will support, not distract, the councils of our country.—Our fears are not from England, or any supposed friends of England; with them we have no controversy; our enmity has long subsided, or in reason and decency, ought to have subsided, conformable to the declaration of American independence; henceforth we deem them as we deem the rest of mankind, *enemies in war, friends in peace*; which friendship recommenced at the peace, and solemnly renewed in the several treaties of amity and commerce. It is the height of absurdity and insanity to continue an implacable animosity towards a nation with whom we have been long at peace, and who is daily manifesting her friendship for us, by an accommodating spirit. And what do we? Persist in rewarding them by entertaining mean suspicious jealousies, and to render our situation still more hazardous, irritate them by insulting expressions, spur with contempt the proffered kindness of ancient friends, and fly with ardour into the arms of a prostitute, defiled with human gore, to be embraced to death, or to enjoy the melancholy prospect of seeing them, in our expiring moments, with their bloody hands entwined, dance about our females, wives and lovely daughters, to the tune of *Ca Ira*, liberty and equality! Forbid it gracious Heaven!

Our political and commercial relation with England, ought to induce us to esteem them as the most natural ally.—That we are interested in her fate is obvious—if that bulwark of the world falls before the gaping and devouring power of France, this continent would not be long, before it felt the effects of the dreadful explosion.

All must now admit, the British arms stand us in good stead, by withstanding the power of France and her formidable allies, and diverting their attention from us; and may they never cease to discontinue the dire contest, until our fears are subsided, and the freedom of the commercial world secured; may we profit by their brave and virtuous efforts, and be thankful.

The peaceable man, who loves order and covets tranquillity, I am sure will approve my prayer. The man of property should be alarmed at the rapid approaches of anarchy and rapacity, that in an ill-fated hour might soon ease him of his wealth; and destroy the funded system, titles, estates, and all confidence—the property man, above all men, should, at this critical time, distinguish himself as a determined friend

of government, and a foe to lawless power. A wise, vigilant and discerning people, have now an opportunity of shewing their circumspection in the choice of a representative.—It is visible to every intelligent person, we have had several gentlemen in congress striving to disgust the people with the government, protracting the business of the session by unnecessary lengthy debates, and, if votes and speeches are a test of principles, there is a strong presumption there were many among them attached to the interest of France, rather than the true interest of America—I am apt to think no part of this imputation can apply to Mr. Sprigg, but it is with real concern I find that gentleman is charged with harmonizing occasionally in sentiment with them, when it was his duty to lessen their number by his opposing voice, unluckily thereby becoming the dupe of that party—that his name is among those who were opposed to brighten the chain of friendship with Great-Britain, and indisposed to dissolve the treaty with France, I am not disposed rigidly to scrutinize or repeat the objectionable votes, or the principles which influenced those votes—I know not whether the gentleman was enchanted, like many more, with that delusive song, gratitude and obligation to France, or that he at any time professed it as the rule of his obedience. Many of the friends and admirers of Mr. Sprigg, are however, known to be seduced by that honest, but injurious impression; attachment and obligation to an old parent country. Few men admit, or all has forgot, but that we should forget ourselves, run opposite to the first law of Nature, and sacrifice our interest at the shrine of the most imperious power on earth, is marvellously unfortunate. No man, I believe, imputes to Mr. S. that he embraced any new error, that he attempted to form any new alliance, that he neglected his post in congress, or in any instance acted contrary to what he deemed the sentiments of his constituents, knowing that he left them mostly Frenchmen in affection, and abhorring the idea of warring against new friends. He has therefore a claim on our indulgence for the past. If he erred against the true interest of the community, it was because the community first erred against themselves; left without instructions, and beset with artful and powerful declaimers; he acquitted himself as well as most young men in like circumstances perhaps would have done; the *flagitious*, while they see the propriety of his apology, should display more circumspection in future.

The gentleman's private character is known to be unexceptionable, his public he has submitted to two sorts of hearers, one friendly, the other hostile. The first heard his defence with pleasure, conceived every argument satisfactory, every evidence conclusive; and his definitive political system expedient, and on that ground proposed to vote for him; the other conceived both principles and arguments had their weak and vulnerable part; that satisfactory reasons were not assigned why he so firmly adhered to first impressions, vindicating a despicable peace system, and the propriety of persevering in them, at a time too when they appear no longer practicable, when it becomes daily more and more imprudent, disgraceful to our character, and destructive to our prosperity. Labouring as we do, as the president wisely observed, under a war of one side only, a system, when contrasted with our resentment towards Great-Britain, is extremely ridiculous, and as long as we will passively submit, France will find it her interest to fleece us, nay, and demand indemnification too for the loss of her islands, and as they recoil at the indignity and repeated injuries sustained, and likely to be sustained, they would rather manfully seek restitution by war than meanly make further sacrifices by peace. On this ground that gentleman's election will be opposed by them. They have not now to be informed the directors of France calculate upon turning our divisions to their own advantage; and as these divisions have hitherto been disgraceful and ruinous, they propose to act in such a manner as to acquit themselves from the reproachful stigmas of being accessory to their own undoing, or to any calamity that may hereafter befall us, knowing unanimity in our national councils is the grand desideratum towards preventing it.

Mr. Thomas's character and credit appears respectable, his political creed I have been told is unexceptionable. He has avowed his determination to cooperate with government in supporting the dignity and independence of the country in opposition to those who may be indisposed to retrieve or sustain our sinking credit. Fellow-citizens, you are now invited to pay a serious regard to the emergencies of the times—behold the desolating scenes of Europe, the unhappy consequences of division; if you like them *involve danger*, remember there is no appeal; if you are wanting to yourselves on the day of trial, remember there is no remedy. I shall have one consolation that I have done my duty. The man of sensibility would be alarmed at making a false step on the brow of a precipice, be ye also alarmed at the prospect of impending evil, and the indisposition of thousands to remove or prevent that evil; this circumstance the most unsuspecting will

see cause to be watchful; the most suspicious the necessity of placing some confidence in the executive administration, as a necessary barrier to prevent the violation of our constitution, and the introduction of some despicable government, under the control and influence of France—forget not the spirit of party assails us within, and a vindictive foe threatens us without. The late intelligence from Louisiana and the Havanna are gloomy, but additional motives for rousing your vigilance and re-animating national exertions—remember the piracies of France have compelled our government to act defensively, and, in all human probability, those and many other considerations will soon constrain them to act offensively, under the formality of a declared war—be assured it is not because the British treaty was made that the French piracies prevail, as many repeatedly assert. Have the Swedes, Danes, &c. recently made British treaties? No, they are tempted by our wants and our weakness; they rely on the strength of the Jacobinical party in this country to suffer them to go all or any length with impunity. Let them go on cries Gallatin! Stop them with a vengeance should be your reply and your instructions. *Of two evils you'll chuse the least*; there is no other alternative, WAR OR INFAMY. Manfully, therefore, meet the war with all its extremities, if necessary, and stipulate with your intended representative (previous to election) that he will vigorously promote war measures, and stand by the government.

I can have no possible motive in this address distinct from your good. Party prejudices and election tricks I have ever despised. To Mr. Thomas I am unknowing and unknown. With Mr. Sprigg I am in habits of friendship, and has for years enjoyed my most affectionate esteem. But friendship or life ought not to be prized too highly when our country's good and the interest of posterity claims the sacrifice.—If Mr. Sprigg is attached to our government from principle, and will with them agree to oppose the insidious designs of France, he will not hesitate, I should suppose, to avow it—in that case I conceive no objection can lie. If he will not, the presumption is, there is something radically defective, some secret predilection to France, or a continued repugnance to be bound by instructions, which he cannot or will not subdue, and as his opposers conceive it their duty to weaken the minority band, and as they deem our constitutional government too precious to be heedlessly sacrificed, he will lessen, most assuredly, instead of increasing the number of his friendly supporters; both candidates profess to have a common interest with us—both are equally concerned in our prosperity, and interested in our happiness. But different conceptions are entertained of the best mode of promoting that interest, or securing that happiness; the gentlemen have, no doubt, here this maturely and patiently considered our interior and exterior relation, and must of course see the necessity of rousing the sleepy sons of war, and display, before it is too late, a generous emulation in scouting prejudice and acting manly and consistently. I am not disposed to inquire now into the merits or ascertain the influencing principles that will best animate the exertions or public services of the respective candidates; it is enough that I reserve my own mind open to conviction. In the mean-time I have the pleasure of knowing the minority in congress are growing more and more unpopular, and deservedly too, *or we as a nation appear as a transient meteor in the theatre of the world to buzz and blaze for the moment and expire shamefully*.—I trust Mr. Sprigg's good sense (as also his friends) will point out to them the necessity, or rather the propriety, of abandoning their former position as untenable, there is no crime in being of one mind in January and another in October, when that change is the result of sound reflection. May Mr. Sprigg be propelled to shift his ground, because the community have shifted theirs, may he prefer adhering to the majority of the people, than to the minority in congress, to a new system that will embrace liberal sentiments and the public good, rather than to the old which disgraces and ruins us; that system which can discard old animosities and rise superior to prejudice would prove now a glorious triumph worthy an active, a generous and independent mind, the lover of his country and of truth.

I conclude with a hope the author of the address, and the respectable friends he alludes to, may prove as eminently conspicuous in discarding national prejudice as the good old general they admire, and be like him prompt to vindicate the American name and character. Behold your country's honour bleeds at every pore, and the voice of reason cries aloud to arms, and revenge your country's wrongs.

A TRUE WHIG of 1798.

L O N D O N, July 20.

THOUGH the Irish rebels expect the assistance of France, we are informed that they only require such a force as may be necessary to put them in