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disgraceful to them, and dishonourable to any legislature. Virginia passed a law, of which ours is a copy, but no other state, except this, was weak enough to follow the example. It is the right of every member of the community to be eligible to any office in the government, unless excluded by the original compact. Our constitution points out the qualifications to all offices, and to a seat in congress. To make either requisite is a violation of it, and the law is void. Our legislature is the creature of our form of government, and as much limited in its power, as the executive. Necessity cannot be urged to justify, or excuse the act, unless there be a necessity to support the designs of a few artful wicked men. The law was impolitic, unjust, and ungenerous. If politic in this state, all the other states ought to pursue the same line of conduct; if wise in us, it would be proper for them: the consequences are obvious, the states would exclude themselves from a choice of men, whose services are wanting in congress, and who have been and may be very useful there. To cut off from the rights of society, to affix a stigma on the whole body of merchant, was an unjust, ungenerous, and ungrateful conduct. The mercantile interest of this state have done as much, and made as great sacrifices of their interest, since the contest and war, as any body of men in the state. It must deeply wound the feelings of an individual, and much more so of a body of men, to be declared by the legislature as unworthy of the public trust and confidence. It would seem as if our assembly were afraid to trust themselves with the choice of delegates, and therefore bound themselves by law not to choose any merchant. Sound policy, and the circumstances of this state, from the want of men of abilities attached to our government, would dictate, that the choice of persons to hold offices should be as extensive as possible. Our delegation to congress, for the last two years, and the choice to other important offices plainly discovers the scarcity of men of abilities and capacity. The merchants are an honourable and useful body of men. Their strength and riches of a country depend on the wealth of individuals, and commerce is the most natural and likely means to acquire property. The merchant is not so deeply concerned in the encouragement of trade as the land-holder. The merchant is not fixed to a country, his effects are moveables, and if oppressed, he can change his residence. The land-holder's property is immovable, and he seems as if annexed to his soil, and if commerce does not carry off the produce of his land, or bring people to consume it, his land must fall in value, because the value of it depends wholly on the price of its produce. There is an inseparable affinity between land and trade, they have, and ever will fall and rise together. The original motives for passing the law can only be conjectured; its continuance can be only founded on little, mean, and illiberal principles. The house of delegates have long since discovered their error in assenting to it, and have for several sessions attempted its repeal. A majority of the senate refuse their assent to rescind an act, which, as long as it remains, records their ignorance, disgrace, and infamy. The members of the senate who voted in the negative are not influenced by public motives (if they are let them justify their conduct to the public) or dislike to the merchants, as a body, but from hatred to an individual. The same motive which excluded merchandise from an indemnification, equally with other property, influences the same men to exclude all merchants from public trust. It is most dishonourable in a senator, or delegate, to oppose public measures from any dislike, or hatred to the person who proposes them; and it is infamous to attempt to injure his reputation, by expressly charging, or indirectly insinuating, that he is influenced by interested and unworthy motives. The intention is to create a suspicion of the person, and by raising prejudices, and inflaming the pas-

sions, to prevent an attention to the reasons offered in support of the measure proposed. I could adduce many instances of this ungenerous and base conduct, to a member of the house of delegates, on all the great political questions agitated in our conventions and assemblies. The member alluded to was a warm advocate for the confiscation of British property. To induce the unwary and unthinking part of the people to reject the proposal, it was assiduously circulated, that it was a deep scheme of his to realize large sums of continental money. This assertion was false and ridiculous, and though it conveyed design and cunning in the author, it implied a want of sense in the legislature to prevent it. The confiscation has taken place upon the very principles contended for its justification. The same member opposed the repeal of the tender law, because he had benefited himself, by paying his debts in a depreciated paper. This allegation is without any foundation; he would not consent to a repeal without providing for particular cases, and some of the most material have been provided for in the late law, on the subject. The repeal alone could not affect any payment under the law. The same member opposed the calling in the convention money, by giving one new paper dollar for forty of that emission, because he had, in person, or by emulraries, bought up large sums of convention money. This report is also false and groundless. The member opposed the scheme, because it was a wanton and unnecessary breach of public faith, and the fatal consequences predicted, and which have flowed from the measure, confirm his opinion, though the authors have not been able to discover, or candour to acknowledge their error. All the above reports are infamous slanders, and the authors and propagators of them are calumniators and villains, and dare not attempt to support them. The facts charged from their nature are capable of proof, but base subtlety fuge the delegate is too cunning to be detected.

It is high time my countrymen should examine into the state of their public affairs, and the characters and conduct of their trustees. The councils of a few very ignorant, rash, and violent men (the political principles of some of whom may be justly questioned) have reduced this republic to a state of bankruptcy; they have violated the public faith, and sacrificed it to their passions and factions; and have brought the state to the very brink of ruin. If they are suffered to remain in power, and can influence public measures, the present government will be unable to protect the people, and a new one will be erected, or we must bately crouch to the yoke of Great-Britain.

C E N S O R.

For the MARYLAND GAZETTE.

**T**HERE has been no era of the war more critical and interesting than the present; no time, when wisdom, and integrity in our councils, were more essential for the security of our freedom and independence. Baffled in their attempts to subdue us by force, worn out by frequent defeats, and experiencing the futility of partial victories, Britain will probably call in a new auxiliary and rest her last hopes on the subtleties of negotiation. Awakened from her dreams of reducing us to unconditional submission and wreathing with the pangs of disappointed ambition, she will exert all her ingenuity to save her pride from a total wreck. Should the neutrality interpose as mediators between the belligerent powers, she will probably set up a claim to those parts of the United States, in the occupation of her armies at the time of the treaty. She will plead the right of conquest, and all the cunning and sophistry of her statesmen will aid the plea; if we may form an opinion from past conduct, it is more than reasonable to expect, that she will find men in our councils who will cheerfully acquiesce to her claim; for surely those who have declared publicly, that they opposed the confiscation

of British property from a fear of rejecting themselves to the resentment of the enemy, will not have the foolhardy to deny them the possession of a few port towns, and a few miles of territory. This right may perhaps be sanctioned by the law of nations, but is certainly pugnacious to every principle of justice, and humanity, and as far as affects us, will never be submitted to, unless we are lost to honour and to glory. Should the mediatory powers determine in favour of our enemy, we must, from their decisions to the sword, at present we cede to Britain one inch of American soil, we fix an eternal stain on our national character and wear the disgraceful badge of submission. This is the language of every true patriot. We will listen to no terms short of full independence, nor will we ever consent to a friendly intercourse with Great Britain; our affections are as distant as our climes, and irreconcilable as the ring elements: any man or body of men who would persuade us to resign a foot of territory, or an atom of our property, we will consider as traitors to our country, and treat them as such: should we be swayed by policy, and combine to support Britain in her pretensions, we will resist the united efforts of the consequences. The prospect of instant dissolution shall not induce us into disgraceful concessions. I live with infamy, is to linger on the should we fail in a gallant resistance facing laurels shall flourish on our brave and virtuous of every will sympathize with our misfortune even the most hardened of our enemies will blush over their triumph.

A W H I

TO THE PUBLIC.

On the 17th day of May, 1781, the following plan was submitted to the consideration of the United States, in their assembly.

**PLAN for establishing a NATIONAL BANK, for the United States of America.**

- I. **T**HAT a subscription be opened for four hundred thousand dollars, in shares of four hundred each, to be paid in gold or silver.
- II. That the subscription be paid by the hands of George Clymer, and Nixon, Elquires, or their agents.
- III. That every subscriber of less than five shares, pay the whole sum on the day of his subscription.
- IV. That every subscriber of five or upwards, pay one half the sum, on the day of his subscription, and the half within three months of that date.
- V. That every holder of a share be entitled to vote by himself, his proxy or proxy properly appointed, at all elections of directors, and that he be entitled to many votes as he holds shares, and every subscriber may sell or transfer his share or shares, at his pleasure, the transfer being made in the bank books, in the presence and with the approbation of the proprietor, or his lawful attorney, purchaser then to become entitled to the right of voting, &c.
- VI. That there be twelve directors chosen from among those entitled to vote who at their first meeting shall choose one as president.
- VII. That there be a meeting of the directors quarterly, for the purpose of regulating the affairs of the bank, and that the directors to make a board that the board have power to do all things that may be necessary from time to time.
- VIII. That the board of directors determine the manner of doing business, and the rules and forms to be observed, and to appoint the various officers which may find necessary, and dispose of the money and credit of the bank, for the interest and benefit of the proprietors, and make from time to time such divisions of the profits, as they may think proper.
- IX. That the board be empowered to open new branches from time to time, to open new