

MARYLAND GAZETTE

THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1783.

RECOMMENDATIONS to the several states, by the United States in congress assembled, April 18, 1783.

Resolved by nine states, That it be recommended to the several states, as indispensably necessary to the restoration of public credit, and to the punctual and honourable discharge of the public debts, to invest the United States in congress assembled, with a power to levy for the use of the United States, the following duties upon goods imported into the said states from any foreign port, island, or place.

Table listing duties on various goods: rum of Jamaica proof (4 goths of a dollar), other spirituous liquors (3 goths do.), Madeira wine (12 goths do.), common behea tea per lb. (6 goths do.), other teas (24 goths do.), pepper per lb. (3 goths do.), brown sugar per lb. (1 goth do.), leaf sugar (2 goths do.), other sugars (1 goth do.), molasses per gallon (1 goth do.), cocoa and coffee per lb. (1 goth do.), and all other goods a duty of five per cent. ad valorem at the time and place of importation.

That it be further recommended to the several states, to establish for a term limited to 25 years, and to appropriate to the discharge of the interest and principal of the debts contracted on the faith of the United States, for supporting the war, substantial and effectual revenues of such nature as they may judge most convenient, for supplying their respective proportions of 1,500,000 dollars annually, exclusive of the aforementioned duties, which proportion shall be fixed and equalized from time to time, according to the rule which is or may be prescribed by the articles of confederation; and in case the revenues established by any state, shall at any time fall a sum exceeding its actual proportion, the excess shall be refunded to it; and in case the revenues of any state shall be found to be deficient the immediate deficiency shall be made up by such state with as little delay as possible, and a future deficiency guarded against by an enlargement of the revenues established; provided, that until the rule of the confederation can be carried into practice, the proportions of the said 1,500,000 dollars shall be as follows, viz.

Table showing state proportions for the 1,500,000 dollar revenue: New-Hampshire 51,708; Massachusetts 224,427; Rhode-Island 32,318; Connecticut 132,091; New-York 118,243; New-Jersey 83,358; Pennsylvania 205,189; Delaware 22,443; Maryland 141,517; Virginia 256,817; North-Carolina 109,006; South-Carolina 96,183; Georgia 16,030.

That an annual account of the proceeds and application of all the aforementioned revenues, shall be made out and transmitted to the several states, distinguishing the proceeds of each of the specified articles, and the amount of the whole revenue received from each state, together with the allowances made to the several officers employed in the collection of the said revenues.

So much of the 8th of the articles of confederation and perpetual union between the thirteen states of America, as is contained in the words following, to wit: "All charges of war and all other expences that shall be incurred for the common defence or general welfare, and allowed by the United States in congress assembled, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several states in proportion to the value of all land within each state granted to or surveyed for any person, as such land and the buildings and improvements thereon, shall be estimated according to such mode as the United States in congress assembled shall from time to time direct and appoint," is hereby revoked and made void; and in place thereof it is declared and concluded, the same having been agreed to in a congress of the United States, that all charges of war and all other expences that have been or shall be incurred for the common defence or general welfare, and allowed by the United States in congress assembled, except to far as shall be otherwise provided for, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several states in proportion to the whole number of white and other free citizens and inhabitants, of every age, sex, and condition, including those bound to servitude for a term of years, and three fifths of all other persons not comprehended in the foregoing description, except Indians, not paying taxes, in each state; which number shall be triennially taken and transmitted to the United States in congress assembled, in such mode as they shall direct and appoint.

The papers referred to in the foregoing address are as follows:

Table titled 'PAPER No. I.' showing an estimate of the national debt. It lists various debts in Livres and Dollars, including: Due to the farmers general of France (1,000,000 Livres), To individuals in France on unliquidated accts. (3,000,000 Livres), To the crown of France including a loan of 10,000,000 borrowed in Holland, and for which France is guarantee, (28,000,000 Livres), To ditto, a loan for 1783 (6,000,000 Livres), Foreign debt, 1st January, 1783 (7,885,085 Livres), Domestic debt (38,000,000 Livres), On loan office certificates reduced to specie value (11,463,802 Livres), Interest unpaid for 1781 (190,000 Livres), Ditto 1782 (687,828 Livres), Credit to sundries in treasury books (638,042 Livres), Army debt to 1st December 1782 (5,635,618 Livres), Unliquidated debt, estimated at (3,000,000 Livres), Commutation to the army, agreeable to the act of 22d of March last (5,000,000 Livres), Bounty due to privates (500,000 Livres), Deficients in 1783, suppose (2,000,000 Livres), Total debt (42,000,375 Livres), Annual interest of the debt of the United States (369,038 6 Livres), On the foreign debt, part at 4 and part at 5 per cent. (2,046,917 4 Livres), On the domestic debt, at 6 per cent. (2,415,956 Livres).

PAPER No. II. By the United States in congress assembled, December 16, 1782.

THE committee, consisting of Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Fitzsimmons, to whom was referred the letter of 30th November, from the honourable William Bradford, speaker of the lower house of assembly of the state of Rhode-Island, containing, under three heads, the reasons of that state for refusing their compliance with the recommendation of congress for a duty on imports and prize goods; report,

"That they flatter themselves the state, on a reconsideration of the objections they have offered, with a candid attention to the arguments which stand in opposition to them, will be induced to retract their dissent, convinced that the measure is supported on the most solid grounds of equal justice, policy, and general utility. The following observations, contrasted with each head of the objections, successively, will furnish a satisfactory answer to the whole.

First objection. "That the proposed duty would be unequal in its operation, bearing hardest upon the most commercial states, and so would press peculiarly hard upon that state, which draws its chief support from commerce."

The most common experience, joined to the concurrent opinions of the ablest commercial and political observers, have established beyond controversy this general principle, "that every duty on imports is incorporated with the price of the commodity, and ultimately paid by the consumer, with a profit on the duty itself, as a compensation to the merchant for the advance of his money."

The merchant considers the duty demanded by the state on the imported article, in the same light with freight or any similar charge, and adding it to the original cost, calculates his profit on the aggregate sum. It may happen that at particular conjunctures, where the markets are over stocked, and there is a competition among the sellers, this may not be practicable; but in the general course of trade the demand for consumption preponderates, and the merchant can with ease indemnify himself, and even obtain a profit on the advance. As a consumer, he pays his share of the duty, but it is no further a burthen upon him. The consequence of the principle laid down is, that every class of the community bears its share of the duty in proportion to its consumption, which last is regulated by the comparative wealth of the respective class, in conjunction with their habits of expence or frugality. The rich and luxurious pay in proportion to their riches and luxury; the poor and parsimonious, in proportion to their poverty and parsimony. A chief excellence of this mode of revenue is, that it preserves a just measure to the abilities of individuals, promotes frugality, and taxes extravagance. The same reasoning in our situation applies to the intercourse between two states; if one imports and the other does not, the latter must be supplied by the former. The duty being transferred to the price of the commodity, is no more a charge on the importing state for what is consumed in the other, than it is a charge on the merchant for what is consumed by the farmer or artificer. Either state will only feel the burthen in a ratio to its consumption, and this will be in a ratio to its population and wealth. What happens between the different classes of the same community internally happens between the two states; and as the merchant, in the first case, so far from losing the duty himself, has a profit on the money he advances for that purpose; so the importing state, which in the second case is the merchant with respect to the other, is not only reimbursed by the non-importing state, but has a like benefit on the duty advanced. It is therefore the reverse of a just position, that the duty proposed will bear hardest on the most commercial states; it will, if any thing, have a contrary effect, though not in a sufficient degree to justify an objection on the part of the non importing states. For it is as reasonable they should allow an advance on the duty paid as on the first cost, freight or any incidental charge. They have also other advantages in the measure fully equivalent to this disadvantage. Over nice and minute calculations, in matters of this nature, are inconsistent with national measures, and in the imperfect state of human affairs, would stagnate all the operations of government. Absolute equality is not to be attained: to aim at it, is pur using a shadow at the expence of the substance, and in the event we should find ourselves wider of the mark, than if in the first instance we were content to approach it with moderation.

Second objection. "That the recommendation proposes to introduce into that and the other states, officers unknown and unaccountable to them, and so is against the constitution of the state."

It is not to be presumed that the constitution of any state could mean to define and fix the precise numbers and descriptions of all officers to be permitted in the state, excluding the creation of any new ones, whatever might be the necessity derived from that variety of circumstances incident to all political institutions. The legislature must always have a discretionary power of appointing officers, not expressly known to the constitution, and this power will include that of authorizing the federal government to make the appointments in cases where the general welfare may require it. The denial of this would prove too much; to wit: that the power given by the confederation to congress, to appoint all officers in the post-office, was illegal and unconstitutional.

The doctrine advanced by Rhode-Island would perhaps prove also that the federal government ought to have the appointment of no internal officers whatever; a position that would defeat all the provisions of the confederation, and all the purposes of the union. The truth is, that no federal constitution can exist without powers that in their exercise affect the internal police of the component members. It is equally true, that no government can exist without a right to appoint officers for those purposes which proceed from and concern itself; and therefore the confederation has expressly declared that congress shall have authority to appoint all such "civil officers as may be necessary for managing the general affairs of the United States under their direction." All that can be required is, that the federal government confine its appointments to such as it is empowered to make by the original act of union, or by the subsequent consent of the parties; unless there should be express words of exclusion in the constitution of a state, there can be no reason to doubt that it is within the compass of legislative discretion to communicate that authority.

The propriety of doing it upon the present occasion, is founded on substantial reasons.