

obligations, resulting from my official station and the rules of the Senate ; because, for myself, I had nothing to conceal, and I desire, at all times, when I lawfully can, to render a faithful account of the proceedings of that branch of the national legislature, in which, through the favor and confidence of the General Assembly of Maryland, I have the honor to hold a seat. But sir, on a requisition of the House of Delegates, so entirely unusual, and I may add, wholly without a precedent in the history of the intercourse of the legislatures of the States of this Union with either branch of Congress, I felt that it was proper I should pause, in order more deliberately to decide what sort of answer might best comport with my duty to that *entire constituency*, which I represent, and at the same time, with the respect I bear towards the House of Delegates, by whose order you have addressed us. On this point, I soon formed a dispassionate judgment, and will endeavour now to pursue the course, which that has indicated to me, pleased to be conscious that I cannot do amiss if my pen be guided by truth and the dictates of a just independence.

Before I offer to you the explanations and suggestions, which have occurred to me as proper to be made, in order to satisfy, as far as lies in my power, the wishes and expectations of the House of Delegates of Maryland, whose organ you are, it is necessary and proper that I should accurately recite the communication, which we had the favor to receive from you and the special inquiries proposed. You write as follows :

*Annapolis, January 14th, 1842.*

“Gentlemen :

As chairman of the committee I am instructed to call your attention to the following order, adopted by the House of Delegates on the 5th of January 1842. In discharge of the duty devolving upon them by this order, the committee deem it proper to address themselves first to you and to request you to inform the House of Delegates, through them, for what reasons and under what circumstances the claims of General Towson, your illustrious fellow citizen, were overlooked by the Senate when they had under consideration the vacancy caused by the death of Macomb, and confirmed the nomination of General Wool of New York ?”

“With great respect, yours, &c.

THOMAS B. W. RANDALL,  
*Chairman.*”

You append to this letter what is doubtless intended as a literal copy of the order, under which you act, to wit: “Ordered that the committee already raised upon the subject of presenting a sword to Captain John A. Webster, referred to by the Governor in his annual message, be instructed further to inquire into the proceedings of Senators Kerr and Merrick as regards the matter of General Towson’s memorial to the United States Senate, when a nomination to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of General Alexander Macomb was before that body.”