

N E G A T I V E.

Messrs. Freeland,
J. Stevenson,
Hammond,Lawson,
Job,
Duckett,Dennis,
Taylor,
M'Comas,Norris,
M'Mechen,
Jo. Chapline,Ja. Chapline,
Cramphin,
Bayly,Oneale,
Hungerford.

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

William Hindman, Esq; from the senate, delivers to Mr. Speaker the bill to seize, confiscate, and appropriate all British property within this state, endorsed; "By the senate, January 27, 1781: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

J. MACCUBBIN, clk.

"By the senate, January 29, 1781: Read the second time and will pass with the proposed amendments.

"By order,

J. MACCUBBIN, clk."

Amendments proposed. Page 2. In the third line from the bottom, after the word "property," insert "debts only excepted."

Page 7. Strike out from the word "act" in the 8th line, to the word "and" in the 12th line. In the 2d line from the bottom, after the word "land," insert "except imported merchandise;" and in the same line strike out from the word "or" inclusive, to the word "states" inclusive, and insert "state."

Page 8. In the first line after the word "state," insert "except as aforesaid." Strike out from the words "or whose" in the first line inclusive, to the word "enemy" in the interlineation on the third line. At the bottom of the eighth page insert the following clause:

"And be it enacted, That the debts due to Osgood Hanbury, individually or in company, and the debts due to Sylvanus Grove, to the amount of two thirds of the bank stock belonging to this state, shall be and hereby are taken and confiscated, and the same shall be applied, in the first place, to satisfy the debts due from the said Osgood Hanbury, individually or in company, and the debts due from Sylvanus Grove, respectively, and in the next place, to satisfy the debts due from James Russell to the subjects of this state as aforesaid, and the balance, if any, shall be and hereby is applied as a fund to sink and pay the bills of credit as aforesaid."

Which were read.

Mr. T. Johnson, from the committee, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following draught of a message:

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, JANUARY 29, 1781.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOURS,

THE earnest desire we have that this state should confederate, from our opinion of the utility of such a measure, has induced us to return you the bill to empower the delegates of this state in congress to subscribe and ratify the articles of confederation, in hopes of your honours affirmative thereto. The advantages and necessity of one general established power, to draw into action the force of the United States, is obvious; perhaps the efforts of the union have not yet, for want of it, been equal to its ability, and by longer delaying to define and mark out distinctly the powers of congress, it is probable that body may, according to the course of human events, possess in a short time too little for our defence, or too much for our liberty. But if the weight and moderation of congress should continue, as it has done, to the admiration of a speculative mind, for upwards of five years, the inconvenience, which has already been very great, will also continue, of transacting executive business by so large a body, or committees of it; and if we should obtain a peace on terms the most desirable, a new compact must then be formed, or each state left to pursue its separate views and interests, without any common object or center of union, a situation not eligible by any who wish well to the whole.

As your honours have not intimated the reasons for your negative, we cannot be certain what they are, but from what has heretofore passed on the subject, we presume the claim made by this state to the back country's being a common stock, not having been acceded to, is the principal; we are as strongly impressed with the justice of that claim as your honours, and are persuaded, that had no exclusive claims been set up, the United States would not have been under their present embarrassments about finance. How far the United States may now be benefited by the western country as a common fund, is impossible to determine, but it does not appear probable, that this state's still refusing to confederate can be a means of securing or improving it as a fund, on the contrary, where the free and independent will of many is to be consulted, giving up something of opinion of each, is necessary to conciliate an agreement of all in one point. The present appears to us to be a seasonable time to shew, that as our claim was better founded in justice than the exclusive claims of others, having supported it with firmness till a disposition is shewn of candidly considering it, we chuse rather to rely on the justice of the confederated states, than by an over perseverance incur the censure of obstinacy. Besides the good effects which will flow from settling the powers of congress on a known and permanent basis,

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