

The reasons, however cogent, which led to determinations so opposite to the already declared sense of a considerable proportion of the confederacy, remain suppressed in that secrecy which those votes seem designed to perpetuate. Lest silent acquiescence may be improperly construed into implied approbation, and as such tend to weaken the efforts of other states, we do not hesitate again to declare our sense against those determinations of that honourable body.

In free governments the authority and sanction of the laws in a great measure depend on the influence of opinion; the public mind, therefore, cannot be too thoroughly possessed of the reasons which influenced their adoption, and if the motives of measures fairly exposed and generally communicated, will not secure them public approbation, they generally furnish conclusive arguments against their continuance. Mystery is the garb of tyranny, whilst free government, founded on reason, derives new strength from every inquiry. The duration of the time for which they are elected, and the different periods at which their offices expire, render that body, in effect, permanent. They admit no constitutional mode by which an entire change could be effected, should ever corruption pervade the mass, or taint their proceedings, and they afford but few opportunities of withdrawing the confidence once improperly reposed in individual members. These combined considerations furnish additional and powerful motives for admitting their constituents to a knowledge of their deliberations, and to a minute inspection of their general and individual conduct; and we hold it no sound argument, that the admission could extend only to the inhabitants of the seat of their deliberations, for we learn from experience, that the calls of public and private business constantly draw well informed citizens from all parts of the union to the seat of government; these constantly going and returning, would disseminate the principles of their deliberations. But, above all, the press already conveys a general history of the debates of the house of representatives, which, if not accurate, may at all times be corrected by the publications of members misrepresented, and furnishes all parts of the confederacy with an ample idea of the conduct of their immediate representatives. The same effects may reasonably be expected from the publication of the debates of the senate; but whatever may have been the original policy or impolicy of the measure, it has now assumed a more serious aspect. The refusal of that honourable body to comply with the urgent desires of so respectable a proportion of their constituents, unopposed by the declared approbation of their conduct by any part of the union, can hardly, we think, be justified by any refinement of theory. If the neglect to open their doors created a jealousy, which has hitherto worn the face of remonstrance, or discovered itself in instructions, requiring that their legislative deliberation should be public, their absolute refusal to comply, seems calculated to inspire suspicion, and confidence leaves the bosom which suspicion has once entered, and rarely returns. We have seen, with peculiar concern, the little attention which has been paid by one of yourselves, our immediate representatives, to the unanimous voice of your constituents, expressed in their instructions of the session of this legislature at November last; we therefore again, and in more positive terms, assure you, that we deem a compliance with the wishes expressed from the various parts of the union, that the doors of the senate should be opened whilst sitting in their legislative capacity, as essential to the preservation of that entire confidence which the whole union ought to repose in that honourable body, and we call on you to use your unremitting exertions to effect so important a measure.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

Which were read the first and second time, agreed to, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

The supplement to an act, entitled, An act to alter and amend the law in certain cases, was read the second time by special order, and the question put, That the said bill do pass? Determined in the negative.

On motion, the question was put on the following; viz.

Whereas, by an act to appoint an agent for the year 1792, and other purposes, all the debtors of this state, who have or might have installed under the act relating to the debtors and creditors of this state, were permitted to discharge their debts by five annual payments, the first of which was due and became payable on the first of December, 1792: And whereas the securities of Thomas Williams paid into the treasury one third part of the principal of their installed debt on the 26th day of July, 1791, which deprived them of the indulgence granted by the act of the last session, without the payment of one fifth of the remaining balance; and it appearing to this general assembly but reasonable and right that the said securities should have every indulgence that other debtors are entitled to, who are at this time compelled to pay but one fifth of their installed debt, **RESOLVED**, That no process shall issue on the bond or bonds passed by the securities of Thomas Williams to the state, for the debt by them installed, before the first day of December next; provided the interest now due thereon be paid before the first day of April next, and that the securities be put on the same footing with debtors of this state who installed under the act to appoint an agent for the year 1792, as to the future payments of their installed debt.

The yeas and nays being called for by Mr. Mackall, appeared as follow:

| | | A F F I R M A T I V E. | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|---------|-------------|----------|-------------|-----|--|
| Messieurs | J. Ringgold, | Goldsbrough, | Clark, | O'Bryon, | Nelson, | Loockerman, | | |
| | Grahame, | Hollingsworth, | Sprigg, | Hutchings, | Jarrett, | M'Mechens, | | |
| | Ridgely, of Wm. | Forman, | Contee, | Beatty, | Prall, | Oncala, | | |
| | Kerr, | Ewing, | Quynn, | Dorley, | Amos, | Threlkeld, | | |
| | Dashiell, | Bowie, | Duvall, | Sappington, | Driver, | Johnson. | 31. | |
| Denwood, | | | | | | | | |