

**Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, January 30, 1799 , from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.**

**TO JAMES MADISON MAD. MSS.**

Jan 30, 99.

My last to you was of the 16th, since which yours of the 12th is received, and it's contents disposed of properly. These met such approbation as to have occasioned an extraordinary impression of that day's paper. Logan's bill is passed. The lower house, by a majority of 20. passed yesterday a bill continuing the suspension of intercourse with France, with a new clause enabling the President to admit intercourse with the rebellious negroes under Toussaint, who has an agent here, and has thrown off dependence on France. The H of R have also voted 6. 74's & 6. 18's, in part of the additional navy, say 552 guns, which in England would cost 5,00 D, & here 10,000, consequently more than the whole 5. millions for which a loan is now opened at 8. per cent. The maintenance is estimated at £1,000 (lawful) a gun annually. A bill has been this day brought into the Senate for authorizing the Pt *in case of a declaration of war or danger of invasion by any European power* to raise an *eventual* army of 30. regiments, infantry, cavalry, & artillery in addition to the additional army, the provisional army, & the corps of volunteers, which last he is authorized to brigade, officer, exercise, & pay during the time of exercise. And all this notwithstanding Gerry's correspondence recently received, & demonstrating the aversion of France to consider us as enemies. All depends on her patiently standing the measures of the present session, and the surrounding *her* islands with our cruisers, & capturing their armed vessels on her own coasts. If this is borne awhile, the public opinion is most

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manifestly wavering in the middle States, & was even before the publication of Gerry's correspondence. In New York, Jersey, & Pennsylvania, every one attests them, and Genl Sumpter, just arrived, assures me that the republicans in S C have gained 50. per cent. in numbers since the election, which was in the moment of the X. Y. Z. fever. I believe there is no doubt the republican governor would be elected here now, & still less for next October. The gentlemen of N C seem to be satisfied that their new delegation will furnish but 3. perhaps only 2. anti-republicans; if so, we shall

be gainers on the whole. But it is on the progress of public opinion we are to depend for rectifying the proceedings of the next Congress. The only question is whether this will not carry things beyond the reach of rectification. Petitions & remonstrances against the alien & sedition laws are coming from various parts of N Y, Jersey, & Pensyva: some of them very well drawn. I am in hopes Virginia will stand so countenanced by those States as to repress the wishes of the government to coerce her, which they might venture on if they supposed she would be left alone. Firmness on our part, but a passive firmness, is the true course. Anything rash or threatening might check the favorable dispositions of these middle States, & rally them again around the measures which are ruining us. Buonaparte appears to have settled Egypt peacefully, & with the consent of those inhabitants, & seems to be looking towards the E. Indies, where a most formidable co-operation has been prepared for demolishing the British power. I wish the affairs of Ireland were as hopeful, and the peace with the north of Europe. Nothing new here as to the price of tobo, the river not having yet admitted the bringing any to this market. Spain being entirely open to ours, & depending on it for her supplies during the cutting off of her intercourse with her own colonies by the superiority of the British at sea, is much in our favor. I forgot to add that the bill for the *eventual* army, authorizes the President to borrow 2. millions more. Present my best respects to mrs. Madison, health & affectionate salutations to yourself. Adieu.