

## Thomas Jefferson to Edmund Randolph, February 3, 1794, The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

### TO EDMUND RANDOLPH J. MSS.

Monticello, Feb. 3, 1794.

Dear Sir, —I have to thank you for the transmission of the letters from Genl Gates, La Motte, & Hauterive. I perceive by the latter, that the partisans of the one or the other principle (perhaps of both) have thought my name a convenient cover for declarations of their own sentiments. What those are to which Hauterive alludes, I know not, having never seen a newspaper since I left Philadelphia (except those of Richmond) and no circumstances authorize him to expect that I should inquire into them, or answer him. I think it is Montaigne who has said, that ignorance is the softest pillow on which a man can rest his head. I am sure it is true as to everything political, and shall endeavor to estrange myself to everything of that character. I indulge myself on one political topic only, that is, in declaring to my countrymen the shameless corruption of a portion of the representatives to the 1st & 2d. Congresses and their implicit devotion to the treasury. I think I do good in this, because it may produce exertions to reform the evil, on the success of which the form of the government is to depend. \* \* \*

At Richmond, our market, no property of any form, would command money even before the interruption of business by the smallpox. Produce might be bartered at a low price for goods at a high one. One house alone bought wheat at all, & that on credit. I take this to be the habitual state of the markets on James river, to which shortlived exceptions have

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existed when some particular cash commission for purchases has been received from abroad. I know not how it is on the other rivers, & therefore say nothing as to them.

This is the first letter I have written to Philadelphia since my arrival at home, & yours the only ones I have received.