

Thomas Jefferson to Congress, January 24, 1803, from Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital. Edited by Saul K. Padover.

Jefferson to Congress JEFFERSON TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

January 24, 1803

I transmit a report by the superintendent [Thomas Munroe] of the city of Washington on the affairs of the city committed to his care. By this you will perceive that the resales of lots prescribed by an act of the last session of Congress did not produce a sufficiency to pay the debt to Maryland, to which they were appropriated; and, as it was evident that the sums necessary for the interest and instalments due to that State could not be produced by a sale of the other public lots, without an unwarrantable sacrifice of the property, the deficiencies were of necessity drawn from the treasury of the United States.

The office of surveyor for the city, created during the former establishment, being of indispensable necessity, it has been continued; and to that of the superintendent, substituted instead of the board of commissioners, at the last session of Congress, no salary was annexed by law. These offices being permanent, I have supposed it more agreeable to principle that their salaries should be fixed by the Legislature, and therefore have assigned them none. Their services to be compensated are from the 1st day of June last.

The marshal of the District of Columbia has, as directed by law, caused a jail to be built in the city of Washington. I enclose his statements of the expenses already incurred, and of

Library of Congress

what remains to be finished. The portion actually completed has rendered the situation of the persons confined much more comfortable and secure than it has been heretofore.

[Pp. 337–38, AMERICAN STATE PAPERS, DOCUMENTS, Legislative and Executive, of the Congress of the U. S., I, 1834; the superintendent's report; also p. 103, DOCUMENTARY HISTORY . . . OF THE CAPITOL.]