

**Thomas Jefferson to Elbridge Gerry, March 3, 1804,
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Leicester Ford.**

TO ELBRIDGE GERRY J. MSS.

Washington, March 3, 1804.

Dear Sir, —Altho' it is long since I received your favor of Oct. 27, yet I have not had leisure sooner to acknolege it. In the middle Southern States, as great an union of sentiment has now taken place as is perhaps desirable. For as there will always be an opposition, I believe it had better be from avowed monarchists than republicans. New York seems to be in danger of republican division; Vermont is solidly with us; R. I. with us on anomalous grounds; N. H. on the verge of the republican shore; Connecticut advancing towards it very slowly, but with steady step; your State only uncertain of making port at all. I had forgotten Delaware, which will be always uncertain, from the divided character of her citizens. If the amendment of the Constitution passes R. I., (and we expect to hear in a day or two,) the election for the ensuing 4 years seems to present nothing formidable. I sincerely regret that the unbounded calumnies of the federal party have obliged me to throw myself on the verdict of my country for trial, my great desire having been to retire, at the end of the present term, to a life of tranquillity; and it was my decided purpose when I entered into office. They force my continuance. If we can keep the vessel of State as steadily in her course another 4 years, my earthly purposes will be accomplished, and I shall be free to enjoy, as you are doing, my family, my farm, & my books. That your enjoyments may

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continue as long as you shall wish them, I sincerely pray, and tender you my friendly salutations, and assurances of great respect & esteem.