

SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK) & PROPERTY OF SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

THE WISDOM OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

BY BILL BAILEY

The Wisdom of George Washington

First in war—first in peace—and first in the hearts of his countrymen.

A collection of quotes from his writing and speeches

**By
Bill Bailey**

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

The Wisdom of George Washington

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Table of Contents

SECTION I: Pre-Revolutionary War

SECTION II: Revolutionary War

SECTION III: Post-Revolutionary War

SECTION IV: The Presidency

SECTION V: Post-Presidential

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – THE RULES OF CIVILITY AND DECENT BEHAVIOR IN COMPANY AND CONVERSATION

APPENDIX II – First Inaugural Address

APPENDIX III – Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1789

APPENDIX IV- First Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX V- Second Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX VI – Third Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX VII – Fourth Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX VIII – Second Inaugural Address

APPENDIX IX – Fifth Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX X – Sixth Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX XI – Seventh Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX XII – Eighth Annual Message to Congress

APPENDIX XIII – Farewell Address, September 17, 1796

APPENDIX XIV – Tributes to George Washington

APPENDIX XV - EULOGY ON WASHINGTON by FISHER AMES

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Special thanks are due to my wife, Jean, who has been supportive of my effort without complaint about the many hours of our golden retirement years that I have spent holed up in my "bunker" working on this endeavor and my friend Steve Straub, the owner of *The Federalist Papers* web page and Facebook group, for his many contributions of material, critiques of earlier versions, constant encouragement, and for designing the cover of this publication. Without their support and encouragement, I might have abandoned this project shortly after its conception.

Bill

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Editor's Notes

The quotations reproduced in this publication were derived almost entirely from John C. Fitzpatrick, *The Writings of George Washington*. Other quotations derive from a few other published sources, primarily *The Writings of George Washington* by Jared Sparks. The addresses in Appendices II and IV thru XIII are reprinted from *George Washington: A Collection*, compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988). The Farewell Address at Appendix XIV is reprinted from *The Life of George Washington: Special Edition for Schools*, Appendix V, editors Robert Faulkner and Paul Carrese (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000). Other sources are identified in the citation following each quotation.

The material presented here is in straightforward chronological order, divided into four phases. This publication is designed to be a tool of general information, highlighting Washington's wisdom and tracing his life thru its phases, rather than a tool of critical study. Readers seeking a tool of critical analysis should consult the multivolume *Papers of George Washington* at the University of Virginia.

The reader will note bracketed words and phrases in some of the quotes. Except in the discarded inaugural, these are Fitzpatrick's, used to indicate that portions of the text have been crossed out, mutilated, or left out inadvertently by Washington or an aide to whom he dictated his words. Brackets sometimes enclose words that Fitzpatrick or this editor provides to fill a gap in the text selected for the quote.

Fitzpatrick inconsistently applied modernization of spelling and grammar. Because Fitzpatrick remains the most complete collection of Washington's writings published, this work adheres to his standard. Selections reprinted from other sources do not conform to the Fitzpatrick standard.

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PREFACE by J. F. Schroeder from *The Maxims of George Washington*

Lord Brougham, in speaking of the Father of our Country, calls him "the greatest man of our own or any age; the ONLY ONE upon whom an epithet, so thoughtlessly lavished by men to foster the crimes of their worst enemies, may be innocently and justly bestowed." He adds, "It will be the duty of the historian and the sage, in all ages, to let no occasion pass, of commemorating this illustrious man; and, until time shall be no more, will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and in virtue, be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington."

The powerful influence of his character, his achievements, and his opinions, is acknowledged by all men. It has long been extending and increasing. And it cannot fail to produce, eventually, the most important and happy results, in the fulfilment of the final destinies of nations, and the attainment of the chief end of human existence.

By common consent, Washington is regarded as not merely the Hero of the American Revolution, but the World's Apostle of Liberty. The war of the Revolution was a war of principle, that involved the interests of all mankind. England's violation of our sacred rights, was the stirring of the eagle's nest. It naturally awakened emotions of resistance. British prerogative was opposed by American freedom. Prerogative became arbitrary, and Freedom asserted her rights; Prerogative became oppressive and cruel, and Freedom took up arms and declared her independence. The spirit of America's cause was impersonated in her great chief. He was a manifestation of the nation's heart and mind. And under his judicious guidance, by the providence of God, America not only stood erect, before the world, clothed in the panoply of justice, but moved steadily onward in her course; her shield, and breastplate, and whole armor flashing, at every step, with the light that shone on her from heaven.

Our victory being won, Washington sheathed his sword, and sat, for a brief space, under the shadow of his own vine and fig-tree. Soon, at the nation's call, he guided her in establishing the foundation, and rearing the superstructure, of her vast and imposing political fabric. He saw its topstone laid. And he was exulting, with holy joy, at the completion of his work, when the Supreme Disposer of events, by suddenly removing him from earth, in the fulness of his glory and renown, consecrated his character, and imparted to his opinions the commanding authority which they now possess.

The first name of America, not only is, but always will be, that of Washington. We pronounce it with filial reverence, as well as gratitude; for we admire and love him, not merely in consideration of what he did, but what he was. There is a sacred charm in his actions and his sentiments, as well as a divine philosophy in his remarkable career.

But his example and his precepts are a legacy, not only to America, but to all mankind. And as they are contemplating and admiring his virtues, they are invited to read, in his own words, his golden maxims. These are adapted to the use of Statesmen, Soldiers, Citizens, heads of families, teachers of youth, and, in a word, all who should aim at what is great and good, in public and in private life, and who would avail themselves of such sagacious, profound, and ennobling sentiments.

With a view to furnish, for popular use, a small volume of the words of Washington, the labor of culling and arranging his memorable precepts in this collection, was originally undertaken. Public documents and private letters, manuscripts and printed volumes, have accordingly been examined, with a view to the completeness and interest of the collection; and none but undoubtedly authentic materials have been used in forming it.

The late Earl of Buchan, whose uniform regard for the American States was manifested long before the epoch of their Federal Union, said of our Washington, "I recommend the constant remembrance of the moral and political Maxims conveyed to its citizens by the Father and Founder of the United States. It seems to me, that such Maxims and such advice ought to be engraved on every forum or place OF COMMON ASSEMBLY among the people, and read by parents, teachers, and guardians to their children and pupils so that TRUE RELIGION, AND VIRTUE, its inseparable attendant, may be imbibed by the rising generation to remote ages."

That generation after generation may enjoy the blessedness of the benign influence which these Maxims are so eminently calculated to exert, should surely be the prayer of patriots, philanthropists, and Christians, until all men shall be animated by the spirit of Washington, and exemplify his precepts.

J. F. SCHROEDER.
New York, September 12th, 1854.

Thomas Jefferson, who was not disposed to be any more favorable in his judgment of Washington than the facts compelled him to be, says of him:

"His was the singular destiny and merit, of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its counsel through the birth of a government new in its form and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example."

The circumstances of Washington's life were peculiarly happy and his career singularly well-rounded and complete. Endowed by birth with influential social connections, placed early in life in affluent circumstances, his military services in the French and Indian War made him the most prominent American soldier of his day. When the colonists took up arms against Great Britain, his appointment as commander-in-chief of the American forces on both military and political grounds was alike natural and inevitable. While he possessed a large measure of the public confidence at the beginning of the Revolution, the qualities which he displayed in the conduct of that struggle placed him among the great men of the world, and gave him a degree of influence with his countrymen that no other American has ever possessed. His experiences in the Revolution made him realize most keenly the necessity of a firmer union than was furnished by the Articles of Confederation, and long before independence was assured, he sought to imbue others with his ambition for the establishment of a national government which should be strong enough to maintain its authority, meet its obligations, and uphold the national dignity and honor. In the last days of the Confederation, when the bonds of union were slowly dissolving and something very like anarchy seemed inevitable, it was the weight of Washington's name, more than any other one factor, which led to the formation and adoption of the Constitution. And when the new government was ready to be put into operation, the election of Washington to the presidency was as natural as had been his appointment to the command of the army fourteen years before; while in the starting of the new government, his personal influence was as large a factor in its success as that influence had been in securing its adoption. It may be questioned whether any other American of his day could have overcome the bitter opposition which was offered to his policy of neutrality in the war between England and France, to his treaty of commerce with Great Britain and to his enforcement of the excise law in Western Pennsylvania. If it had been necessary to wage the war for independence without his military genius and unstinted devotion; if his influence had been lacking in the effort of the few to establish an adequate government for the union; or if he had not stood sponsor for the great measures which gave stability to the new government and a place of honor and dignity to the nation, it is difficult to believe that any one of these movements could have been brought to a successful conclusion. No other leader of modern times has conducted a people through such momentous changes, or placed his work on so permanent a foundation as did Washington. And he had the almost unique good fortune of living to witness the triumph of every great cause which he had advocated, while in the closing years of his life, removed from the animosities which every public career seems to entail, he received the veneration of the civilized world.

Few public men have left so complete a record of their lives as has Washington. He began at an early period to keep copies of the letters which he wrote and to preserve all important papers which came into his hands. Every phase of his public life is amply recorded, not indeed with any purpose of leaving a record but merely because the circumstances of his career were such that the transaction of the business of the day was in itself a record. After the outbreak of the Revolution, however, Washington had a proper appreciation of the interest that his papers would have in the future, and he took ample precautions to see that they were preserved.

It was the attempt of Great Britain to tax the colonies which set Washington upon a career ending in his becoming one of the most important figures in history. But for those ill-advised measures, he might have lived and died a comparatively obscure colonial gentleman. He would have donned the King's uniform when there was need for it; he would probably have been elected with great regularity to the House of Burgesses of Virginia, and the time and energy not given to his public duties or to the cultivation of his plantations would no doubt have been given to some of those plans for the development of the country which occupied so much of his thoughts. But the enactment of the Stamp Act introduced him at once to a larger sphere, and from that time until his death his letters and other papers teem with comment and discussion occasioned by events of national and international importance.

No man in America was more thoroughly aroused than he by the British measures for the taxation of the colonies, and his letters vividly reflect the feelings which those measures engendered. Writing to his agents in London and to his Tory neighbor Bryan Fairfax, he states the grievances of America in no uncertain tones, and indicates some of the consequences which the British policy would entail. He saw at once the bearing of the controversy on British commerce and wrote to Francis Dandridge, in London, "The eyes of our people, already beginning to open will perceive that many luxuries, which we lavish our substance in Great Britain for, can well be dispensed with, whilst the necessaries of life are (mostly) to be had within ourselves". And four years later, when other plans of taxation had been resorted to, he again advocated measures for "starving their trade and manufactures"; and as the grievances of the colonies accumulated, his sense of injury and his determination to resist found indignant expression in letters to his loyalist friend and neighbor Bryan Fairfax:

"The crisis is arrived," he wrote, "when we must assert our rights, or submit to every imposition, that can be heaped upon us, till custom and use shall make us as tame and abject slaves, as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway." In the popular discussions of the time, he could not defend the rights of his countrymen with the eloquence of James Otis, or Samuel Adams, or Patrick Henry, but he made the most eloquent of all speeches when he said, "I will raise one thousand men, enlist them at my own expense, and march myself at their head for the relief of Boston."

There are many sources from which the story of the British attempt to tax America and the determination of the colonists to insist upon their rights can be learned, but for the history of the Revolutionary War,— his objects, the gradual growth of the idea of independence, the obstacles raised by inefficient military organization, by the mutual jealousies of the States, and by the weakness of the national government, the uncertainty of the assistance of our nominal allies, the discovery of treason in the ranks, the lack of funds, the failure of supplies, the practical cessation of enlistments and the growth of a discontent among the troops which finally resulted in mutiny, — for all this there is no source which in authenticity, in vividness, and in completeness is at all comparable with the letters and official papers of Washington. The circumstances under which he exercised his command and the questions with which he had to deal involved the preparation of papers which constitute a complete record of his connection with the war. For convenience the most important of them may be arranged in these groups, — letters to the President of Congress, appeals to the States, and letters to individuals.

The first of the letters to the President of Congress was written from New York the week after his appointment as commander-in-chief, and from that time until he resigned his commission, he was in frequent, sometimes daily, communication with that body. Reporting to it as to a superior authority, his letters are filled with accounts of the state of the army, defects in its organization, the difficulty of obtaining food and clothing, complaints caused by the failure of Congress to pay the troops, and by the depreciation in the value of the continental currency, the gradual decline in enlistments, proposed movements of the troops, and important conflicts with the enemy. They are the most complete contemporary record that we possess of the conditions under which the Revolutionary War was carried on. The history of almost every phase of the military side of the contest could be written from these letters alone. His representations to Congress of the needs of his troops did not produce the desired results. That body was at best but the shadow of a government, and, as was to have been expected, was often divided in opinion as to the proper measures to be adopted. To meet his necessities Washington began to appeal to the States. Sometimes he addressed the governors or provincial congresses singly. Sometimes he sent a circular letter to the States or to particular groups of them. As the Revolution proceeded, and the inability of Congress to meet the necessities of the army increased, appeals of this kind became more and more common. They are an illustration of the double task which rested upon Washington. He must not only train the armies and fight the battles of the Revolution, but more and more as the contest went on he was also obliged to provide the means for feeding and clothing and arming his men in order that they might remain in the field. The magnitude of his services to America in the Revolution cannot be exaggerated. The unintended testimony of his papers, as they were prepared from day to day in the transaction of the business of the moment, is convincing evidence that without his unending patience, and his determined persistence, the war could not have been brought to a successful conclusion. It cannot be charged that the American republic has been lacking in appreciation of Washington. But on the other hand, it is certain that a perusal of his papers written while he was in command of the army, and particularly of those addressed to Congress and to the States, will show that there is ample justification for anything that may be said in praise of his services in the War for Independence, Washington won the Revolution. To him it appeared as a battle for human rights, and he made it appear in that light to others. He saw how the happiness of future generations was involved in it. Hence he refused to allow the indifference or negligence of some, or even the slanderous opposition and treason of others, to divert him from his course. Defeat did not dismay him. In reporting to Congress a disastrous repulse of his army, he could yet express the consolatory hope that on another occasion we might have better fortune. Without his inspiring example of unselfishness and devotion, it is doubtful if local jealousies could have been sufficiently subdued to bring the various colonial forces together into a continental army. Without him that army certainly could not have been kept in the field. And year by year as he led his ragged troops into winter quarters with verj^ little in the way of victory over the enemy to encourage them, he urged upon Congress and the States to begin at once preparations for another campaign, apparently taking it for granted that no matter how often his men were defeated or his armies disabled by slaughter, sickness, or desertion, the war must nevertheless go on until it had achieved its object. And of all this, we have in Washington's papers a vivid and indisputable record. We may join with Moses Coit Tyler in saying that no one can "ever hope to know the mind and conscience of our Revolution, its motive, its conduct, its stern and patient purpose or its cost, without studying Washington's letters."

In writing to Congress, Washington was necessarily placed under considerable restraint. Communications to that body were in the nature of public documents. They were read in Congress. They came to the knowledge of a considerable number of people— Many of them were given to the press. Hence their author was frequently obliged to write with reserve, in order that information damaging to the public interest might not be disclosed. To obviate this difficulty, a public letter to the President of Congress was frequently supplemented by a private one to the same official. Thus when Lafayette broached his plan for an invasion of Canada with a French army, Washington saw at once the dangerous possibilities involved in the introduction of a body of French troops among the French population of Canada. His letter to the President of Congress, however, is devoted altogether to the military aspects of the enterprise and gives no hint of the real reasons for his opposition— These are found in a private letter sent three days later. In communications to the States, even greater care and restraint were necessary, for the officials of the States were less responsible for the promotion of the common cause than was the Congress.

This necessity for circumspection in what were virtually public letters gives added value to Washington's more intimate communications to friends in whom he had confidence. Here he felt it safe to write with greater frankness, and these letters exhibit a freedom of expression and an absence of restraint which make them of particular interest to every student of the Revolutionary War. Here are statements as to the condition of the army and its dangerous situation which would never have found their way into any public document. Here also he felt at liberty to give vent to personal feelings which he was usually careful to suppress in his more public communications.

Among his correspondents while he was with the army were five with whom his exchange of letters was frequent and the tone of his own particularly frank and unrestrained. The first of these was his favorite brother John Augustine Washington (1736-87), "the intimate companion of my youth and the friend of my ripened age." The correspondence with him during the early years of the war is especially valuable. It was to him that Washington wrote, March 31, 1776:

"I believe I may, with great truth affirm, that no man perhaps since the first institution of armies ever commanded one under more difficult circumstances than I have done. To enumerate the particulars would fill a volume. Many of the difficulties and distresses were of so peculiar a cast that, in order to conceal them from the enemy, I was obliged to conceal them from my friends, and indeed from my own army, thereby subjecting my conduct to interpretations unfavorable to my character, especially by those at a distance who could not in the smallest degree be acquainted with the springs that governed it."

Once again the General wrote his brother on November 9, 1776:

"I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde Motions of things, and I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of 20,000£ a year would not induce me to undergo what I do; and after all, perhaps, to loose my Character as it is impossible under such a variety of distressing Circumstances to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even of those who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned."

Among his other correspondents during the war none enjoyed a larger share of his confidence than Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania. Washington welcomed his criticism, and offered to him his own sentiments without the slightest reserve. It was to Reed that he wrote on 28 November, 1775:

"Such a dearth of public spirit and want of virtue, such stock-jobbing, and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another, in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before, and pray God I many never be witness to again. What will be the ultimate end of these manoeuvres is beyond my scan. I tremble at the prospect. Could I have foreseen what I have, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command. A regiment or any subordinate department would have been accompanied with ten times the satisfaction, and perhaps the honor."

And again, when depressed by circumstances which weighed upon him, it was to the same friend that he wrote:

"I know—but to declare it, unless to a friend, may be an argument of vanity—the integrity of my own heart. I know the unhappy predicament I stand in; I know that much is expected of me; I know, that without men, without arms, without ammunition, without any thing fit for the accommodation of a soldier, little is to be done; and, which is mortifying, I know, that I cannot stand justified to the world without exposing my own weakness, and injuring the cause, by declaring my wants, which I am determined not to do, further than unavoidable necessity brings every man acquainted with them."

During a very interesting period of the war, Washington wrote frequently to Gouverneur Morris, who while in Congress opened a friendly correspondence with the General, in the course of which they exchanged views with great freedom. It was at this period that Morris so established himself in Washington's confidence as to lead to his selection in 1789 as the confidential agent to sound the government of Great Britain on the subject of a treaty of commerce.

But among all his friends, the two who stood closest to him, who possessed the greatest share of his confidence, and who enlisted his personal affection most deeply, were Lafayette and Hamilton. The youthful enthusiasm and chivalrous spirit with which the French boy entered the battle for American independence appealed to the sensibilities of Washington, and aroused in him an affection for Lafayette which was a mingling of the love of a father with the attachment of friend for friend. His letters to Lafayette, of which there are many, reveal one of the most attractive phases of his character. In their mingling of frank comment on the events of the day with friendly gossip on matters of interest to the two families, they strongly suggest the correspondence of William III with Bentinck, Earl of Portland.

Hamilton also enjoyed the unlimited confidence of Washington. Like Lafayette, Hamilton was a mere boy when he entered the military service. Like Lafayette, he was at Washington's side in some of the most important battles of the Revolution, and again like Lafayette, Washington regarded him almost in the light of a son. He bore with his faults. He appreciated his great abilities.

In 1781, he wrote of him:

"How far Colo. Hamilton, of whom you ask my opinion as a financier, has turned his thoughts to that particular study I am unable to answer because I never entered upon a discussion on this point with him; but this I can venture to advance from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found, of his age, who has a more general knowledge than he possesses, and none whose Soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and Sterling virtue."

The public careers of Washington and Hamilton were passed side by side. They served together during a large part of the Revolution. They worked together in bringing about the formation and adoption of the Constitution. And when Washington was called to the Presidency, Hamilton was associated with him as his most trusted adviser. His letters to Hamilton are among the most valuable of his papers.

Washington's services during the Revolutionary War did not surpass in importance his services in bringing about the formation and adoption of the Constitution. Early in the war he saw that the national government was not endowed with adequate powers, and that the jealousy or inactivity of the States prevented an effective exercise of those that it had. He was in a better position than any one else, except possibly Robert Morris, to appreciate the defects of the government of the Confederation, for, as he wrote to Hamilton, "No Man perhaps has felt the bad effects of it more sensibly; for the defects thereof, and want of Powers in Congress, may justly be

ascribed the prolongation of the War, and consequently the expenses occasioned by it. More than half the perplexities I have experienced in the course of my command, and almost the whole of the difficulties and distress of the Army, have their origin here."

He realised also the great danger that the weakness of the Confederation would result in the dissolution of the union. "I do not conceive," he wrote to Jay, "we can exist long as a nation without having lodged somewhere a power, which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States."

Long before he resigned his command, but much more so after he retired to Mt. Vernon, all his letters, to quote his own words, "teem with these sentiments." Mt. Vernon became the centre of the agitation for the reform of the Confederation. In letters sent to Knox in Massachusetts, to Jay and Hamilton in New York, to McHenry in Maryland, to Mason and Madison, Henry and Jefferson in Virginia, he set forth the urgency of the need of a stronger government, and through these and other correspondents his opinions penetrated every part of the Union, As the history of the Revolutionary War can be traced largely in his papers, so also his correspondence is an invaluable source for all who would comprehend the movement which led up to the Convention of 1787. Much against his will, but moved by a "conviction that our affairs were fast verging toward ruin," he consented to serve as one of the representatives of Virginia in that body. And when the Constitution was formulated and submitted to the States. All his influence was used to obtain its adoption. A visitor at Mt. Vernon in October, 1787 wrote, "I never saw him so keen for anything in my life as he is for the adoption of the new scheme of government." He regarded the contest for the ratification of the instrument as the last chance that America was likely to have to realize national greatness. "Without an alteration in our political creed," he wrote to Madison, "the superstructure we have been seven years in raising, at the expense of so much treasure and blood, must fall. We are fast verging to anarchy and confusion."

As soon as it became apparent that the new Constitution would be accepted by a sufficient number of States to insure its being put into operation, several of Washington's correspondents, especially Hamilton, began to suggest to him the probability of his being called to the Presidency. His letters for a period of several months reveal his disinclination to accept the office and his distrust of his ability to discharge its duties creditably. He urged his lack of experience in civil affairs, his Ignorance of law, and his increasing years. But his interest in establishing a firm union of the States under a government of adequate powers was so great that he finally yielded to the appeals which came to him from every State and entered upon the discharge of new tasks equal in importance to any that he had previously met. The work which he had begun as commander of the army in the War for Independence, and as the chief influence in achieving the formation and adoption of the Constitution, he was now to complete in the office of chief magistrate.

The labors of Washington in the organization and administration of the government are recorded in his own writings with much less completeness than are the other great aspects of his career. During the Revolutionary War the circumstances of his command required the daily preparation of numerous letters to the President of Congress, to the governors of the States, to various officials, friends, and relatives, so that there is hardly a phase of that contest which is not pictured in his correspondence. The movement for the reform of the government likewise drew its inspiration chiefly from him, and the reasons for it, the obstacles that impeded it, and its final achievement are amply recorded in his letters. But while in the Presidency, he was in such constant contact with his advisers, and so much of the work of the day was carried out through the members of his cabinet, that there was less need for him to resort to writing himself. His papers therefore offer a much less complete record of his eight years at the head of the nation than of the eight years which he spent in the field, or the six years which intervened between his retirement from the army and his inauguration as President. For a full explanation of the great policies with which his administration of the government is identified, — the enforcement of neutrality, the organization of the national finances, the conclusion of a treaty of commerce with England, and the suppression of the Whiskey Insurrection, — the writings of Washington must be supplemented by those of his associates, particularly by those of Hamilton and Jefferson.

When Washington became President, he inherited from the government of the Confederation a series of disagreements with England growing out of the flagrant violations of the treaty of peace by both parties to it, and made the more difficult of settlement because England would neither send a minister to the United States nor agree to a treaty of commerce. Before the arrival of his Secretary of State, Washington began informal negotiations through Gouverneur Morris for the removal of these obstacles to friendly intercourse. His letters to Morris and later to John Jay, whom he sent to London as a special envoy, set forth the principles which he thought should govern our relations with the mother country. His early letters to Morris show much of the skill of a practiced diplomat, while his later letter of December 22, 1795, is a comprehensive statement of the whole of the American case against Great Britain.

Closely associated with the questions growing out of our relations with Great Britain was Washington's policy of neutrality. He had long been impressed by the peculiar advantages possessed by America for observing a strict neutrality in her relations with the countries of Europe. More than a year before he became President, he had argued for the adoption of the new Constitution because in the war which then threatened between France and England, America would surely become involved "unless there is energy enough in Government to restrain our people within proper bounds." When the threatened war came, he used the energy of the new government both to "restrain our people within proper bounds" and to establish the principle of neutrality as a part of the system of international law. His writings give a more comprehensive view of his neutrality policy than of any other measure of his administration. In his message to Congress and in many of his letters he states the principle which guided his conduct toward England and France, while in the Farewell Address he reiterates it as a rule which should become a part of the national policy.

Before his accession to the Presidency, Washington had given much thought to the development of the West and the establishment of commercial ties by which it could be firmly knit to the East. By far his most important utterance on this subject, and one of the most important of all his writings, is his letter to Governor Harrison of October 10, 1784. "The suggestions of Washington in his letter to the governor," says Irving, "and his representations during this visit to Richmond, gave the first impulse to the great system of internal improvements since pursued throughout the United States." The people of the States bordering the Atlantic have in general manifested

little appreciation of the political, social and economic development of the West and of its relative importance in the development of the country as a whole. The statesmanship of Washington is nowhere more clearly displayed than in his perception of the possibilities of the great region beyond the mountains.

Most of the writings of Washington are merely the papers involved in the current transactions of the day. Three of his papers, however, occupy a distinctive place, and possess peculiar claims to our interest and notice. These are his Address to the Officers at Newburgh, his Letter to the Governors on Disbanding the Army, and his Farewell Address.

These three papers have one feature in common,— all of them relate to civil affairs. They reveal the statesmanship rather than the military skill of their author. The first, while addressed to the officers of the army, is an appeal to them as citizens rather than as soldiers. Its purpose is to deter them from tarnishing the fame, which they have won under arms by any unlawful action against the civil authorities. The success of Washington's appeal on this occasion was due to the quality to which so much of his success as a general must be attributed, — namely, his mastery of men and his ability to inspire confidence. In directness and simplicity of language, in cogency of argument, in skill in answering the insinuations contained in the Anonymous Addresses, and in emotional appeal to the patriotism of the assembled officers, this address is the best of all of Washington's writings.

The Circular Letter to the Governors was the first clear revelation to the American people of Washington's qualities as a statesman. This aspect of his character had already been discerned by some of those who had been brought into close contact with him. We know from Patrick Henry how the extent of his information and the soundness of his judgment had impressed his associates in the First Continental Congress. His correspondents during the war must also have seen that he was much more than a skilful soldier. But Washington was neither an orator nor a pamphleteer. The avenues to public notice which had been open to John and Samuel Adams, to Hamilton, Henry, and Jefferson, and which had made the people acquainted with these men, were closed to him. His comprehensive and well-reasoned Letter to the Governors, devoted altogether to the questions of civil polity which then confronted the country, must have occasioned surprise in the minds of those who had thought of him only as the devoted patriot and skilful general who had conducted their armies to victory. In this Letter he showed that his statesmanship was not inferior to his generalship, and the public accorded instant recognition of the fact. The addresses adopted by the several State legislature in reply to the Letter and contemporary comment upon it show that in laying down the command of the army Washington merely exchanged military for civil leadership. His release from the toils of the camp enabled him to devote himself to the more difficult problem of providing a government for the new nation.

By far the best known of Washington's writings, although not intrinsically the best, is the Farewell Address to the People of the United States. This occupies a unique place in history. No analogy to it can be found in the annals of other countries. It contains nothing strikingly original. It sets forth no new political principles. It does not stir the emotions nor arouse the imagination. It is not particularly distinguished by aptness of phraseology. It contains no maxims which have entered into the speech of the people. It is not the appeal of a great leader to his followers, summoning them to rally about him in defence of his policies, for its author was just terminating his public career. Unlike the Declaration of Independence, the only document in American history which can compare with it in influence, it was not sent out to the world bearing the endorsement of the nation. With none of those elements which usually lend importance to a state paper, it has nevertheless become a political classic. All its importance is derived from the fact that it is "the disinterested warnings of a parting friend/' and that the friend in question was George Washington. Regard for its author and confidence in his judgment and integrity are the foundation of its authority.

The counsel offered in the Farewell Address, like that offered in the Circular Letter to the Governors, met with immediate acceptance. Writing from The Hague of the election of 1796, before the result of it was known to him, John Quincy Adams said, "It is yet very uncertain how it will turn. — Nor do I believe it material. — From the reception of the President's address all over the Continent, judge whether any successor would dare or could effect a total departure from his system of administration." (J. Q. Adams to S. Bourne, February 1, 1797) Its influence, however, has not been temporary. In most of the great national controversies over questions of public policy, its authority has been invoked, and not infrequently by the opposite parties to the same controversy. Its beneficent influence as a political force both conservative and uplifting is incalculable. It is not the least of the debts which a grateful country owes to Washington. Washington belonged to a generation of statesmen famous for their literary abilities. Among them were Franklin, a master of the resources of the English tongue; Hamilton, whose language reflected the lucidity of his mind; Jefferson, whose great polemic, the Declaration of Independence, is a model of its kind; Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams, masters of forensic eloquence, and Gouverneur Morris, whose crisp phrases are presented in the clauses of the Constitution. Compared with these Washington can make but a poor showing in point of literary style. Indeed much of his writing suffers when judged by any standard of literary excellence. Even his spelling was various and uncertain. Many of his sentences, in their elephantine dignity, reflect the stateliness of their author's personal bearing. Involved and complex, it is frequently difficult, sometimes even impossible, to discover their meaning, while instances are not wanting in which Washington says directly the contrary of what he obviously intended to say. On the other hand, his writings are filled with passages marked by a noble simplicity of style which would have been creditable to any of his contemporaries. This is particularly conspicuous in his two notable speeches, the address to the officers at Newburgh, and his address to Congress on resigning his commission.

In power of vivid narrative, also, he was not lacking. His reports to Congress of the great events in which he was engaged are, in general, all that they ought to be in point of straightforward description and rehearsal of facts. In his private letters, to the preparation of which he could give less care, his power of concise statement is even more conspicuous. His letter (July 4, 1778) to his favorite brother, in which he describes the situation at the battle of Monmouth when he found General Lee in full retreat, is an example of this. He writes:

"Before this will have reached you, the account of the battle of Monmouth will probably get to Virginia; which, from an unfortunate and bad beginning, turned out a glorious and happy day. ... General Lee, having the command of the van of the army, consisting of full five thousand chosen men, was ordered to begin the attack next morning, so soon as the enemy began their march; to be supported by me; but, strange to tell when he came up with the enemy, a retreat commenced; whether by his order, or from other causes, is now (he subject of inquiry, and consequently improper to be descanted upon, as he is in arrest, and a court-martial sitting for trial of him. A retreat, however, was the fact, be the causes as they may; and the disorder arising from it would have proved fatal to the army, had not that bountiful Providence, which has never failed us in the hour of distress, enabled me to form a regiment or two (of those that were retreating) in the face of the enemy and under their fire; by which means a stand was made long enough (the place through which the enemy were pursuing being narrow,) to form the troops, that were advancing upon an advantageous piece of ground in the rear. Here our affair took a favorable turn, and, from being pursued, we drove the enemy back over the ground they had followed, and recovered the field of battle, and possessed ourselves of their dead. But as they retreated behind a morass very difficult to pass, and had both flanks secured with thick woods, it was found impracticable with our men, fainting with fatigue, heat, and want of water, to do anything more that night. In the morning we expected to renew the action; when, behold, the enemy had stole off an silent as the grave in the night, after having sent away their wounded. Getting a night's march of us, and having but ten miles to a strong post, it was judged inexpedient to follow them any further, but move towards the North River, lest They should have any design upon our posts here.

"We buried 245 of their dead on the field of Action; they buried several themselves, and many have been since found in the Woods, where, during the action they had drawn them to, and hid them. We have taken five Officers and upwards of One hundred Prisoners, but the amount of their wounded we have not learnt with any certainty; according to the common proportion of four or five to one, there should be at least a thousand or 1200. Without exaggerating, their trip through the Jerseys in killed, Wounded, Prisoners, and deserters, has cost them at least 2000 Men and of their best Troops. We had 60 Men killed, 132 Wounded, and abt. 130 Missing, some of whom I suppose may yet come in. Among our Slain Officers is Majr. Dickenson, and Captn. Fauntleroy, two very valuable ones."

Washington was a man of strong feeling, and when under the influence of it he could express himself with a vividness of language which has made some of his phrases classic. The government of the country under the Articles of Confederation is inseparably associated with his description of it as "a half-starved, limping government, that appears to be always moving upon crutches, and tottering at every step." A whole system of political philosophy is summed up in the words, "Influence is no government," while the indifference of the public to the distresses of the army brought out this bit of sarcastic comment:

"The army as usual Is without pay, and a great part of the soldiery without shirts; and tho' the patience of them is equally threadbare, it seems to be a matter of small concern to those at a distance. In truth, if one was to hazard an opinion for them on this subject, it would be, that the army having contracted a habit of encountering distress and difficulties, and of living without money, it would be injurious to it, to introduce other customs."

At times he produces a passage of striking eloquence. Jefferson himself could not indict the British government in arguments more cogently phrased, or more logically arranged, or marshaled in more imposing array, than are to be found in this famous paragraph:

"If every man was of my mind, the ministers of Great Britain should know, in a few words, upon what issue the cause should be put I would not be deceived by artful declarations, nor specious pretences; nor would I be amused by unmeaning propositions; but in open, undisguised and manly terms proclaim our wrongs, and our resolution to be redressed, I would tell them, that we had borne much, that we had long and ardently sought for reconciliation upon honorable terms, that it had been denied us, that all our attempts after peace had proved abortive, and had been grossly misrepresented, that we had done everything which could be expected from the best of subjects, that the spirit of freedom beat too high in us to submit to slavery, and that, if nothing else could satisfy a tyrant and his diabolical ministry, we are determined to shake off all connexions with a state be unjust and unnatural. This I would tell them, not under covert, but in words as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness."

But perhaps the most important, certainly one of the most interesting aspects of Washington's writings is their revelation of the man. No character in American history has suffered so greatly from overmuch adulation as has he. The Weems tradition has taken such firm root and has grown so much that Washington has come to be regarded somewhat as a force of nature, — majestic, inexplicable, unhuman. To suggest that he might be judged by the canons applied to his associates, — that he was made of such stuff as other men are made of, — that he had traits of character which were not wholly admirable, — even to hint at these things is still regarded by many as a desecration of his memory. Yet a perusal of his writings, while not detracting in the least from the great qualities which make him unique, shows that he was not free from faults and foibles* His constant profession of the purity of his intentions and his zeal for the public interest, as well as his reiterations of the hardships of his position, seem pedantic and tiresome, and are relieved only by our conviction of his absolute sincerity. His proneness to give advice both to individuals and to the country was in many quarters resented, and in any other man would have been unbearable. His high temper flashes out even in his letters, and must have found frequent expression in the trials of his daily intercourse with men. In serving the public he was not so visionary or devoted to the country as to be unwilling to specify the conditions upon which his services could be had. He was not above dissembling, as is shown in his correspondence with Jefferson, whose professions of devotion he pretended to accept, while acknowledging to others that he was not deceived thereby.

On the other hand, Washington's writings reflect with equal clearness the great qualities which made him the most revered figure in American life. His stalwart resistance to the encroachments of the British government; his absolute devotion of his life and fortune to the cause of independence when he became convinced that independence alone would secure the rights of America; his courage in the midst of disaster; his persistence in the face of opposition and divided counsels and insufficient support; his patience under trials that would have driven a lesser man to abandon the contest; his lofty view of what the Revolution meant both for those engaged in it and

for future generations; his steadfast battle for a national government and his endeavor to give that government a respectable standing, both at home and abroad, — all this shines forth in his writings with unmistakable clearness. Especially do they reveal the great moral qualities which were most strongly marked in his character, and which were the basis of his career. Whether in the management of his private business or in the direction of public enterprises, whether leading the army or presiding over the administration of the government, his action was determined by principles which might well be adopted as universal standards of conduct, and which cannot be better stated than in his own words:

"I most recommend to you what I endeavor to practise myself, patience and perseverance."

"There is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily."

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SECTION I: Pre-Revolutionary War



1942 Washington National Insurance Company Calendar
The Young Surveyor, by Walter Haskell Hinton

A selection from a calendar distributed by the Chicago insurance company containing art work from a series of George Washington images that Hinton produced for the company.

The Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior – 1744

"Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #1 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Shake not the head, feet, or legs; roll not the eyes; lift not one eyebrow higher than the other, wry not the mouth, and bedew no man's face with your spittle by [approaching too near] him [when] you speak." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #12 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Reproach none for the infirmities of nature, nor delight to put them that have in mind of thereof." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #21 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another though he were your enemy." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #22 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Strive not with your superior in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #40 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Wherein you reprove another be unblameable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precepts." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #48 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Use no reproachful language against any one; neither curse nor revile." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #49 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #50 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation, for it is better to be alone than in bad company." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #56 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for 'tis a sign of a tractable and commendable nature, and in all causes of passion permit reason to govern." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #58 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Speak not in an unknown tongue in company but in your own language and that as those of quality do and not as the vulgar; sublime matters treat seriously." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #72 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"When you speak of God or his attributes, let it be seriously & with reverence. Honor & obey your natural parents although they be poor." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #108 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Let your recreations be manful not sinful." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #109 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust." – George Washington, "The Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #89 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

"Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience." – George Washington, "Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation," Rule #110 written out by Washington ca. 1744; Allen: Prologue

Journey Over the Mountains – March 15, 1748

"We set out early with Intent to Run round the sd. Land but being taken in a Rain and it Increasing very fast obliged us to return it clearing about one oClock and our time being too Precious to Loose we a second time ventur'd out and Worked hard till Night and then return'd to Penningtons we got our Supper and was lighted into a Room and I not being so good a Woodsman as the rest of my Company striped myself very orderly and went into the Bed as they called it when to my Surprize I found it to be nothing but a Little Straw-Matted together without Sheets or any thing else but only one thread Bear blanket with double its Weight of Vermin such as Lice Fleas &c. I was glad to get up (as soon as the Light was carried from us) I put on my Cloths and Lay as my Companions. Had we not been very tired I am sure we should not have slep'd much that night I made a Promise not to Sleep so from that time forward chusing rather to sleep in the open Air before a fire as will appear hereafter." – George Washington, entry in memorandum book "Journey Over the Mountains," March 15, 1748; Fitzpatrick 1:7

Oh Ye Gods why should my Poor Resistless Heart

Stand to oppose thy might and Power
At Last surrender to cupids feather'd Dart
And now lays Bleeding every Hour
For her that's Pityless of my grief and Woes
And will not on me Pity take
Ile sleep amongst my most Inveterate Foes
And with gladness never with to Wake
In deluding sleepings let my Eyelids close
That in an enraptured Dream I may
In a soft lulling sleep and gentle repose
Possess those joys denied by Day
– George Washington, poetry from his memorandum book "Journey Over the Mountains," 1748; Fitzpatrick 1:19

Prayer Journal – April 21-23, 1752

"Almighty God, and most merciful father, who didst command the children of Israel to offer a daily sacrifice to thee, that thereby they might glorify and praise thee for thy protection both night and day; receive, O Lord, my morning sacrifice which I now offer up to thee; I yield thee humble and hearty thanks that thou has preserved me from the dangers of the night past, and brought me to the light of this day, and the comforts thereof, a day which is consecrated to thine own service and for thine own honor. Let my heart, therefore, Gracious God, be so affected with the glory and majesty of it, that I may not do mine own works, but wait on thee, and discharge those weighty duties thou requirest of me; and since thou art a God of pure eyes, and wilt be sanctified in all who draw near unto thee, who doest not regard the sacrifice of fools, nor hear sinners who tread in thy courts, pardon, I beseech thee, my sins, remove them from thy presence, as far as the east is from the west, and accept of me for the merits of thy son Jesus Christ, that when I come into thy temple, and compass thine altar, my prayers may come before thee as incense; and as thou wouldst hear me calling upon thee in my prayers, so give me grace to hear thee calling on me in thy word, that it may be wisdom, righteousness, reconciliation and peace to the saving of my soul in the day of the Lord Jesus. Grant that I may hear it with reverence, receive it with meekness, mingle it with faith, and that it may accomplish in me, Gracious God, the good work for which thou has sent it. Bless my family, kindred, friends and country, be our God & guide this day and for ever for his sake, who lay down in the Grave and arose again for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen." – George Washington, Sunday Morning Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 24-25

"O most Glorious God, in Jesus Christ my merciful and loving father, I acknowledge and confess my guilt, in the weak and imperfect performance of the duties of this day. I have called on thee for pardon and forgiveness of sins, but so coldly and carelessly, that my prayers are become my sin and stand in need of pardon. I have heard thy holy word, but with such deadness of spirit that I have been an unprofitable and forgetful hearer, so that, O Lord, tho' I have done thy work, yet it hath been so negligently that I may rather expect a curse than a blessing from thee. But, O God, who art rich in mercy and plenteous in redemption, mark not, I beseech thee, what I have done amiss; remember that i am but dust, and remit my transgressions, negligences & ignorances, and cover them all with the absolute obedience of thy dear Son, that those sacrifices which I have offered may be accepted by thee, in and for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered upon the cross for me; for his sake, ease me of the burden of my sins, and give me grace that by the call of the Gospel I may rise from the slumber of sin into the newness of life. Let me live according to those holy rules which thou hast this day prescribed in thy holy word; make me to know what is acceptable in thy holy word; make me to know what is acceptable in thy sight, and therein to delight, open the eyes of my understanding, and help me thoroughly to examine myself concerning my knowledge, faith and repentance, increase my faith, and direct me to the true object Jesus Christ the way, the truth and the life, bless O Lord, all the people of this land, from the highest to the lowest, particularly those whom thou has appointed to rule over us in church & state. continue thy goodness to me this night. These weak petitions I humbly implore thee to hear accept and ans. for the sake of thy Dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen." – George Washington, Sunday Evening Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 25-26

"O eternal and everlasting God, I presume to present myself this morning before thy Divine majesty, beseeching thee to accept of my humble and hearty thanks, that it hath pleased thy great goodness to keep and preserve me the night past from all the dangers poor mortals are subject to, and has given me sweet and pleasant sleep, whereby I find my body refreshed and comforted for performing the duties of this day, in which I beseech thee to defend me from all perils of body and soul. Increase my faith in the sweet promises of the gospel; give me repentance from dead works; pardon my wanderings, and direct my thoughts unto thyself, the God of my salvation; teach me how to live in thy fear, labor in thy service, and ever to run in the ways of thy commandments; make me always watchful over my heart, that neither the terrors of conscience, the loathing of holy duties, the love of sin, nor an unwillingness to depart this life, may cast me into a spiritual slumber, but daily frame me more and more into the likeness of thy son Jesus Christ, that living in thy fear, and dying in thy favor, I may in thy appointed time attain the resurrection of the just unto eternal life bless my family, friends, and kindred unite us all in praising & glorifying thee in all our works begun, continued, and ended, when we shall come to make our last account before thee blessed saviour, who hath taught us thus to pray, our Father." – George Washington, Monday Morning Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 26-28

"Most Gracious Lord God, from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift, I offer to thy divine majesty my unfeigned praise & thanksgiving for all thy mercies towards me. Thou mad'st me at first and hast ever since sustained the work of thy own hand; thou gav'st thy Son to die for me; and hast given me assurance of salvation, upon my repentance and sincerely endeavoring to conform my life to his holy precepts and example. Thou art pleased to lengthen out to me the time of repentance and to move me to it by thy spirit and by thy word, by thy mercies, and by thy judgments; out of a deepness of thy mercies, and my own unworthiness, I do appear before thee at this t'me; I have sinned and done very wickedly, be merciful to me, O God, and pardon me for Jesus Christ sake; instruct me in the particulars of my duty, and suffer me not to be tempted above what thou givest me strength to bear. Take care, I pray thee of my affairs and more and more direct me in thy truth, defend me from my enemies, especially my spiritual ones. Suffer me not to be drawn from thee, by the blandishments of the world, carnal desires, the cunning of the devil, or deceitfulness of sin. work in me thy good will and pleasure, and discharge my mind from all things that are displeasing to thee, of all ill will and discontent, wrath and bitterness, pride & vain conceit of myself, and render me charitable, pure, holy, patient and heavenly minded, be with me at the hour of death; dispose me for it, and deliver me from the slavish fear of it, and make me willing and fit to die whenever thou shalt call me hence. Bless our rulers in church and state, bless O Lord the whole race of mankind, and let the world be filled with the knowledge of Thee and thy son Jesus Christ. Pity the sick, the poor, the weak, the needy, the widows and fatherless, and all that morn or are broken in heart, and be merciful to them according to their several necessities, bless my friends and grant me grace to forgive my enemies as heartily as I desire forgiveness of Thee my heavenly Father. I beseech thee to defend me this night from all evil, and do more for me than I can think or ask, for Jesus Christ sake, in whose most holy name & words, I continue to pray, Our Father." – George Washington, Monday Evening Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 28-29

"O Lord our God, most mighty and merciful father, I thine unworthy creature and servant, do once more approach thy presence. Though not worthy to appear before thee, because of my natural corruptions, and the many sins and transgressions which I have committed against thy divine majesty; yet I beseech thee, for the sake of him in whom thou art well pleased, the Lord Jesus Christ, to admit me to render thee deserved thanks and praises for thy manifold mercies extended toward me, for the quiet rest & repose of the past night, for food, raiment, health, peace, liberty, and the hopes of a better life through the merits of thy dear son's bitter passion, and O kind father continue thy mercy and favor to me this day, and ever hereafter; prosper all my lawful undertakings; let me have all my directions from thy holy spirit, and success from thy bountiful hand. Let the bright beams of thy light so shine into my heart, and enlighten my mind in understanding thy blessed word, that I may be enabled to perform thy will in all things, and effectually resist all temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, preserve and defend our rulers in church & state, bless the people of this land, be a father to the fatherless, a comforter to the comfortless, a deliverer to the captives, and a physician to the sick, let thy blessings be upon our friends, kindred and families. Be our guide this day and forever through J. C. in whose blessed form of prayer I conclude my weak petitions —Our Father." – George Washington, Tuesday Morning Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 29-30

"Most gracious God and heavenly father, we cannot cease, but must cry unto thee for mercy, because my sins cry against me for justice. How shall I address myself unto thee, I must with the publican stand and admire at thy great goodness, tender mercy, and long suffering towards me, in that thou hast kept me the past day from being consumed and brought to nought. O Lord, what is man, or the son of man, that thou regardest him; the more days pass over my head, the more sins and iniquities I heap up against thee. If I should cast up the account of my good deeds done this day, how few and small would they be; but if I should reckon my miscarriages, surely they would be many and great. O, blessed Father, let thy son's blood wash me from all impurities, and cleanse me from the stains of sin that are upon me. Give me grace to lay hold upon his merits; that they may be my reconciliation and atonement unto thee,—That I may know my sins are forgiven by his death & passion, embrace me in the arms of thy mercy; vouchsafe to receive me unto the bosom of thy love, shadow me with thy wings, that I may safely rest under thy protection this night; and so into thy hands I commend myself, both soul and body, in the name of thy son, J. C., beseeching Thee, when this life shall end, I may take my everlasting rest with thee in thy heavenly kingdom, bless all in authority over us, be merciful to all those afflicted with thy cross or calamity, bless all my friends, forgive my enemies and accept my thanksgiving this evening for all the mercies and favors afforded me; hear and graciously answer these my requests, and whatever else thou see'st needful grant us, for the sake of Jesus Christ in whose blessed name and words I continue to pray, Our Father, &c." – George Washington, Tuesday Evening Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 30-31

"Almighty and eternal Lord God, the great creator of heaven & earth, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; look down from heaven, in pity and compassion upon me thy servant, who humbly prostrate myself before thee, sensible of thy mercy and my own misery; there is an infinite distance between thy glorious majesty and me, thy poor creature, the work of thy hand, between thy infinite power, and my weakness, thy wisdom, and my folly> thy eternal Being, and my mortal frame, but, O Lord, I have set myself at a greater distance from thee by my sin and wickedness, and humbly acknowledge the corruption of my nature and the many rebellions of my life. I have sinned against heaven and before thee, in thought, word & deed; I have contemned thy majesty and holy laws. I have likewise sinned by omitting what I ought to have done, and committing what I ought not. I have rebelled against light, despised thy mercies and judgments, and broken my vows and promises; I have neglected the means of Grace, and opportunities of becoming better; my iniquities are multiplied, and my sins are very great. I confess them, O Lord, with shame and sorrow, detestation and loathing, and desire to be vile in my own eyes, as I have rendered myself vile in thine. I humbly beseech thee to be merciful to me in the free pardon of my sins, for the sake of thy dear Son, my only saviour, J. C., who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; be pleased to renew my nature and write thy laws upon my heart, and help me to live, righteously, soberly and godly in this evil world; make me humble, meek, patient and contented, and work in me the grace of thy holy spirit, prepare me for death and

judgment, and let the thoughts thereof awaken me to a greater care and study to approve myself unto thee in well doing, bless our rulers in church & state. Help all in affliction or adversity—give them patience and a sanctified use of their affliction, and in thy good time deliverance from them; forgive my enemies, take me unto thy protection this day, keep me in perfect peace, which I ask in the name & for the sake of Jesus. Amen." – George Washington, Wednesday Morning Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 31-33

"Holy and eternal Lord God who art the King of heaven, and the watchman of Israel, that never slumberest or sleepest, what shall we render unto thee for all thy benefits; because thou hast inclined thine ears unto me, therefore will I call on thee as long as I live, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same let thy name be praised, among the infinite riches of thy mercy towards me, I desire to render thanks & praise for thy merciful preservation of me this day, as well as all the days of my life; and for the many other blessings & mercies spiritual & temporal which thou hast bestowed on me, contrary to my deserving. All these thy mercies call on me to be thankful and my infirmities & wants call for a continuance of thy tender mercies; cleanse my soul, O Lord, I beseech thee, from whatever is offensive to thee, and hurtful to me, and give me what is convenient for me. watch over me this night, and give me comfortable and sweet sleep to fit me for the service of the day following. Let my soul watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus; let my bed put me in mind of my grave, and my rising from there of my last resurrection; O heavenly Father, so frame this heart of mine, that I may ever delight to live according to thy will and command, in holiness and righteousness before thee all the days of my life. Let me remember, O Lord, the time will come when the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise and stand before the judgment seat, and give an account of whatever they have done in the body, and let me so prepare my soul, that I may do it with joy and not with grief, bless the rulers and people of this and forget not those who are under any affliction or oppression. Let thy favor be extended to all my relations friends and all others who I ought to remember in my prayer and hear me I beseech thee for the sake of my dear redeemer in whose most holy words, I farther pray, Our Father, &c." – George Washington, Wednesday Evening Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 33-34

"Most gracious Lord God, whose dwelling is in the highest heavens, and yet beholdest the lowly and humble upon earth, I blush and am ashamed to lift up my eyes to thy dwelling place, because I have sinned against thee; look down, I beseech thee upon me thy unworthy servant who prostrate myself at the footstool of thy mercy, confessing my own guiltiness, and begging pardon for my sins; what couldst thou have done Lord more for me, or what could I have done more against thee? Thou didst send me thy Son to take our nature upon..." (Note: The manuscript ended at this place, the close of a page. Whether the other pages were lost or the prayers were never completed, has not been determined.) – George Washington, Thursday Morning Prayer recorded in the Prayer Journal, an authentic, handwritten 24 page manuscript book, dated April 21-23, 1752; "George Washington, The Christian," William J. Johnson, editor (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1919) pp. 34-35

Journey to Fort Le Boeuf – 1753-1754

"Pack at my Back, in which were my Papers and Provisions, I set-out with Mr. Gist, fitted in the same Manner, on Wednesday the 26th. ... The Day following, just after we had passed a Place called the Murdering -Town (where we intended to quit the Path, and steer across the Country for Shannapins Town) we fell in with a Party of French Indians, who had lain in Wait for us. One of them fired at Mr. Gist or me, not 15 steps off, but fortunately missed. We took this Fellow into Custody, and kept him till about 9 o'clock at Night; Then let him go, and walked all the remaining Part of the Night without making any Stop; that we might get the Start, so far, as to be out of the Reach of their Pursuit the next Day, since we were well assured they would follow our Tract as soon as it was light. The next Day we continued travelling till quite dark, and got to the River about two Miles above Shannapins. We expected to have found the River frozen, but it was not, only about 50 Yards from each Shore; The Ice I suppose had broken up above, for it was driving in vast Quantities." – George Washington, manuscript transcription of his journal of his journey to the French commandant at Fort Le Boeuf, December 26, 1753; Fitzpatrick 1:29

"There was no Way for getting over but on a Raft; Which we set about with but one poor Hatchet, and finished just after Sun-setting. This was a whole Day's Work. Then set off; But before we were Half Way over, we were jammed in the Ice, in such a Manner that we expected every Moment our Raft to sink, and ourselves to perish. I put-out my setting Pole to try to stop the Raft, that the Ice might pass by; when the Rapidity of the Stream threw it with so much Violence against the Pole, that it jerked me out into ten Feet Water: but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the Raft Logs. Notwithstanding all our Efforts we could not get the Raft to either Shore; but were obliged, as we were near an Island, to quit our Raft and make to it. ... The Cold was so extremely severe, that Mr. Gist had all his Fingers, and some of his Toes frozen; but the water was shut up so hard, that we found no Difficulty in getting-off the Island, on the Ice, in the Morning, and went to Mr. [John] Frazier's." – George Washington, manuscript transcription of his journal of his journey to the French commandant at Fort Le Boeuf, December 27, 1753; Fitzpatrick 1:29-30

"Tuesday the 1st Day of January, we left Mr. Frazier's House, and arrived at Mr. Gist's at Monongahela the 2d, where I bought a Horse, Saddle, etc: the 6th we met 17 Horses loaded with Materials and Stores, for a Fort at the Forks of Ohio, and the Day after some Families going out to settle: This Day we arrived at Wills Creek, after as fatiguing a Journey as it is possible to conceive, rendered so by excessive bad Weather. From the first Day of December to the 15th, there was but one Day on which it did not rain or snow incessantly: and throughout the whole Journey we met with nothing but one continued Series of cold wet Weather, which occasioned very uncomfortable Lodgings: especially after we had quitted our Tent, which was some Screen from the Inclemency of it. ... On the 11th I got to Belvoir: where I stopped one Day to take necessary Rest; and then set out and arrived at Williamsburgh the 16th; when I waited upon his Honour the Governor with the Letter I had brought from the French Commandant; and to give an Account of the

Success of my Proceedings." – George Washington, manuscript transcription of his journal of his journey to the French commandant at Fort Le Boeuf, January 1, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:30

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – March 9, 1754

"In my last by Mr. Stuart, I slightly mentioned the objection many had against Enlisting (to wit) not knowing who was to be pay Master or the times for payment: It is now grown a pretty general Clamour, and some of those, who were amongst the first Enlisters, being needy, and knowing it to be usual for His Majesty's Soldiers to be paid once a Week, or at most every Fortnight, are very importunate to receive their Due: I have soothed and quieted them as much as possible, under pretence of receiving your Honour's Instructions in this particular at the arrival of the Colonel. I have increased my number of Men to abt. 25, and dare venture to say, I should have had several more, if the excessive bad weather did not prevent their meeting agreeable to their Officer's Commands." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Alexandria, March 9, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:31-32

"We daily Experience the great necessity for Cloathing the Men, as we find the generality of those, who are to be Enlisted, are of those loose, Idle Persons, that are quite destitute of House, and Home, and, I may truly say, many of them of Cloaths; which last, renders them very incapable of the necessary Service, as they must unavoidably be expos'd to inclement weather in their Marches, &c, and can expect no other, than to encounter almost every difficulty, that's incident to a Soldier's Life. There is many of them without Shoes, others want Stockings, some are without Shirts, and not a few that have Scarce a Coat, or Waistcoat to their Backs; In short, they are as illy provided as can well be conceiv'd, but I really believe every Man of them, for their own Credits sake, is willing to be Cloathed at their own Expense. They are perpetually teasing me to have it done, but I am not able to advance the money provided there was no risque in it, which there certainly is, and too great for me to run; tho' it would be nothing to the Country, as a certain part of their pay might be deducted and appropriated to that use : Mr. Carlyle, 69 or any of the merchants here, would furnish them with proper necessarys, if there was a certainty of any part of their pay stopt to reimburse the Expense. But I must here in time put a kirk to my requests, and remember that I ought not to be too importunate; otherwise I shall be as troublesome to your Honour, as the Soldiers are to me: there is nothing but the necessity of the thing could urge me to be thus free, but I shall no more exaggerate this affair to your Honour, as I am well assured, whatever you think for the Benefit or good of the Expedition, you will cause to have done." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Alexandria, March 9, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:32-33

Letter to Richard Corbin – March 1754

"I flatter myself, that, under a skilful commander, or man of sense, (whom I most sincerely wish to serve under,) with my own application and diligent study of my duty, I shall be able to conduct my steps without censure, and, in time, render myself worthy of the promotion, that I shall be favored with now." – George Washington, letter to Richard Corbin, March 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:34

Letter to Horatio Sharpe, Royal Commander-in-Chief of British Forces – April 27, 1754

"It is with the greatest concern I acquaint you, that Mr. Ward, ensign in Captain Trent's company, was obliged to surrender his small fortress in the Forks of Monongahela, at the summons of Captain Contrecoeur, commander of the French forces who fell down from Venango with a fleet of 360 canoes and battoes, conveying upwards of one thousand men, eighteen pieces of artillery, and large stores of provisions and other necessaries; Mr. Ward having but an inconsiderable number of men (not exceeding 30) and no cannon to make a proper defence was forced to give up the fort on the 17th instant. They suffered him to draw out his men, arms, and working tools, and gave leave that he might retreat to the inhabitants with them. I have heard of your excellency's great zeal for his majesty's service, and for all our interests on the present occasion; therefore I am persuaded you will take proper notice of the Indians' moving speech and think their unshaken fidelity worthy your consideration." – George Washington, letter to Horatio Sharpe, Royal Commander-in-Chief of British Forces, Wills Creek, April 27, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:43

"I ought first to have begged pardon of your excellency for this liberty of writing, as I am not happy enough to be ranked among those of your acquaintance. It was the glowing zeal I owe my country that influenced me to impart these advices and my inclination prompted me to do it to you as I know you are solicitous for the public weal and warm in this interesting cause; that should rouse from the lethargy we have fallen into, the heroick spirit of every free-born English man to attest the rights and privileges of our king (if we don't consult the benefit of ourselves) and resque from the invasions of a usurping enemy, our Majesty's property, his dignity, and land." – George Washington, letter to Horatio Sharpe, Royal Commander-in-Chief of British Forces, Wills Creek, April 27, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:44

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – May 18, 1754

"But let me serve voluntarily; then I will, with the greatest pleasure in life, devote my services to the expedition without any other reward, than the satisfaction of serving my country; but to be slaving dangerously for the shadow of pay, through woods, rocks, mountains, — I would rather prefer the great toil of a daily laborer, and dig for a maintenance, provided I were reduced to the necessity, than serve upon such ignoble terms." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Great Crossing of the Youghiogany, May 18, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:49

Speech to the Half King – May 19, 1754

"My Brethren, It gives me great pleasure, to learn that you are marching to assist me with your counsels; be of good courage, my brethren, and march vigorously towards your brethren the English; for fresh forces will soon join them, who will protect you against your treacherous enemy the French." – George Washington, speech to the Half King, Youghiogeny River, May 19, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:51

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – May 29, 1754

"I am much concern'd, that your Honour should seem to charge me with ingratitude for your generous, and my undeserved favours; for I assure you, Hon'ble Sir, nothing is a greater stranger to my Breast, or a Sin that my Soul abhors, than that black and detestable one Ingratitude. I retain a true sense of your kindnesses, and want nothing but opportunity [sic] to give testimony of my willingness to oblige you, as far as my Life or fortune will extend." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:59-60

"[N]othing is a greater stranger to my breast, or a sin that my soul more abhors, than that black and detestable one, ingratitude." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:60

"I have a Constitution hardy enough to encounter and undergo the most severe tryals, and, I flatter myself, resolution to Face what any Man durst, as shall be prov'd when it comes to the Test." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:60

"[I]t is a matter almost indifferent whether I serve for full pay, or as a generous Volunteer; indeed, did my circumstances corrispond with my Inclination, I sh'd not hesitate a moment to prefer the Latter; for the motives that lead me here were pure and Noble." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:63

"I have shew'd all the respect I co'd to them here, and have given some necessary cloathing, by which I have disfurnish'd myself, for having brought no more than two or three Shirts from Will's C'k that we might be light I was ill provided to furnish them." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:67

"Since writing the other, [letter] I have still stronger presumption, indeed almost confirmation, that they were sent as Spyes, and were order'd to wait near us till they were truly informd of our Intentions, situation, strength &ca. and were to have acquainted the Commander therewith, and laid lurking hear for Reinforcements before they served the Summons, if it at all. ... I doubt not but they will ndeavour to amuse your Honour with many smooth Stories, as they did me but were confuted in them all and by circumstances too plain to be denied almost made ashamed of their assertions. I dare say your Honour will treat them with respect which is due to all unfortunate Persons in their Condition. But I hope you will give no Ear to what they will have an opportunity for displaying to the best advantage, having none by to contradict their reports." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Camp at the Great Meadows, May 29, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:68-69

Letter to John Augustine Washington – May 31, 1754

"I fortunately escaped without any wound, for the right wing, where I stood, was exposed to and received all the enemy's fire, and it was the part where the man was killed, and the rest wounded. I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something charming in the sound." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, May 31, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:70

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – June 12, 1754

"We have not provisions of any sort enough in camp to serve us two days. Once before we should have been four days without provisions, if Providence had not sent a trader from the Ohio to our relief, for whose flour I was obliged to give twenty-one shillings and eight pence per hundred." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, June 12, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:76

"Captn. Mackay brought none of the Cannon, very little Ammunition, about 5 Days [sic] allowance of Flower [sic], and 60 Beeves. Since I have spun a letter to this enormous size, I must go a little further and beg your Honour's patience to peruse it. I am much grieved to find our Stores so slow advancing. God knows when we shall [be] able to do any thing [sic] for to deserve better of our Country." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, June 12, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:84

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – August 20, 1754

"Another thing, which should be fixed indisputably, is the Law we are to be guided by; whether Martial or Military. If the former, I must beg the favour [sic] of your Honour to give me some written orders and indemnification; otherwise I cannot give my assent (as I am liable for all the proceedings) to any judgment of the Martial Court, that touches the Life of a Soldier; tho' at this time there is an

absolute necessity for it, as the Soldiers are deserting constantly. Yesterday, while we were at Church, 25 of them collected, and were going off in the Face of there [sic] Officers, but were stop'd and Imprisoned before the plot came to its full hight [sic]." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, August 20, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:97

Letter to Colonel William Fitzhugh – November 15, 1754

"You make mention in your letter of my continuing in the Service, and retaining my Colo's Commission. This idea has filled me with surprise; for if you think me capable of holding a comission that has neither rank nor emolument annexed to it, you must entertain a very contemptible opinion of my weakness, and believe me to be more empty than the Commission itself." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Fitzhugh, Belvoir, November 15, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:105

"I shall have the consolation of knowing, that I have opened the way when the smallness of our numbers exposed us to the attacks of a Superior Enemy; that I have hitherto stood the heat and brunt of the Day, and escaped untouched in time of extreme danger; and that I have the Thanks of my Country, for the Services I have rendered it." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Fitzhugh, Belvoir, November 15, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:106

"I herewith enclose Governour Sharp's Letter, which I beg you will return to him, with my Acknowledgments for the favour he intended me, assure him, Sir, as you truly may, of my reluctance to quit the Service, and of the pleasure I should have received in attending his Fortunes, also inform him, that it was to obey the call of Honour, and the advice of my Friends, I declined it, and not to gratify any desire I had to leave the military line. My inclinations are strongly bent to arms." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Fitzhugh, Belvoir, November 15, 1754; Fitzpatrick 1:106

Letter to Robert Orme – March 15, 1755

"I must be ingenuous enough to confess, I am not a little biass'd by selfish and private views. To be plain Sir, I wish for nothing more earnestly than to attain a small degree of knowledge in the Military Art: and believing a more favourable oppertunity cannot be wished than serving under a Gentleman of his Excellencys [Braddock] known ability and experience, it will, you must reasonably, imagine not a little contribute to influence me in my choice." – George Washington, letter to Robert Orme, Mount Vernon, March 15, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:108

"You do me a singular favour, in proposing an acquaintance which cannot but be attended with the most agreeable Intimacy on my side; as you may already experience, by the familiarity and freedom with which I now assume to treat you; a freedom, which, even if disagreeable, you'll excuse, as I shall lay the whole blame at your door, for encouraging me to thro' lack of that formality which otherwise might have appeard in my department, on this occasion." – George Washington, letter to Robert Orme, Mount Vernon, March 15, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:108

Letter to William Byrd – April 20, 1755

"I am now preparing for, and shall in a few days sett off, to serve in the ensuing Campaigne; with different Views from what I had before; for here, if I can gain any credit, or if I am entitled to the least countenance and esteem, it must be from serving my Country with a free, Voluntary will; for I can very truly say, I have no expectation of reward but the hope of meriting the love of my Country and friendly regard of my acquaintances." – George Washington, letter to William Byrd, Mount Vernon, April 20, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:114

Letter to Carter Burwell – April 20, 1755

"I am just ready to embark a 2d. time in the Service of my Country; to merit whose regard and esteem, is the sole motive that induces me to make this Campaigne; for I can very truly say I have no views, either of profitting or rising in the Service, as I go a Volunteer, witht. rank or Pay, and am certain it is not in Genl. Braddocks power to give a Comn. that I wd. accept; I might add, that so far from being serviceable I am thoroughly convinced it will prove very detrimental to my private Affairs, as I shall have a Family scarcely Settled, and in gt. disorder but however prejudicial this may be, it shall not stop me from going." – George Washington, letter to Carter Burwell, Mount Vernon April 20, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:115-116

Letter to John Augustine Washington – May 28, 1755

"I came to this place last Night, and was greatly disappointed at not finding the Cavalry according to promise; I am oblig'd to wait till it does arrive, or till I can procure a Guard from the Militia, either of which I suppose will detain me two days; as you may, with almost equal success, attempt to raize the Dead to life again, as the force of this County." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Winchester, May 28, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:128-129

"As I understand your County is to be divided, and that Mr. Alexander intends to decline serving it, I shou'd be glad if you cou'd fish at Colo. Fairfax's Intentions, and let me know whether he purposes to offer himself a Candidate; If he does not I shou'd be glad to stand

a poll, if I thought my chance tolerably good. Majr. Carlyle mention'd it to me in Williamsburg in a bantering way and asked how I shou'd like to go, saying at the same time, he did not know but they might send me when I knew nothing of the matter, for one or t'other of the Counties. I must own I shou'd like to go for either in that manner, but more particularly for Fairfax, as I am a resident there." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Winchester, May 28, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:130

Letter to William Fairfax – June 7, 1755

"The General, by frequent breaches of Contracts, has lost all degree of patience; and for want of that consideration and moderation which shou'd be used by a Man of Sense upon these occassion's, will I fear, represent us [erasure] in a light we little deserve; for instead of blameing the Individuals as he ought, he charges all his Disappointments to a publick Supineness; and looks upon the Country, I believe, as void of both Honour and Honesty; we have frequent disputes on this head, which are maintained with warmth on both sides, especially on his, who is incapable of Arguing with't; or giving up any point he asserts, let it be ever so incompatible with Reason." – George Washington, letter to William Fairfax, Camp at Wills Creek, June 7, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:133

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – July 18, 1755

"When we came to this place, we were attack'd (very unexpectedly I must own) by abt. 300 French and Ind'ns; Our numbers consisted of abt. 1300 well arm'd Men, chiefly Regular's, who were immediately struck with such a deadly Panick, that nothing but confusion and disobedience of order's prevail'd amongst them: The Officer's in gen'l behav'd with incomparable bravery, for which they greatly suffer'd, there being near 60 kill'd and wound'd. A large proportion, out of the number we had! The Virginian Companies behav'd like Men and died like Soldiers; for I believe out of the 3 Companys that were there that day, scarce 30 were left alive." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Battle of Monongahela, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:149

"[T]he dastardly behaviour of the English Soldier's expos'd all those who were inclin'd to do their duty to almost certain Death; and at length, in despite of every effort to the contrary, broke and run as Sheep before the Hounds, leav'g the Artillery, Ammunition, Provisions, and, every individual thing we had with us a prey to the Enemy; and when we endeavour'd to rally them in hopes of regaining our invaluable loss, it was with as much success as if we had attempted to have stop'd the wild Bears of the Mountains." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Battle of Monongahela, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:149

"The Genl. [Braddock] was wounded behind in the shoulder, and into the Breast, of w'ch he died three days after; his two Aids de Camp were both wounded, but are in a fair way of Recovery; Colo. Burton and Sir Jno. St. Clair are also wounded, and I hope will get over it; Sir Peter Halket, with many other brave Officers were kill'd in die Field. I luckily escap'd with't a wound tho' I had four Bullets through my Coat and two Horses shot under me." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Battle of Monongahela, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:149

"I tremble at the consequences that this defeat may have upon our back settlers, who I suppose will all leave their habitations unless there are proper measures taken for their security." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Battle of Monongahela, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:150

Letter to Mrs. Mary Washington – July 18, 1755

"The Genl. was wounded; of w'ch he died 3 Days after; Sir Peter Halket was kill'd in the Field where died many other brave Officer's; I luckily escap'd with't a wound, tho' I had four Bullets through my Coat, and two Horses shot under me; Captns. Orme and Morris two of the Genls. Aids de Camp, were wounded early in the Engagem't. which render'd the duty hard upon me, as I was the only person then left to distribute the Genl's Orders which I was scarcely able to do, as I was not half recover'd from a violent illness, that confin'd me to my Bed, and a Waggon, for above 10 Days." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Mary Washington, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:151-152

Letter to John Augustine Washington – July 18, 1755

"As I have heard since my arriv'l at this place, a circumstantial acct. of my death and dying speech, I take this early opportunity of contradicting both, and of assuring you that I now exist and appear in the land of the living by the miraculous care of Providence, that protected me beyond all human expectation; I had 4 Bullets through my Coat, and two Horses shot under me, and yet escaped unhurt." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:152

"We have been most scandalously beaten by a trifling body of men." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Fort Cumberland, July 18, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:153

Letter to Robert Jackson – August 2, 1755

"Its true, we have been beaten, most shamefully beaten, by a handful of Men! who only intended to molest and disturb our March; Victory was their smallest expectation, but see the wondrous works of Providence! the uncertainty of Human things! We, but a few moments before, believ'd our number's almost equal to the Canadian Force; they only expected to annoy us. Yet, contrary to all expectation and human probability, and even to the common course of things, we were totally defeated, sustain'd the loss of every thing; which they have got, are enrichen'd and strengthened by it. This, as you observe, must be an affecting story to the Colony; and will, no doubt, license the tongues of People to censure those they think most blamably; which by the by, often falls very wrongfully. I join very heartily with you in believing that when this story comes to be related in future Annals, it will meet with ridicule or indignation; for had I not been witness to the fact on that fatal Day, I sh'd scarce give credit to it now." – George Washington, letter to Robert Jackson, Mount Vernon, August 2, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:155

Letter to John Augustine Washington – August 2, 1755

"I can nevertheless assure you, and other's (who it may concern to borrow a phrase from Governor Innes) that I am so little dispirited at what has happen'd, that I am always ready and always willing, to do my Country any Services that I am capable off; but never upon the Terms I have done, having suffer'd much in my private fortune, besides impairing one of the best of Constitution's." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Mount Vernon, August 2, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:156

Letter to Charles Lewis – August 14, 1755

"[I]t was more in my power than it is to answer the favourable opinion my Friends have conceiv'd of my abilitys, let them not be deceiv'd, I am unequal to the Task, and do assure you it requires more experience than I am master of to conduct an affair of the importance that this is now arisen to." – George Washington, letter to Charles Lewis, Mount Vernon, August 14, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:163

Orders – September 19, 1755

"Any Soldier who is guilty of any breach of the Articles of War, by Swearing, getting Drunk, or using an Obscene Language; shall be severely Punished, without the Benefit of a Court Martial." – George Washington, Orders, Fort Cumberland, September 19, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:179

Letter to Major Andrew Lewis – October 27, 1755

"When the Indians arrive with Captain Montour or Gist, you are to see them properly provided with all necessaries, and use your utmost endeavours to see them duly encouraged; and the Officers are all desired to take notice of them and treat them kindly, as their assistance at this time is absolutely necessary." – George Washington, letter to Major Andrew Lewis, October 27, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:225

"The Officers to take notice what men are Served. You are to see that the Articles of War are frequently read to the men." – George Washington, letter to Major Andrew Lewis, October 27, 1755; Fitzpatrick 1:226

Letter to Robert Hunter Morris – January 5, 1756

"There is nothing more necessary than good intelligence to frustrate a designing enemy, and nothing that requires greater pains to obtain." – George Washington, letter to Robert Hunter Morris, Winchester, January 5, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:268

Orders to Officers of the Virginia Regiment – January 8, 1756

"Remember, that it is the actions, and not the commission, that make the officer, and that there is more expected from him, than the title. Do not forget, that there ought to be a time appropriated to attain this knowledge; as well as to indulge pleasure. And as we now have no opportunities to improve from example; let us read, for this desirable end." – George Washington, orders to the Officers of the Virginia Regiment, January 8, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:271

"I shall make it the most agreeable part of my duty to study merit, and reward the brave and deserving." – George Washington, Orders to the Officers of the Virginia Regiment, January 8, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:271

"I assure, you, gentlemen, that partiality shall never bias my conduct, nor shall prejudice injure any." – George Washington, Orders to the Officers of the Virginia Regiment, January 8, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:271

Letter to Captain Robert Lewis – January 27, 1756

"It gave me infinite satisfaction to hear Colonel Stephen express his approbation of your conduct. Assure yourself, dear Charles, that activity and Bravery in Officers are the means to recommend them to their Country's applause; and will ever endear them to me! Your courage and abilities were always equal to my wishes: But I dreaded the pernicious effects of liquor; especially as I knew it bereft you of that prudent way of reasoning, which at other times you are master of. Such inconsistent behaviour as liquor sometimes prompts you to, may be borne by your Friends; but can not by Officers; and in a camp, where each individual should regulate his conduct for the good of the whole, and strive to excel in all laudable Emulations. This comes from me as your Friend, not as a Superior Officer; who must, when occasion requires, condemn as well as applaud: Though in sincerity I tell you, it would grate my nature to censure a person for whom I have a real love and esteem; and one, too, who I know has a capacity to act as becomes the best of Officers." – George Washington, letter to Captain Charles Lewis, Alexandria, January 27, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:291-292

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen – February 1, 1756

"The Governor seems determined to make the officers comply with the terms of getting their commissions, or forfeit them, and approves of [Lehaynsius] Dekeyser's suspension [for cheating at cards, as being "unbecoming a gentleman and an officer"], and orders, that he shall not be admitted into the camp. He seems uneasy at what I own gives me much concern, i.e., that gaming seems to be introduced into the camp. I am ordered to discourage it, and must desire that you will intimate the same." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen, Alexandria, February 1, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:295

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie - February 2, 1756

"I have always, so far as it was in my power, endeavoured to discourage gaming in the camp; and always shall so long as I have the honor to preside there." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Alexandria, February 2, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:297

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – April 7, 1756

"However absurd it may appear, it is nevertheless certain, that five hundred Indians have it more in their power to annoy the inhabitants, than ten times their number of regulars. For besides the advantageous way they have of fighting in the woods, their cunning and craft are not to be equalled, neither their activity and indefatigable sufferings. They prowl about like wolves, and, like them, do their mischief by stealth. They depend upon their dexterity in hunting and upon the cattle of the inhabitants for provisions." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 7, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:300

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – April 18, 1756

"I have, both by threats and persuasive means, endeavoured to discountenance gaming, drinking, swearing, and irregularities of every other kind; while I have, on the other hand, practised every artifice to inspire a laudable emulation in the officers for the service of their country, and to encourage the soldiers in the unerring exercise of their duty. How far I have failed in this desirable end, I cannot pretend to say. But it is nevertheless a point, which does in my opinion merit some scrutiny, before it meets with a final condemnation. Yet I will not undertake to vouch for the conduct of many of the officers, as I know there are some, who have the seeds of idleness very strongly ingrafted in their natures; and I also know, that the unhappy difference about the command, which has kept me from Fort Cumberland, has consequently prevented me from enforcing the orders, which I never fail to send." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 18, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:317

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – April 22, 1756

"I am too little acquainted, Sir, with pathetic language, to attempt a description of the people's distresses, though I have a generous soul, sensible of wrongs, and swelling for redress. But what can I do? If bleeding, dying! would glut their insatiate revenge, I would be a willing offering to savage fury, and die by inches to save a people! I see their situation, know their danger, and participate their sufferings, without having it in my power to give them further relief, than uncertain promises." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 22, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:324

"The supplicating tears of the women, and moving petitions from the men, melt me into such deadly sorrow, that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 22, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:325

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – April 24, 1756

"[W]ithout Indians to oppose Indians, we may expect but small success." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 24, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:330

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – April 27, 1756

"A small number, just to point out the wiles and tracks of the enemy, is better than none." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, April 27, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:341

Orders – May 1, 1756

"Any Soldier, who shall presume to quarrel or fight; shall receive five hundred lashes, without the Benefit of a Court Martial. The offender (upon complaint made) shall have strict justice done him. Any Soldier found Drunk, shall immediately receive one hundred lashes; without Benefit of a court martial." – George Washington, Orders, Winchester, May 1, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:353

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen – May 18, 1756

"I must desire you will have the Suttlers put under proper restrictions: and order the Officers, as there will be many of them there, to agree and fix reasonable prices upon all Liquors, &c. Do take great pains to prevent all irregularities in the Garrison; but especially those of Drinking, Swearing and Gaming!" – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Adam Stephen, Winchester, May 18, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:382

Letter to Captain Charles Lewis – June 4, 1756

"You must endeavour to inculcate due obedience upon the new Recruits and to discourage Swearing and Drinking." – George Washington, letter to Captain Charles Lewis, Winchester, June 4, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:392

Orders – July 7, 1756

"Colonel Washington has observed, that the men of his Regiment are very profane and reprobate. He takes this opportunity of informing them of his great displeasure at such practices; and assures them if they do not leave them off, they shall be severely punished. The Officers are desired, if they hear any man swear, or make use of an oath or execration; to order the Offender twenty-five lashes immediately, without a Court Martial. For the second offence, they will be more severely punished....The Sergeants are ordered to take notice of the mens Behaviour in their Barracks and endeavour to break them of that ill habit." – George Washington, Orders, Fort Cumberland, July 7, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:396

Orders - July 22, 1756

"Sentries to be posted around the Town, at the most convenient places, and to be relieved every hour. The Officer of the Guard is to go the rounds sometime in the night; and to send the Sergeant and Corporal to the Sentries, between the Reliefs, to see they are alert; and to examine all the public houses, at relieving and visiting the Sentries, and see that no Soldiers are drinking there." – George Washington, Orders, July 22, 1756" – George Washington, Orders, Fort Cumberland, July 7, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:408

"The Adjutant must acquaint all the towns people, that they must not allow the Soldiers to be drunk in their Houses, or sell them any liquor, without an order from a Commissioned Officer; or else they may depend Colonel Washington will prosecute them as the Act of Assembly directs. This caution must be particularly given to the dutch Baker's, John Stewart, and Jacob Sowers." – George Washington, Orders, Fort Cumberland, July 7, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:409

Speech to the Tuscarora Indians – August 1, 1756

"Brothers, You can be no strangers to the many Murders and Cruelties; committed on our Country Men, and Friends, by that False and Faithless people the French, who are constantly endeavouring to corrupt the minds of our Friendly Indians; and have Stirr'd up the Shawnese and Delawares, with severall other nations to take up the hatchet against us. And at the head of many of these Indians have invaded our Country, laid waste our lands, plunder'd our plantations, Murdered defenceless Women and Children, and Burnt and destroy'd wherever they came; which has enraged our Friends the Six Nations, Cherokees, Nottoways, Catawbias, and all our Indian Allies, and prompted them to take up the Hatchet in our deffence, against these disturbers of the Common peace. ... I hope, Brothers, you will likewise take up the Hatchet, against the French and their Indians, as our other Friends have done, and Send us some of your Young Men, to protect our Frontiers, and go to War with us, against our restless and Ambitious Foes. And to encourage Your brave Warriors, I promise to furnish them w' Arms, Amunition, Cloths, provision, and every necessary for War, And the Sooner you Send them to our asistance, the greater mark will you give us of your Friendship; and the better shall we be enabled to take just Revenge of their Cruelties." – George Washington, speech to the Tuscarora Indians, Winchester, August 1, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:414

Orders – August 7, 1756

"As every method hitherto practised has been found ineffectual to restrain the paltry tipling houses and Ginn-shops in this town, from selling liquor, contrary to orders, to the Soldiers, to the Detriment of His Majesty's Service, and irreparable loss of their own Health. It is hereby expressly ordered, that as many men as the Tents will contain, do immediately encamp; and all the rest, except those in the Hospital be on Monday, new quartered upon Brinker, Heath and Lemon; who are charged not to sell more than a reasonable quantity of liquor, and at reasonable rates to each man per day; as they will answer the contrary. And any Soldier or Draught who is found drinking in any of the other houses, or who is known to purchase, by direct or indirect means, any liquor from other places; or who shall be found ever going into, or sitting down in any of the other houses, without giving a sufficient excuse why he did so; shall immediately receive 50 lashes, without the benefit of a Court Martial. And all the Officers are strictly required to see all these Orders strictly complied with." – George Washington, Orders, Winchester, August 7, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:440

Address to His Command – August 1756

"You see, gentlemen soldiers, that it hath pleased our most gracious sovereign to declare war in form against the French King, and (for divers good causes, but more particularly for their ambitious usurpations and encroachments on his American dominions) to pronounce all the said French King's subjects and vassals to be enemies to his crown and dignity; and hath willed and required all his subjects and people, and in a more especial manner commanded his captain-general of his forces, his governors, and all other his commanders and officers, to do and execute all acts of hostility in the prosecution of, this just and honorable war. And though our utmost endeavors can contribute but little to the advancement of his Majesty's honor and the interest of his governments, yet let us show our willing obedience to the best of kings, and, by a strict attachment to his royal commands, demonstrate the love and loyalty we bear to his sacred person; let us, by rules of unerring bravery, strive to merit his royal favor, and a better establishment as reward for our services." – George Washington, address to his command, August 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:446-447

Orders – August 30, 1756

"It is also expected the Officers will see the greatest punctuality observed, in following the Orders for preventing the men from buying any liquors from any Houses but those appointed. And it is hereby declared, that if any Soldier detects another in committing this crime, he shall upon proof thereof, receive 5/ from such Soldier's pay, and the Colonels thanks for his good Behaviour: And as precautions will confine the Custom to the aforesaid places; it is expected they will sell only a moderate quantity to each man per day, and that at reasonable rates; as great complaints have been made of the demands for Liquor." – George Washington, Orders, Winchester, August 30, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:451

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – September 8, 1756

"I wish the new commission for this county may have the intended effect. The number of tipling houses kept here is a great grievance." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Mount Vernon, September 8, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:463

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – September 23, 1756

"I apprehend it will be thought advisable to keep a garrison always at Fort Loudoun; for which reason I would beg leave to represent the great nuisance the number of tipling-houses in Winchester are of to the soldiers, who, by this means, in despite of the utmost care and vigilance, are, so long as their pay holds good, incessantly drunk, and unfit for service." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:470

"The want of a chaplain does, I humbly conceive, reflect dishonor upon the regiment, as all other officers are allowed. The gentlemen of the corps are sensible of this, and did propose to support one at their private expense. But I think it would have a more graceful appearance were he appointed as others are." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:470

"I could wish some method were practised to bring the commonalty acquainted with the laws against entertaining of deserters, and to enforce those laws more effectually than they ever have been." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:470

Orders – September 25, 1756

"The men are to parade at beating the long roll to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock; and be marched as usual to the Fort, to attend Divine Service. The Officers to be present at calling the roll, and see that the men do appear in the most decent manner they can." – George Washington, Orders, Winchester, September 25, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:473

Speech to Captain Johnne of the Catawabas – October 28, 1756

"We Desire you to go to the Cherokees, and tell them the Road is now clear and Open; We expected them to War last Spring, and love them So well, that Our Governor Sent Some few men to build a fort among them; but we are mighty Sorry that they hearken so much to lies French tell, as to break their promise and not come to war, when they might have got a great deal of honour; and kill'd a great many of the French, whose hearts are false, and rotten as an old Stump. If they Continue to Listen to What the French Say much longer they will have great cause to be sorry, as the French have no Match locks, pow'd and Lead but what they got from King George our father, before the War began and that will soon be out; when they will get no more, and all the French Indians will be starving with Cold, and must take to Bows and Arrows again for want of Ammunition. ... Tell them we long to Shake hands with them; ... Let them get their knives and tomhawkes Sharpe, we will go before them, and show them the way to honour, Scalps, prisoners, and money Enough, We are mighty sorry they stay at home idle, when they should go to War, and become great men, and a terror and dread to their Enemies. Tell them they shall have Victuals enough, and used very kindly." – George Washington, speech to Captain Johnne of the Catawabas, Winchester, October 28, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:486

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – November 9, 1756

"From Fort Trial on Smith's River, I returned to Fort William on the Catawba, where I met Colonel Buchanan with about thirty men, (chiefly officers,) to conduct me up Jackson's River, along the range of forts. With this small company of irregulars, with whom order, regularity, circumspection, and vigilance were matters of derision and contempt, we set out, and, by the protection of Providence, reached Augusta Court House in seven days, without meeting the enemy; otherwise we must have fallen a sacrifice, through the indiscretion of these whooping, hallooing gentlemen soldiers!" – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:498

"[T]he waste of provision they make is unaccountable; no method or order in being served or purchasing at the best rates, but quite the reverse. Allowance for each man, as other soldiers do, they look upon as the highest indignity, and would sooner starve, than carry a few days' provision on their backs for conveniency. But upon their march, when breakfast is wanted, knock down the first beef, &c, they meet with, and, after regaling themselves, march on until dinner, when they take the same method, and so for supper likewise, to the great oppression of the people. Or, if they chance to impress cattle for provision, the valuation is left to ignorant and indifferent neighbours, who have suffered by those practices, and, despairing of their pay, exact high prices, and thus the public is imposed on at all events. I might add, I believe, that, for the want of proper laws to govern the militia by (for I cannot ascribe it to any other cause), they are obstinate, self-willed, perverse, of little or no service to the people, and very burthensome to the country. Every mean individual has his own crude notions of things, and must undertake to direct. If his advice is neglected, he thinks him self slighted, abased, and injured; and, to redress his wrongs, will depart for his home. These, Sir, are literally matters of fact, partly from persons of undoubted veracity, but chiefly from my own observations." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:498

"As touching a chaplain, if the government will grant a subsistence, we can readily get a person of merit to accept of the place, without giving the commissary any trouble on that point, as it is highly necessary we should be reformed from those crimes and enormities we are so universally accused of." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:499

"Your Honor has had advice of two spies, that were taken at Fort Cumberland; one of whom they quickly hung up as his just reward, being a deserter; the other was sent to Governor Sharpe, to give information of the infernal practices followed by some of the priests of that province, in holding correspondence with our enemy." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:499

Letter to John Robinson – November 9, 1756

"A Chaplain for the Regiment ought to be provided; that we may at least have the show, if we are said to want the substance of Godliness!" – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:505

"As Fort Loudon must be supported; I would represent the prejudice we suffer by the number of Tippling-houses kept in this Town; by which our men are debauched, and rendered unfit for duty, while their pay lasts. Neither do the Court take any notice of them, tho' often complained of." – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, Winchester, November 9, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:505

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – November 24, 1756

"When I spoke of a chaplain, it was in answer to yours. I had no person in view, tho' many have offered; and only said, if the country would provide a subsistence, we could procure a chaplain, without thinking there was offence in the expression." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Alexandria, November 24, 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:510

Letter to John Robinson – December 1756

"[A] man's intentions should be allowed in some respects to plead for his actions." – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, December 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:532

"I have diligently sought the public welfare; and have endeavoured to inculcate the same principles in all that are under me. These reflections will be a cordial to my mind as long as I am able to distinguish between Good & Evil." – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, December 1756; Fitzpatrick 1:533

Letter to the Earl of Loudoun – January 1757

"Therefore, it is not to be wondered at, if, under such peculiar circumstances, I should be sicken'd in a service, which promises so little of a soldier's reward. I have long been satisfied of the impossibility of continuing in this service, without loss of honor. Indeed, I was fully convinced of it before I accepted the command the second time, (seeing the cloudy prospect that stood before me;) and did for this reason reject the offer, (until I was ashamed any longer to refuse,) not caring to expose my character to public censure. But the solicitations of the country overcame my objections, and induced me to accept it." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Loudoun, January 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:17

"Do not think, my Lord, that I am going to flatter; notwithstanding I have exalted sentiments of your Lordship's character and respect your rank, it is not my intention to adulate. My nature is open and honest and free from guile!" – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Loudoun, January 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:18

Letter to Richard Washington – April 15, 1757

"[W]hat can be so proper as the truth." – George Washington, letter to Richard Washington, Fort Loudoun, April 15, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:21

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie - April 29, 1757

"It is a hardship upon the Regiment I think, to be denied a Chaplain." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Williamsburgh, Friday morning, April 29, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:33

Letter to John Robinson – June 10, 1757

"Major Lewis is returned with part of the Indians, that went out with him, in consequence of their having taken only eight days' provisions with them. He was unable to prevail with those savages to take more. One party of twenty, with ten soldiers, is gone towards Fort Duquesne, under Captain Spotswood; and another party of fifteen, with five soldiers, under Lieutenant Baker, but they course towards Logstown. God send them success and a safe return, I pray." – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, Fort Loudoun, June 10, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:52

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie - June 12, 1756

"We shou'd also be glad if our Chaplain was appointed, and that a Gentleman of sober, serious and religious deportment were chosen for this important Trust! Otherwise, we shou'd be better without." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, June 12, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:56

Instructions to the Captains of the Virginia Regiments – July 29, 1757

"[D]evote some part of your leisure hours to the study of your profession, a knowledge in which cannot be attained without application; nor any merit or applause to be achieved without a certain knowledge thereof." – George Washington, letter of Instructions to the Captains of the Virginia Regiments, July 29, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:114

"Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all." – George Washington, letter of Instructions to the Captains of the Virginia Regiments, July 29, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:114

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – August 27, 1757

"It is with pleasure I receive reproof, when reproof is due, because no person can be readier to accuse me, than I am to acknowledge an error, when I am guilty of one; nor more desirous of atoning for a crime, when I am sensible of having committed it." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, August 27, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:122

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – September 17, 1757

"[I]t is hard to have my character arraigned, and my actions condemned, without a hearing." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Fort Loudoun, September 17, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:1

Letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie – October 5, 1757

"I do not know, that I ever gave your Honor cause to suspect me of ingratitude, a crime I detest, and would most carefully avoid. If an open, disinterested behavior carries offence, I may have offended; because I have all along laid it down as a maxim, to represent facts freely and impartially, but no more to others, than I have to you, Sir. If instances of my ungrateful behavior had been particularized, I would have answered to them. But I have long been convinced, that my actions and their motives have been maliciously aggravated." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Dinwiddie, Fort Loudoun, October 5, 1757; Fitzpatrick 2:141

Letter to John Blair – April 17, 1758

"The last Assembly, in their Supply Bill, provided for a chaplain to our regiment, for whom I had often very unsuccessfully applied to Governor Dinwiddie. I now flatter myself, that your Honor will be pleased to appoint a sober, serious man for this duty. Common decency, Sir, in a camp calls for the services of a divine, and which ought not to be dispensed with, altho' the world should be so uncharitable as to think us void of religion, and incapable of good instructions." – George Washington, letter to John Blair, Fort Loudoun, April 17, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:178

Letter to Captain William Henry Fairfax – April 23, 1758

"This Colony have voted 2000 Men for the Expedition to be Commanded by General Forbes, besides Militia to protect their Frontiers. Already have 700 Indians marchd to this place, and other Parties of them daily expected; so that without some signal Interposition of Providence against us, we have I think, no great Reason to despair of Success." – George Washington, letter to Captain William Henry Fairfax, Fort Loudoun, April 23, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:181

Letter to General John Forbes – June 19, 1758

"Another great advantage that might be deriv'd from sending such a such a Person instantly to the Cherokee Nation, wou'd be making up ('tis to be hop'd) those differences that lately happen'd between them, and some of the natives of the Southern Frontiers of this Colony; which unhappy broils, if not properly, and timously attended to, may be productive of the most destructive consequences to the british Affairs in America, and terminate in the ruin of our Southern Settlements. ... The Southern Indians, of late, seem to be in a very wavering situation, and have, on several occasions, discover'd an Inclination to break with Us; I think it can admit of no doubt, that, if we shou'd be unsuccessfull in this Quarter, which Heaven avert! that the united Force of several powerfull Nations of these Indians might be employ'd against Us; and, that such acquisition to the Enemy wou'd enable them to exterpate our Southern Colonies, and make themselves Masters of this part of the Continent at least. Wherefore, that nothing shou'd be omitted that might contribute to prevent so dreadfull a Calamity; if a proper Person as I before said was immediately sent to the Cherokee Nation, he might not only accomplish this great work, but get a Body of them to join the Army on their March; and no Person, surely, who has the Interest of our Important Cause at Heart, wou'd hesitate a moment to depart in such a Service, on the event of which, our all in a manner depends." – George Washington, letter to General John Forbes, Fort Loudoun, June 19, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:216-217

Letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet – July 13, 1758

"It gives me great pleasure to find you approve of the dress I have put my Men into. It is evident, Sold'rs in that trim are better able to carry their Provisions, are fitted for the active Service we must engage in; less liable to sink under the fatigues of a March; and by this means, get rid of much baggage that wou'd consequently, if carri'd protract our line of March; this, and not whim or caprice, are really my reasons for ordering them into it." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet, Camp at Fort Loudoun, July 13, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:235

Letter to Mrs. Martha Custis – July 20, 1758

"We have begun our march for the Ohio. A courier is starting for Williamsburg, and I embrace the opportunity to send a few words to one whose life is now inseparable from mine. Since that happy hour when we made our pledges to each other, my thoughts have been continually going to you as another Self. That an all-powerful Providence may keep us both in safety is the prayer of your ever faithful and affectionate friend." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Martha Custis, Fort Cumberland, July 20, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:242

Letter to Gabriel Jones – July 29, 1758

"Our Expedition seems overcast with too many Ills to give you any satisfaction in a transient relation of them. God knows what's intended; for nothing seems ripe for Execution; backwardness, and I would (if I dard) say more, appears in all things." – George Washington, letter to Gabriel Jones, Camp at Fort Cumberland, July 29, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:249

Letter to Colonel James Wood – July 1758

"If thanks flowing from a heart replete with joy and Gratitude can in any Measure compensate for the fatigue, anxiety and Pain you had at my Election, be assured you have them. 'tis a poor, but I am convinced welcome tribute to a generous Mind; such, I believe yours to be." – George Washington, letter to Colonel James Wood, July, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:251

"How I shall thank Mrs. Wood for her favourable Wishes? and how acknowledge my Sense of Obligations to the People in General for their choice of me I am at a loss to resolve on; but why; Can I do it more effectually than by making their Interests (as it really is) my own, and doing everything that lyes in my little Power for the Hon'r and welfare of the County; I think not; and my best endeavours they may always Command. I promise this now, when promises may be regarded, before they might pass as words of Course." – George Washington, letter to Colonel James Wood, July, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:251

Letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet – August 2, 1758

"The shortness of the Road from Rays Town to Fort Duquesne by Loyal hanny, is us'd as an argument in disfavor of this Road, and bears some thing in it unaccountable to me, for I must beg leave to ask here, if it requires more time, or is it more difficult and expensive, to go 145 miles in a good Road already made to our hands, or to cut 100 miles in length, great part of which over almost inaccessible Mountains, and, to say, or think, we can do nothing more this Fall than to fortify some Post on the other side of the Mountains and prepare against another Campaigne I must pray Heaven, most fervently, to avert! till we find it impracticable at least to prosecute with prudence the Enterprise in hand." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet, Camp at Fort Cumberland, August 2, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:255

Letter to Major Francis Halkett – August 2, 1758

"I am just return'd from a Conference held with Colo. Bouquet. I find him fix'd, I think I may say fix'd, upon leading you a New way to the Ohio; thro a Road, every Inch of it to cut, at this advanced Season, when we have scarce time left to tread the beaten Tract; universally confess'd to be the best Passage through the Mountains. ... If Colo. Bouquet succeeds in this point with the General, all is lost! All is lost by Heavens! Our Enterprise Ruin'd; and we stop'd at the Laurel Hill this Winter; not to gather Laurels, by the by, desirable in their effects. The Southern Indians turn'd against Us, and these Colonies become desolated by such an Acquisition to the Enemy's Strength." – George Washington, letter to Major Francis Halkett, Camp at Fort Cumberland, August 2, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:260

"I am uninfluenced by Prejudice, having no hopes or fears but for the General Good." – George Washington, letter to Major Francis Halkett, Camp at Fort Cumberland, August 2, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:261

Letter to Francis Fauquier – August 5, 1758

"I am just return'd from a Conference held with Colo. Bouquet on this occasion. The General lyin indispos'd at Carlyle. In this conference I urg'd, in the most persuasive terms I was Master of, the advanc'd Season as an argument against new discoveries I press'd also; the difficulties of cutting a Road over these Mountains; the length of time it must require to do it; the little time left for that Service, the moral certainty of its obstructing Our March; and the Miscarriage of the Expedition from that Cause, and lastly, I endeavour'd to represent the distress'd Condition the Colonies wou'd be reduc'd to, consequent thereupon. In fine, I said, and did every thing to avert a mischief that seem'd to forebode our manifest Ruin; this is the light it appears to me. I pray Heaven my Fears may prove imaginary only; but the thoughts of opening a Road 100 Miles in length; over Mountains almost inaccessible, at this advanc'd Season, when there is already a good Road made. a Road universally confess'd to be the best that either is, or can be found any where thro these Mountains, prognosticates something; not quite favorable." – George Washington, letter to Francis Fauquier, Fort Cumberland Camp, August 5, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:261

Letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet – August 13, 1758

"If you have any Intelligence from Ticonderago, I shou'd be extreme thankful for the acct. We have expected hourly, to hear that Louisburg is in our hands, pray Heaven we may not be disappointed at last." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet, Camp Fort Cumberland, August 13, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:268

"I cou'd wish most sincerely, that our Accounts from the No. Ward were clearer, and more favourable than they appear to be. If you have any Intelligence from Ticonderago, I shou'd be extreme thankful for the acct. We have expected hourly, to hear that Louisburg is

in Our hands, pray Heaven we may not be disappointed at last." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Henry Bouquet, Camp Fort Cumberland, August 13, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:269

Letter to John Robinson – September 1, 1758

"We are still Incamp'd here, very sickly; and quite dispirited at the prospect before Us. That appearance of Glory once in view, that hope, that laudable Ambition of serving Our Country, and meriting its applause, is now no more! Tis dwindled into ease; Sloth, and fatal inactivity, and in a Word, All is lost, if the ways of Men in power, like the ways of Providence are not Inscrutable; and, why [are] they not? for we who view the Action's of great Men at so vast a distance can only form conjectures agreeable to the small extant of our knowledge and ignorant of the comprehensive Schemes intended; mistake, plaugily, in judging by the Lump; this may be and yet every F---I will have his Notions; prattle and talk away, and pray why may not I? ... We seem then, to act under an evil Geni, the conduct of our Leaders (if not actuated by superior Orders) is temper'd with something, I don't care to give a name to, indeed I will go further, and say they are d—ps, or something worse to P—s—v—n Artifice, to whose selfish views I attribute the miscarriage of this Expedition, for nothing now but a Miracle can bring this Campaigne to a happy Issue." – George Washington, letter to John Robinson, Camp at Fort Cumberland, September 1, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:276-277

Letter to Mrs. George William Fairfax – September 12, 1758

"But experience, alas! sadly reminds me how impossible this is, and evinces an opinion which I have long entertained, that there is a Destiny which has the control of our actions, not to be resisted by the strongest efforts of Human Nature." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. George William Fairfax, Camp at Fort Cumberland, September 12, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:288

"Col. Mercer, to whom I delivered your message and compliments, joins me very heartily in wishing you and the Ladies of Belvoir the perfect enjoyment of every happiness this world affords." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. George William Fairfax, Camp at Fort Cumberland, September 12, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:289

Letter to Francis Fauquier – September 28, 1758

"The troops were divided: which caused the front to give way, and put the whole into confusion, except the Virginians, commanded by Captn. Bullet, who were (in the hands of Providence) a means of preventing all of our people from sharing one common fate." – George Washington, letter to Francis Fauquier, Camp at Raystown, September 28, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:295

Letter to Francis Fauquier – November 28, 1758

"I have the pleasure to inform you, that Fort Duquesne, or the ground rather on which it stood, was possessed by his Majesty's troops on the 25th instant. The enemy, after letting us get within a day's march of the place, burned the fort, and ran away (by the light of it,) at night, going down the Ohio by water, to the number of about five hundred men, from our best information. The possession of this fort has been matter of great surprise to the whole army, and we cannot attribute it to more probable causes, than those of weakness, want of provisions, and desertion of their Indians. Of these circumstances we were luckily informed by three prisoners, who providentially fell into our hands at Loyal Hannan, at a time when we despaired of proceeding, and a council of war had determined, that it was not advisable to advance beyond the place above mentioned this season, but the information above caused us to march on without tents or baggage, and with a light train of artillery only, with which we have happily succeeded." – George Washington, letter to Francis Fauquier, Camp, at Fort Duquesne, November 28, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:308-309

Letter to Francis Fauquier – December 2, 1758

"That a trade with the Indians should be upon such terms, and transacted by men of such principles, as would at the same time turn out to the reciprocal advantage of the colony and the Indians, and which would effectually remove those bad impressions, that the Indians received from the conduct of a set of rascally fellows, divested of all faith and honor, and give us such an early opportunity of establishing an interest with them, as would be productive of the most beneficial consequences, by getting a large share of the fur-trade, not only of the Ohio Indians, but, in time, of the numerous nations possessing the back countries westward of it. And to prevent this advantageous commerce from suffering in its infancy, by the sinister views of designing, selfish men of the different provinces, I humbly conceive it absolutely necessary that commissioners from each of the colonies be appointed to regulate the mode of that trade, and fix it on such a basis, that all the attempts of one colony undermining another, and thereby weakening and diminishing the general system might be frustrated." – George Washington, letter to Francis Fauquier, Loyal Hanna, December 2, 1758; Fitzpatrick 2:313

Letter to Richard Washington – September 20, 1759

"I am now I believe fixd at this Seat with an agreeable Consort for Life and hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienc'd amidst a wide and bustling World." – George Washington, letter to Richard Washington, Mount Vernon, September 20,

Letter to Robert Cary & Company – September 28, 1760

"It is needless for me to particularise the sorts, quality, or taste I woud choose to have them in unless it is observd; and you may believe me when I tell you that instead of getting things good and fashionable in their several kinds we often have Articles sent Us that coud only have been used by our Forefathers in the days of yore. 'Tis a custom, I have some Reason to believe, with many Shop keepers, and Tradesmen in Lodon when they know Goods are bespoke for Exportation to palm sometimes old, and sometimes very slight and indifferent Goods upon Us taking care at the same time to advance 10, 15 or perhaps 20 pr. Ct. upon them." – George Washington, letter to Robert Cary & Company, Mount Vernon, September 28, 1760; Fitzpatrick 2:350

Invoice for Sundry's to be Shipd by Robert Cary Esq. & Co. – October 12, 1761

"For Master [John Parke] Custis 8 yrs. old....A Small Bible neatly bound in Turkey, and John Parke Custis wrote in gilt Letters on the Inside of the cover...A Neat small Prayer Book b[oun]d. as above, with &ca....[For] Miss [Martha Parke] Custis 6 yrs. old...A Neat Small Bible b'd in Turkey and Martha Parke Custis wrote on the Inside in gilt Letters...A Small Prayer Book neat and in the same manner." – George Washington, Invoice of Sundry's to be Shipd by Robert Cary Esq. & Co. for the Uses of Master John, and Miss Patsy Custis, Each to be Charged to Their Own Accounts, But Both Consigned to George Washington, Potomack River &ca., October 12, 1761; Fitzpatrick 2:369-370

Letter to Richard Washington – October 20, 1761

"Since my last of the 14th. July I have in appearance been very near my last gasp; the Indisposition then spoken of Increased upon me and I fell into a very low and dangerous State. I once thought the grim King woud certainly master my utmost efforts and that I must sink-in spite of a noble struggle but thank God I have now got the better of the disorder and shall soon be restord I hope to perfect health again." – George Washington, letter to Richard Washington, Mount Vernon, October 20, 1761; Fitzpatrick 2:371

Letter to Maryland Governor Horatio Sharpe – March 26, 1762

"Be so good as to pardon the liberty I presume to take in recommending to your Excellency's notice the Revd. Mr. West; a young Gentn. lately entered into Holy Orders, of a good Family, and unexceptionable Morals; this with truth I can venture to certifie as he is a neighbour of mine, and one of those few of whom every body speaks well. At present he is engagd to officiate as Curate to the Revd. Doctr. Swift of Port Tobo.; who it seems is in the last Stage of a Consumption, and attempting by a Voyage to England, the recovery of his health, but, shoud he fail in this (as most probably he will) and the Parish become vacant by his death. Mr. West woud think himself very happy in the honour of your presentment of him to the Cure, and I am fully persuaded that his endeavours woud merit the favour." – George Washington, letter to Maryland Governor Horatio Sharpe, Mount Vernon, March 26, 1762; Fitzpatrick 37:484

Letter to Robert Cary & Company – May 28, 1762

"As I have ever laid it down as an established Maxim to believe, that every person is, (most certainly ought to be) the best judges of what relates to their own Interest and concerns I very rarely undertake to propose Schemes to others which may be attended with uncertainty and miscarriage." – George Washington, letter to Robert Cary & Company, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1762; Fitzpatrick 2:377

Letter to Burwell Bassett – August 28, 1762

"I was favoured with your Epistle wrote on a certain 25th of July when you ought to have been at Church, praying as becomes every good Christian Man who has as much to answer for as you have; strange it is that you will be so blind to truth that the enlightning sounds of the Gospel cannot reach your Ear, nor no Examples awaken you to a sense of Goodness; could you but behold with what religious zeal I hye me to Church on every Lords day, it would do your heart good, and fill it I hope with equal fervency; but heark'ee; I am told you have lately introduced into your Family, a certain production which you are lost in admiration of, and spend so much time in contemplating the just proportion of its parts, the ease, and conveniences with which it abounds, that it is thought you will have little time to animadvert upon the prospect of your crops &c; pray how will this be reconciled to that anxious care and vigilance, which is so escencially necessary at a time when our growing Property, meaning the Tobacco, is assailed by every villainous worm that has had an existence since the days of Noah (how unkind it was of Noah now I have mentioned his name to suffer such a brood of vermin to get a birth in the Ark) but perhaps you may be as well of as we are; that is, have no Tobacco for them to eat and there I think we nicked the Dogs, as I think to do you if you expect any more; but not without a full assurance of being with a very sincere regard etc." – George Washington, letter to Burwell Bassett, Mount Vernon, August 28, 1762; Fitzpatrick 37:484-485

Letter to Robert Stewart – April 27, 1763

"[H]uman Affairs are always chequered, and Viscissitudes in this Life are rather to be expected than wondered at." – George Washington, letter to Robert Stewart, April 27, 1763; Fitzpatrick 2:396

"I wish my dear Stewart that the circumstances of my Affairs woud have permitted me to have given you an order upon any Person, in the world, I might add, for £400 with as much ease and propriety as you seem to require it, or even for twice that Sum if it woud make you easy; but alas I to shew my inability in this respect, I inclose you a copy of Mr. Cary's last Acct. currt. against me, which upon my honr and the faith of a Christian is a true one." – George Washington, letter to Robert Stewart, April 27, 1763; Fitzpatrick 2:396-397

Letter to Francis Dandridge – September 20, 1765

"The Stamp Act Imposed on the Colonies by the Parliament of Great Britain engrosses the conversation of the Speculative part of the Colonists, who look upon this unconstitutional method of Taxation as a direful attack upon their Liberties, and loudly exclaim against the Violation; what may be the result of this and some other (I think I may add) ill judgd Measures, I will not undertake to determine; but this I may venture to affirm, that the advantage accruing to the Mother Country will fall greatly short of the expectations of the Ministry; for certain it is, our whole Substance does already in a manner flow to Great Britain and that whatsoever contributes to lessen our Importation's must be hurtful to their Manufacturers. And the Eyes of our People, already beginning to open, will perceive, that many Luxuries which we lavish our substance to Great Britain for, can well be dispensd with whilst the necessaries of Life are (mostly) to be had within ourselves. This consequently will introduce frugality, and be a necessary stimulation to Industry. If Great Britain therefore Loads her Manufactures with heavy Taxes, will it not facilitate these Measures? they will not compel us I think to give our Money for their exports, whether we will or no, and certain I am none of their Traders will part from them without a valuable consideration. Where then is the Utility of these Restrictions? ... As to the Stamp Act, taken in a single view, one, and the first bad consequences attending it I take to be this. Our Courts of Judicature must inevitably be shut up; for it is impossible (or next of kin to it) under our present Circumstances that the Act of Parliam't can be complyd with were we ever so willing to enforce the execution; for not to say, which alone woud be sufficient, that we have not Money to pay the Stamps, there are many other Cogent Reasons to prevent it; and if a stop be put to our judicial proceedings I fancy the Merchants of G. Britain trading to the Colonies will not be among the last to wish for a Repeal of it." – George Washington, letter to Francis Dandridge, Mount Vernon, September 20, 1765; Fitzpatrick 2:425-426

Letter to Captain Josiah Thompson – July 2, 1766

"With this Letter comes a Negro (Tom) which I beg the favour of you to sell, in any of the Islands you may go to, for whatever he will fetch, and bring me in return from him
One Hhd of best Molasses
One Ditto of best Rum
One Barrl of Lymes, if good and Cheap
One Pot of Tamarinds, contg. about 10 lbs.
Two small Do of mixed Sweetmeats, abt. 5-lb. each.
And the residue, much or little, in good old Spirits.
That this Fellow is both a Rogue and a Runaway (tho' he was by no means remarkable for the former, and never practised the latter till of late) I shall not pretend to deny. But that he is exceeding healthy, strong, and good at the Hoe, the whole neighbourhood can testifie and particularly Mr. Johnson and his Son, who have both had him under them as foreman of the gang; which gives me reason to hope he may, with your good management, sell well, if kept clean and trim'd up a little when offerd for Sale. ... I shall very chearfully allow you the customary Commissions on this affair, and must beg the favour of you (lest he shoud attempt his escape) to keep him handcuffd till you get to Sea, or in the Bay, after which I doubt not but you may make him very useful to you." – George Washington, letter to Captain Josiah Thompson, Mount Vernon, July 2, 1766; Fitzpatrick 2:437

Letter to Robert Cary & Company – July 21, 1766

"The Repeal of the Stamp Act, to whatsoever causes owing, ought much to be rejoiced at, for had the Parliament of Great Britain resolvd upon enforcing it the consequences I conceive woud have been more direful than is generally apprehended both to the Mother Country and her Colonies. All therefore who were Instrumental in procuring the Repeal are entitled to the Thanks of every British Subject and have mine cordially." – George Washington, letter to Robert Cary & Company, Mount Vernon, July 21, 1766; Fitzpatrick 2:440

Letter to Robert Cary & Company – June 6, 1768

"Green being a colour little apt, as I apprehend to fade, and grateful to the Eye, I woud give it the preference." – George Washington, letter to Robert Cary & Company, Mount Vernon, June 6, 1768; Fitzpatrick 2:488

Letter to William Ramsay – January 29, 1769

"Having once or twice of late hear you Speak highly in praise of the Jersey College, as if you had a desire of sending your Son William there (who I am told is a youth fond of study and instruction, and disposed to a sedentary studious life; in following of which he may not only promote his own happiness, but the future welfare of others) I shou'd be glad, if you have no other objection to it than what may arise from the expence, if you wou'd send him there as soon as it is convenient and depend on me for Twenty five pounds this Currency a year for his support so long as it may be necessary for the completion of his Education. If I live to see the accomplishment of this term, the sum here stipulated shall be annually paid, and if I die in the mean while, this letter shall be obligatory upon my Heirs or Executors to do it according to the true intent and meaning hereof. No other return is expected, or wished for this offer, than that you will accept it with the same freedom and good will with which it is made, and that you may not even consider it in the light of an obligation, or mention it as such; for be assur'd that from me it will never be known." – George Washington, letter to William Ramsay, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1769; Fitzpatrick 2:499-500

Letter to George Mason – April 5, 1769

"At a time, when our lordly masters in Great Britain will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty, which we have derived from our ancestors. But the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, April 5, 1769; Fitzpatrick 2:500

"That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, on which all the good and evil of life depends, is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the dernier resort. Addresses to the throne, and remonstrances to Parliament, we have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of. How far, then, their attention to our rights and privileges is to be awakened or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufacturers, remains to be tried." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, April 5, 1769; Fitzpatrick 2:500-501

"The extravagant and expensive man has the same good plea to retrench his expenses. He is thereby furnished with a pretext to live within bounds, and embraces it. Prudence dictated economy to him before, but his resolution was too weak to put it in practice; For how can I, says he, who have lived in such and such a manner, change my method? I am ashamed to do it, and, besides, such an alteration in the system of my living will create suspicions of the decay in my fortune, and such a thought the world must not harbour. I will e'en continue my course, till at last the course discontinues the estate a sale of it being the consequence of his perseverance in error. This I am satisfied is the way, that many, who have set out in the wrong track, have reasoned, till ruin stares them in the face." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, April 5, 1769; Fitzpatrick 2:503

Letter to Robert Cary & Company – July 25, 1769

"[I]f there are any Articles contained in either of the respective Invoices (Paper only excepted) which are Tax'd by Act of Parliament for the purpose of Raising a Revenue in America, it is my express desire and request, that they may not be sent, as I have very heartily enterd into an Association (Copies of which, I make no doubt you have seen otherwise I shoud have Inclosed one) not to Import any Article which now is or hereafter shall be Taxed for this purpose untill the said Act or Acts are repeal'd. I am therefore particular in mentioning this matter as I am fully determined to adhere religiously to it, and may perhaps have wrote for some things unwittingly which may be under these Circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Robert Cary & Company, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1769; Fitzpatrick 2:512-513

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – May 13, 1770

"A natural parent has only two things principally to consider, the improvement of his son, and the finances to do it with." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, May 13, 1770; Fitzpatrick 3:13

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – January 2, 1771

"To be acquainted with the French Tongue, is become a part of polite Education; and to a Man who has any [prospect] of mixing in a large Circle absolutely [necessary. Without] Arithmetic, the common [affairs of] Life are not to be managed [] and the Mathematics [] (branches of it) is equally [] of Philosophy, Moral, Natural,&c. I should think a very desirable knowledge for a Gentleman." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, January 2, 1771; Fitzpatrick 3:36

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – June 5, 1771

"[I] conceive there is much greater circumspection to [be observed] by a Guardian than a natural Parent, who is only accountable to his own Conscience for his Conduct; whereas any faupas in a Guardian however well meant the Action, seldom fails to meet with malicious construction." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, June 5, 1771; Fitzpatrick 3:44

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – July 9, 1771

"I conceive a knowledge of books is the basis upon which other knowledge is to be built." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, July 9, 1771; Fitzpatrick 3:50-51

Invoice from Robert Cary & Co. – July 18, 1771

"A Prayr. Book with the new Version of Psalms and good plain type, covd. with red Moroco., to be 7 Inchs. long 4½ wide, and as thin as possible for the greatr. ease of caryg. in the Pocket." – George Washington, invoice for goods to be shipped by Robert Cary & Co., July 18, 1771; Fitzpatrick 3:61

Letter to Reverend Jonathon Boucher – May 4, 1772

"The expediency of an American Episcopate was long and warmly debated, and at length rejected. As a substitute, the House attempted to frame an Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction, to be composed of a President and four other clergymen, who were to have full power and authority to hear and determine all matters and causes relative to the clergy, and to be vested with the [power] of Suspension, deprivation, and visitation. From this Jurisdiction an Appeal was to be had to a Court of Dele gates, to consist of an equal number of Clergymen and Lay men; but this Bill, after much canvassing, was put to Sleep, from an opinion that the subject was of too much Importance to be hastily entered into at the end of a Session." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathon Boucher, Mount Vernon, May 4, 1772; Fitzpatrick 3:81

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – May 21, 1772

"Inclination having yielded to Importunity, I am now contrary to all expectations under the hands of Mr. Peale; but in so grave -- so sullen a mood -- and now and then under the influence of Morpheus, when some critical strokes are making, that I fancy the skill of this Gentleman's Pencil, will be put to it, in describing to the World what manner of man I am." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathon Boucher, Mount Vernon, May 21, 1772; Fitzpatrick 3:83

Invoice of Goods to Be Shipped – July 1772

"Fordices Sermon's...A Large Family Bible bound in Morrocco with Cuts, and Silver Clasps...A small and very neat Prayer Book with the new Version of Psalms and Comp'm to the Alter, with Silv'r Clasps." – George Washington, excerpt of Invoice of Goods to be Shipp'd by Robt. Cary Esq. & Co. for the Use of Miss. Martha Parke Custis, and to her Charged But Consigned to Geo: Washington, Potomack Riv'r, Virginia, Viz., July 1772; Fitzpatrick 3:94

Letter to John Dalton – February 15, 1773

"I am obliged to you for the notice you have given me of an intended meeting of your Vestry [Christ Church in Alexandria] on Tuesday next. I do not know however that it will be in my power to attend, nor do I conceive it at all necessary that I should, as I am an avowed Enemy to the Scheme I have heard (but never till late believed) that some Members of your Vestry are Inclined to adopt." – George Washington, letter to John Dalton, Mountt Vernon, February 15, 1773; Fitzpatrick 3:112-113

"If the Subscription to which among others I put my name was set on foot under Sanction of an Order of Vestry as I always understood it to be, I own myself at a loss to conceive, upon what principle it is, that there should be an attempt to destroy it; repugnant it is to every Idea I entertain of justice to do so; and the right of reclaiming the Pews by the Vestry in behalf of the Parish (which have been Built by Private contribution granting the Subscription Money to be refunded with Interest,) I most clearly deny; therefore, as a parishioner who is to be saddled with the extra charge of the Subscription Money I protest against the Measure. As a Subscriber who meant to lay the foundation of a Family Pew in the New Church, I shall think myself Injured; For give me leave to ask, can the raising of that £150 under the present Scheme be considered in any other light than that of a deception? Is it presumable that this money would have been advanced if the Subscribers could possibly have conceived, that after a Solemn Act of Vestry under faith of which the Money was Subscribed the Pews would be reclaimed? Surely not! the thought is absurd! and can be stated in no better point of view than this: Here is a Parish wanting a large Church but considering the Circumstances of its Constituents is content with a Small one, till an offer is made to enlarge it by Subscription (under certain Privileges), which is acceded by the Vestry; and when Effected and the Parish better able to bear a fresh Tax what does it want? Why to destroy a solemn Compact and reclaim the Priviledges they had granted. For I look upon the refunding of Money as totally beside the question. And for what purpose, I beg leave to ask, is this to be done? I own to you I am at a loss to discover; for as every Subscriber has an undoubted right to a Seat in the Church what matters it whether he Assembles his whole Family into one Pew, or, as the Custom is have them dispers'd into two or three; and probably it is these families will increase in a proportionate degree with the rest of the Parish, so that if the Vestry had a right to annul the agreement, no disadvantage would probably happen on that account. ... Upon the whole, Sir, as I observed to you before, considering myself as a Subscriber, I enter my Protest against the measure in Agitation. As a Parishioner, I am equally averse

to a Tax which is intended to replace the Subscription Money. These will be my declared Sentiments if present at the Vestry; if I am not I shall be obliged to you for Communicating them." – George Washington, letter to John Dalton, Mount Vernon, February 15, 1773; Fitzpatrick: Vol. 3:113-114

Letter to Benedict Calvert – April 3, 1773

"I am now set down to write to you on a Subject of Importance, and of no small embarrassment to me. My Son in Law and Ward, Mr. Custis, has, as I have been informed, paid his Addresses to your Second Daughter, and having made some progress in her Affections has required her in Marriage. How far a union of this Sort may be agreeable to you, you best can tell, but I should think myself wanting in Candor was I not to acknowledge, that, Miss Nellie's amiable qualifications stands confess'd at all hands; and that, an alliance with your Family, will be pleasing to his. ... This acknowledgment being made you must permit me to add Sir, that at this, or in any short time, his youth, inexperience, and unripened Education, is, and will be insuperable obstacles in my eye, to the completion of the Marriage. As his Guardian, I conceive it to be my indispensable duty (to endeavor) to carry him through a regular course of Education, many branches of which, sorry I am to add, he is totally deficient of; and to guard his youth to a more advanced age before an Event, on which his own Peace and the happiness of another is to depend, takes place; not that I have any doubt of the warmth of his Affections, nor, I hope I may add, any fears of a change in them; but at present, I do not conceive that he is capable of bestowing that due attention to the Important consequences of a marriage State, which is necessary to be done by those, who are Inclind to enter into it; and of course, am unwilling he should do it till he is. If the Affection which they have avowd for each other is fixd upon a Solid Basis, it will receive no diminution in the course of two or three years, in which time he may prosecute his Studies, and thereby render himself more deserving of the Lady, and useful to Society; If unfortunately, (as they are both young) there should be an abatement of Affection on either side, or both, it had better precede, than follow after, Marriage. ... Delivering my Sentiments thus, will not, I hope, lead you into a belief that I am desirous of breaking off the Match; to postpone it, is all I have in view; for I shall recommend it to the young Gentleman with the warmth that becomes a man of honour, (notwithstanding he did not vouchsafe to consult either his Mother or me, on the occasion) to consider himself as much engaged to your Daughter as if the indissoluble Knot was tied; and, as the surest means of effecting this, to stick close to his Studies, (in which I flatter myself you will join me) by which he will, in a great measure, avoid those little Flirtations with other Girls which may, by dividing the Attention, contribute not a little to divide the Affection." – George Washington, letter to Benedict Calvert, Mount Vernon, April 3, 1773; Fitzpatrick 3:130-131

Letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett – April 25, 1773

"The ways of Providence being inscrutable, and the justice of it not to be scanned by the shallow eye of humanity, nor to be counteracted by the utmost efforts of human power or wisdom, resignation, and as far as the strength of our reason and religion can carry us, a cheerful acquiescence to the Divine Will, is what we are to aim." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett, Mount Vernon, April 25, 1773; Fitzpatrick 3:133

Diary Entry, Death of Patsy Custis – June 19, 1773

"June 19. At home all day. About five o'clock poor Patsy Custis Died Suddenly." – George Washington, diary entry, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1773; Fitzpatrick 3:138 Note

Letter to Burwell Bassett – June 20, 1773

"It is an easier matter to conceive, than to describe the distress of this Family; especially that of the unhappy Parent of our Dear Patsy Custis, when I inform you that yesterday removed [sic] the Sweet Innocent Girl Entered into a more happy and peaceful abode than any she has met with in the afflicted Path she hitherto has trod. ... She rose from Dinner about four o'clock in better health and spirits than she appeared to have been in for some time; soon after which she was seized with one of her usual Fits, and expired in it, in less than two minutes without uttering a word, a groan, or scarce a sigh. This sudden, and unexpected blow, I scarce need add has almost reduced my poor Wife to the lowest ebb of Misery." – George Washington, letter to Burwell Bassett, Mount Vernon, June 20, 1773; Fitzpatrick 3:138

Letter to George Muse – January 29, 1774

"Your impertinent Letter of the 24th. ulto., was delivered to me yesterday by Mr. Smith. As I am not accustomed to receive such from any Man, nor would have taken the same language from you personally, without letting you feel some marks of my resentment; I would advise you to be cautious in writing me a second of the same tenour; for though I understand you were drunk when you did it, yet give me leave to tell you, that drunkenness is no excuse for rudeness; and that, but for your stupidity and sottishness you might have known, by attending tending to the public Gazettes, (particularly Rinds of the 14th. of January last) that you had your full quantity of ten thousand acres of Land allowed you." – George Washington, letter to George Muse, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:179

Diary entry – June 4, 1774

"Went to Church and fasted all day." – George Washington, diary entry, in conformity with the vote of the burgesses to fast in sympathy with Massachusetts the day the Boston Port bill went into effect, June 1, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:219 Note

Letter to George William Fairfax – June 10, 1774

"[T]he [British] Ministry may rely on it that Americans will never be tax'd without their own consent that the cause of Boston the despotick Measures in respect to it I mean now is and ever will be considerd as the cause of America (not that we approve their conduct in destroyg. the Tea) and that we shall not suffer ourselves to be sacrificed by piece meals though god only knows what is to become of us, threatned as we are with so many hoverg. evils as hang over us at present; having a cruel and blood thirsty Enemy upon our Backs, the Indians, between whom and our Frontier Inhabitants many Skirmishes have happnd, and with whom a general War is inevitable whilst those from whom we have a right to seek protection are endeavouring by every piece of Art and despotism to fix the Shackles of Slavery upon us." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, Williamsburg, June 10, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:224

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – July 4, 1774

"As to your political sentiments, I would heartily join you in them, so far as relates to a humble and dutiful petition to the throne, provided there was the most distant hope of success. But have we not tried this already? Have we not addressed the Lords, and remonstrated to the Commons? And to what end? Did they deign to look at our petitions? Does it not appear, as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness, that there is a regular, systematic plan formed to fix the right and practice of taxation upon us? Does not the uniform conduct of Parliament for some years past confirm this? Do not all the debates, especially those just brought to us, in the House of Commons on the side of government, expressly declare that America must be taxed in aid of the British funds, and that she has no longer resources within herself? Is there any thing to be expected from petitioning after this? Is not the attack upon the liberty and property of the people of Boston, before restitution of the loss to the India Company was demanded, a plain and self-evident proof of what they are aiming at? Do not the subsequent bills (now I dare say acts), for depriving the Massachusetts Bay of its charter, and for transporting offenders into other colonies or to Great Britain for trial, where it is impossible from the nature of the thing that justice can be obtained, convince us that the administration is determined to stick at nothing to carry its point? Ought we not, then, to put our virtue and fortitude to the severest test?" – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:228-229

"With you I think it a folly to attempt more than we can execute, as that will not only bring disgrace upon us, but weaken our cause; yet I think we may do more than is generally believed, in respect to the non-importation scheme. As to the withholding of our remittances, that is another point, in which I own I have my doubts on several accounts, but principally on that of justice; for I think, whilst we are accusing others of injustice, we should be just ourselves; and how this can be, whilst we owe a considerable debt, and refuse payment of it to Great Britain, is to me inconceivable. Nothing but the last extremity, I think, can justify it. Whether this is now come, is the question." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:229

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – July 20, 1774

"[W]hat further proofs are wanted to satisfy one of the designs of the ministry, than their own acts, which are uniform and plainly tending to the same point, nay, if I mistake not, avowedly to fix the right of taxation? What hope then from petitioning, when they tell us, that now or never is the time to fix the matter? Shall we, after this, whine and cry for relief, when we have already tried it in vain? Or shall we supinely sit and see one province after another fall a prey to despotism? If I was in any doubt, as to the right which the Parliament of Great Britain had to tax us without our consent, I should most heartily coincide with you in opinion, that to petition, and petition only, is the proper method to apply for relief; because we should then be asking a favor, and not claiming a right, which, by the law of nature and our constitution, we are, in my opinion, indubitably entitled to. I should even think it criminal to go further than this, under such an idea; but none such I have. I think the Parliament of Great Britain hath no more right to put their hands into my pocket, without my consent, than I have to put my hands into theirs for money." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Mount Vernon, July 20, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:232

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – August 24, 1774

"I have no new lights to throw upon the subject, or any other arguments to offer in support of my own doctrine, than what you have seen; and could only in general add, that an innate spirit of freedom first told me, that the measures, which administration hath for some time been, and now are most violently pursuing, are repugnant to every principle of natural justice; whilst much abler heads than my own hath fully convinced me, that it is not only repugnant to natural right, but subversive of the laws and constitution of Great Britain itself, in the establishment of which some of the best blood in the kingdom hath been spilt. Satisfied, then, that the acts of a British Parliament are no longer governed by the principles of justice, that it is trampling upon the valuable rights of Americans, confirmed to them by charter and the constitution they themselves boast of, and convinced beyond the smallest doubt, that these measures are the result of deliberation, and attempted to be carried into execution by the hand of power, is it a time to trifle, or risk

our cause upon petitions, which with difficulty obtain access, and afterwards are thrown by with the utmost contempt? Or should we, because heretofore unsuspecting of design, and then unwilling to enter into disputes with the mother country, go on to bear more, and forbear to enumerate our just causes of complaint? For my own part, I shall not undertake to say where the line between Great Britain and the colonies should be drawn; but I am clearly of opinion, that one ought to be drawn, and our rights clearly ascertained." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Mount Vernon, August 24, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:241-242

"I could wish, I own, that the dispute had been left to Posterity to determine, but the Crisis is arrivd when we must assert our Rights, or Submit to every Imposition that can be heap'd upon us, till custom and use shall make us as tame and abject slaves, as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Mount Vernon, August 24, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:242

Letter to Captain Robert Mackenzie – October 9, 1774

"I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government [Massachusetts], or any other upon this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independency; but this you may at the same time rely on, that none of them will ever submit to the loss of those valuable rights and privileges, which are essential to the happiness of every free state, and without which, life, liberty, and property are rendered totally insecure." – George Washington, letter to Captain Robert Mackenzie, Philadelphia, October 9, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:246

"[I]s it to be wondered at, I repeat, that men, who wish to avert the impending blow, should attempt to oppose it in its progress, or prepare for their defence, if it cannot be diverted?" – George Washington, letter to Captain Robert Mackenzie, Philadelphia, October 9, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:246

"[I] is the ardent wish of the warmest advocates for liberty, that peace and tranquility, upon constitutional grounds, may be restored, and the horrors of civil discord prevented." – George Washington, letter to Captain Robert Mackenzie, Philadelphia, October 9, 1774; Fitzpatrick 3:246-247

Instructions for James Cleveland – January 10, 1775

"After you have got a place Inclosed, try and buy me all the Buffalo Calves you can get and make them as gentle as possible. I would not stick at any reasonable price for them, especially the Cow Calves, but I should like at least two Bull Calves for fear of Accidents as I am very anxious to raise a Breed of them." – George Washington, Instructions for James Cleveland, January 10, 1775; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 3:261

Letter to John West – January 13, 1775

"I never deny, or even hesitate in granting any request that is made to me (especially by persons I esteem, and in matters of moment) without feeling in expressible uneasiness." – George Washington, letter to John West, Mount Vernon, January 13, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:262

"I can solemnly declare to you, that for this year or two past, there has been scarce a Moment that I can properly call my own: For what with my own business, my present Wards, My Mothers (which is wholly in my hands), Colo. Colvills, Mrs. Savages, Colo. Fairfax's, Colo. Mercers (for Colo. Tayloe though he accepted of the Trust jointly with myself, seems no ways inclined to take any part of the Execution of it), and the little Assistance I have undertaken to give in the management of my Brother Augustines Affairs (for I have absolutely refused to qualify as an Executor) keeps me, together with the share I take in publick Affairs, constantly engaged in writing Letters, Settling Accts., and Negotiating one piece of business or another in behalf of one or other of these Concerns; by which means I have really been deprived of every kind of enjoyment, and had almost fully resolved, to engage in no fresh matter, till I had entirely wound up the old." – George Washington, letter to John West, Mount Vernon, January 13, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:262

Virginia Gazette – January 12, 1775

"In spite of Gage's flaming sword,
Or Carleton's Canadian troop,
Brave Washington shall give the word,
And we'll make them howl and whoop."
– *Virginia Gazette*, January 12, 1775; Ford 2:457 Note

Letter to John Augustine Washington – March 25, 1775

"I have promised to review the Independant Company of Richmond sometime this Summer, they having made me a tender of the Command of it at the sametime I could review yours and shall very cheerfully accept the honr. of Commanding it if occasion requires it to be drawn out, as it is my full intention to devote my Life and Fortune in the cause we are engagd in, if need be." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, March 25, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:276-277

Letter to Edward Montague – April 5, 1775

"It gives me much pain to find two Gentl[ema]n brothers, who individually stand high in the esteem of their countrymen, imbibing unfavorable impressions, and, to their joint Friends, mu[tu]ally arraigning the conduct of each other, when I am satisfied that both think themselves right, and that neither hath made proper allowance for the situation of the other." – George Washington, letter to Edward Montague, Mount Vernon, April 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:285

"[T]he nature of a Virginia Estate being such, that without close application it never fails bringing the proprietors in Debt annually, as Negroes must be clothed and fed, taxes paid, &c, &c, whether anything is made or not." – George Washington, letter to Edward Montague, Mount Vernon, April 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:285

Newspaper Advertisement – April 23, 1775

"Forty Dollars Reward. Ran away from the subscriber, on the 19th instant, at night, two servant men, viz. Thomas Spears, a joiner, born in *Bristol*, about 20 years of age, 5 feet 6 inches and a half high, slender made. He has light grey or blueish colored eyes, a little pock marked, and freckled, with sandy colored hair, cut short; his voice is coarse, and somewhat drawling. He took with him a coat, waistcoat, and breeches, of light brown duffil, with black horn buttons, a light colored cloth waistcoat, old leather breeches, check and oznabrig shirts, a pair of new milled yarn stockings, a pair of old ribbed ditto, new oznabrig trowsers, and a felt hat, not much the worse for wear. William Webster, a brickmaker, born in *Scotland*, and talks pretty broad. He is about 5 feet 6 inches high, and well made, rather turned of 30, with light brown hair, and roundish face. He had an olive colored coat, pretty much worn, with black horn buttons, duffil waistcoat and breeches (same as *Spears's*) oznabrig trowsers, and check and oznabrig shirts. They went off in a small yawl, with turpentine sides and bottom, the inside painted with a mixture of tar and red lead. Masters of vessels are cautioned against receiving of them; and the above reward is offered to any person who will deliver them at my dwelling-house in this county, or twenty dollars for each from George Washington." – George Washington, newspaper advertisement, Fairfax County, April 23, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:289

Letter to George William Fairfax – May 31, 1775

"Unhappy it is though to reflect, that a Brother's Sword has been sheathed in a Brother's breast, and that, the once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with Blood, or Inhabited by Slaves. Sad alternative! But can a virtuous Man hesitate in his choice?" – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, Philadelphia, May 31, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:292

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HERITAGE (SCCHK)

SECTION II: Revolutionary War



"Washington, Lafayette, and Tilghman at Yorktown" by Charles Willson Peale

Speech to Congress, accepting appointment as Commander-In-Chief – June 16, 1775

"Tho' I am truly sensible of the high honor done me in this appointment, yet I feel great distress from a consciousness that my abilities and military experience may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the Congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty and exert every power I possess in the service and for support of the glorious cause." – George Washington, speech to John Hancock, President of Congress, accepting appointment as Commander-In-Chief, June 16, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:292

"But lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with." – George Washington, speech to John Hancock, President of Congress, accepting appointment as Commander-In-Chief, June 16, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:292

"As to pay, Sir, I beg leave to Assure the Congress that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to have accepted this Arduous employment [at the expence of my domestt. ease and happiness] I do not wish to make any proffit from it: I will keep an exact Account of my expences; those I doubt not they will discharge and that is all I desire." – George Washington, speech to John Hancock, President of Congress, accepting appointment as Commander-In-Chief, June 16, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:292-293

Letter to Martha Washington – June 18, 1775

"I am now set down to write to you on a subject which fills me with inexpressible concern, and this concern is greatly aggravated and increased, when I reflect upon the uneasiness I know it will give you. It has been determined in Congress, that the whole army raised for the defense of the American cause shall be put under my care, and that it is necessary for me to proceed immediately to Boston to take upon me the command of it. ... You may believe me, my dear patsy, when I assure you, in the most solemn manner that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part with you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity, and that I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home, than I have the most distant prospect of finding abroad, if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny, that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed to answer some good purpose. You might, and I suppose did perceive, from the tenor of my letters, that I was apprehensive I could not avoid this appointment, as I did not intimate when I should return. That was the case. It was utterly out of my power to refuse this appointment, without exposing my character to such censures, as would have reflected dishonor upon myself, and given pain to my friends." – George Washington, letter to Martha Washington, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, June 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:293-294

"I shall rely, therefore, confidently on that Providence, which has heretofore preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but that I shall return safe to you in the fall." – George Washington, letter to Martha Washington, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, June 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:294

"I shall feel no pain from the toil or the danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness I know you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg, that you will summon your whole fortitude, and pass your time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much sincere satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen. My earnest and ardent desire is, that you would pursue any plan that is most likely to produce content, and a tolerable degree of tranquillity; as it must add greatly to my uneasy feelings to hear, that you are dissatisfied or complaining at what I really could not avoid." – George Washington, letter to Martha Washington, Philadelphia, Philadelphia, June 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:294

"As life is always uncertain, and common prudence dictates to every man the necessity of settling his temporal concerns, while it is in his power, and while the mind is calm and undisturbed." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Martha Washington, Philadelphia, June 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:294-295

Letter to John Parke Custis – June 19, 1775

"I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the colonies to take the command of the continental army. It is an honor I neither sought after, or was by any means fond of accepting, from a consciousness of my own inexperience and inability to discharge the duties of so important a trust. However, as the partiality of the Congress has placed me in this distinguished point of view, I can make them no other return but what will flow from close attention and upright intention -- for the rest I can say nothing." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, Philadelphia, June 19, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:295

"My great concern upon this occasion is, the thought of leaving your mother under the uneasiness which I fear this affair will throw her into; I therefore hope, expect, and indeed have no doubt, of your using every means in your power to keep up her spirits, by doing everything in your power to promote her quiet. I have, I must confess, very uneasy feelings on her account, but as it has been a kind of unavoidable necessity which has led me into this appointment, I shall more readily hope that success will attend it and crown our meetings with happiness." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, Philadelphia, June 19, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:295-296

Letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett – June 19, 1775

"I am now Imbarked on a tempestuous ocean, from whence perhaps no friendly harbor is to be found. I have been called upon by the unanimous voice of the Colonies to the command of the Continental Army. It is an honor I by no means aspired to. It is an honor I wished to avoid, as well as from an unwillingness to quit the peaceful enjoyment of my Family, as from a thorough conviction of my own Incapacity & want of experience in the conduct of so momentous a concern; but the partiality of the Congress, added to some political motives, left me without a choice. May God grant, therefore, that my acceptance of it, may be attended with some good to the common cause, & without injury (from want of knowledge) to my own reputation. I can answer but for three things: a firm belief of the justice of our cause, close attention in the prosecution of it, and the strictest Integrity. If these cannot supply the place of ability & Experience, the cause will suffer, & more than probable my character along with it, as reputation derives its principal support from success." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett, Philadelphia, June 19, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:296-297

"I can answer but for three things, a firm belief of the justice of our Cause, close attention in the prosecution of it, and the strictest Integrity. If these cannot supply the place of Ability and Experience, the cause will suffer, and more than probable my character along with it, as reputation derives its principal support from success; but it will be remembered, I hope, that no desire or insinuation of mine, placed me in this situation. I shall not be deprived therefore of a comfort in the worst event if I retain a consciousness of having acted to the best of my judgment." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett, Philadelphia, June 19, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:297

"As to other articles of Intelligence I must refer you to the Gazette, as the Printers pick up every thing that is stirring in that way." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Burwell Bassett, Philadelphia, June 19, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:297

Letter to the Captains of Several Independent Companies in Virginia – June 20, 1775

"I have launched into a wide and extensive field, too boundless for my abilities, and far, very far, beyond my experience. I am called, by the unanimous voice of the Colonies, to the command of the Continental army; an honor I did not aspire to; an honor I was solicitous to avoid, upon a full conviction of my inadequacy to the importance of the service. The partiality of the Congress, however, assisted by a political motive, rendered my reasons unavailing..." – George Washington, letter to the Captains of Several Independent Companies in Virginia, Philadelphia, June 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:298

Letter to John Augustine Washington – June 20, 1775

"I am Imbarked on a wide Ocean, boundless in its prospect, and from whence, perhaps, no safe harbour is to be found." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, June 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:299

"That I may discharge the Trust to the Satisfaction of my Employers, is my first wish; that I shall aim to do it, there remains as little doubt of; how far I may succeed is another point; but this I am sure of, that in the worst event I shall have the consolation of knowing (if I act to the best of my judgment) that the blame ought to lodge upon the appointers, not the appointed, as it was by no means a thing of my own seeking, or proceeding from any hint of my friends." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, June 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:299

"I shall hope that my Friends will visit and endeavor to keep up the spirits of my Wife as much as they can, as my departure will, I know, be a cutting stroke upon her." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, June 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:300

Letter to Mrs. Martha Washington – June 23, 1775

"My Dearest: As I am within a few minutes of leaving this city, I would not think of departing from it with out dropping you a line, especially as I do not know whether it may be in my power to write again till I get to the camp at Boston. I go fully trusting in that providence, which has been more bountiful to me than I deserve and in full confidence of a happy meeting with you some time in the fall. I have no time to add more as I am surrounded with company to take leave of me. I return an unalterable affection for you which neither time or distance can change my best love to Jack and Nelly and regard for the rest of the family; conclude me with the utmost truth and Sincerety, Yr. entire." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Martha Washington, Philadelphia, June 23, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:301

Letter to the New York Provincial Congress – June 26, 1775

"At the same time that with you I deplore the unhappy necessity of such an Appointment, as that with which I am now honoured, I cannot but feel sentiments of the highest gratitude for this affecting Instance of distinction and Regard." – George Washington, letter to the New York Provincial Congress, June 26, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:305

"May your every wish be realized in the success of America, at this important and interesting Period; and be assured that the every exertion of my worthy Colleagues and myself will be equally extended to the re-establishment of Peace and Harmony between the Mother Country and the Colonies, as to the fatal, but necessary, operations of War." – George Washington, letter to the New York Provincial Congress, June 26, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:305

"When we assumed the Soldier, we did not lay aside the Citizen; and we shall most sincerely rejoice with you in that happy hour when the establishment of American Liberty, upon the most firm and solid foundations, shall enable us to return to our Private Stations in the bosom of a free, peaceful and happy Country." – George Washington, letter to the New York Provincial Congress, June 26, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:305

Answer to an Address of the Massachusetts Legislature – July 4, 1775

"The course of human affairs forbids an expectation that troops formed under such circumstances should at once possess the order, regularity, and discipline of veterans. Whatever deficiencies there may be, will, I doubt not, soon be made up by the activity and zeal of the officers, and the docility and obedience of the men. These qualities, united with their native bravery and spirit, will afford a happy presage of success, and put a final period to those distresses, which now overwhelm this once happy country." – George Washington, answer to an address of the Massachusetts Legislature, July 4, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:307-308

"In return for your affectionate wishes to myself, permit me to say, that I earnestly implore the divine Being, in whose hands are all human events, to make you and your constituents as distinguished in private and public happiness, as you have been by ministerial oppression, and private and public distress." – George Washington, answer to an address of the Massachusetts Legislature, July 4, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:308

General Orders – July 4, 1775

"The Continental Congress having now taken all the Troops of the several Colonies, which have been raised, or which may be hereafter raised for the support and defence of the Liberties of America; into their Pay and Service. They are now the Troops of the UNITED PROVINCES of North America; and it is hoped that all Distinctions of Colonies will be laid aside, so that one and the same Spirit may animate the whole, and the only Contest be, who shall render, on this great and trying occasion, the most essential service to the Great and common cause in which we are all engaged." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 4, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:309

"The General most earnestly requires, and expects, a due observance of those articles of war, established for the Government of the army, which forbid profane cursing, swearing and drunkenness; And in like manner requires and expects, of all Officers, and Soldiers, not engaged on actual duty, a punctual attendance on divine Service, to implore the blessings of heaven upon the means used for our safety and defence." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 4, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:309

"All Officers are required and expected to pay diligent Attention to keep their Men neat and clean; to visit them often at their quarters, and inculcate upon them the necessity of cleanliness, as essential to their health and service." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 4, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:309-310

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – July 10, 1775

"I find myself already much embarrassed for want of a Military Chest; these embarrassments will increase every day, I must therefore most earnestly request that money may be forwarded to me as soon as possible. The want of this most necessary Article, will I fear, produce great Inconveniences if not prevented by an early attention." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp at Cambridge, July 10, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:324

General Orders – July 15, 1775

"Notwithstanding the Orders already given, the General hears with astonishment, that not only Soldiers, but Officers unauthorized are continually conversing with the Officers and Sentries of the Enemy; any Officer, Non Commissioned Officer or Soldier, or any Person whatsoever, who is detected holding any Conversation, or carrying on any Correspondence with any of the Officers or Sentries of the advanc'd posts of the enemy, will be immediately brought before a General Court Martial, and punished with the utmost severity." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 15, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:346

General Orders – July 16, 1775

"The Continental Congress having earnestly recommended, that "Thursday next the 20th. Instant, be observed by the Inhabitants of all the english Colonies upon this Continent, as a Day of public Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer; that they may with united Hearts and Voice unfeignedly confess their Sins before God, and supplicate the all wise and merciful disposer of events, to avert the Desolation and Calamities of an unnatural war". The General orders, that Day to be religiously observed by the Forces under his Command, exactly in manner directed by the proclamation of the Continental Congress: It is therefore strictly enjoind on all Officers and Soldiers, (not upon duty) to attend Divine Service, at the accustomed places of worship, as well in the Lines, as the Encampments and Quarters; and it is expected, that all those who go to worship, do take their Arms, Ammunitions and Accoutrements and are prepared for

immediate Action if called upon. If in the judgment of the Officers, the Works should appear to be in such forwardness as the utmost security of the Camp requires, they will command their men to abstain from all Labour upon that solemn day." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, July 16, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:341-342

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – July 18, 1775

"I should hope every Post would be deemed Honor able, which gave a Man Opportunity to serve his Country." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut, July 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:343

"As the Cause of our common Country, calls us both to an active and dangerous Duty, I trust that Divine Providence, which wisely orders the Affairs of Men, will enable us to discharge it with Fidelity and Success." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut, July 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:344

Letter to Samuel Washington – July 20, 1775

"I came to this place the 3d instant and found a numerous army of Provincials under very little command, discipline or order. I found an enemy who had drove our People from Bunker's Hill strongly Intrenching and from accts had reason to expect before this, another attack from them; but as we have been incessantly (Sundays not excepted) employed in throwing up works of defense, I rather begin to believe now that they think it rather a dangerous experiment; and that we shall remain sometime watching the motions of each other, at the distance of little more than a mile and in full view." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Camp at Cambridge, July 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 37:512

Letter to General Thomas – July 23, 1775

"If our cause is just, [it] ought to be supported; but when shall it find support if gentlemen of merit and experience, unable to conquer the prejudices of a competition, withdraw themselves in the hour of danger?" – George Washington, letter to General Thomas, July 23, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:359

"A people contending for life and liberty are seldom disposed to look with a favorable eye upon either men or measures whose passions, interests or consequences will clash with those inestimable objects." – George Washington, letter to General Thomas, July 23, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:361

Pennsylvania Gazette – July 26, 1775

"Go, gallant Washington—
And when (all milder means withstood)
Ambition, tam'd by loss of blood,
Regains her reason; then, on angels' wings,
Shall peace descend, and shouting greet,
With peels of joy, these happy climes."
– "Pennsylvania Gazette," 26 July, 1775; – Ford 2:457 Note

General Orders – August 5, 1775

"The Church to be cleared to morrow, and the Rev'd Mr. Doyles will perform Divine Service therein at ten O'clock." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, August 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:403

Letter to the Provincial Congress of New York – August 8, 1775

"It must give great concern to any considerate mind, that, when this whole continent, at a vast expense of blood and treasure, is endeavoring to establish its liberties on the most secure and solid foundations, not only by a laudable opposition of force to force, but denying itself the usual advantages of trade, there are men among us so basely sordid, as to counteract all our exertions, for the sake of a little gain." – George Washington, letter to the Provincial Congress of New York, Camp at Cambridge, August 8, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:407

General Orders – August 9, 1775

"Capt. [William Hudson] Ballard of Col Fryes Regiment tried by the late General Court-Martial for "profane swearing and for beating, and abusing his men": The Court find the Prisoner guilty, in two Instances of profane swearing and of beating his men, and therefore sentence him to pay, a Fine of Four Shillings, for each offence." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge,

August 9, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:410

Letter to Lieutenant General Thomas Gage – August 20, 1775

"What may have been the ministerial views, which have precipitated the present crisis, Lexington, Concord, and Charlestown can best declare. May that God, to whom you then appealed, judge between America and you. Under his providence, those who influence the councils of America, and all the other inhabitants of the United Colonies, at the hazard of their lives, are determined to hand down to posterity those just and invaluable privileges, which they received from their ancestors." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant General Thomas Gage, Headquarters, Cambridge, Augusts 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:431

Letter to Lund Washington – August 20, 1775

"The People of this government have obtained a Character which they by no means deserved; their officers generally speaking are the most indifferent kind of People I ever saw. I have already broke one Colo. and five Captains for Cowardice and for drawing more Pay and Provisions than they had Men in their Companies; there is two more Colos. now under arrest, and to be tried for the same offences; in short they are by no means such Troops, in any respect, as you are led to believe of them from the acct. which are published, but I need not make myself Enemies among them, by this declaration, although it is consistent with truth. I dare say the Men would fight very well (if properly Officered) although they are an exceeding dirty and nasty people; had they been properly conducted at Bunkers Hill (on the 17th of June) or those that were there properly supported, the Regulars would have met with a shameful defeat, and a much more considerable loss than they did, which is now known to be exactly 1057 killed and wounded; it was for their behaviour on that occasion that the above Officers were broke, for I never spared one that was accused of Cowardice but brot 'em to immediate Tryal." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Camp at Cambridge, August 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:433

General Orders – August 22, 1775

"The General does not mean to discourage the practice of bathing whilst the weather is warm enough to continue it, but he expressly forbids, any persons doing it, at or near the Bridge in Cambridge, where it has been observed and complained of, that many Men, lost to all sense of decency and common modesty, are running about naked upon the Bridge, whilst Passengers, and even Ladies of the first fashion in the neighbourhood, are passing over it, as if they meant to glory in their shame." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, August 22, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:440

Letter to Richard Henry Lee – August 29, 1775

"There has been so many great, and capital errors, and abuses to rectify -- so many examples to make -- and so little Inclination in the officers of inferior Rank to contribute their aid to accomplish this work, that my life has been nothing else (since I came here) but one continued round of annoyance and fatigue ; in short no pecuniary recompense could induce me to undergo what I have especially as I expect, by shewing so little countenance to irregularities and publick abuses to render myself very obnoxious to a greater part of these People." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henry Lee, Camp at Cambridge, August 29, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:454

Handbill to the Inhabitants of the Island of Bermuda – September 6, 1775

"As Descendents of Freeman and Heirs with us of the same Glorious Inheritance, we flatter ourselves that tho' divided by our Situation, we are firmly united in Sentiment; the Cause of Virtue and Liberty is Confined to no Continent or Climate, it comprehends within its capacious Limits, the Wise and good, however dispersed and seperated in Space or distance." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of the Island of Bermuda, Camp at Cambridge 3 Miles from Boston, September 6, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:475

"The wise disposer of all Events has hitherto smiled upon our virtuous Efforts; Those Mercenary Troops, a few of whom lately boasted of Subjugating this vast Continent, have been check'd in their earliest Ravages and are now actually encircled in a small Space; their Arms disgraced, and Suffering all the Calamities of a Siege. ." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of the Island of Bermuda, Camp at Cambridge 3 Miles from Boston, September 6, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:475-476

Handbill to the Inhabitants of Canada – September 1775

"The Colonies, confiding in the Justice of their Cause and the purity of their intentions, have reluctantly appealed to that Being, in whose hands are all Human Events: He has hitherto smiled upon their virtuous Efforts: The Hand of Tyranny has been arrested in its Ravages." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of Canada, September 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:479

"[W]e rejoice that our Enemies have been deceived with Regard to you: They have persuaded themselves, they have even dared to say, that the Canadians were not capable of distinguishing between the Blessings of Liberty and the Wretchedness of Slavery; that gratifying the Vanity of a little Circle of Nobility would blind the Eyes of the people of Canada. By such Artifices they hoped to bend you

to their Views; but they have been deceived: Instead of finding in you that poverty of Soul, and baseness of Spirit, they see with a Chagrin equal to our Joy, that you are enlightened, generous, and Virtuous; that you will not renounce your own Rights, or serve as Instruments to deprive your Fellow subjects of theirs. Come then, my Brethern, Unite with us in an indissoluble Union. Let us run together to the same Goal." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of Canada, September 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:479

"We have taken up arms in defence of our liberty, our property, our wives, and our children; we are determined to preserve them, or die. We look forward with pleasure to that day, not far remote, we hope, when the inhabitants of America shall have one sentiment, and the full enjoyment of the blessings of a free government." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of Canada, September 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:479

"The cause of America, and of liberty, is the cause of every virtuous American citizen; whatever may be his religion or descent, the United Colonies know no distinction but such as slavery, corruption, and arbitrary dominion may create. Come, then, ye generous citizens, range yourselves under the standard of general liberty, against which all the force and artifices of tyranny will never be able to prevail." – George Washington, handbill to the Inhabitants of Canada, September 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:480

Letter to the Major and Brigadier Generals – September 8, 1775

"It is to know whether, in your judgment, we cannot make a successful attack upon the Troops in Boston, by means of Boats, cooperated by an attempt upon their Lines at Roxbury. The success of such an Enterprize depends, I well know, upon the all wise disposer of Events, and is not within the reach of human wisdom to foretell the Issue; but, if the prospect is fair, the undertaking is justifiable under the following, among other reasons which might be assigned." – George Washington, letter to the Major and Brigadier Generals, Camp at Cambridge, September 8, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:483

Letter to Benedict Arnold – September 14, 1775

"I also give it in Charge to you to avoid all Disrespect to or Contempt of the Religion of the Country and its Ceremonies. Prudence, Policy, and a true Christian Spirit, will lead us to look with Compassion upon their Errors without insulting them. While we are contending for our own liberty, we should be very cautious not to violate the rights of conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the judge of the hearts of men, and to him only in this case they are answerable." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Camp at Cambridge, September 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:492

"Any other Prisoners who may fall into your Hands, you will treat with as much Humanity and kindness, as may be consistent with your own Safety and the publick Interest." – George Washington, Instructions to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Camp at Cambridge, September 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:494

"In such a cause every post is honorable in which a man can serve his country." – George Washington, Instructions to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Camp at Cambridge, September 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:494

"Be very particular in restraining not only your own Troops, but the Indians from all Acts of Cruelty and Insult, which will disgrace the American Arms, and irritate our Fellow Subjects against us." – George Washington, Instructions to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Camp at Cambridge, September 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:495

"As the Contempt of the Religion of a Country by ridiculing any of its Ceremonies or affronting its Ministers or Votaries has ever been deeply resented, you are to be particularly careful to restrain every Officer and Soldier from such Imprudence and Folly and to punish every Instance of it. On the other Hand, as far as lays in your power, you are to protect and support the free Exercise of the Religion of the Country and the undisturbed Enjoyment of the rights of Conscience in religious Matters, with your utmost Influence and Authority." – George Washington, Instructions to Colonel Benedict Arnold, September 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:495-496

General Orders – September 16, 1775

"James Finley Serjt in Capt Price's Company of Rifle men, tried by a General Court Martial for "expressing himself disrespectfully of the Continental Association, and drinking Genl Gage's health" -- The Court sentence the Prisoner to be deprived of his Arms and Accoutrements, put in a Horse Cart, with a Rope round his neck, and drum'd out of the Army and rendered for-ever incapable of serving in the Continental army." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, September 16, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:497

General Orders – September 17, 1775

"The Revd. Mr. John Murray is appointed Chaplain to the Rhode-Island Regiments and is to be respected as such." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, September 17, 1775 Fitzpatrick 3:497

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – September 21, 1775

"It gives me real concern to observe yours of the 15th Inst. that you should think it Necessary to distinguish between my Personal and Public Character and confine your Esteem to the former." – George Washington, letter to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, September 21, 1775; Fitzpatrick 3:503

General Orders – October 3, 1775

"Any Officer; non Commission'd Officer, or Soldier, who shall hereafter be detected playing at Toss-up, pitch and hustle, or any other Games of chance, in, or near the Camp or Villages bordering on the encampments; shall without delay be confined and punished for disobedience of orders. – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, October 3, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:1-2

Letter to Robert Carter Nicholas – October 5, 1775

"The Enemy in Boston and on the heights of Charlestown (two Peninsulas surrounded in a manner by Ships of War and Floating Batteries) are so strongly fortified, as to render it almost impossible to force their Lines, which are thrown up at the Head of each Neck; without great Slaughter on our side, or cowardice on their, it is absolutely so. We, therefore, can do no more than keep them besieged, which they are, to all intents and purposes, as close as any Troops upon earth can be, that have an opening to the Sea. Our advanced Works and theirs are within Musket shot. We daily undergo a cannonade, which has done no injury to our Works and very little hurt to our Men. Those insults we are obliged to submit to for want of Powder, being obliged (except now and then giving them a Shot) to reserve what we have for closer Work than Cannon distance." – George Washington, letter to Robert Carter Nicholas, Camp at Cambridge, October 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:15

General Orders – November 5, 1775

"As the Commander in Chief has been apprized of a design form'd for the observance of that ridiculous and childish custom of burning the Effigy of the pope -- He cannot help expressing his surprise that there should be Officers and Soldiers in this army so void of common sense, as not to see the impropriety of such a step at this Juncture; at a Time when we are solliciting, and have really obtain'd, the friendship and alliance of the people of Canada, whom we ought to consider as Brethren embarked in the same Cause. The defence of the general Liberty of America: At such a juncture, and in such Circumstances, to be insulting their Religion, is so monstrous, as not to be suffered or excused; indeed instead of offering the most remote insult, it is our duty to address public thanks to these our Brethren, as to them we are so much indebted for every late happy Success over the common Enemy in Canada." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, November 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:65

Letter to Joseph Reed – November 8, 1775

"Connecticut wants no Massachusetts man in their corps; Massachusetts thinks there is no necessity [for a Rhode-Islander] to be introduced amongst them; and New Hampshire says, it's very hard, that her valuable and experienced officers (who are willing to serve) should be discarded, because her own regiments, under the new establishment, cannot provide for them." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, November 8, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:77

Letter to Colonel William Woodford – November 10, 1775

"The best general advice I can give, and which I am sure you stand in no need of, is to be strict in your discipline; that is, to/require nothing unreasonable of your officers and men, but see that whatever is required be punctually complied with. Reward and punish every man according to his merit, without partiality or prejudice; hear his complaints; if well founded, redress them; if otherwise, discourage them, in order to prevent frivolous ones. Discourage vice in every shape, and impress upon the mind of every man, from the first to the lowest, the importance of the cause, and what it is they are contending for. For ever keep in view the necessity of guarding against surprises. In all your marches, at times, at least, even when there is no possible danger, move with front, rear, and flank guards, that they may be familiarized to the use; and be regular in your encampments, appointing necessary guards for the security of your camp. In short, whether you expect an enemy or not, this should be practised; otherwise your attempts will be confused and awkward, when necessary: Be plain and precise in your orders, and keep copies of them to refer to, that no mistakes may happen. Be easy and condescending in your deportment to your officers, but not too familiar, lest you subject yourself to a want of that respect, which is necessary to support a proper command." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Woodford, Cambridge, November 10, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:80-81

General Orders – November 14, 1775

"This moment a confirmation is arrived of the glorious Success of the Continental Arms, in the Reduction, and Surrender, of the Fortress of St. Johns; the Garrisons of that place and Chamblee being made Prisoners of war. The Commander in Chief is confident, the

Army under his immediate direction, will shew their Gratitude to providence, for thus favouring the Cause of Freedom and America; and by their thankfulness to God, their zeal and perseverance in this righteous Cause, continue to deserve his future blessings." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, November 14, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:87

General Orders – November 18, 1775

"The Honorable the Legislature of this Colony having thought fit to set apart Thursday the 23d of November Instant, as a day of public thanksgiving "to offer up our praises, and prayers to Almighty God, the Source and Benevolent Bestower of all good; That he would be pleased graciously to continue, to smile upon our Endeavours, to restore peace, preserve our Rights, and Privileges, to the latest posterity; prosper the American Arms, preserve and strengthen the Harmony of the United Colonies, and avert the Calamities of a civil war." The General therefore commands that day to be observed with all the Solemnity directed by the Legislative Proclamation, and all Officers, Soldiers and others, are hereby directed, with the most unfeigned Devotion, to obey the same." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, November 18, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:98

Letter to Joseph Reed – November 20, 1775

"I can never think of promoting my convenience at the expense of your interest and inclination." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Camp at Cambridge, November 20, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:104

Letter to Lund Washington – November 26, 1775

"Let the Hospitality of the House, with respect to the poor, be kept up; Let no one go hungry away. If any of these kind of People should be in want of Corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them in idleness; and I have no objection to your giving my Money in Charity, to the Amount of forty or fifty Pounds a Year, when you think it well bestowed stowed. What I mean, by having no objection, is, that it is my desire that it should be done. You are to consider that neither myself or Wife are now in the way to do these good Offices. In all other respects, I recommend it to you, and have no doubts, of your observing the greatest Oeconomy and frugality; as I suppose you know that I do not get a farthing for my services here more than my Expenses; It becomes necessary, therefore, for me to be saving at home." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, November 26, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:115

Letter to Richard Henry Lee – November 27, 1775

"For God's sake hurry the signers of money, that our wants may be supplied. It is a very singular case, that their signing cannot keep pace with our demands." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henry Lee, Camp at Cambridge, November 27, 1775 Fitzpatrick 4:117

General Orders – November 28, 1775

"The General hopes Such frequent Favors from divine providence will animate every American to continue, to exert his utmost, in the defence of the Liberties of his Country, as it would now be the basest ingratitude to the Almighty, and to their Country, to shew any the least backwardness in the public cause." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, November 28, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:119

Letter to Joseph Reed – November 28, 1775

"What an astonishing thing it is, that those who are employed to sign the Continental bills should not be able, or inclined, to do it as fast as they are wanted. They will prove the destruction of the army, if they are not more attentive and diligent. Such a dearth of public spirit, and want of virtue, such stock-jobbing, and fertility in all the low arts to obtain advantages of one kind or another, in this great change of military arrangement, I never saw before, and pray God I may never be witness to again. What will be the ultimate end of these manoeuvres is beyond my scan. I tremble at the prospect." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, November 28, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:124-125

"Could I have foreseen what I have, and am likely to experience, no consideration upon earth should have induced me to accept this command. A regiment or any subordinate department would have been accompanied with ten times the satisfaction, and perhaps the honor." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, November 28, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:125

Letter to Joseph Reed – November 30, 1775

"I have a very singular pleasure in informing you that by express last night from Cape Ann, I received the glad tidings of the capture of the Nancy storeship from London, by Capt. Manley, contents as per the enclosed copy, (taken by Mr. Pierce, to save me, you must know, the trouble of enumeration.) He unluckily miss'd the greatest prize in the world; their whole ordinance, the ship containing it

being just ahead, but he could not have got both; and we must be thankful, as I truly am, for this instance of Divine favour; for nothing surely ever came more apropos; that no part of it may slip through my fingers, (for I have no doubt as this capture was made in sight of the other vessel, of there being some bold push to recover it) I instantly upon receiving the account, ordered four companies down to protect the stores; teams to be impress'd, to remove them without delay; and Col. Glover to assemble the minute men in the neighbourhood of Cape Ann, to secure the removal to places of safety." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Camp, November 30, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:130

Letter to Major General Philip Schuyler – December 5, 1775

"The Cause we are engaged in is so just and righteous, that we must try to rise superior to every Obstacle in it's Support." – George Washington, letter to Major General Philip Schuyler, Cambridge, December 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:148

Letter to Colonel Benedict Arnold – December 5, 1775

"I have no Doubt but a Junction of your Detachment with the Army under General Montgomery, is effected before this. If so, you will put yourself under his Command and will, I am persuaded, give him all the Assistance in your Power, to finish the glorious Work you have begun. That the Almighty may preserve and prosper you in it, is the sincere and fervent Prayer of, Dr. Sir, &c." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Cambridge, December 5, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:149

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – December 15, 1775

"Having heard that It's doubtful, whether the Reverend Mr. Leonard from your Colony, will have it in his power to Continue here as a Chaplain, I cannot but express some Concern, as I think his departure will be a loss. His General Conduct has been exemplary and praiseworthy: In discharging the duties of his Office, active and industrious; he has discovered himself warm and steady friend to his Country, and taken great pains to animate the Soldiery and Impress them with a knowledge of the important rights we are contending for. Upon the late desertion of the Troops, he gave a Sensible and judicious discourse, holding forth the Necessity of courage and bravery and at the same time of Obedience and Subordination to those in Command. ... In justice to the merits of this Gentleman, I thought it only right to give you this Testimonial of my Opinion of him and to mention him to you, as a person worthy of your esteem and that of the Public." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Cambridge, December 15, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:164

Letter to Joseph Reed – December 15, 1775

"I cannot charge myself with incivility, or, what in my opinion is tantamount, ceremonious civility, to the gentlemen of this colony; but if such my conduct appears, I will endeavor at a reformation, as I can assure you...that I wish to walk in such a line as will give most general satisfaction." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, December 15, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:165

"[T]here is no restraining men's tongues, or pens, when charged with a little vanity." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, December 15, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:166

"The accounts which you have given of the sentiments of the people respecting my conduct, is extremely flattering. Pray God, I may continue to deserve them, in the perplexed and intricate situation I stand in." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, December 15, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:166

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 31, 1775

"It has been represented to me, that the free Negroes who have served in this Army, are very much dissatisfied at being discarded. As it is to be apprehended that they may seek employ in the Ministerial Army, I have presumed to depart from the Resolution respecting them and have given licence for their being enlisted, If this is disapproved by Congress I shall put a stop to it." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Cambridge, December 31, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:195

"I have long had it on my mind to mention to Congress, that frequent applications had been made to me respecting the Chaplain's pay, which is too small to encourage men of Abilities. Some of them who have left their Flocks, are Obligated to pay the parson acting for them more than they receive. I need not point out the great utility of Gentlemen whose lives and conversation are unexceptionable, being employed for that service in this Army. There are two ways of making it worth the Attention of such; one is, an advancement of their pay, the other, that one Chaplain be appointed to two regiments; this last I think may be done without Inconvenience, I beg leave to recommend this matter to Congress whose sentiments thereon I shall impatiently expect." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Cambridge, December 31, 1775; Fitzpatrick 4:197-198

General Orders – January 1, 1776

"His Excellency hopes that the Importance of the great Cause we are engaged in, will be deeply impressed upon every Man's mind, and wishes it to be considered, that an Army without Order, Regularity and Discipline, is no better than a Commission'd Mob; Let us therefore, when every thing dear and valuable to Freemen is at stake; when our unnatural Parent is threat'ning of us with destruction from every quarter, endeavour by all the Skill and Discipline in our power, to acquire that knowledge, and conduct, which is necessary in War -- Our Men are brave and good; Men who with pleasure it is observed, are addicted to fewer Vices than are commonly found in Armies; but it is Subordination and Discipline (the Life and Soul of an Army) which next under providence, is to make us formidable to our enemies, honorable in ourselves, and respected in the world." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, January 1, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:202-203

General Orders – January 2, 1776

"That every Officer may be perfectly well acquainted with the establishment of the present Army, in Order that they may be govern'd by it, and make the Returns agreeable thereto -- The General informs them, that each Regiment is to consist of a Colonel, a Lieut. Colonel, a Major, eight Companies, an Adjutant, a Quarter Master, Surgeon and a Surgeon's Mate; whether a Chaplain will be allowed to each Regiment, or one to two Regiments is yet to be determined; each Company is to consist of a Captain, a first and Second Lieutenant, an Ensign, four Serjeants, four Corporals, a Drummer and Fifer, and Seventy-six Privates, and no more, under any pretence, or plea whatsoever." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, January 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:204-205

Letter to Joseph Reed – January 4, 1776

"[F]or more than two months past, I have scarcely immersed from one difficulty before I have [been] plunged into another. How it will end, God in his great goodness will direct. I am thankful for his protection to this time. We are told that we shall soon get the army completed, but I have been told so many things which have never come to pass, that I distrust every thing." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, January 4, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:211-212

Letter to Joseph Reed – January 14, 1776

"The hints you have communicated from time to time not only deserve, but do most sincerely and cordially meet with my thanks. You cannot render a more acceptable service, nor in my estimation give a more convincing proof of your friendship, than by a free, open, and undisguised account of every matter relative to myself or conduct." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, January 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:240

"I can bear to hear of imputed or real errors. The man who wishes to stand well in the opinion of others must do this; because he is thereby enabled to correct his faults, or remove prejudices which are imbibed against him." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, January 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:240

"We are now without any money in our treasury, powder in our magazines, arms in our stores. We are without a brigadier (the want of which has been twenty times urged), engineers, expresses (though a committee has been appointed these two months to establish them), and by and by, when we shall be called upon to take the field, shall not have a tent to lie in. Apropos, what is doing with mine?" – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, January 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:241

"The reflection on my situation, and that of this army, produces many an uneasy hour when all around me are wrapped in sleep. Few people know the predicament we are in, on a thousand accounts; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been, if, instead of accepting of a command under such circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks, or, if I could have justified the measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country, and lived in a wigwam. If I shall be able to rise superior to these and many other difficulties, which might be enumerated, I shall most religiously believe, that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for surely if we get well through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labour under. ... Could I have foreseen the difficulties, which have come upon us; could I have known, that such a backwardness would have been discovered in the old soldiers to the service, all the generals upon earth should not have convinced me of the propriety of delaying an attack upon Boston till this time." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, January 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:243

General Orders – February 7, 1776

"The Continental Congress having been pleased to order, and direct, that there shall be one Chaplain to two Regiments, and that the pay of each Chaplain shall be Thirty-three dollars and one third, pr Kalendar Month -- The Revd. Abiel Leonard is appointed Chaplain to the Regiment of Artillery, under the command of Col Knox, and to the 20th. Regiment, at present commanded by Lt. Col Durkee. ... As there can be but fourteen Chaplains under this establishment, to the 28 Regiments (including the Artillery, and Riffle Regiments) and as preference will be given to those Chaplains who served last Year, provided their conduct, and attendance, have been unexceptionable: The Brigadiers are to enquire into this matter and with the Colonels, and commanding Officers of the several

Regiments, arrange them agreeable to the above direction, and make report thereof that orders, may issue accordingly." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 7, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:307-308

Letter to John Hancock, the President of Congress – February 9, 1776

"To bring men [to be] well acquainted with the duties of a soldier, requires time. To bring them under proper discipline and subordination, not only requires time, but is a work of great difficulty, and, in this army, where there is so little distinction between the officers and soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect, then, the same service from raw and undisciplined recruits, as from veteran soldiers, is to expect what never did and perhaps never will happen. Men, who are familiarized to danger, meet it without shrinking; whereas troops unused to service often apprehend danger where no danger is." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Continental Congress, Cambridge, February 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:316

"Men who are familiarized to danger, meet it without shrinking, whereas those who have never seen Service often apprehend danger where no danger is. Three things prompt Men to a regular discharge of their Duty in time of Action: natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutor'd, and the Disciplin'd Soldiers; but the latter, most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A Coward, when taught to believe, that if he breaks his Ranks, and abandons his Colours, will be punished with Death by his own party, will take his chance against the Enemy; but the Man who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, Acts from present feelings regardless of consequences." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Continental Congress, Cambridge, February 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:316

"[Y]et the cost of marching home one set of Men; bringing in another, the havock and waste occasioned by the first; the repairs necessary for the Second, with a thousand incidental charges and Inconveniencies which have arisen, and which it is scarce possible either to recollect or describe, amounts to near as much as the keeping up a respectable body of Troops the whole time, ready for any emergency, would have done. To this may be added that you never can have a well Disciplined Army. ... To bring Men well acquainted with the Duties of a Soldier, requires time; to bring them under proper discipline and Subordination, not only requires time, but is a Work of great difficulty; and in this Army, where there is so little distinction between the Officers and Soldiers, requires an uncommon degree of attention. To expect then the same Service from Raw, and undisciplined Recruits as from Veteran Soldiers, is to expect what never did, and perhaps never will happen. Men who are familiarized to danger, meet it without shrinking, whereas those who have never seen Service often apprehend danger where no danger is. Three things prompt Men to a regular discharge of their Duty in time of Action: natural bravery, hope of reward, and fear of punishment. The two first are common to the untutor'd, and the Disciplin'd Soldiers; but the latter, most obviously distinguishes the one from the other. A Coward, when taught to believe, that if he breaks his Ranks, and abandons his Colours, will be punished with Death by his own party, will take his chance against the Enemy; but the Man who thinks little of the one, and is fearful of the other, Acts from present feelings regardless of consequences. Again, Men of a days standing will not look forward, and from experience we find, that as the time approaches for their discharge they grow careless of their Arms, Ammunition, Camp utensils &ca. nay even the Barracks themselves have felt uncommon marks of Wanton depredation, and lays us under fresh trouble, and additional expence, in providing for every fresh sett; when we find it next to impossible to procure such Articles, as are absolutely necessary in the first Instance. To this may be added the Seasoning which new Recruits must have to a Camp, and the loss, consequent therefrom. But this is not all, Men engaged for a short, limited time only, have the Officers too much in their power; for to obtain a degree of popularity, in order to induce a second Inlistment, a kind of familiarity takes place which brings on a relaxation of Discipline, unlicensed furloughs, and other Indulgences, incompatible with order and good Government, by which means, the latter part of the time for which the Soldier was engaged, is spent in undoing what you were aiming to inculcate in the first. ... To go into an enumeration of all the Evils we have experienced in this late great change of the Army, and the expence incidental to it, to say nothing of the hazard we have run, and must run, between the discharging of one Army and Inlistment of another (unless an Inormous expence of Militia is incurred) would greatly exceed the bounds of a Letter; what I have already taken the liberty of saying, will serve to convey a general Idea of the matter, and, therefore I shall with all due deference, take the freedom to give it as my opinion, that if the Congress have any reason to believe, that there will be occasion for Troops another year, and consequently of another inlistment, they would save money, and have infinitely better Troops if they were, even at the bounty of twenty, thirty or more Dollars to engage the Men already Inlisted ('till January next) and such others as may be wanted to compleat to the Establishment, for and during the War. -- I will not undertake to say that the Men may be had upon these terms, but I am satisfied that it will never do to let the matter alone as it was last year, till the time of service was near expiring. The hazard is too great in the first place. In the next the trouble and perplexity of disbanding one Army and raising another at the same Instant, and in such a critical situation as the last was, is scarcely in the power of Words to describe, and such as no man, who has experienced it once, will ever undergo again." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, Cambridge, February 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:316-318

Letter to Joseph Reed – February 10, 1776

"I know—but to declare it, unless to a friend, may be an argument of vanity—the integrity of my own heart. I know the unhappy predicament I stand in; I know that much is expected of me; I know, that without men, without arms, without ammunition, without any thing fit for the accommodation of a soldier, little is to be done; and, which is mortifying, I know, that I cannot stand justified to the world without exposing my own weakness, and injuring the cause, by declaring my wants, which I am determined not to do, further than unavoidable necessity brings every man acquainted with them." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, February 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:319

"My own situation feels so irksome to me at times, that, if I did not consult the public good, more than my own tranquillity, I should long ere this have put every thing to the cast of a Dye." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, February 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:319

"The party to Bunker's Hill had some good and some bad men engaged in it. One or two courts have been held on the conduct of part of it. To be plain, these people—among friends—are not to be depended upon if exposed; and any man will fight well if he thinks himself in no danger. I do not apply this only to these people. I suppose it to be the case with all raw and undisciplined troops." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, February 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:320

"With respect to myself, I have never entertained an idea of an accommodation, since I heard of the measures, which were adopted in consequence of the Bunker's Hill fight. The king's speech has confirmed the sentiments I entertained upon the news of that affair; and if every man was of my mind, the ministers of Great Britain should know, in a few words, upon what issue the cause should be put. I would not be deceived by artful declarations, nor specious pretences; nor would I be amused by unmeaning propositions; but in open, undisguised, and manly terms proclaim our wrongs, and our resolution to be redressed. I would tell them, that we had borne much, that we had long and ardently sought for reconciliation upon honorable terms, that it had been denied us, that all our attempts after peace had proved abortive, and had been grossly misrepresented, that we had done every thing which could be expected from the best of subjects, that the spirit of freedom beat too high in us to submit to slavery, and that, if nothing else could satisfy a tyrant and his diabolical ministry, we are determined to shake off all connexions with a state so unjust and unnatural. This I would tell them, not under covert, but in words as clear as the sun in its meridian brightness." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, February 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:321

"Would to heaven the plan you speak of for obtaining arms may succeed. The acquisition would be great, and give fresh life and vigor to our measures." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, February 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:322

General Orders – February 20, 1776

"As it is necessary that every Regiment should be furnished with Colours, and that those Colours should, if it can be done, bear some kind of similitude to the Uniform of the regiment to which they belong, the Colonels with their respective Brigadiers and the Qt. Mr. Genl. may fix upon such as are proper, and can be procured. -- There must be to each Regiment, the Standard (or Regimental Colours) and Colours for each Grand Division, the whole to be small and light -- The Number of the Regiment is to be mark'd on the Colours, and such a Motto, as the Colonel may choose, in fixing upon which, the General advises a Consultation amongst them." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:341

"The Genl. cannot again help urging it in the strongest terms to the Colonels the necessity of the strictest attention to the discipline of their Men -- learning them to march and perform all the different Evolutions and Manoevures; which is of more essential service, than dwelling too long upon the Manual Exercise -- He also recommends to the Colonels a proper attention to the Cloathing of their Officers and Men, that they may appear in a soldierlike manner." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:341

"The General desires that the Brigadiers, who have not complied with the Orders of the 6th Instant concerning the Ammunition; and that of the 7th respecting the Arrangement of Chaplains; may be informed, that he expects an immediate report from them." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:341

General Orders – February 26, 1776

"All officers, non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers are positively forbid playing at cards, and other games of chance. At this time of public distress men may find enough to do in the service of their God, and their Country, without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 26, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:347

General Orders – February 27, 1776

"As the Season is now fast approaching, when every man must expect to be drawn into the Field of action, it is highly necessary that he should prepare his mind, as well as every thing necessary for it. It is a noble Cause we are engaged in, it is the Cause of virtue, and mankind, every temporal advantage and comfort to us, and our posterity, depends upon the Vigour of our exertions; in short, Freedom, or Slavery must be the result of our conduct, there can therefore be no greater Inducement to men to behave well: -- But it may not be amiss for the Troops to know, that if any Man in action shall presume to skulk, hide himself, or retreat from the enemy, without the orders of his commanding Officer; he will be instantly shot down, as an example of cowardice; -- Cowards having too frequently disconcerted the best form'd Troops, by their dastardly behaviour." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 27, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:355

"Next to the favour of divine providence, nothing is more essentially necessary to give this Army the victory over all its enemies, than Exactness of discipline, Alertness when on duty, and Cleanliness in their arms and persons; unless the Arms are kept clean, and in good firing Order, it is impossible to vanquish the enemy; and Cleanliness of the person gives health, and soldier-like appearance. --

That no confusion may ensue when the troops are called to action, the General has order'd all the posts, and guards of the lines, and redoubts, to be so fix'd and regulated, as every Officer, and Soldier, may know his place, and his duty; and to confirm the order and discipline, the General orders, that the Officers and men, who are to mount guard, do parade every morning at eight O'Clock, upon their regimental parades, where they are to be reviewed by the Adjutant, in the presence of a Field Officer, who is to see that their arms, ammunition and accoutrements are compleat, and the men dress'd in a soldier-like manner." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, February 27, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:355-356

General Orders – March 6, 1776

"Thursday the seventh Instant, being set apart by the Honourable the Legislature of this province, as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation, "to implore the Lord, and Giver of all victory, to pardon our manifold sins and wickedness's, and that it would please him to bless the Continental Arms, with his divine favour and protection" -- All Officers, and Soldiers, are strictly enjoined to pay all due reverence, and attention on that day, to the sacred duties due to the Lord of hosts, for his mercies already received, and for those blessings, which our Holiness and Uprightness of life can alone encourage us to hope through his mercy to obtain." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Cambridge, March 6, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:369

Letter to Joseph Reed – March 7, 1776

"We had prepared boats, a detachment of 4000 men, &c., &c., for pushing to the west part of Boston, if they had made any formidable attack upon Dorchester. I will not lament or repine at any act of Providence because I am in a great measure a convert to Mr. Pope's opinion, that whatever is, is right, but I think everything had the appearance of a successful issue, if we had come to an engagement on that day. It was the 5th of March, which I recalled to their remembrance as a day never to be forgotton; an engagement was fully expected, and I never saw spirits higher, or more prevailing." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, March 7, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:370-371

Letter to Joseph Reed – March 25, 1776

"Since my last, things remain nearly in statu quo. The enemy have the best knack at puzzling people I ever met with in my life. They have blown up, burnt, and demolished the Castle totally, and are now all in Nantasket Road, have been there ever since Wednesday, what doing, the Lord knows. Various are the conjectures." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, March 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:430-431

Letter to Landon Carter – March 25, 1776

"We were obliged therefore to provide an amazing quantity of Chandeliers, Fascines &c. for the Work, and on the Night of the 4th., after a severe, and heavy Cannonade and bombardment of the Town, the three preceding Nights, to divert the Enemy's attention from our real object, we carried them on under cover of darkness and took full possession of those heights without the loss of a single Man. Upon their discovering of it next Morning, great preparations were made for attacking us; but not being ready before the afternoon, and the Weather getting very tempestuous much Blood was saved, and a very important blow (to one side or the other) prevented. That this remarkable interposition of Providence is for some wise purpose, I have no doubt; but as the principal design of the manoeuvre was to draw the Enemy to an engagement under disadvantages; as a premeditated Plan was laid for this purpose, and seemed to be succeeding to my utmost wish, and as no Men seemed better disposed to make the appeal than ours did upon that occasion, I can scarce forbear lamenting the disappointment." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Cambridge, March 25, 1776 Fitzpatrick 4:433-434

Address to the Massachusetts Legislature – March 28, 1776

"When the councils of the British nation had formed a plan for enslaving America, and depriving her sons of their most sacred and invaluable privileges, against the clearest remonstrances of the constitution, of justice, and of truth, and, to execute their schemes, had appealed to the sword, I esteemed it my duty to take a part in the contest, and more especially on account of my being called thereto by the unsolicited suffrages of the representatives of a free people; wishing for no other reward, than that arising from a conscientious discharge of the important trust, and that my services might contribute to the establishment of freedom and peace, upon a permanent foundation, and merit the applause of my countrymen, and every virtuous citizen." – George Washington, answer to an address from the Massachusetts Legislature, March 28, 1776, published in The Pennsylvania Evening Post of April 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:440

"That the metropolis of your colony is now relieved from the cruel and oppressive invasions of those, who were sent to erect the standard of lawless domination, and to trample on the rights of humanity, and is again open and free for its rightful possessors, must give pleasure to every virtuous and sympathetic heart; and its being effected without the blood of our soldiers and fellow-citizens must be ascribed to the interposition of that Providence, which has manifestly appeared in our behalf through the whole of this important struggle, as well as to the measures pursued for bringing about the happy event. ... May that being, who is powerful to save, and in whose hands is the fate of nations, look down with an eye of tender pity and compassion upon the whole of the United Colonies; may

He continue to smile upon their counsels and arms, and crown them with success, whilst employed in the cause of virtue and mankind. May this distressed colony and its capital, and every part of this wide extended continent, through His divine favor, be restored to more than their former lustre and once happy state, and have peace, liberty, and safety secured upon a solid, permanent, and lasting foundation." – George Washington, answer to an address from the Massachusetts Legislature, March 28, 1776, published in The Pennsylvania Evening Post of April 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:441-442

Orders and Instructions to Major General Israel Putnam – March 29, 1776

"Devoutly praying that the Power which has hitherto sustained the American Arms, may continue to bless them, with his divine Protection, I bid you Farewell." – George Washington, Orders and Instructions to Major General Israel Putnam, Head Quarters, Cambridge, March 29, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:444

Letter to John Augustine Washington – March 31, 1776

"Upon their [British] discovery of the Works next Morning, great preparations were made for attacking them, but not being ready before the Afternoon and the Weather getting very tempestuous, much blood was Saved, and a very important blow (to one side or the other) prevented. That this remarkable Interposition of Providence is for some wise purpose, I have not a doubt; but as the principal design of the Manouvre was to draw the Enemy to an Ingagement under disadvantages, as a premeditated Plan was laid for this purpose, and seemed to be succeeding to my utmost wish, and as no Men seem'd better disposed to make the appeal than ours did upon that occasion, I can scarce forbear lamenting the disappointment, unless the dispute is drawing to an accommodation, and the Sword going to be Sheathed." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:447-448

"I believe I may, with great truth affirm, that no man perhaps since the first institution of armies ever commanded one under more difficult circumstances than I have done. To enumerate the particulars would fill a volume. Many of the difficulties and distresses were of so peculiar a cast that, in order to conceal them from the enemy, I was obliged to conceal them from my friends, and indeed from my own army, thereby subjecting my conduct to interpretations unfavorable to my character, especially by those at a distance who could not in the smallest degree be acquainted with the springs that governed it." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:450

"The share you have taken in these Publick disputes is commendable and praiseworthy; it is a duty we owe our country; a claim which posterity has upon us. It is not sufficient for a man to be a passive friend and well-wisher to the cause. This, and every other cause of such a nature, must inevitably perish under such an opposition. Every person should be active in some department or other, without paying too much attention to private interest." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:450

"Inactivity in some, disaffection in others, and timidity in many, may hurt the cause. Nothing else can; for unanimity will carry us through triumphantly." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, March 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:450

Letter to Joseph Reed – April 1, 1776

"My countrymen I know, from their form of government, and steady attachment heretofore to royalty, will come reluctantly into the idea of independence, but time and persecution bring many wonderful things to pass; and by private letters, which I have lately received from Virginia, I find "Common Sense" is working a powerful change there in the minds of many men." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, April 1, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:455

"Unhappy wretches! Deluded mortals! Would it not be good policy to grant a generous amnesty, and conquer these people by a generous forgiveness?" – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, Cambridge, April 1, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:456

Letter to Joseph Reed – April 15, 1776

"I am exceedingly concerned to hear of the divisions and parties, which prevail with you, and in the southern colonies, on the score of independence. These are the shelves we have to avoid, or our bark will split and tumble to pieces. Here lies our great danger, and I almost tremble when I think of this rock. Nothing but disunion can hurt our cause. This will ruin it, if great prudence, temper, and moderation is not mixed in our counsels, and made the governing principles of the contending parties." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, New York, April 15, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:482-483

Letter to John Adams – April 15, 1776

"I have ever thought, and am still of Opinion that no terms of accommodation will be offered by the British Ministry, but such as cannot be accepted by America. We have nothing my Dear Sir, to depend upon but the protection of a kind Providence and unanimity among

ourselves." – George Washington, letter to John Adams, New York, April 15, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:483-484

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – April 18, 1776

"Agreeable to your request, I have communicated in General Orders to the Officers and Soldiers under my Command, the thanks of Congress for their good behaviour in the Service; and am happy in having such an opportunity of doing justice to their Merit." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Acknowledgment of the Thanks of Congress on the British Evacuation of Boston, New York, April 18, 1776 Fitzpatrick 4:489

"They were indeed, at first, 'a band of undisciplined Husbandmen,' but it is (under God) to their bravery and attention to their duty, that I am indebted for that success which has procured me the only reward I wish to receive; the affection and esteem of my Countrymen." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Acknowledgment of the Thanks of Congress on the British Evacuation of Boston, New York, April 18, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:489

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – April 23, 1776

"No person wishes more to save money to the public than I do; nor no person has aim'd more at it; but there are some cases in which parsimony may be ill placed." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, April 23, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:506

General Orders – April 25, 1776

"Complaints having been made to the General, of Injuries done to the Farmers, in their Crops, and Fields, by the Soldiers passing over, and trampling upon the young Growth, in a wanton and disorderly manner -- he expressly orders the Officers commanding, either upon duty, or in quarters in the Country, to take especial Care to put a Stop to such practices and endeavour to convince their Men, that we come to protect; not to injure the property of any man." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, April 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:514

Letter to John Augustine Washington – April 29, 1776

"Mrs. Washington is still here, and talks of taking the Small Pox, but I doubt her resolution. Mr. and Mrs. Custis will set out in a few days for Maryland. I did not write to you by the 'Squire, because his departure in the first place, was sudden; in the next, I had but little to say. I am very sorry to hear that my Sister was Indisposed with a sore Breast when you last wrote. I hope she is now recover'd of it, and that all your Family are well; that they may continue so, and that our once happy Country may escape the depredations and Calamities attending on War, is the fervent prayer of, dear Sir, your most affectionate brother. ... Mrs. Washington, Mr. and Mrs. Custis join in love to my Sister and the rest of the Family." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, New York, April 29, 1776; Fitzpatrick 4:531

General Orders – May 10, 1776

"Joseph Child of the New York Train of Artillery tried at a late General Court Martial whereof Col. Huntington was President for "defrauding Christopher Stetson of a dollar, also for drinking Damnation to all Whigs, and Sons of Liberty, and for profane cursing and swearing." -- The Court finding the prisoner guilty of profane cursing and swearing and speaking contemptuously of the American Army, do sentence him to be drum'd out of the army. ... Zodiac Piper of Capt. [Benjamin] Ledyard's Company and Thos. Watkins of Capt. [David] Lyon's Company, both in Col. McDougal's Regiment, tried by the same General Court Martial, for "being concern'd in a riot on Saturday night" -- The Court find the Prisoner, Piper, guilty of being from his quarters at an unseasonable hour, and being concern'd, in raising a disturbance in the streets, and do sentence him to be confined six days, upon bread and water, for said offence: The Court are of opinion, that the Prisoner, Watkins, is guilty of being out of his quarters at unseasonable hours, and of profane cursing and swearing, and do sentence him to be confin'd six days; upon bread and water -- and be fined one sixth of a dollar for profane swearing, as by the 3rd Article is prescribed. ... The General approves of the foregoing Sentences, and orders them to take place to morrow morning at Guard mounting." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, May 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:31-32

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – May 13, 1776

"No matter from what cause your promptness to work proceeded, whether from the Salem acc't of an Invasion, or the general Plan of Security; which common prudence rendered obviously necessary for the preservation of every capital place. If the work is done, I will not quarrel about the motives, for you may be assured it was no small degree of vexation to me, to hear (as I did from various hands) of the slothful manner in which they were executing. I could not help writing to Gen' Ward on this Subject, and roundly to the Engineer, under whose conduct the Fortifications were going on...It is but too common for Men under accusation to endeavour to

exculpate themselves by charging others. I would therefore ask, if Gen'l W -- is judged an improper person to Command five Regiments in a peaceable Camp, or Garrison, (for in truth I did not, nor do not, expect any further attempt will be made upon Boston) why was he appointed to the first Military Command in the Massachusetts Government? by whom was he appointed in the first Instance? and by whom supported in the next? Could I think the Second Officer in Command; an Officer of their own Creating, an improper person to Intrust the immediate defence of the Government to, admitting that active Scenes were like to follow. If on the other hand they were not, and my opinion had coincided with theirs respecting Gen'l W -- was it not prudent in me to bring active officers into active service? consider the matter in either point of view then and I think reason will acquit me, but free People will judge freely, and I do not condemn them for it, it is the only way to bring matters to a fair discussion..." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, New York, May 13, 1776; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 37:526

General Orders – May 15, 1776

"The Continental Congress having ordered, Friday the 17th. Instant to be observed as a day of "fasting, humiliation and prayer, humbly to supplicate the mercy of Almighty God, that it would please him to pardon all our manifold sins and transgressions, and to prosper the Arms of the United Colonies, and finally, establish the peace and freedom of America, upon a solid and lasting foundation" -- The General commands all officers, and soldiers, to pay strict obedience to the Orders of the Continental Congress, and by their unfeigned, and pious observance of their religious duties, incline the Lord, and Giver of Victory, to prosper our arms." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, May 15, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:43

General Orders – May 16, 1776

"As the Troops are to be exempt from all duties of fatigue to morrow, the regiments are to parade on their regimental parades, and to be marched from thence a little before Ten, to hear divine service from their respective chaplains." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, May 16, 1776 Fitzpatrick 5:50

Letter to John Augustine Washington - May 31, 1776

"I am very glad to find that the Virginia Convention have passed so noble a vote, and with so much unanimity, 6 things have come to that pass now, as to convince us, that we have nothing more to expect from the justice of G. Britain; also, that she is capable of the most delusive Arts, for I am satisfied that no Commissioners ever were design'd, except Hessians and other Foreigners; and that the Idea was only to deceive, and throw us off our guard; the first it has too effectually accomplished, as many Members of Congress, in short, the representation of whole Provinces, are still feeding themselves upon the dainty food of reconciliation; and tho' they will not allow that the expectation of it has any influence upon their judgments (with respect to their preparations for defence) it is but too obvious that it has an operation upon every part of their conduct and is a clog to their proceedings, it is not in the nature of things to be otherwise, for no Man, that entertains a hope of seeing this dispute speedily, and equitably adjusted by Commissioners, will go to the same expence and run the same hazards to prepare for the worst event as he who believes that he must conquer, or submit to unconditional terms, and its concomitants, such as Confiscation, hanging, &c., &c." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, May 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:91

"To form a new Government, requires infinite care, and unbounded attention; for if the foundation is badly laid the superstructure must be bad, too much time therefore, cannot be bestowed in weighing and digesting matters well. We have, no doubt, some good parts in our present constitution; many bad ones we know we have, wherefore no time can be misspent that is employed in seperating the Wheat from the Tares. My fear is, that you will all get tired and homesick, the consequence of which will be, that you will patch up some kind of Constitution as defective as the present; this should be avoided, every Man should consider, that he is lending his aid to frame a Constitution which is to render Million's happy, or Miserable, and that a matter of such moment cannot be the Work of a day." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, May 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:92

"We expect a very bloody Summer of it at New York and Canada, as it is there I expect the grand efforts of the Enemy will be aim'd; and I am sorry to say that we are not, either in Men, or Arms, prepared for it; however, it is to be hoped, that if our cause is just, as I do most religiously believe it to be, the same Providence which has in many Instances appear'd for us, will still go on to afford its aid." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, May 31, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:93

General Orders – June 6, 1776

"George Edgel of Capt. [David] Hobby's Company, and Colonel Ritzema's Regiment, tried at the General Court Martial whereof Colonel Nixon is President, for 'leaving his guard, getting drunk, and damning the Officer of the guard,' is found guilty, and sentenced to be whipped Thirty-nine Lashes on his bare back. ... John O'Brien of Capt. Varick's Company, and Col McDougall's Regiment, tried at the above Court Martial for 'sleeping on his post when Sentry,' is found guilty, and sentenced to be whipped Twenty Lashes on his bare back. ... Benjamin Richards of Capt. [Thomas] Mighill's Company and Col Baldwin's Regiment, tried at the above Court Martial for 'publishing the Countersign, and openly proclaiming it in a public house after Taptoo Beating' -- is found guilty, and sentenced to be whipped Twenty Lashes, on his bare back, for said offence. ... John Sinner of Capt. [John] Johnson's Company, and Colo. McDougall's

Regiment, tried at the above Court Martial for 'Desertion' is found guilty of the same, and sentenced to be whipped Twenty Lashes, on his bare back for said offence. ... The General approves of all the foregoing Sentences, and orders that they be put in execution at the usual time and place." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, June 6, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:100-101

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – June 20, 1776

"The Institution of a War Office is certainly an Event of great importance, and in all probability will be recorded as such in the Historic Page. The Benefits derived from it, I flatter myself will be considerable tho' the plan, upon which it is first formed may not be entirely perfect. This like other great Works in its first Edition, may not be entirely free from Error. Time will discover its Defects and experience suggest the Remedy, and such further Improvements as may be necessary; but it was right to give it a Beginning." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, June 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:159

Letter to Major General Horatio Gates – June 24, 1776

"The Distance of the Scene, and the frequent Changes which have happened in the State of our Affairs in Canada, do not allow me to be more particular in my Instructions. The Command is important, the Service difficult, but honourable; and I most devoutly pray that Providence may crown your Arms with abundant Success." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, New York, June 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:175

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – June 28, 1776

"I would also beg leave to mention to Congress, the necessity there is of some new regulations being entered into respecting the Chaplains of the Army. They will remember, that application was made to increase their pay, which was conceived too low for their support. It was proposed that if, It could not be done for the whole, the number should be lessened and one, Chaplain be appointed to two Regiments and an additional allowance made them on that Account. The Latter expedient was adopted, which, at that time and while the Army continued altogether at one Encampment, answered or at least did not produce any Capital inconveniences; But the Army now being differently circumstanced from what it then was, part here, part at Boston, and a third part detached to Canada, has Introduced much confusion and disorder in this Instance. nor do I know how it is possible to remedy the Evil, but by affixing one to each Regiment, with a salary competent to their support; no Shifting, no Change from one Regiment to another, can answer the purpose, and in many cases it could not be done, tho' the Regiments should consent, as where detachments are composed of unequal numbers, or Ordered from different Posts. Many more Inconveniences might be pointed out, but these it is presumed will sufficiently shew the defect of the present establishment and the propriety of an alteration. What that Alteration shall be Congress will please to determine." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, June 28, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:192-193

General Orders – June 30, 1776

"Upon the Signal for the enemies approach, or upon any alarm, all fatigue parties are immediately to repair to their respective Corps, with their arms, ammunition and accoutrements ready for instant action; the working parties in no other instance are to be interrupted; the finishing of our Lines of defence and other works expeditiously, is a matter of so much consequence, that the General is persuaded from the known Zeal of the troops, that officers and men will stand in no need of arguments, to stimulate them upon common exertion upon the occasion, his anxiety for the Honor of the American Arms, and the noble cause we are engaged in, not a distrust in the officers care, induces him once more, and while time will allow it, to recommend a thorough Inspection in the men's arms and ammunition, to see that every Soldier is completed to Twenty-four Rounds, and has a good Flint, well fixed into the lock; in short to be well prepared for an engagement is, under God, (whose divine Aid it behoves us to supplicate) more than one half the battle." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, June 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:205-206

General Orders – July 2, 1776

"The time is now near at hand which must probably determine, whether Americans are to be, Freemen, or Slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their Houses, and Farms, are to be pillaged and destroyed, and they consigned to a State of Wretchedness from which no human efforts will probably deliver them." – George Washington, General Orders before the Battle of Long Island, Headquarters, Highlands, New York, July 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:211

"The fate of unborn Millions will now depend, under God, on the Courage and Conduct of this army -- Our cruel and unrelenting Enemy leaves us no choice but a brave resistance, or the most abject submission; this is all we can expect -- We have therefore to resolve to conquer or die: Our own Country's Honor, all call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion, and if we now shamefully fail, we shall become infamous to the whole world." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:211

"Let us therefore rely upon the goodness of the Cause, and the aid of the supreme Being, in whose hands Victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble Actions. The Eyes of all our Countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings, and

praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the tyranny mediated against them." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:211-212

"Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and shew the whole world, that a Freeman contending for LIBERTY on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:212

"Any officer, or soldier, or any particular Corps, distinguishing themselves by any acts of bravery, and courage, will assuredly meet with notice and rewards; and on the other hand, those who behave ill, will as certainly be exposed and punished -- The General being resolved, as well for the Honor and Safety of the Country, as Army, to shew no favour to such as refuse, or neglect their duty at so important a crisis." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:212

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – July 3, 1776

"Our reinforcements of Militia are but small yet: Their amount I cannot ascertain, having not been able to procure a return. However, I trust, if the Enemy make an Attack, they will meet with a repulse, as I have the pleasure to inform you, that an agreeable Spirit and willingness for Action, seems to Animate and prevade the whole of our Troops." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, July 3, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:214-215

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – July 4, 1776

"Only about 40 of the three Old Companies have reinlisted, which I shall form into one for the present and place under an Officer or two, 'till a further and complete Arrangement is made, of the whole Battalion." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, July 4, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:216

Letter to Major General Artemas Ward – July 4, 1776

"The distress we are in for want of Arms induces me again to urge your sending on all such as can possibly be spared with the greatest expedition. The enemy have landed under cover of their Ships and have taken possession of Staten Island, from which in all probability they will soon make a descent upon us." – George Washington, letter to Major General Artemas Ward, New York, July 4, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:217

Letter to the Massachusetts Legislature or Committee of Safety of New York – July 9, 1776

"You will perceive by the inclosed Declaration, which I have the honor to transmit you, that Congress of late have been employed in deliberating on Matters of the utmost Importance. Impelled by Necessity and a Repetition of Injuries unsufferable without the most distant prospect of relief, they have asserted the Claims of the American Colonies to the rights of Humanity and declared them, Free and Independent States." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Legislature or Committee of Safety of the State, New York, July 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:238

Letter to Major General Artemas Ward – July 9, 1776

"Congress have made some Alteration in the Establishment of Chaplains, and advanced their Pay; as they have that of the regimental Surgeons, as you will see by their Proceedings, Copies of which in these Instances are also transmitted." – George Washington, letter to Major General Artemas Ward, New York, July 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:243

General Orders – July 9, 1776

"The Hon. Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a Chaplain to each Regiment, with the pay of Thirty-three Dollars and one third pr month -- The Colonels or commanding officers of each regiment are directed to procure Chaplains accordingly; persons of good Characters and exemplary lives -- To see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them a suitable respect and attend carefully upon religious exercises. The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary but especially so in times of public distress and danger -- The General hopes and trusts, that every officer and man, will endeavour so to live, and act, as becomes a Christian Soldier defending the dearest Rights and Liberties of his country." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:245-246

"The Hon. The Continental Congress, impelled by the dictates of duty, policy and necessity, having been pleased to dissolve the Connection which subsisted between this Country, and Great Britain, and to declare the United Colonies of North America, free and independent States : The several brigades are to be drawn up this evening on their respective Parades, at Six O'Clock, when the declaration of Congress, shewing the grounds and reasons of this measure, is to be read with an audible voice. ... The General hopes

this important Event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer, and soldier, to act with Fidelity and Courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of his Country depends (under God) solely on the success of our arms: And that he is now in the service of a State, possessed of sufficient power to reward his merit, and advance him to the highest Honors of a free Country." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, July 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:246

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – July 10, 1776

"I perceive that Congress have been employed in deliberating on measures of the most interesting Nature. It is certain that it is not with us to determine in many instances what consequences will flow from our Counsels, but yet it behoves us to adopt such, as under the smiles of a Gracious and all kind Providence will be most likely to promote our happiness; I trust the late decisive part they have taken, is calculated for that end, and will secure us that freedom and those priviledges, which have been, and are refused us, contrary to the voice of Nature and the British Constitution." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, July 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:247

"They look for Admiral Howe's arrival every day, with his Fleet and a large Reinforcement, are in high Spirits, and talk confidently of Success and carrying all before them when he comes. I trust through Divine Favor and our own Exertions they will be disappointed in their Views, and at all Events, any advantages they may gain will cost them very dear. If our Troops will behave well, which I hope will be the case, having every thing to contend for that Freeman hold dear, they will have to wade thro' much Blood and Slaughter before they can carry any part of our Works, if they carry them at all; and at best be in possession of a Melancholly and Mournfull Victory. May the Sacredness of our cause inspire our Soldiery with Sentiments of Heroism, and lead them to the performance of the noblest Exploits." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, July 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:250

Letter to Major General Philip Schuyler – July 11, 1776

"From every Appearance, they mean to make a most vigorous Push, to subdue us this Campaign; and for this Purpose to possess themselves of this Colony, if possible, as a Step leading to it. Our utmost Exertions must be used, and I trust, thro' the Favour of divine Providence, they will be disappointed in their Views." – George Washington, letter to Major General Philip Schuyler, New York, July 11, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:258

Letter to Major General Philip Schuyler – July 17, 1776

"Enjoin this upon the Officers, and let them inculcate, and press home to the Soldiery, the Necessity of Order and Harmony among them, who are embark'd in one common Cause, and mutually contending for all that Freeman [sic] hold dear. I am persuaded, if the Officers will but exert themselves, these Animosities, this Disorder, will in a great Measure subside, and nothing being more essential to the Service than that it should, I am hopeful nothing on their Parts will be wanting to effect it." – George Washington, letter to Major General Philip Schuyler, July 17, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:290

Letter to Colonel Adam Stephen – July 20, 1776

"I did not let the Anniversary of the 3d. or 9th. of this Instr. pass of with out a grateful remembrance of the escape we had at the Meadows and on the Banks of Monongahela. the same Providence that protected us upon those occasions will, I hope, continue his Mercies, and make us happy Instruments in restoring Peace and liberty to this once favour'd, but now distressed Country." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Adam Stephen, New York, July 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:313

General Orders – July 21, 1776

"With this hope and confidence, and that this Army will have its equal share of Honour, and Success; the General most earnestly exhorts every officer, and soldier, to pay the utmost attention to his Arms, and Health; to have the former in the best order for Action, and by Cleanliness and Care, to preserve the latter; to be exact in their discipline, obedient to their Superiors and vigilant on duty: With such preparation, and a suitable Spirit there can be no doubt, but by the blessing of Heaven, we shall repel our cruel Invaders; preserve our Country, and gain the greatest Honor." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, July 21, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:315

Letter to the Board of War and Ordnance – July 29, 1776

"I shall while I have the honor to remain in the service of the United States, obey to the utmost of my power and to the best of my Abilities, all orders of Congress with a scrupulous exactness." – George Washington, letter to the Board of War and Ordnance, New York, July 29, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:348-349

General Orders – August 1, 1776

"It is with great concern, the General understands, that Jealousies &c. are arisen among the troops from the different Provinces, of reflections frequently thrown out, which can only tend to irritate each other, and injure the noble cause in which we are engaged, and which we ought to support with one hand and one heart. The General most earnestly entreats the officers, and soldiers, to consider the consequences; that they can no way assist our cruel enemies more effectually, than making division among ourselves; That the Honor and Success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding Country, depends upon harmony and good agreement with each other; That the Provinces are all United to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions sunk in the name of an American; to make this honorable, and preserve the Liberty of our Country, ought to be our only emulation, and he will be the best Soldier, and the best Patriot, who contributes most to this glorious work, whatever his Station, or from whatever part of the Continent, he may come: Let all distinctions of Nations, Countries, and Provinces, therefore be lost in the generous contest, who shall behave with the most Courage against the enemy, and the most kindness and good humour to each other -- If there are any officers, or soldiers, so lost to virtue and a love of their Country as to continue in such practices after this order; The General assures them, and is directed by Congress to declare, to the whole Army, that such persons shall be severely punished and dismissed the service with disgrace." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 1, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:361

General Orders – August 3, 1776

"That the Troops may have an opportunity of attending public worship, as well as take some rest after the great fatigue they have gone through; The General in future excuses them from fatigue duty on Sundays (except at the Ship Yards, or special occasions) until further orders." – George Washington, General Orders, issued to the Continental Army at New York, August 3, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:367

"The General is sorry to be informed, that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into a fashion; he hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavor to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by impiety and folly; added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." – George Washington, General Orders, issued to the Continental Army at New York, August 3, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:367

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – August 7, 1776

"To trust altogether in the justice of our cause, without our own utmost exertions, would be tempting Providence." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Head Quarters, August 7, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:390

Letter to the Pennsylvania Associators – August 8, 1776

"The Honor and safety of our bleeding Country, and every other motive that can influence the brave and heroic Patriot, call loudly upon us, to acquit ourselves with Spirit. In short, we must now determine to be enslaved or free. If we make Freedom our choice, we must obtain it, by the Blessing of Heaven on our United and Vigorous Efforts." – George Washington, letter to the Officers and Soldiers of the Pennsylvania Associators, Head Quarters, August 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:398

"I salute you Gentlemen most Affectionately, and beg leave to remind you, that Liberty, Honor, and Safety are all at stake, and I trust Providence will smile upon our Efforts, and establish us once more, the Inhabitants of a free and happy Country." – George Washington, letter to the Officers and Soldiers of the Pennsylvania Associators, Head Quarters, August 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:398

General Orders, After Orders – August 12, 1776

"Under this disposition, formed as well as times will allow, the united efforts of the officers, of every Rank, and the Soldiers, with the smiles of providence, The General hopes to render a favourable account to his Country, and Posterity of the enemy, whenever they chuse to make the appeal to the great Arbiter of the universe." – George Washington, General Orders, After Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 12, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:423

General Orders – August 13, 1776

"The Enemy's whole reinforcement is now arrived, so that an Attack must, and will soon be made; The General therefore again repeats his earnest request, that every officer, and soldier, will have his Arms and Ammunition in good Order, keep within their quarters and encampment, as much as possible; be ready for action at a moments call; and when called to it, remember that Liberty, Property, Life and Honor, are all at stake; that upon their Courage and Conduct, rest the hopes of their bleeding and insulted Country; that their Wives, Children and Parents, expect Safety from them only, and that we have every reason to expect Heaven will crown with Success, so just a cause." – George Washington, General Orders, After Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 13, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:424-425

"The enemy will endeavour to intimidate by shew and appearance, but remember how they have been repulsed, on various occasions, by a few brave Americans; Their Cause is bad; their men are conscious of it, and if opposed with firmness, and coolness, at their first onsett, with our advantage of Works, and Knowledge of the Ground; Victory is most assuredly ours." – George Washington, General Orders, After Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 13, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:425

Letter to Major General Horatio Gates – August 14, 1776

"I...am extremely sorry to find, that the Army is still in a Sickly and melancholy State. The precaution taken to halt the Reinforcement at Skenesborough, which are destined for your Succour, is certainly prudent. They should not be exposed or made liable to the Calamities already too prevailing, unless in Cases of extreme Necessity. Doctor Stringer has been here with Doctor Morgan and is now at Philadelphia, I trust he will obtain some necessary Supplies of Medicines, which will enable him under the Smiles of Providence, to relieve your Distresses in some degree." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, New York, August 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:433

"I am glad to hear the Vessels for the Lakes are going on with such Industry. Maintaining the Superiority over the Water is certainly of infinite Importance. I trust neither Courage nor Activity will be wanting in those to whom the Business is committed." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, New York, August 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:433

General Orders – August 14, 1776

"The General flatters himself, that every man's mind and arms are now prepared for the glorious Contest, upon which so much depends. The time is too precious, nor does the General think it necessary to spend it in exhorting his brave Countrymen and fellow Soldiers to behave like men, fighting for every thing that can be dear to Freeman -- We must resolve to conquer, or die; with this resolution and the blessing of Heaven, Victory and Success certainly will attend us. There will then be a glorious Issue to this Campaign, and the General will reward, his brave Fellow Soldiers! with every Indulgence in his power." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:436-437

Letter to the New York Legislature – August 17, 1776

"When I consider that the City of New York, will in all human probability very soon be the Scene of a bloody Conflict; I cannot but view the great Numbers of Women, Children and infirm Persons remaining in it, with the most melancholy concern. When the Men of War passed up, the River, the Shrieks and Cries of these poor Creatures, running every way with their Children, was truly distressing and I fear will have an unhappy effect, on the Ears and Minds of our young and inexperienced Soldiery. Can no Method be devised for their removal? Many doubtless are of Ability to move themselves; but there are others in a different Situation. Some Provision for them afterwards, would also be a Necessary consideration. It would relieve me from great anxiety, if your Honble. Body would Immediately deliberate upon it and form and execute some plan for their removal and relief; In which I will co-operate and assist to the utmost of my Power." – George Washington, letter to the New York Legislature, Head Quarters, New York, August 17, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:444

Proclamation – August 17, 1776

"Whereas a bombardment and attack upon the city of New York, by our cruel and inveterate enemy, may be hourly expected; and as there are great numbers of women, children, and infirm persons, yet remaining in the city, whose continuance will rather be prejudicial than advantageous to the army, and their persons exposed to great danger and hazard; I Do, therefore recommend it to all such persons, as they value their own safety and preservation, to remove with all expedition out of the said town, at this critical period, -- trusting that, with the blessing of Heaven upon the American arms, they may soon return to it in perfect security. And I do enjoin and require all the officers and soldiers in the army under my command to forward and assist such persons in their compliance with this recommendation." – George Washington, Proclamation, Head Quarters, August 17, 1776; Printed in the New York Journal or General Advertiser of Aug. 22, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:445

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – August 18, 1776

"When the whole of the Reinforcements do arrive, I flatter my self we shall be competent to every exigency; and, with the Smiles of Providence upon our Arms and Vigorous Exertions, we shall baffle the designs of our Inveterate Foes, formidable as they are. Our Situation was truly Alarming, a little while Since; but, by the kind Interpositions and Aid of our Friends, is much bettered." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, New York, August 18, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:453

General Orders – August 20, 1776

"The General being informed, to his great surprize, that a report prevails and is industriously spread far and wide that Lord Howe has made propositions of peace, calculated by designing persons more probably to lull us into a fatal security; his duty obliges him to

declare that no such offer has been made by Lord Howe, but on the contrary, from the best intelligence he can procure -- the Army may expect an attack as soon as the wind and tide shall prove favourable. He hopes therefore, every man's mind and arms, will be prepared for action, and when called to it, shew our enemies, and the whole world, that Freemen contending on their own land, are superior to any mercenaries on earth" – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, August 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:469

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – August 22, 1776

"The falling down of several Ships Yesterday Evening to the narrows crowded with men. Those succeeded by several more this Morning and a great number of Boats parading around them as I was just now informed, with Troops; are all circumstances indicating an Attack, and it's not Improbable it will be made to day. -- It could not have happened last night by reason of a most violent Gust. ... We are making every preparation to receive them, and I trust, under the smiles of Providence, with our own exertions, that my next, if they do attack will transmit an Account which will be pleasing to every Friend of America and to the rights of Humanity." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, August 22, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:475

General Orders – August 23, 1776

"[T]he hour is fast approaching, on which the Honor and Success of this army, and the safety of our bleeding Country depend. Remember officers and Soldiers, that you are Freemen, fighting for the blessings of Liberty - that slavery will be your portion, and that of your posterity, if you do not acquit yourselves like men." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, August 23, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:479

"Be cool, but determined, do not fire at a distance, but wait for orders from your officers. It is the General's express orders that if any man attempt to skulk, lay down, or retreat without Orders he be instantly shot down as an example, he hopes no such Scoundrel will be found in this army; but on the contrary, every one for himself resolving to conquer, or die, and trusting to the smiles of heaven upon so just a cause, will behave with Bravery and Resolution: Those who are distinguished for their Gallantry, and good Conduct, may depend upon being honorably noticed, and suitably rewarded: And if this Army will but emulate, and imitate their brave Countrymen, in other parts of America, he has no doubt they will, by a glorious Victory, save their Country, and acquire to themselves immortal Honor." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, New York, August 23, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:479-480

Letter to Major General Israel Putnam – August 25, 1776

"The burning of Houses, where the apparent good of the Service is not promoted by it, and the pillaging of them, at all times, and upon all Occasions, is to be discountenanced and punished with the utmost severity. In short, it is to be hoped, that men who have property of their own, and a regard for the rights of others, will shudder at the thought of rendering any Man's Situation, to whose protection he had come, more insufferable, than his open and avowed Enemy would make it, when by duty and every rule of humanity, they ought to Aid, and not Oppress, the distressed in their habitations. ... The distinction between a well regulated Army, and a Mob, is the good order and discipline of the first, and the licentious and disorderly behaviour of the latter; Men, therefore, who are not employed, as mere hirelings, but have stepped forth in defence of every thing that is dear and Valuable, not only to themselves but to posterity, should take uncommon pains to conduct themselves with uncommon propriety and good Order, as their honor, reputation &c. call loudly upon them for it." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Head Quarters, August 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:488- 489

General Orders – August 25, 1776

"The General Order against working on Sunday is revoked the time not admitting of any delay. The same number of fatigue men to turn out, as yesterday, this afternoon at three O'Clock, as well Militia as other troops." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, August 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 5:490

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – September 2, 1776

"I am persuaded and as fully convinced, as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our Liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded, If not entirely lost, If their defence is left to any but a permanent standing Army, I mean one to exist during the War. Nor would the expence incident to the support of such a body of Troops as would be competent almost to every exigency, far exceed that which is daily incurred, by calling in Succour and new Inlistments, and which when effected are not attended with any good consequences. Men who have been free and subject to no controul, cannot be reduced to order in an Instant, and the Priviledges and exemptions they claim and will have, Influence the Conduct of others, and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity and confusion they Occasion." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, September 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:5

"Till of late I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place, nor should I have yet, if the men would do their duty, but this I despair of. It is painful and extremely grating to me, to give such unfavourable Accounts, but it would be still more criminal to conceal the Truth at so critical a Juncture. Every power I possess shall be exerted to serve the Cause, and my first wish is, that whatever may be the event, the Congress will do me the Justice to think so." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, New York, September 2, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:6

General Orders – September 3, 1776

"The General hopes the justice of the great cause in which they are engaged, the necessity and importance of defending this Country, preserving its Liberties, and warding off the destruction meditated against it, will inspire every man with Firmness and Resolution in time of action, which is now approaching -- Ever remembering that upon the blessing of Heaven, and the bravery of the men, our Country only can be saved." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New York, September 3, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:13

Letter to Colonel Fisher Gay – September 4, 1776

"I also desire in terms equally express, that you do not suffer the Men of your Corps to straggle from their Quarters, or be absent from Camp without leave, and even then, but few at a time. Your own Reputation, the safety of the Army, and the good of the cause depends, under God, upon our vigilance and readiness to oppose a Crafty and enterprising enemy, who are always upon the watch to take advantages." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Fisher Gay, New York, September 4, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:13

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – September 8, 1776

"[O]n our Side the War should be defensive. It has even been called a War of Posts. That we should on all Occasions avoid a general Action, or put anything to the Risque, unless compelled by a necessity, into which we ought never to be drawn." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, New York, September 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:28

"The case of our Sick is also worthy of much consideration, their number by the returns form at least ¼th. of the Army: Policy and humanity require they should be made as comfortable as possible." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, New York, September 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:30

"I am sensible a retreating Army is incircled with difficulties, that the declining an Engagement subjects a General to reproach and that the common Cause may be in some measure affected by the discouragements which it throws over the minds of many; nor am I insensible of the contrary effects, if a brilliant stroke could be made with any Probability of success, especially after our loss upon Long Island: but when the fate of America may be at stake on the Issue; when the Wisdom of cooler moments and experienced Men have decided that we should protract the War if Possible; I cannot think it safe or wise to adopt a different System, when the season for Action draws so near a close." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, New York, September 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:31

Letter to John Augustine Washington – September 22, 1776

"The Dependance which the Congress has placed upon the Militia, has already greatly injured, and I fear will totally ruin our Cause. Being subject to no controul themselves they introduce disorder among the Troops you have attempted to discipline while the change in their living brings on sickness; this makes them Impatient to get home, which spreads universally, and introduces abominable Desertions." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Heights of Haerlem, September 22, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:96

"[I]t is not in the power of Words to describe the task I have to act. £50,000 should not induce me again to undergo what I have done." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Heights of Haerlem, September 22, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:96

General Orders – September 24, 1776

"The General does not admit of any pretence for plundering, whether it is Tory property taken beyond the lines, or not, it is equally a breach of Orders, and to be punished in the officer who gives Orders, or the Soldier who goes without." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:105

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – September 24, 1776

"It becomes evidently clear then, that as this Contest is not likely to be the Work of a day; as the War must be carried on systematically, and to do it, you must have good Officers, there are, in my Judgment, no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your Army upon a permanent footing; and giving your Officers good pay; this will induce Gentlemen, and Men of Character to engage; and till the bulk of your Officers are composed of such persons as are actuated by Principles of honour, and a spirit of

enterprize, you have little to expect from them. -- They ought to have such allowances as will enable them to live like, and support the Characters of Gentlemen; and not be driven by a scanty pittance to the low, and dirty arts which many of them practice, to filch the Public of more than the difference of pay would amount to upon an ample allowe. besides, something is due to the Man who puts his life in his hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the Sweets of domestic enjoyments. Why a Captn. in the Continental Service should receive no more than 5/. Curry per day, for performing the same duties that an officer of the same Rank in the British Service receives 10/. Sterlg. for, I never could conceive; especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires, upon the best terms, and the former can scarce procure them, at any Rate. There is nothing that gives a Man consequence, and renders him fit for Command, like a support that renders him Independant of every body but the State he Serves." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of The Continental Congress, Heights of Harlem, New York, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:108

"To place any dependance upon Militia, is, assuredly, resting upon a broken staff. Men just dragged from the tender Scenes of domestick life; unaccustomed to the din of Arms; totally unacquainted with every kind of Military skill, which being followed by a want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to Troops regularly train'd, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge, and superior in Arms, makes them timid, and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, (particularly in the lodging) brings on sickness in many; impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes that it not only produces shameful, and scandalous Desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit in others." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of the Continental Congress, Heights of Harlem, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:110

"To bring Men to a proper degree of Subordination, is not the work of a day, a Month or even a year; and unhappily for us, and the cause we are Engaged in, the little discipline I have been labouring to establish in the Army under my immediate Command, is in a manner done away by having such a mixture of Troops as have been called together within these few Months." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of The Continental Congress, Heights of Harlem, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6

"An army formed of good officers moves like clockwork; but there is no situation upon earth less enviable, nor more distressing, than that person's who is at the head of troops which are regardless of order and discipline." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of The Continental Congress, Heights of Harlem, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:115

"In a word the difficulties which have forever surrounded me since I have been in the Service, and kept my Mind constantly upon the stretch; The Wounds which my Feelings as an Officer have received by a thousand things which have happened, contrary to my expectation and Wishes; the effect of my own Conduct, and present appearance of things, so little pleasing to myself, as to render it a matter of no Surprize (to me) if I should stand capitally censured by Congress." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of The Continental Congress, Heights of Harlem, September 24, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:115-116

Letter to Lund Washington – September 30, 1776

"This time last year I pointed out the evil consequences of short enlistments, the expenses of militia, and the little dependence that was to be placed in them. I assured [Congress] that the longer they delayed raising a standing army, the more difficult and chargeable would they find it to get on and that, at the same time that the militia would answer no valuable purpose, the frequent calling them in would be attended with an expense, that they could have no conception of. Whether, as I have said before, the unfortunate hope of reconciliation was the cause, or the fear of a standing army prevailed, I will not undertake to say; but the policy was to engage men for twelve months only. The consequence of which, you have had great bodies of militia in pay that never were in camp; you have had immense quantities of provisions drawn by men that never rendered you one hour's service (at least usefully), and this in the most profuse and wasteful way." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Harlem, September 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:137

"At present our numbers fit for duty (by this day's report) amount to 14,759, besides 3,427 on command, and the enemy within stone's throw of us. It is true a body of militia are again ordered out, but they come without any conveniences and soon return. I discharged a regiment the other day that had in it fourteen rank and file fit for duty only, and several that had less than fifty. In short, such is my situation that if I were to wish the bitterest curse to an enemy on this side of the grave, I should put him in my stead with my feelings; and yet I do not know what plan of conduct to pursue." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Harlem, September 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:137-138

"I see the impossibility of serving with reputation, or doing any essential service to the cause by continuing in command, and yet I am told that if I quit the command inevitable ruin will follow from the distraction that will ensue. In confidence I tell you that I never was in such an unhappy, divided state since I was born. To lose all comfort and happiness on the one hand, whilst I am fully persuaded that under such a system of management as has been adopted, I cannot have the least chance for reputation, nor those allowances made which the nature of the case requires; and to be told, on the other, that if I leave the service all will be lost, is, at the same time that I am bereft of every peaceful moment, distressing to a degree." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Harlem, September 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:138

"If I fall, it may not be amiss that these circumstances be known, and declaration made in credit to the justice of my character. And if the men will stand by me (which by the by I despair of), I am resolved not to be forced from this ground while I have life." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Harlem, Sept. 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:138

Letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry – October 5, 1776

"I own my fears, that this must ever be the case, when our dependence is placed on men, enlisted for a few months, commanded by such officers as party or accident may have furnished; and on militia, who, as soon as they are fairly fixed in the camp, are impatient to return to their own homes; and who, from an utter disregard of all discipline and restraint among themselves, are but too apt to infuse the like spirit into others." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Heights of Harlem, October 5, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:165

"One Circumstance, in this important Business, ought to be cautiously guarded against, and that is, the Soldier and Officer being too nearly on a level. Discipline and Subordination add life and Vigour to Military movements. The person Commanded yields but a reluctant obedience to those, he conceives, are undeservedly made his Superiors. The degrees of Rank are frequently transferred from Civil life into the Departments of the Army. The true Criterion to judge by (when past Services do not enter into the Competition) is, to consider whether the Candidate for Office has a just pretention to the Character of a Gentleman, a proper sense of Honor, and some reputation to loose." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Heights of Harlem, October 5, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:167

Letter to Lund Washington – October 6, 1776

"Had I been left to the dictates of my own judgment, New York should have been laid in Ashes before I quitted it; to this end I applied to Congress, but was absolutely forbid; that they will have cause to repent the Order, I have not a moments doubt of, nor never had, as it was obvious to me (covered as it may be by their ships) that it will be next to impossible for us to dispossess them of it again as all their Supplies come by Water, whilst ours were derived by Land; besides this, by leaving it standing, the Enemy are furnished with warm and comfortable Barracks, in which their whole Force may be concentrated, the place secured by a small garrison (if they chuse it) having their ships round it, and only a narrow Neck of Land to defend, and their principal force left at large to act against us, or to remove to any other place for the purpose of harrassing us. this in my judgment may be set down amg. one of the capitol errors of Congress." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Haerlam, October 6, 1776; Fitzpatrick 37:532

"In speaking of New York, I had forgot to mention that Providence, or some good honest Fellow, has done more for us than we were disposed to do for ourselves, as near One fourth of the City is supposed to be consumed. however enough of it remains to answer their purposes." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Heights of Haerlam, October 6, 1776; Fitzpatrick 37:533

General Orders – October 8, 1776

"The General, to prevent any plea of ignorance, again repeats his order against all kinds of Gaming, as destructive and pernicious to the service: He hopes the officers will set no examples of this kind, and that they will punish it among the men." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Harlem Heights, October 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:179-180

Letter to Robert R. Livingston – October 20, 1776

"I wish I had leizure to write you fully on the subject of yr. last Letter; the moving state of the Army, and the extreame hurry in which I have been Involved for these Eight days, will only allow me time to acknowledge the receipt of yr. layout, and to thank you (as I shall always do) for Any hints you may please to communicate, as I have great reliance upon your judgment; and knowledge of the Country, (which I wish to God I was as much master of). Drain'd as Connecticut is of Men, I have nevertheless recommended to the Govr. of it the advantages which would result from a Body of Mens moving towards the Enemy's right; but whether it will, or can be done, is more than I am able to say." – George Washington, letter to Robert R. Livingston, Mr. Lowe's, October 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 37:533-534

Letter to John Augustine Washington – November 6, 1776

"I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde Motions of things, and I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of 20,000£ a year would not induce me to undergo what I do; and after all, perhaps, to loose my Character as it is impossible under such a variety of distressing Circumstances to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even of those who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, White Plains, November 6, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:246

Letter to Sir William Howe – November 9, 1776

"It is not my wish that Severity should be exercised towards any, whom the fortune of War has thrown, or, shall throw into our hands. On the Contrary, It is my desire that the utmost Humanity should be shewn them. I am convinced the latter has been the prevailing line of Conduct to Prisoners." – George Washington, letter to Sir William Howe, Head Quarters, November 9, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:260

Letter to the Board of War – November 30, 1776

"[Y]ou ask my advice, as to the propriety of inlisting prisoners of War, I would just observe, that in my opinion, it is neither consistent with the Rules of War, nor politic, nor can I think that because our Enemies have committed an unjustifiable action by enticing and in some instances intimidating our men into their service, we ought to follow their Example." – George Washington, letter to the Board of War, Head Quarters, Brunswick, November 30, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:317

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 5, 1776

"My first wish is, that Congress may be convinced of the propriety of relying as little as possible upon Militia, and of the necessity of raising a larger standing Army than they have voted, the saving in the Article of Stores, Provisions and in a thousand other things by having nothing to do with Militia, [unless in cases of extraordinary emergency and such as could not be expected in the common course of events,] would amply support a large Army which (well officered) would daily be improving instead of [always] continuing a destructive, expensive and disorderly Mob. ... I am clearly of opinion, that if 40,000 Men had been kept in constant pay since the first Commencement of Hostilities, and the Militia had been excused doing duty during that Period, the Continent would have saved Money. When I reflect on the losses we have sustain'd for want of good Troops, the certainty of this is placed beyond a doubt in my Mind. In such case the Militia, who have been Harrassed and tired by repeated calls upon them, and Farming, and Manufactures in a Manner suspended would, upon any emergency have run with alacrity to Arms, whereas the cry now is, they may as well be ruind one way as another, and with difficulty are obtained. I mention these things to show that in my opinion, if any dependance is placed on Militia another year, the Congress will deceive themselves. When danger is a little remov'd from them, they will not turn out at all. When it comes home to them, the well affected, instead of flying to Arms to defend themselves, are busily employed in removing their Family's and Effects, while the disaffected are concerting measures to make their Submission, and spread terror and dismay all around, to induce others to follow the example." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Trenton, December 5, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:332

Letter to Brigadier General William Maxwell – December 8, 1776

"As it is a matter of the utmost Importance to prevent the Enemy from crossing the Delaware, and to effect it, that all the Boats and Water Craft should be secured or destroyed. I do hereby earnestly request and desire that you will take upon you the care and Superintendency of the Matter." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Maxwell, Falls of Delaware South Side, December 8, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:337

Letter to Major General Charles Lee – December 10, 1776

"I last night received your favor by Colo. Humpton, and were it not for the weak and feeble state of the force I have, I should highly approve of your hanging on the Rear of the Enemy and establishing the post you mention; But when my situation is directly opposite to what you suppose it to be, and when Genl. Howe is pressing forward with the whole of his Army, except the Troops that were lately embarked and a few besides, left at New York, to possess himself of Philadelphia; I cannot but request and entreat you and this too, by the advice of all the Genl. Officers with me, to march and join me with all your whole force, with all possible expedition. The utmost exertions that can be made, will not be more than sufficient to save Philadelphia." – George Washington, letter to Major General Charles Lee, Trenton Falls, December 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:340-341

Letter to Lund Washington – December 10, 1776

"Our numbers, quite inadequate to the task of opposing that part of the army under the command of General Howe, being reduced by sickness desertion, and political deaths (on or before the first instant, and having no assistance from the militia), were obliged to retire before the enemy, who were perfectly well informed of our situation, till we came to this place, where I have no idea of being able to make a stand, as my numbers, till joined by the Philadelphia militia, did not exceed three thousand men fit for duty. Now we may be about five thousand to oppose Howe's whole army, that part of it excepted which sailed under the command of Gen. Clinton. I tremble for Philadelphia. Nothing, in my opinion, but Gen. Lee's speedy arrival, who has been long expected, though still at a distance (with about three thousand men), can save it." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Falls of Delaware, South Side, December 10, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:345-346

Letter to Major General Charles Lee – December 11, 1776

"Having wrote you fully respecting my Situation just before it came to hand, it is unnecessary to add much now; I shall only say that Philadelphia, beyond all question, is the object of the Enemy's movements and that nothing less than our utmost exertions, will be sufficient to prevent Genl. Howe from possessing it. The force I have is weak and entirely incompetent to that end. I must therefore entreat you to push on with every possible succour you can bring. Your aid may give a more favourable complexion to our affairs. You know the importance of the City of Philadelphia and the fatal consequences that must attend the loss of it." – George Washington,

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 11, 1776

"I received another Letter from General Lee last Evening, it was dated at Chatham (which I take to be near Morris Town) the 8th. of this Month, he had then received my Letter sent by Major Hoops, but seemed still inclined to hang upon the Enemy's Rear, to which I should have no Objection had I a sufficient force to oppose them in Front; but as I have not at present, nor do I see much probability of further Reinforcements, I have wrote to him in the most pressing Terms, to join me with all Expedition." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Falls of Delaware, December 11, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:350

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 12, 1776

"As the publication of their Resolve, in my opinion, will not lead to any good end, but on the contrary, may be attended with some bad consequences, I shall take the liberty to decline inserting it in this days Orders, [unless I am requested again to do it]. I am persuaded, if the subject is taken up and reconsidered, that Congress will concur with me in Sentiment." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Trenton Falls, December 12, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:353

Letter to Major General William Heath – December 12, 1776

"Our situation at present in this Quarter is truly critical; our Army (as you have been informed) has been greatly diminished; The Troops composing the flying camp have mostly gone home, and we have as yet received very little assistance except from the Philadelphia Militia." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters, near Trenton Falls, December 12, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:357

Letter to Major General Horatio Gates – December 14, 1776

"I expect Genl. Lee will be there this Evening or tomorrow, who will be followed by Genl. Heath and his division. If we can draw our forces together, I trust, under the smiles of providence, we may yet effect an important stroke, or at least prevent Genl. Howe from executing his plans. Philadelphia is now the object of our care, you know the importance of it, and the fatal consequences that must attend its loss. I am persuaded no Aid with you to give, will be withheld a single instant; your arrival may be a most happy Circumstance." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, Head Quarters at Keiths, December 14, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:372

Letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety – December 15, 1776

"The Spirit of disaffection that appears in this Country, I think, deserves your serious attention; instead of giving any Assistance in repelling the Enemy; the Militia have not only refused to obey your General Summons and that of their Commanding Officers; but, I am told, exult at the approach of the Enemy, and our late misfortunes. I beg leave to submit to your Consideration, whether such people are to be trusted with Arms in their Hands? If they will not use them for us, there is the greatest reason to apprehend they will against us, if opportunity offers." – George Washington, letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, Head Quarters, Bucks County, December 15, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:376

Letter to the Massachusetts Legislature – December 18, 1776

"[U]pon the whole our affairs are in a Much less promising condition than could be wished; Yet I trust, under the Smiles of Providence and by our own exertions, we shall be happy. Our cause is righteous, and must be Supported. Every nerve should be strained, to Levy the New Army. If we can but procure a respectable one in Season, All may be well, and to this end no pains can be too great. The next Campaign will be of importance and the Issue may lead to happiness or the most melancholly of all events." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Legislature, Head Quarters at Keith's, December 18, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:396

Letter to John Augustine Washington – December 18, 1776

"[W]e are in a very disaffected part of the Province, and between you and me, I think our Affairs are in a very bad situation; not so much from the apprehension of Genl. Howe's Army, as from the defection of New York, Jerseys, and Pennsylvania. In short, the Conduct of the Jerseys has been most Infamous. Instead of turning out to defend their Country and affording aid to our Army, they are making their submissions as fast as they can." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Camp, near the Falls of Trenton, December 18, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:397-398

"You can form no Idea of the perplexity of my Situation. No Man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties and less means to extricate himself from them. However under a full persuasion of the justice of our Cause I cannot [but think the prospect will brighten, although for a wise purpose it is, at present hid under a cloud] entertain an Idea that it will finally sink tho' it may remain for some time under a Cloud." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Camp, near the Falls of Trenton, December 18, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:398-399

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 20, 1776

"It may be said that this is an application for powers that are too dangerous to be Intrusted. I can only add, that desperate diseases require desperate Remedies; and with truth declare, that I have no lust after power but wish with as much fervency as any Man upon this wide extended Continent, for an opportunity of turning the Sword into a plow share. But my feelings as an Officer and a Man, have been such as to force me to say that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp above Trenton Falls, December 20, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:402

"I have labourd ever since I have been in the Service to discourage all kinds of local attachments, and distinctions of Country, denominating the whole by the greater name of American; but I found it impossible to overcome prejudices." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp above Trenton Falls, December 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:405

"We find Sir, that the Enemy are daily gathering strength from the disaffected; this Strength like a Snow ball by rolling, will Increase, unless some means can be devised to check, effectually, the progress of the Enemy's Arms; Militia may, possibly, do it for a little while; but in a little while also, the Militia of those States which have been frequently called upon will not turn out at all or with so much reluctance and sloth as to amount to the same thing. Instance New Jersey! Witness Pennsylvania! Could any thing but the River Delaware have sav'd Philadelphia? Can any thing (the exigency of the case indeed may justify it), be more destructive to the recruiting Service than giving 10 Dollars Bounty for Six Weeks Service of the Militia; who come in you cannot tell how, go, you cannot tell when; and act, you cannot tell where; consume your Provisions, exhaust your Stores, and leave you at last in a critical moment." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp above Trenton Falls, December 25, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:413

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – December 21, 1776

"When I reflect, upon what our Situation in this Quarter will be, in ten days from this time; I am almost led to despair." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Head Quarters, Bucks County, December 21, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:411

"The Necessity of the times must plead my excuse for calling Men so far from home, and at this Season of the year, who have an Enemy just landed upon their own Coasts, and have not even a Continental Regiment to Assist them; but I trust they will undertake this Chearfully, when they reflect, that they cannot ensure that Liberty which they have so nobly contended for, while our Common Enemy Maintains any footing upon any part of this Continent." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Head Quarters, Bucks County, December 21, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:412

Letter to Rhode Island Governor Nicholas Cooke – December 21, 1776

"All in my power to do, I have done." – George Washington, letter to Rhode Island Governor Nicholas Cooke, Camp above Trenton Falls, December 21, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:412

Letter to the Massachusetts Legislature – December 21, 1776

"The distresses of our Prisoners in the hands of the Enemy gives me much Concern; their Sufferings by all accounts are extremely great." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Legislature, Camp above Trenton Falls, December 21, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:413-414

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – December 27, 1776

"In justice to the Officers and Men, I must add, that their Behaviour upon this Occasion, reflects the highest honor upon them. The difficulty of passing the River in a very severe Night, and their march thro' a violent Storm of Snow and Hail, did not in the least abate their Ardour." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newton, December 27, 1776; Fitzpatrick 6:444

Encouraging Soldiers to Reenlist – December 31, 1776

"My brave fellows, you have done all I asked you to do, and more than can be reasonably expected; but your country is at stake, your wives, your houses and all that you hold dear. You have worn yourselves out with fatigues and hardships, but we know not how to

spare you. If you will consent to stay one month longer, you will render that service to the cause of liberty, and to your country, which you probably can never do under any other circumstances." – George Washington, encouraging his men to reenlist in the army, December 31, 1776; "Washington's Crossing," by David Hackett Fischer, Oxford University Press (2004)

Letter to the Committee of Congress – January 1, 1777

"Instead of thinking myself free'd from all civil Obligations, by this mark of their Confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind, that as the Sword was the last Resort for the preservation of our Liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside, when those Liberties are firmly established." – George Washington, letter to Robert Morris, George Clymer, and George Walton, the Committee of Congress, Head Quarters, Trenton, January 1, 1777; Fitzpatrick 6:464

Rallying troops at Princeton – January 3, 1777

"Parade with me my brave fellows! There is but a handful of the enemy and we shall have them directly!" – George Washington, Rallying his troops at the Battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777; "1776," David McCullough, editor, New York: Simon and Schuster (2006) p. 289

"Parade with me my brave fellows, we will have them soon!" – George Washington, rallying his troops at the Battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777; quoted by Richard Brookhiser, in speech "The character of George Washington," at Hillsdale College, July 2007, transcript in "Imprimus" newsletter

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel George Baylor – January 9, 1777

"[N]othing contributes so much to the constitution of a good Regiment, as a good Corps of Officers, and no Method so likely to obtain these as leaving the choice, in a great measure, to the Gentleman who is to reap the honours, or share the disgrace arising from their Behaviour." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel George Baylor, Morris Town, January 9, 1777; Fitzpatrick 6:483

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Hanson Harrison – January 9, 1777

"As to Military knowledge, I do not expect to find Gentleman much skilled in it. If they can write a good Letter, write quick, are methodical, and diligent, it is all I expect to find in my Aids." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Hanson Harrison, Morris Town, January 9, 1777; Fitzpatrick 6:487

Letter to Robert Morris – January 13, 1777

"I have long since drop'd all private corrispondance with my friends in Virginia, finding it incompatable with my public business. A Letter or two from my Family are regularly sent by the Post, but very irregularly received, which is rather mortifying, as it deprives me of the consolation of hearing from home, on domestick matters." – George Washington, letter to Robert Morris, Morris Town, January 13, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:1

Letter to Lord William Howe – January 13, 1777

"I would beg that some certain Rule of Conduct towards Prisoners may be settled; if you are determined to make Captivity as distressing as possible, to those whose Lot it is to fall into it, let me know it, that we may be upon equal terms, for your Conduct must and shall mark mine." – George Washington, letter to Lord William Howe, Head Quarters, Morris Town, January 13, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:3

Letter to Richard, Lord Howe – January 13, 1777

"[M]y injured Countrymen have long called upon me to endeavour to obtain a redress of their Grievances; and I shall think myself as culpable, as those who inflict such severities upon them, were I to continue silent." – George Washington, letter to Richard, Lord Howe, Head Quarters, January 13, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:4-5

Letter to Colonel Joseph Reed – January 15, 1777

"If the Militia cannot be prevail'd upon to restrain the Foraging parties and to annoy and harass the Enemy in their excursions, and upon a march they will be of very little use to us, as I am sure they can never be brought fairly up to an attack in any serious matter."

– George Washington, letter to Colonel Joseph Reed, Morris Town, January 15, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:18

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – January 19, 1777

"For to boast of our superiority in that respect on one hand, and to call publicly on the people for Assistance on the other, is an impropriety too glaring." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Morris Town, January 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:30

Letter to Lord Stirling – January 19, 1777

"It has been our great misfortune to have too much to do with Militia; but while the necessity exists, the most should be made of them; a people unused to restraint must be led, they will not be drove, even those who are ingaged for the War, must be disciplin'd by degrees, we must not expect the same ready obedience therefore from New, as from old Troops accustomed to obey." – George Washington, letter to Lord Stirling, Morris Town, January 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:33

General Orders – January 21, 1777

"Let the persons who are known to be enemies to their Country, be seized and confin'd, and their Property disposed of, as the Law of the State directs." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, January 21, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:47

"It is our business to give protection, and support, to the poor, distressed Inhabitants; not to multiply and increase their calamities." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, January 21, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:47

Letter to John Parke Custis – January 22, 1777

"The misfortune of short enlistments, and an unhappy dependance upon militia, have shown their baneful influence at every period, and almost upon every occasion, throughout the whole course of this war. At no time, nor upon no occasion, were they ever more exemplified than since Christmas; for if we could but have got in the militia in-time, or prevailed upon those troops whose times expired (as they generally did) on the first of this instant, to have continued (not more than a thousand or twelve hundred agreeing to stay) we might, I am persuaded, have cleared the Jerseys entirely of the enemy. Instead of this, all our movements have been made with inferior numbers, and with a mixed, motley crew, who were here today, gone tomorrow, without assigning a reason, or even apprizing you of it. In a word, I believe I may with truth add, that I do not think that any officer since the creation ever had such a variety of difficulties and perplexities to encounter as I have. How we shall be able to rub along till the new army is raised, I know not." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, Morris Town, January 22, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:52

Proclamation – January 25, 1777

"I do therefore, in behalf of the United States, by virtue of the powers committed to me by Congress, hereby strictly command and require every person, having subscribed such declaration, taken such oath, and accepted such protection and certificates from Lord and General Howe or any person under their authority forthwith to repair to Head-Quarters, or to the quarters of the nearest general officer of the Continental Army, or Militia, (until further provision can be made by the Civil Authority,) and there deliver up such protections, certificates and passports, and take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America. Nevertheless hereby granting full Liberty to all such as prefer the interest and protection of Great-Britain to the freedom and happiness of their country, forthwith to withdraw themselves and families within the enemys lines." – George Washington, proclamation, Morris Town, January 25, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:62

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – January 26, 1777

"I hope your New Appointment, when it is made, will make the necessary Reform in the Hospital, and that I shall not, the next Campaign, have my Ears and Eyes too Shocked with the Complaints and looks of poor Creatures, perishing for want of proper Care, either in the Regimental or Hospital Surgeons." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Morris Town, January 26, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:64

Letter to Major General Israel Putnam – February 3, 1777

"Upon considering the best mode of distressing the Enemy and rendering their Situation still more disagreeable, as well as retarding their early Operations in the Field; I have determined to remove, out of their reach, all the Horses, Waggon, and fat Cattle, for which purpose I have appointed Thursday Morning next early for you, Genls. Sullivan, Warner and Dickinson to do it. In the mean time you will, in the best and most private manner, collect the necessary information where these Articles are. I mean that you should take a sufficient party to remove them from the whole Country, lying between Quibble Town and the Sound eastward, approaching as near

the Enemy as you can in safety. I would by no means have you grasp at too much, lest the attempt may be entirely frustrated, undertake to remove no more of them, than you can with the greatest certainty and success accomplish. The forage in the Circle above described, I shall let remain till another time. I have dispatched Orders Similar to these to the above mentioned Generals, and have assigned to each of them, such parts of the Country, as lie most convenient. On the success of this business, very much depends; let me therefore, call your utmost attention to it. Doctr. Caldwell will be the best person you can apply to, he will give you every possible Assistance. As the success of this enterprize depends totally on the secrecy with which it is conducted, I expect you will settle matters so, that the Enemy cannot possibly get a hint of it." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Head Quarters, Morris Town, February 3, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:97

General Orders – February 4, 1777

"The Hon'ble The Governor and Assembly of New Jersey, having directed Thursday the 6th. day of this Month, to be observed as a Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, by the Inhabitants of the State -- The General desires the same may be observed by the army." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, February 4, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:98

General Orders – February 5, 1777

"The Fast day directed in Yesterday's General Orders was a mistake, it being ordered by the Governor and Assembly of this State, to be kept the 6th. of March, not the 6th. of this Month; which the Army is to take notice of." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, February 5, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:102

Letter to Samuel Chase – February 5, 1777

"One thing I must remark in favor of the Hessians, and that is, that our people who have been prisoners generally agree that they received much kinder treatment from them, than from the British Officers and Soldiers." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Chase, Head Quarters, Morris Town, February 5, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:108

Letter to the New York Committee of Safety – February 8, 1777

"Heaven knows, that I greatly want the Aid of every good Man, and that there are not such enviable pleasures attending my Situation, as to make me too jealous of its prerogatives." – George Washington, letter to the New York Committee of Safety, Head Quarters, Morris Town, February 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:117

Letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston – February 22, 1777

"No person, I hope, can be so lost to Virtue, as to except against Colo. [Silas] Newcomb [of the First New Jersey Regiment] on Account of his being religiously disposed. The relaxed Discipline and want of Order in the Regiment, I believe were among the principle objections to him; these added to his Inactivity and that want of Confidence mentioned in a former Letter, obliged me to displace him." – George Washington, letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston, Head Quarters, Morris Town, February 22, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:186

Letter to John Augustine Washington – February 24, 1777

"Your remark 'that you cannot depend upon the Reports of our strength' is most literally true. It is morally impossible that any body at a distance, should know it with precision and certainty; because, while it depends upon Militia, who are here today, and gone tomorrow; *whose ways, like the ways of Providence are, almost, inscrutable*; and when it is our Interest, however much our characters may suffer by it, to make small numbers appear large, it is impossible you should; for in order to deceive the Enemy effectually, we must not communicate our weakness to any body." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Morristown, February 24, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:198

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – March 1, 1777

"Retaliation is certainly just and sometimes necessary, even where attended with the severest penalties; But when the Evils which may and must result from it, exceed those intended to be redressed, prudence and policy require that it should be avoided." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Morris Town, March 1, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:211

Letter to Robert Morris – March 2, 1777

"[N]or is it in my power to make Congress fully sensible of the real situation of our Affairs, and that it is with difficulty (if I may use the expression) that I can, by every means in my power, keep the Life and Soul of this Army together. In a word, when they are at a distance, they think it is but to say Presto begone, and every thing is done. They seem not to have any conception of the difficulty and perplexity attending those who are to execute. Indeed, Sir, your observations on the want of many capital Characters in that Senate, are but too just. However, our cause is good and I hope Providence will support it." – George Washington, letter to Robert Morris, Morris Town, March 2, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:225

Letter to Edmund Pendleton – April 12, 1777

"[T]hat the God of Armies may enable me to bring the present contest to a speedy and happy conclusion, thereby gratifying me in a retirement to the calm and sweet enjoyment of domestick happiness, is the fervent prayer, and most ardent wish of my Soul." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, Morris Town, April 12, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:394

General Orders – April 12, 1777

"All the troops in Morristown, except the Guards, are to attend divine worship to morrow morning at the second Bell, the officers commanding Corps, are to take especial care, that their men appear clean, and decent, and that they are to march in proper order to the place of worship." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, April 12, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:407

Letter to Landon Carter – April 15, 1777

"Your friendly and affectionate wishes for my health and success has a claim to my most grateful acknowledgements. That the God of Armies may Incline the Hearts of my American Brethren to support, and bestow sufficient abilities on me to bring the present contest to a speedy and happy conclusion, thereby enabling me to sink into sweet retirement, and the full enjoyment of that Peace and happiness which will accompany a domestick Life, is the first wish, and most fervent prayer of my Soul." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Morristown in New Jersey, April 15, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:414

Letter to Major General William Heath – April 18, 1777

"Inclosed you have sundry Resolutions of Congress for the Regulation of the Paymaster General's, Commissary of Muster's and Hospital department and some amendments to the Articles of War. You will also observe that the Pay of Majors of Brigade is augmented to 50 Dollars pr. Month, and that of Chaplain to 40 Dollars pr. Month to take place from 12th instant." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters, Morris Town, April 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:430

Letter to Brigadier General Alexander McDougall – April 18, 1777

"The pay of Chaplains is also augmented to 40 dollars pr. Month from 12th. April." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Alexander McDougall, Head Quarters, Morris Town, April 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:432

Letter to Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons – April 19, 1777

"By some late Regulations, the Pay of Majors of Brigade is augmented to 50 Dollars pr. Month, Chaplains to 40 Dollars pr. Month, and Regimental Surgeons to two dollars pr. Day. I hope this will influence Gentlemen of Merit, Abilities and Skill (especially in Physic) to Step forth." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons, Head Quarters, Morris Town, April 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:440

Letter to Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons – April 23, 1777

"All agree our claims are righteous and must be supported; Yet all, or at least, too great a part among us, withhold the means, as if Providence, who has already done much for us, would continue his gracious interposition and work miracles for our deliverance, without troubling ourselves about the matter." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Samuel Holden Parsons, Morris Town, April 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:456

Letter to Brigadier General John Glover – April 26, 1777

"Diffidence in an officer is a good mark because he will always endeavor to bring himself up to what he conceives to be the full line of his duty." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General John Glover, Headquarters, Morristown, April 26, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:471

Letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Neil, Widow of Major Daniel Neil, killed at Princeton – April 27, 1777

"I hoped to have given you a more favourable Acct. Of my application to Congress, in your behalf, than the Inclosed resolution will convey; but that Honble. body have, I presume, thought it rather too early to adopt a measure of this kind yet, what they may do hereafter, I cannot under take to say. In the meantime, as I sincerely feel for your distress, I beg your acceptance of the Inclosed, as a small testimony of my Inclination to serve you upon any future occasion. I am Madam, etc. ... PS. I have receivd, and am much obliged to you for the Piece of Buff Cloth. ... Fifty Dollars sent." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Neil, widow of Major Daniel Neil, killed at Princeton, Morris Town, April 27, 1777; Fitzpatrick 7:482

Letter to Brigadier General William Smallwood – May 3, 1777

"I am confident that it is unnecessary to remind you of the necessity there is, to use every Argument with the Officers which may serve to call forth their utmost exertions in the recruiting Service. I cannot avoid mentioning to you, that I am informed that Dissipation and Gaming are very prevalent in many parts of the Country, to the great Injury of the Service, and that instances are not wanting of Officers drawing Sums of Money, intended as a Bounty to recruits, which they have Squandered away in this shameful manner. I do not pretend to charge any particular set of Officers or Regiment with this pernicious vice, and shall soon issue orders, which I think must effectually eradicate it amongst Gentlemen in the Military Line, at least for the present." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Smallwood, Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 3, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:13

Letter to Colonel William Grayson – May 3, 1777

"I am well informed, from various parts of the Country, that the pernicious practice of Gaming has been exceedingly injurious to the recruiting Service; not only in point of the Officer's time being taken up; but that they have been so lost to all sense of Honor, that the Money drawn and intended for Bounty has been Squander'd this way. it therefore becomes a matter of great concern, that every Commander of a Regiment should be particularly attentive, that this Evil may be prevented from creeping in amongst them, and punish it in a most exemplary manner, upon its first appearance. Orders shall soon be issued from Head Quarters to support the authority of Officers and point out the mode of acting upon occasions of this nature. I do not wish or intend that you should apply what I have said, to your Regiment, as I have not the least cause for such an Imputation; but the evil becoming too general makes it necessary that every Officer on this duty, should be apprized of its fatal Consequences, that he may take the earliest opportunity of Suppressing it." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Grayson, Morris Town, May 3, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:14

Letter to Lord Stirling – May 6, 1777

"The present situation of public affairs, affords abundant causes of distress, we should be very careful how we aggravate or multiply them, by private bickerings. It is not for me to enter into the merits of the dispute, that gave rise to the ill treatment complained of; but I must take the liberty to give my opinion, that prudence and compassion equally dictated, all little differences and animosities, calculated to increase the unavoidable evils of the times, should be forgotten, or, at least, postponed." – George Washington, letter to Lord Stirling, Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 6, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:22

General Orders – May 8, 1777

"As few vices are attended with more pernicious consequences, in civil life; so there are none more fatal in a military one, than that of Gaming ; which often brings disgrace and ruin upon officers, and injury and punishment upon the Soldiery: and reports prevailing, which, it is to be feared are too well founded, that this destructive vice has spread its baneful influence in the army, and, in a peculiar manner, to the prejudice of the recruiting Service, -- The Commander in chief, in the most pointed and explicit terms, forbids All officers and soldiers, playing at cards, dice or at any games, except those of Exercise, for diversion; it being impossible, if the practice be allowed, at all, to discriminate between innocent play, for amusement, and criminal gaming, for pecuniary and sordid purposes." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, May 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:28

"Officers, attentive to their duty, will find abundant employment, in training and disciplining their men -- providing for them -- and seeing that they appear neat, clean and soldier-like -- Nor will any thing redound more to their honor -- afford them more solid amusement -- or better answer the end of their appointment, than to devote the vacant moments, they may have, to the study of Military authors." – George Washington, General Orders, Morristown, May 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:29

Letter to Marquis de Malmedy – May 16, 1777

"We ought not to convert trifling difficulties into insuperable obstacles." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Malmedy, Head Quarters, May 16, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:69

General Orders – May 17, 1777

"All the troops in, and about Morristown, (those on duty excepted) are to attend divine service, to morrow morning." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, May 17, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:77

Letter to Brigadier General Alexander McDougall – May 23, 1777

"Of late several of our Officers have broken their paroles and stolen away. This practice, ignominious to themselves, dishonorable to the Service, and injurious to the Officers of sentiment and delicacy who remain behind to experience the rigors of resentment and distrust on their account, cannot be tolerated whatever be the pretence. I have made a point, of sending those back that have come under my observation, and I must desire you will do the same towards those who fall under yours." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Alexander McDougall, Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:108

Letter to Colonel George Baylor – May 23, 1777

"A Chaplain is part of the Establishment of a Corps of Cavalry, and I see no Objection to your having One, Unless you suppose yours will be too virtuous and Moral to require instruction. Let him be a Man of Character and good conversation, and who will influence the manners of the Corps both by precept and example. A paymaster is indispensably necessary, and as his duty will be to make up All Abstracts and receive and pay all Money due to the Corps, and also to keep and settle all transactions respecting It, he must be a person of good character and well versed in Accounts; His pay will be fifty Dollars pr. Month, and I hope you will make choice of One who will answer the description I have given." – George Washington, letter to Colonel George Baylor, Morristown, May 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:109

General Orders – May 24, 1777

"All the troops in, and near Morristown, (except on duty) to attend divine service, to morrow morning." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Morristown, May 24, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:114

Letter to Brigadier General William Smallwood – May 26, 1777

"Improve all the leizure time your Brigade may have from other Duties, in Manoeuvring, and teaching the Men the use of their Legs, which is of infinitely more Importance than learning them the Manual Exercise. Cause the Officers to attend regularly, and perform their part of these duties with the Men." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Smallwood, Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 26, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:128

"Let Vice, and Immorality of every kind, be discouraged, as much as possible, in your Brigade; and as a Chaplain is allowed to each Regiment, see that the Men regularly attend divine Worship. Gaming of every kind is expressly forbid, as the foundation of evil, and the cause of many Gallant and Brave Officer's Ruin. Games of exercise, for amusement, may not only be permitted but encouraged." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Smallwood, Head Quarters, Morris Town, May 26, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:129

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – May 29, 1777

"I shall pay the strictest attention to the Resolutions transmitted me; However I am not without apprehensions, that the Regulation lately adopted respecting Chaplains, will not answer. I recollect, when One was assigned, in the course of last year, to Two Regiments, the prevailing Opinion was, and that founded on a variety of reasons, that it would not do, and the old mode of appointment was introduced again." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 29, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:138-139

General Orders – May 31, 1777

"It is much to be lamented, that the foolish and scandalous practice of profane Swearing is exceedingly prevalent in the American Army -- Officers of every rank are bound to discourage it, first by their example, and then by punishing offenders -- As a mean to abolish this, and every other species of immorality -- Brigadiers are enjoined, to take effectual care, to have divine service duly performed in their respective brigades." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Middle-Brook, May 31, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:152

General Orders – June 8, 1777

"A return to be made to morrow of the Chaplains in each brigade, specifying where they are." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Middle-Brook, June 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:202

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – June 8, 1777

"I shall order a return to be made of the Chaplains in Service, which shall be transmitted, as soon as it is obtained. At present, as the Regiments are greatly dispersed, part in one place and part in another, and accurate States of them have not been made, it will not be in my power to forward it immediately. I shall here take occasion to mention, that I communicated the Resolution, appointing a Brigade Chaplain in the place of all others, to the several Brigadiers; they are all of opinion, that it will be impossible for them to discharge the duty; that many inconveniences and much dissatisfaction will be the result, and that no Establishment appears so good in this instance as the Old One. Among many other weighty objections to the Measure, It has been suggested, that it has a tendency to introduce religious disputes into the Army, which above all things should be avoided, and in many instances would compel men to a mode of Worship which they do not profess. The old Establishment gives every Regiment an Opportunity of having a Chaplain of their own religious Sentiments, it is founded on a plan of a more generous toleration, and the choice of the Chaplains to officiate, has been generally in the Regiments. Supposing one Chaplain could do the duties of a Brigade, (which supposition However is inadmissible, when we view things in practice) that being composed of four or five, perhaps in some instances, Six Regiments, there might be so many different modes of Worship. I have mentioned the Opinion of the Officers and these hints to Congress upon this Subject; from a principle of duty and because cause I am well assured, it is most foreign to their wishes or intention to excite by any act, the smallest uneasiness and jealousy among the Troops." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, June 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:203-204

Letter to Colonel Daniel Morgan – June 13, 1777

"It occurs to me that if you were to dress a Company or two of true Woods Men in the right Indian Style and let them make the Attack accompanied with screaming and yelling as the Indians do, it would have very good consequences especially if as little as possible was said, or known of the matter beforehand." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Daniel Morgan, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, June 13, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:236

Acceptance of the American Flag – June 14, 1777

"We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity, representing our liberty." – George Washington, acceptance of American Flag, June 14, 1777; "Celebrating America's Freedoms: The United States Flag," U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, p. 1

Letter to Chevalier d'Anmurs – June 19, 1777

"An immediate declaration of War against Britain, in all probability, could not fail to extricate us from all our difficulties, and to cement the Bond of Friendship so firmly between France and America, as to produce the most permanent advantages to both. Certainly nothing can be more the true Interest of France, than to have a Weight of such Magnitude as America taken out of the Scale of British power and opulence and thrown into that of her own; and, if so, it cannot be advisable to trust any thing to contingencies, when by a conduct decisively in our favour, the object in view, might be put upon a sure footing." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier d'Anmurs, Head Quarters, Camp at Middle Brook, June 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:266

General Orders – June 28, 1777

"All Chaplains are to perform divine service tomorrow, and on every succeeding Sunday, with their respective brigades and regiments, where the situation will possibly admit of it. And the commanding officers of corps are to see that they attend; themselves, with officers of all ranks, setting the example. The Commander in Chief expects an exact compliance with this order, and that it be observed in future as an invariable rule of practice -- And every neglect will be considered not only a breach of orders, but a disregard to decency, virtue and religion." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, Middle Brook, June 28, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:308

General Orders – July 6, 1777

"[N]othing can be more hurtful to the service, than the neglect of discipline; for that discipline, more than numbers, gives one army the superiority over another." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, Morristown, July 6, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:359

"And the more effectually to promote military discipline in the army, the officers must set the example of a close attention to that point; assembling frequently each corps by themselves, and learning with diligence the manual exercise, and the most useful manoeuvres, together with the easy salute already directed in General Orders. Such a practice cannot fail of producing the best effects; And nothing can do the officers more honor. They will know their own duty, and what they have a right to expect from all who are

under their command. The men excited by the example, will eagerly embrace every opportunity, to improve in the military art; and the whole army be inspired with an emulation to become good soldiers." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, Morristown, July 6, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:360

Letter to Major General Philip Schuyler – July 15, 1777

"We should never despair, our Situation before has been unpromising and has changed for the better, so I trust, it will again. If new difficulties arise, we must only put forth new exertions and proportion our efforts to the exigency of the times." – George Washington, letter to Major General Philip Schuyler, July 15, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:408 (This letter concerns the loss of Fort Ticonderoga.)

Letter to Major General William Heath – July 19, 1777

"Since the Congress passed the Resolve that there should be but one Chaplain to three Regiments, nothing has been done towards reducing them, and I have my doubts whether the Resolve will ever be carried into execution. The appointment you mention had therefore better be suspended for a while." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:438

Letter to the Committee of Congress – July 19, 1777

"With respect to Food, considering we are in such an extensive and abundant Country, no army was ever worse supplied than ours with many essential articles of it—our Soldiers, the greatest part of last Campaign, and the whole of this, have scarcely tasted any kind of Vegetables; had but little salt and Vinegar, which would have been a tolerable substitute for Vegetables; have been in a great measure strangers to, neither have they been provided with proper drink." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:441

"Soap is another article in great demand, the Continental allowance is too small, and dear, as every necessary of life is now got, a soldier's pay will not enable him to purchase, by which means his consequent dirtiness adds not a little to the disease of the Army." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:441

"It is a maxim, which needs no illustration, that nothing can be of more importance in an Army than the Clothing and feeding it well,—on these the health, comfort, and spirits of the Soldiers, essentially depend; and it is a melancholy fact, that the American Army are miserably defective in both these respects—the distress most of them are in, for want of Clothing is painful to humanity, dispiriting to themselves, and discouraging to every Officer.—It makes every pretention to the preservation of cleanliness impossible, exposes them to a variety of disorders—and abates, or destroys that military pride without which nothing can be expected from any Army." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:442

"The Consequence of giving Rank indiscriminately, is much to be dreaded; great dissatisfaction has already arisen on acct. of bestowing this on Officers in the civil departments of the Army, on the Inferior Staff, Waggon Master &ca. who by custom, propriety, and every other motive are excluded from it in all well regulated Armies. The too great liberality practised in this respect, will destroy the pride of Rank where it ought to exist, and will not only render it cheap but contemptable." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:442

"A Small travelling Press to follow head Quarters would be productive of many eminent advantages. It would enable us to give speedy and exact information of any Military transactions that take place with proper comments upon them; and thereby frustrate the pernicious tendency of falshood and misrepresentation, which, in my opinion of whatever complexion they may be, are in the main, detrimental to our Cause." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:443

"If the People had a Channel of Intelligence, that from its usual authenticity they could look up to with confidence, they might often be preserved from that dispondency, which they are apt to fall into from the exaggerated pictures our Enemies and their emissaries among us commonly draw of any misfortunes we meet with; and from that diffidence of truths favorable to us, which they must naturally feel from the frequent deception they are exposed to, by the extravagant colourings our friends often give to our Successes." – George Washington, letter to Philip Livingston, Elbridge Gerry, and George Clymer, the Committee of Congress, Camp at the Clove, July 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 8:443-444

Letter to Samuel Washington – August 10, 1777

"I most sincerely condole with you on your late loss; and doubt not your feeling it in the most sensible manner; nor do I expect that human Fortitude, and reason, can so far overcome natural affection, as to enable us to look with calmness upon losses wh. distress us altho they are acts of Providence, and in themselves unavoidable, yet acquiescence to the divine will is not only a duty, but is to be

aided by every manly exertion to forget the causes of such uneasiness." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Germantown near Philadelphia, August 10, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:39

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – August 10, 1777

"It is generally a well-founded Maxim, that we ought to endeavour to reduce our defence, as much as possible, to a certainty, by collecting our Strength and making all our preparations at one point, rather than to risk its being weak and ineffectual every where, by dividing our attention and force to different objects." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, Head Quarters, Camp near German Town, August 10, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:46

Letter to Benjamin Franklin – August 17, 1777

"Our Corps being already formed and fully Officered and the number of Foreign Gentn. already commissioned and continually arriving with fresh applications, throw such obstacles in the way of any future appointments, that every new arrival is only a new Source of embarrassment to Congress and myself, and of disappointment and chagrin to the Gentn. who come over. Had there been only a few to provide for, we might have found employment for them in a way advantageous to the Service and honorable to themselves; but as they have come over in such Crowds, we either must not employ them, or we must do it, at the expence of one half the Officers of the Army, which you must be sensible would be attended with the most ruinous effects, and could not fail to occasion a general discontent." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Franklin, Head Quarters, August 17, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:85

General Orders – August 24, 1777

"The Commander in Chief positively forbids the straggling of soldiers of the two divisions which remain behind, from their quarters; and the General Officers commanding these divisions will take every precaution in their power effectually to prevent it; and likewise to prevent an inundation of bad women from Philadelphia; and for both purposes, a guard is to be placed on the road between the camp and the city, with particular orders to stop and properly deal with both." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at Derby, August 24, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:129-130

General Orders – September 4, 1777

"Notwithstanding all the cautions, the earnest requests, and the positive orders of the Commander in Chief, to prevent our own army from plundering our own friends and fellow citizens, yet to his astonishment and grief, fresh complaints are made to him, that so wicked, infamous and cruel a practice is still continued, and that too in circumstances most distressing; where the wretched inhabitants, dreading the enemy's vengeance for their adherence to our cause, have left all, and fled to us for refuge I We complain of the cruelty and barbarity of our enemies; but does it equal ours? They sometimes spare the property of their friends : But some amongst us, beyond expression barbarous, rob even them ! Why did we assemble in arms? Was it not, in one capital point, to protect the property of our countrymen? And shall we to our eternal reproach, be the first to pillage and destroy? Will no motives of humanity, of zeal, interest and of honor, restrain the violence of the soldiers, or induce officers to keep so strict a watch over the ill-disposed, as effectually to prevent the execution of their evil designs, and the gratification of their savage inclinations? Or, if these powerful motives are too weak, will they pay no regard to their own safety? How many noble designs have miscarried, how many victories been lost, how many armies ruined, by an indulgence of soldiers in plundering?" – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Wilmington, September 4, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:178

General Orders – September 13, 1777

"The General, with peculiar satisfaction, thanks those gallant officers and soldiers, who, on the 11th. instant, bravely fought in their country and its cause. If there are any whose conduct reflects dishonour upon soldiership, and their names are not pointed out to him, he must, for the present, leave them to reflect, how much they have injured their country, how unfaithful they have proved to their fellow -- soldiers; but with this exhortation, that they embrace the first opportunity which may offer to do justice to both, and to the profession of a soldier. Altho' the event of that day, from some unfortunate circumstances, was not so favorable as could be wished, the General has the satisfaction of assuring the troops, that from every account he has been able to obtain, the enemy's loss greatly exceeded ours;3 and he has full confidence that in another Appeal to Heaven (with the blessing of providence, which it becomes every officer and soldier humbly to supplicate), we shall prove successful." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, near Germantown, September 13, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:210-211

Letter to John Hancock, President of Congress – September 23, 1777

"But the strongest Reason against being able to make a forced March is the want of Shoes. Messrs. Carroll, Chase and Penn, who were some days with the Army, can inform Congress, in how deplorable a Situation the Troops are for want of that necessary Article, at least

one thousand Men are bare footed and have performed the late Marches in that condition." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp near Potts Grove, September 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:259

"[If there are any Shoes and Blankets to be had in Lancaster or that part of the Country I earnestly entreat] you to have them taken up for the use of the Army. I have been informed, that there are large parcels of Shoes, in particular there." – George Washington, letter to John Hancock, President of Congress, Camp near Potts Grove, September 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:259-260

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – September 24, 1777

"The difference in our political Sentiments never made any change in my friendship for you, and the favorable Sentiments I ever entertain'd of your Honr, leaves me without a doubt that you would say any thing, or do any thing injurious to the cause we are engaged in, after having pledg'd your word to the contrary—I therefore give my consent, readily, to the prosecution of your Inclination of going to England, and for this purpose Inclose a certificate—or pass-port to come forward to this army whenever you please." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, September 24, 1777; Papers, Revolutionary War Series 11:310

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – September 25, 1777

"In my Letter of yesterday I assur'd you, and assur'd you with truth, that the difference in our political Sentiments had made no change in my friendship for you—I esteem, and revere, every Man who acts from principle as I am perswaded you do; and shall ever contribute my aid to facilitate any Inclination you may wish to indulge, as I am satisfied that that honr which I have ever found you scrupulously observant of, will never be departed from." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, September 25, 1777; Papers, Revolutionary War Series 11:318

General Orders – September 27, 1777

"As the troops will rest to day, divine service is to be performed in all the corps which have chaplains." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at Pennybecker's Mills, September 27, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:275

General Orders – October 3, 1777

"This army, the main American Army, will certainly not suffer itself to be out done by their northern Brethren; they will never endure such disgrace; but with an ambition becoming freemen, contending in the most righteous cause, rival the heroic spirit which swelled their bosoms, and which, so nobly exerted, has procured them deathless renown. Covet! my Countrymen, and fellow soldiers! Covet! a share of the glory due to heroic deeds!" – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at Wentz's, Worcester Township, October 3, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:306

"Let it never be said, that in a day of action, you turned your backs on the foe; let the enemy no longer triumph. They brand you with ignominious epithets. Will you patiently endure that reproach? Will you suffer the wounds given to your Country to go unrevenged? Will you resign your parents, wives, children and friends to be the wretched vassals of a proud, insulting foe? And your own necks to the halter? General Howe promised protection to such as submitted to his power; and a few dastard souls accepted the disgraceful boon. But his promises were deceitful; the submitting and resisting had their property alike plundered and destroyed. But even these empty promises have come to an end; the term of Mercy is expired, General Howe has, within a few days proclaimed, all who had not then submitted, to be beyond the reach of it, and has left us no choice but Conquest or Death. Nothing then remains, but nobly to contend for all that is dear to us. Every motive that can touch the human breast calls us to the most vigorous exertions. Our dearest rights, our dearest friends, and our own lives, honor, glory and even shame, urge us to the fight. And My fellow Soldiers! when an opportunity presents, be firm, be brave; shew yourselves men, and victory is yours." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at Wentz's, Worcester Township, October 3, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:306

General Orders – October 7, 1777

"John Farndon of Col. Hartley's regiment, found guilty of the crime of desertion, and sentenced by the General Court Martial, held the 25th. of September last, to suffer death is to be executed to morrow at twelve o'clock." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Perkiomy, October 7, 1777; Fitzpatrick:Vol. 9:329

"The situation of the army, frequently not admitting, of the regular performance of divine service, on Sundays, the Chaplains of the army are forthwith to meet together, and agree on some method of performing it, at other times, which method they will make known to the Commander in Chief." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Perkiomy, October 7, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:329

General Orders – October 18, 1777

"The General has his happiness completed relative to the successes of our northern Army. On the 14th. instant, General Burgoyne, and his whole Army, surrendered themselves prisoners of war. Let every face brighten, and every heart expand with grateful Joy and praise to the supreme disposer of all events, who has granted us this signal success. The Chaplains of the army are to prepare short discourses, suited to the joyful occasion to deliver to their several corps and brigades at 5 O'clock this afternoon -- immediately after which, Thirteen pieces of cannon are to be discharged at the park of artillery, to be followed by a feu-de-joy with blank cartridges, or powder, by every brigade and corps of the army, beginning on the right of the front line, and running on to the left of it, and then instantly beginning on the left of the 2nd. line, and running to the right of it where it is to end." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at Wentz's, Worcester Township, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:390-391

Letter to Brigadier General James Potter – October 18, 1777

"I congratulate you upon the glorious Success of our Arms in the North an account of which is enclosed. This singular favor of Providence is to be received with thankfulness and the happy moment which Heaven has pointed out for the firm establishment of American Liberty ought to be embraced with becoming spirit; it is incumbent upon every man of influence in his country to prevail upon the militia to take the field with that energy which the present crisis evidently demands." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General James Potter, Head Quarters, Peter Wentz's, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:391

Letter to Henry Leonard Philipe, Baron d'Arendt – October 18, 1777

"Being recovered from the indisposition under which you lately laboured, you are to proceed immediately to Fort Mifflin on Mud Island and to take the command of the Troops there and those which may be sent. ... I shall not prescribe any particular line for your conduct, because I repose the utmost confidence in your bravery, knowledge and judgment; and because the mode of defence must depend on a variety of circumstances, which will be best known to those, who are on the spot. I will add, that the maintenance of this post is of the last importance to the States of America, and that preventing the Enemy from obtaining possession of it, under the smiles of Heaven, will be the means of our defeating the Army to which we are opposed, or of obliging them disgracefully to abandon the City of Philadelphia, which is now in their hands." – George Washington, letter to Henry Leonard Philipe, Baron d'Arendt, Head Quarters, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:394

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Green – October 18, 1777

"You are immediately to proceed with the Troops under your command, by the shortest Route to Bristol, where you will cross the Delaware and continue your March by way of Haddon field to Red Bank, from whence you are to go over to Fort Mifflin, and do every thing in your power for the support and defence of that garrison. You will take no baggage but what is absolutely necessary, and your March should be executed with the greatest secrecy and dispatch. I have nothing further to add, than that I expect every thing in the defence of this important pass, from the unanimous council and joint exertions of the Commodore and officers at the different Posts." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Green, Head Quarters, Worcester, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:395

Letter to John Augustine Washington – October 18, 1777

"The anxiety you have been under, on Acct. of this Army, I can easily conceive; would to God there had been less Cause for it; or, that our Situation at present, was such, as to promise much from it. The Enemy crossed the Schuylkill, which, by the by, above the Falls (and the Falls you know is only five Miles from the City) is as easily crossed in any place as Potomack Run, Aquia, or any other broad and Shallow Water. rather by stratagem; tho' I do not know that it was in our power to prevent it, as their Manoeuvres made it necessary for us to attend to our Stores which lay at Reading, towards which they seemed bending their course, and the loss of which must have proved our Ruin. After they had crossed, we took the first favourable opportunity of attacking them; this was attempted by a Nights March of fourteen Miles to Surprise them (which we effectually did) so far as reaching their Guards before they had notice of our coming, and but for a thick Fog rendered so infinitely dark at times, as not to distinguish friend from Foe at the distance of 30 Yards" – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia County, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:397

"[W]e should, I believe, have made a decisive and glorious day of it. But Providence or some unaccountable something, design'd it otherwise; for after we had driven the Enemy a Mile or two, after they were in the utmost confusion, and flying before us in most places, after we were upon the point, (as it appear'd to every body) of grasping a compleat Victory, our own Troops took fright and fled with precipitation and disorder. how to acct. for this I know not, unless, as I before observed, the Fog represented their own Friends to them for a Reinforcement of the Enemy as we attacked in different Quarters at the same time, and were about closing the Wings of our Army when this happened." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia County, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:397-398

"[O]ne thing indeed contributed not a little to our Misfortune, and that was want of Ammunition on the right wing, which began the Ingagement, and in the course of two hours and 40 Minutes which it lasted, had (many of them) expended the 40 Rounds which they took into the Field." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia County, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:398

"Our loss in the late action was, in killed, wounded, and Missing, about 1000, but of the missing, many, I dare say took advantage of the times, and deserted." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia County, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:398

"I had scarce finish'd this Letter when by express from the State of New York, I received the Important and glorious News which follows [concerning Burgoyne's surrender] ... I most devoutly congratulate you, my Country, and every well wisher to the Cause on this Signal Stroke of Providence." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Philadelphia County, October 18, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:399

Letter to Major General Israel Putnam – October 19, 1777

"The defeat of Genl. Burgoyne is a most important event, and such as must afford the highest satisfaction to every well affected American breast. Should providence be pleased to crown our Arms in the course of the Campaign, with one more fortunate stroke, I think we shall have no great cause for anxiety respecting the future designs of Britain. I trust all will be well in his good time." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Camp, 20 Miles from Philada., October 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:400

"I am extremely sorry for the death of Mrs. Putnam and Sympathise with you upon the occasion. Remembering that all must die, and that she had lived to an honourable age, I hope you will bear the misfortune with that fortitude and complacency of mind, that become a Man and a Christian." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Camp, 20 Miles from Philada., October 19, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:401

Letter to Landon Carter – October 27, 1777

"I have this Instant received an acct. of the Prisoners taken by the Northern Army (Including Tories in arms agt. us) in the course of the Campaign. this singular Instance of Providence, and our good fortune under it exhibits a striking proof of the advantages which result from unanimity and a spirited conduct in the Militia." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Philadelphia County, October 27, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:453

"I do not mean to complain, I flatter myself that a Superintending Providence is ordering every thing for the best and that, in due time, all will end well." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Philadelphia County, October 27, 1777; Fitzpatrick 9:454

Letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson – November 8, 1777

"It is in vain to look back to our disappointment on the 4th. Instant at Germantown. We must endeavour to deserve better of Providence, and, I am persuaded, she will smile upon us. The rebuff which the Enemy met with at Red Bank (in which Count Donop and about four or 500 Hessians were killed and wounded) and the loss of the Augusta of 64 and Merlin of 18 Guns, have, I dare say, been fully related to you, which renders it unnecessary for me to dwell on it. They are using every effort for the reduction of Fort Mifflin and we, under our present circumstances, to save it. The event is left to Heaven." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Camp at White Marsh, 12 Miles from Philadelphia, November 8, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:28

General Orders – November 30, 1777

"Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men, to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God; to acknowledge with gratitude their obligations to him for benefits received, and to implore such further blessings as they stand in need of; and it having pleased him in his abundant mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable bounties of his common providence, but also, to smile upon us in the prosecution of a just and necessary war, for the defence of our unalienable rights and liberties. ... It is therefore recommended by Congress, that Thursday the 18th. day of December next be set apart for Solemn Thanksgiving and Praise; that at one time, and with one voice, the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their divine benefactor; and that, together with their sincere acknowledgements and offerings they may join the penitent confession of their sins; and supplications for such further blessings as they stand in need of. The Chaplains will properly notice this recommendation, that the day of thanksgiving may be duly observed in the army, agreeably to the intentions of Congress." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, White Marsh, November 30, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:123

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – December 14, 1777

"I confess, I have felt myself greatly embarrassed with respect to a vigorous exercise of Military power. An Ill placed humanity perhaps and a reluctance to give distress may have restrained me too far. But these were not all. I have been well aware of the prevalent jealousy of military power, and that this has been considered as an Evil much to be apprehended even by the best and most sensible among us. Under this Idea, I have been cautious and wished to avoid as much as possible any Act that might improve it. However Congress may be assured, that no exertions of mine as far as circumstances will admit shall be wanting to provide our own Troops with Supplies on the one hand, and to prevent the Enemy from them on the other. At the same time they must be apprized, that many

Obstacles have arisen to render the former more precarious and difficult than they usually were from a change in the Commissary's department at a very critical and interesting period. I should be happy, if the Civil Authority in the Several States thro' the recommendations of Congress, or their own mere will, seeing the necessity of supporting the Army, would always adopt the most spirited measures, suited to the end. The people at large are governed much by Custom. To Acts of Legislation or Civil Authority they have been ever taught to yield a willing obedience without reasoning about their propriety. On those of Military power, whether immediate or derived originally from another Source, they have ever looked with a jealous and suspicious Eye." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Head Quarters near the Gulph, December 14, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:159

General Orders – December 17, 1777

"The Commander in Chief with the highest satisfaction expresses his thanks to the officers and soldiers for the fortitude and patience with which they have sustained the fatigues of the Campaign. Altho' in some instances we unfortunately failed, yet upon the whole Heaven hath smiled on our Arms and crowned them with signal success; and we may upon the best grounds conclude, that by a spirited continuance of the measures necessary for our defence we shall finally obtain the end of our Warfare, Independence, Liberty and Peace. These are blessings worth contending for at every hazard." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at the Gulph, December 17, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:167

"To morrow being the day set apart by the Honorable Congress for public Thanksgiving and Praise; and duty calling us devoutly to express our grateful acknowledgements to God for the manifold blessings he has granted us. The General directs that the army remain in it's present quarters, and that the Chaplains perform divine service with their several Corps and brigades. And earnestly exhorts, all officers and soldiers, whose absence is not indispensibly necessary, to attend with reverence the solemnities of the day." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, at the Gulph, December 17, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:168

Letter to Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker – December 20, 1777

"Your favour of the 24th. of September inclosing a discourse [Judges 5:23] against Toryism, came safe to my hands. For the honour of the dedication, I return you my sincere thanks, and wish most devoutly that your labour may be crowned with the success it deserves." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker, Valley Forge, December 20, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:175

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – December 22, 1777

"I do not know from what cause, this alarming deficiency or rather total failure of Supplies arises; But unless more Vigorous exertions and better regulations take place in that line, and immediately, this Army must dissolve.⁵⁶ I have done all in my power, by remonstrating, by writing to, by ordering the Commissaries on this Head, from time to time; but without any good effect, or obtaining more than a present scanty relief." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, December 22, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:183-184

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – December 23, 1777

"I am now convinced, beyond a doubt that unless some great and capital change suddenly takes place in that line, this Army must inevitably be reduced to one or other of these three things. Starve, dissolve, or disperse, in order to obtain subsistence in the best manner they can; rest assured Sir this is not an exaggerated picture, but [and] that I have abundant reason to support what I say." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, December 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:192

"[W]hat makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye is, that these very Gentn. who were well apprized of the nakedness of the Troops, from ocular demonstration [who] thought their own Soldiers worse clad than others, and advised me, near a Month ago, to postpone the execution of a Plan, I was about to adopt (in consequence of a resolve of Congress) for seizing Cloaths, under strong assurances that an ample supply would be collected in ten days agreeably to a decree of the State⁶⁶ not one Article of wch., by the bye, is yet come to hand, should think a Winters Campaign and the covering these States from the Invasion of an Enemy so easy [and practicable] a business. I can assure those Gentlemen that it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fire side than to occupy a cold bleak hill and sleep under frost and Snow without Cloaths or Blankets; however, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked, and distressed Soldier, I feel superabundantly for them, and from my Soul pity those miseries, wch. it is neither in my power to relieve or prevent." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, December 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:193

"Military arrangement, and movements in consequence, like the mechanism of a clock, will be imperfect and disordered by the want of a part." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, December 23, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:197

Letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston – December 31, 1777

"I sincerely feel for the unhappy Condition of our Poor Fellows in the Hospitals, and wish my powers to relieve them were equal to my inclination. It is but too melancholy a truth, that our Hospital Stores are exceedingly scanty and deficient in every instance, and I fear there is no prospect of their being better shortly. Our difficulties and distresses are certainly great and such as wound the feelings of Humanity. Our sick naked, our well naked, our unfortunate men in captivity naked!" – George Washington, letter to Nes Jersey Governor William Livingston, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, December 31, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:233

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – December 31, 1777

"It will ever constitute part of my happiness to know that I stand well in your opinion, because I am satisfied that you can have no views to answer by throwing out false colours, and that you possess a Mind too exalted to condescend to dirty Arts and low intrigues to acquire a reputation. Happy, thrice happy, would it have been for this Army and the cause we are embarked in, if the same generous spirit had pervaded all the Actors in it." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Head Quarters, December 31, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:236

"[I]t is much to be lamented that things are not now as they formerly were; but we must not, in so great a contest, expect to meet with nothing but Sun shine. I have no doubt but that every thing happens so for the best; that we shall triumph over all our misfortunes, and shall, in the end, be ultimately happy; when, My Dear Marquis, if you will give me your Company in Virginia, we will laugh at our past difficulties and the folly of others." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Head Quarters, December 31, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:237

General Instructions for the Colonels and Commanding Officers of Regiments in the Continental Service – 1777

"Your Officers are to dress Neat, but plain, aiming in all respects to support the Character of Gentlemen, and Men of Honour; a deviation therefrom will be markd with an attentive eye and the Officers encouraged, or discountenanced according to the line of conduct they pursue." – George Washington, General Instructions for the Colonels and Commanding Officers of Regiments in the Continental Service, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:241

"As nothing adds more to the look of a Soldier, and nothing can contribute more to his health than cleanliness of person and wholesome Diet you are to be particularly attentive to both these, making it a part of the Officers Regimental Duty to superintend these matters." – George Washington, General Instructions for the Colonels and Commanding Officers of Regiments in the Continental Service, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:241

"Let Vice and immorality of every kind be discouraged as much as possible in your Regiment; and see, as a Chaplain is allowed to it, that the Men regularly attend divine Worship. Gaming of every kind is expressly forbid as the foundation of evil, and the ruin of many a brave, and good Officer. Games of exercise, for amusement, may be not only allowed of, but Encouraged." – George Washington, General Instructions for the Colonels and Commanding Officers of Regiments in the Continental Service, 1777; Fitzpatrick 10:242

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – January 2, 1778

"If General Conway means, by cool receptions mentioned in the last paragraph of his Letter of the 31st Ulto., that I did not receive him in the language of a warm and cordial Friend, I readily confess the charge. I did not, nor shall I ever, till I am capable of the arts of dissimulation. These I despise, and my feelings will not permit me to make professions of friendship to the man I deem my Enemy, and whose system of conduct forbids it." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, January 2, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:249

Letter to Major General Horatio Gates – January 4, 1778

"Thus Sir, with an openness and candour which I hope will ever characterize and mark my conduct have I complied with your request." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, Valley Forge, January 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:264

"I considered the information as coming from yourself; and given with a friendly view to forewarn, and consequently forearm me, against a secret enemy; or, in other words, a dangerous incendiary; in which character, sooner or later, this Country will know Genl. Conway. But, in this, as in other matters of late, I have found myself mistaken." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, Valley Forge, January 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:264-265

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – January 5, 1778

"It will never answer to procure Supplies of Cloathing or Provision, by coercive measures. The small seizures made of the former, a few days ago, in consequence of the most pressing and absolute necessity, when that or to dissolve was the alternative, excited the greatest alarm and uneasiness, even among our best and warmest friends. Such procedures may give a momentary relief, but if repeated, will prove of the most pernicious consequence." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley

General Orders – January 8, 1778

"The Commander in Chief is informed that gaming is again creeping into the Army; in a more especial manner among the lower staff in the environs of the camp. He therefore in the most solemn terms declares, that this Vice in either Officer or soldier, shall not when detected, escape exemplary punishment; and to avoid discrimination between play and gaming forbids Cards and Dice under any pretence whatsoever." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, January 8, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:276

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – January 23, 1778

"[N]either interested nor ambitious views led me into the service, I did not solicit the command, but accepted it after much entreaty, with all that diffidence which a conscious want of ability and experience equal to the discharge of so important a trust, must naturally create in a mind not quite devoid of thought; and after I did engage, pursued the great line of my duty, and the object in view (as far as my judgement could direct) as pointedly as the needle to the pole. So soon then as the public gets dissatisfied with my services, or a person is found better qualified to answer her expectation, I shall quit the helm with as much satisfaction, and retire to a private station with as much content, as ever the wearied pilgrim felt upon his safe arrival in the Holy-land, or haven of hope; and shall wish most devoutly, that those who come after may meet with more prosperous gales than I have done, and less difficulty." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, January 23, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:338

Letter to the Committee of Congress with the Army – January 29, 1778

"A small knowledge of human nature will convince us, that, with far the greatest part of mankind, interest is the governing principle; and that almost every man is more or less, under its influence." – George Washington, address to the Committee of Congress with the Army, Head Quarters, January 29, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:363

"Irregular promotions have also been a pregnant source of uneasiness, discord and perplexity in this army. ... This, however, shows how indispensably necessary it is, to have some settled rule of promotion, universally known and understood and not to be deviated from, but for obvious and incontestible reasons." – George Washington, address to the Committee of Congress with the Army, Head Quarters, January 29, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:380

"No expressions of personal politeness to me can be acceptable, accompanied by reflections on the Representatives of a free People, under whose Authority I have the Honor to act. The delicacy I have observed in refraining from every thing offensive in this way, entitled me to expect a similar Treatment from you. I have not indulged myself in invective against the present Rulers of Great Britain, in the course of our Correspondence, nor will I even now avail myself of so fruitful a Theme." – George Washington, letter to Lord William Howe, Head Quarters, January 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:409

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – January 31, 1778

"As I have no other view than to promote the public good, and am unambitious of honours not founded in the approbation of my Country, I would not desire in the least degree to suppress a free spirit of enquiry into any part of my conduct that even faction itself may deem reprehensible." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, January 31, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:410

"My Enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me; they know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets, it is of the utmost moment to conceal." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, January 31, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:410

"[W]hy should I expect to be exempt from censure; the unfailling lot of an elevated station? Merits and talents, with which I can have no pretensions of rivalship, have ever been subject to it. My Heart tells me it has been my unremitted aim to do the best circumstances would permit; yet, I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may, in many instances deserve the imputation of error." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, January 31, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:411

Letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston – February 2, 1778

"It is a tax, however, severe, which all those must pay, who are called to eminent stations of trust, not only to be held up as conspicuous marks to the enmity of the Public adversaries to their country, but to the malice of secret traitors and the envious intrigues of false friends and factions." – George Washington, letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston, Head Quarters, Valley Forge,

Letter to New York Governor George Clinton – February 16, 1778

"For some days past, there has been little less, than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week, without any kind of flesh, and the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery, that they have not been ere this excited by their sufferings, to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms, however, of discontent have appeared in particular instances; and nothing but the most active efforts every where can long avert so shocking a catastrophe." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor George Clinton, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, February 16, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:469

"There is no foundation laid for any adequate relief hereafter. All the magazines provided in the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland, and all the immediate additional supplies they seem capable of affording, will not be sufficient to support the army more than a month longer, if so long." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor George Clinton, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, February 16, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:469

"Impressed with this idea, I am, on my part, putting every engine to work, that I can possibly think of, to prevent the fatal consequences, we have so great reason to apprehend." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor George Clinton, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, February 16, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:470

General Orders – February 18, 1778

"At a brigade Court Martial whereof Lt. Colo. [Abraham] Beauford was president (Feb. 16th.) Lieutt. John Rust of 10th. Virginia Regiment, tried at the request of Lieutt. [Charles] Broadwater for abusively aggravating said Broadwater to strike him, for getting drunk, playing Cards and beating Capt. [David] Lard on the Sabbath day whilst he the said Capt. Lard was under arrest and found guilty of a breach of 21st. Article 14th section of the Articles of war, also of a breach of General Orders, and sentenced to be discharged from the service. But as Lieutt. Rust has formerly borne the character of a good officer, the court are pleased to recommend him to the consideration of His Excellency General Washington to have him reinstated in his rank. ... The Commander in Chief approves the sentence, but is concern'd he cannot reinstate Lt. Rust in compliance with the recommendation of the Court founded upon his former good Character as an Officer. His behavior in the several instances alledged was so flagrant and scandalous that the General thinks his continuance in the service would be a disgrace to it and as one part of the charge against him was gaming, that alone would exclude him from all Indulgence; a Vice of so pernicious a nature that it never will escape the Severest punishment with His approbation." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, V. Forge, Wednesday, February 18, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:475

Letter to Major General Horatio Gates – February 24, 1778

"I am as averse to controversy, as any Man, and had I not been forced into it, you never would have had occasion to impute to me, even the shadow of a disposition towards it. Your repeatedly and Solemnly disclaiming any offensive views, in those matters, which have been the subject of our past correspondence, makes me willing to close with the desire, you express, of burying them hereafter in silence, and as far as future events will permit, oblivion. My temper leads me to peace and harmony with all Men; and it is particularly my wish, to avoid any personal feuds or dissensions with those, who are embarked in the same great National interest with myself, as every difference of this kind must in its consequences be very injurious." – George Washington, letter to Major General Horatio Gates, Valley Forge, February 24, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:508

General Orders – February 25, 1778

"At a General Court Martial whereof Colo. Cortlandt was President, February 16th, '78, Lieutt. [Abraham] Tipton of 12th. Virginia Regiment tried for gaming and behaving unbecoming the Character of an Officer or Gentleman and acquitted of the charge exhibited against him. ... The General cannot perceive upon what principle the Court acquitted Lt. Tipton having been clearly convicted of gaming, which is a palpable breach of the general orders prohibiting it in every form and is therefore obliged to disapprove the sentence yet as Lieutenant Tipton has undergone his trial it would be improper to bring him to a second; he is of course to be released from his arrest." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Wednesday, February 25, 1778; Fitzpatrick 10:510-511

Letter to Bryan Fairfax – March 1, 1778

"The friendship I ever professed, and felt for you, met with no diminution from the difference in our political Sentiments. I know the rectitude of my own intentions, and believing in the sincerity of yours, lamented, though I did not condemn, your renunciation of the creed I had adopted. Nor do I think any person, or power, ought to do it, whilst your conduct is not opposed to the general Interest of the people and the measures they are pursuing; the latter, that is our actions, depending upon ourselves, may be controuled, while the

powers of thinking originating in higher causes, cannot always be moulded to our wishes." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:2

"The determinations of Providence are all ways wise; often inscrutable, and though its decrees appear to bear hard upon us at times is nevertheless meant for gracious purposes." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:3

"[G]reat Britain understood herself perfectly well in this dispute but did not comprehend America. She meant as Lord Campden in his late speech in Parlt. clearly, and explicitly declared, to drive America into rebellion 7 that her own purposes might be more fully answered by it but take this along with it, that this Plan originating in a firm belief, founded on misinformation, that no effectual opposition would or could be made, they little dreamt of what has happened and are disappd. in their views; does not every act of administration from the Tea Act to the present Session of Parliament declare this in plain and self evidt. Characters? Had the Comrs. any powers to treat with America? If they meant Peace, would Lord Howe have been detain'd in England 5 Months after passing the Act? Would the powers of these Comrs. have been confined to mere acts of grace, upon condition of absolute submission? No, surely, No! they meant to drive us into what they termed rebellion, that they might be furnished with a pretext to disarm and then strip us of the rights and privileges of Englishmen and Citizens. If they were actuated by principles of justice, why did they refuse indignantly to accede to the terms which were humbly supplicated before hostilities commenced and this Country deluged in Blood; and now make their principal Officers and even the Comrs. themselves say, that these terms are just and reasonable; Nay that more will be granted than we have yet asked, if we will relinquish our Claim to Independency. What Name does such conduct as this deserve? and what punishment is there in store for the Men who have distressed Millions, involved thousands in ruin, and plunged numberless families in inextricable woe?" – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:3-4

"[W]hat punishment is there in store for the Men who have distressed Millions, involved thousands in ruin, and plunged numberless families in inextricable woe? Could that wch. is just and reasonable now, have been unjust four Years ago? If not upon what principles, I say does Administration act? they must either be wantonly wicked and cruel, or (which is only another mode of describing the same thing) under false colours are now endeavouring to deceive the great body of the people, by industriously propagating a belief that G. B. is willing to offer any, and that we will accept of no terms; thereby hoping to poison and disaffect the Minds of those who wish for peace, and create feuds and dissensions among ourselves. In a word, having less dependance now, in their Arms than their Arts, they are practising such low and dirty tricks, that Men of Sentiment and honr. must blush at their Villainy, among other manoeuvres, in this way they are counterfeiting Letters, and publishing them, as intercepted ones of mine to prove that I am an enemy to the present measures, and have been led into them step by step still hoping that Congress would recede from their present claims." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:4

"[T]hey are practising such low and dirty tricks, that Men of Sentiment and honr. must blush at their Villainy..." – George Washington, letter to Bryan Fairfax, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:5

General Orders – March 1, 1778

"The Commander in Chief again takes occasion to return his warmest thanks to the virtuous officers and soldiery of this Army for that persevering fidelity and Zeal which they have uniformly manifested in all their conduct. Their fortitude not only under the common hardships incident to a military life, but also under the additional sufferings to which the peculiar situation of these States have exposed them, clearly proves them worthy the enviable privilege of contending for the rights of human nature, the Freedom and Independence of their Country." – George Washington, General Orders, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:8-9

"Surely we who are free Citizens in arms engaged in a struggle for every thing valuable in society and partaking in the glorious task of laying the foundation of an Empire, should scorn effeminately to shrink under those accidents and rigours of War which mercenary hirelings fighting in the cause of lawless ambition, rapine and devastation, encounter with cheerfulness and alacrity, we should not be merely equal, we should be superior to them in every qualification that dignifies the man or the soldier in proportion as the motive from which we act and the final hopes of our Toils, are superior to theirs." – George Washington, General Orders, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:9

"[B]ut soldiers ! American soldiers! will despise the meanness of repining at such trifling strokes of Adversity, trifling indeed when compared to the transcendent Prize which will undoubtedly crown their Patience and Perseverance, Glory and Freedom, Peace and Plenty to themselves and the Community; The Admiration of the World, the Love of their Country and the Gratitude of Posterity!" – George Washington, General Orders, Valley Forge, March 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:9-10

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – March 7, 1778

"[I]t may not be a little dangerous, to beget in the minds of our own Countrymen, a Suspicion that we do not pay the strictest Observance to the Maxims of Honor and good Faith. It is prudent to use the greatest Caution, not to shock the Notions of general Justice and Humanity, universal among Mankind, as well in a public as a private View: in a Business, on the side of which the Passions are so much concerned as in the Present, Men would be readily disposed to believe the worst and cherish the most unfavourable Conclusions." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Valley Forge, March 7, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:41

Letter to Thomas Wharton, Junior, President of Pennsylvania – March 7, 1778

"There is nothing I have more at Heart, than to discharge the great duties incumbent on me with the strictest Attention to the Ease and Convenience of the People." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Wharton, Junior, President of Pennsylvania, Valley Forge, March 7, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:45

Letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs – March 13, 1778

"[B]y the...Resolve of Congress...I am impowered to employ a body of four hundred Indians, if they can be procured upon proper terms. Divesting them of the Savage customs exercised in their Wars against each other, I think they may be made of excellent use, as scouts and light troops, mixed with our own Parties. I propose to raise about one half the number among the Southern and the remainder among the Northern Indians. I have sent Colo Nathl. Gist, who is well acquainted with the Cherokees and their Allies, to bring as many as he can from thence, and I must depend upon you to employ suitable persons to procure the stipulated number or as near as may be from the Northern tribes. The terms made with them should be such as you think we can comply with, and persons well acquainted with their language, manners and Customs and who have gained an influence over them should accompany them." – George Washington, letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, March 13, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:76

Letter to Reverend Israel Evans – March 13, 1778

"[I]t is more especially incumbent upon me to thank you for the honorable, but partial mention you have made of my character; and to assure you, that it will ever be the first wish of my heart to aid your pious endeavours to inculcate a due sense of the dependance we ought to place in that all wise and powerful Being on whom alone our success depends." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Israel Evans, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, March 13, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:78

General Orders – March 14, 1778

At a General Court Martial whereof Colo. Tupper was President (10th March 1778) Lieutt. [Frederick Gotthold] Enslin 28 of Colo. Malcom's Regiment tried for attempting to commit sodomy, with John Monhort a soldier; Secondly, For Perjury in swearing to false Accounts, found guilty of the charges exhibited against him, being breaches of 5th. Article 18th. Section of the Articles of War and do sentence him to be dismiss'd the service with Infamy. His Excellency the Commander in Chief approves the sentence and with Abhorrence and Detestation of such Infamous Crimes orders Lieutt. Enslin to be drummed out of Camp tomorrow morning by all the Drummers and Fifers in the Army never to return; The Drummers and Fifers to attend on the Grand Parade at Guard mounting for that Purpose." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Saturday, March 14, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:83-84

Letter to Brigadier General John Cadwalader – March 20, 1778

"By death and desertion, we have lost a good many Men since we came to this ground, and have encountered every species of hardship, that cold, wet, and hunger, and want of Cloathes were capable of producng; notwithstanding. and contrary to my expectations we have been able to keep the Soldiers from Mutiny or dispersion, although, in the single article of Provisns. they have encountered enough to have occasioned one or the other of these in most other Armies; as they have been (two or three times), days together, without Provisions; and once Six days without any of the Meat kind; could the poor Horses tell their tale, it would be in a strain still more lamentable, as numbers have actually died from pure want." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General John Cadwalader, Valley Forge, March 20, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:117

Letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry – March 27, 1778

"I should feel much regret, if I thought the happiness of America so intimately connected with my personal welfare, as you so obligingly seem to consider it. All I can say is, that she has ever had, and I trust she ever will have, my honest exertions to promote her interest. I cannot hope that my services have been the best; but my heart tells me they have been the best that I could render." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Valley Forge, March 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:160

"That I may have erred in using the means in my power for accomplishing the objects of the arduous, exalted station with which I am honored, I cannot doubt; nor do I wish my conduct to be exempted from reprehension farther than it may deserve. Error is the portion of humanity, and to censure it, whether committed by this or that public character, is the prerogative of freemen." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Valley Forge, March 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:160

General Orders – March 27, 1778

"It is expected the General and Field Officers will set the Example." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Friday, March 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:162

Letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry – March 28, 1778

"The approbation of my Country is what I wish, and as far as my abilities and opportunity will permit, I hope I shall endeavour to deserve it. It is the highest reward to a feeling Mind; and happy are they, who so conduct themselves as to merit it." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Camp, March 28, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:164

Letter to Colonel Josias Carvil Hall – April 3, 1778

"A refusal to obey the commands of a superior Officer, especially where the duty required was evidently calculated for the good of the Service, cannot be justified, without involving consequences subversive of all Military Discipline." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Josias Carvil Hall, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, April 3, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:204

"[F]rom the Crisis at which our affairs have arrived and the frequent defection of Officers seduced by views of private interest and emolument to abandon the cause of their Country. I think every Man who does not merely make profession of Patriotism is bound by indissoluble ties to remain in the Army." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Josias Carvil Hall, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, April 3, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:204

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – April 4, 1778

"I am well aware that appearances ought to be upheld, and that we should avoid as much as possible recognizing by any public Act, the depreciation of our currency; but I conceive this end would be answered, as far as might be necessary, by stipulating that all money payments should be made in Gold and Silver, being the common Medium of Commerce among Nations." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, April 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:217

General Orders – April 9, 1778

"Nothing does, nor nothing can contribute more to the health of soldiers than a clean Camp, clean Cloathes and Victuals well dressed; these (however deeply involved in rags an Army may be) are to be effected by attention in the officers. The General therefore calls upon every officer from the Major General to the Corporal inclusively for their exertions hoping thereby with the blessing of God to prevent such number of deaths which unfortunately have happened since we came to this ground, and see a stricter attention to orders than heretofore has been paid." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Thursday, April 9, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:231

General Orders – April 12, 1778

"The Honorable Congress having thought proper to recommend to The United States of America to set apart Wednesday the 22nd. instant to be observed as a day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer, that at one time and with one voice the righteous dispensations of Providence may be acknowledged and His Goodness and Mercy toward us and our Arms supplicated and implored; The General directs that this day also shall be religiously observed in the Army, that no work be clone thereon and that the Chaplains prepare discourses suitable to the Occasion." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Sunday, April 12, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:252

Letter to John Bannister – April 21, 1778

"I am pleased to find that you expect the proposed establishment of the Army will succeed; though it is a painful consideration, that matters of such pressing importance and obvious necessity meet with so much difficulty and delay. Be assured the success of the measure is a matter of the most serious moment, and that it ought to be brought to a conclusion, as speedily as possible. The spirit of resigning Commissions has been long at an alarming height, and increases daily. [Applications from Officers on furlough are hourly arriving, and Genls. Heath, of Boston, McDougal on the No. River, and Mason of Virginia are asking what they are to do with the appliants to them.]" – George Washington, letter to John Bannister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:285

"The difference between our service and that of the Enemy, is very striking. With us, from the peculiar, unhappy situation of things, the Officer, a few instances excepted, must break in upon his private fortune for present support, without a prospect of future relief. With them, even Companies are esteemed so honourable and so valuable, that they have sold of late from 15 to 2,200 £ Sterling, and I am credibly informed, that 4,000 Guineas have been given for a Troop of Dragoons: You will readily determine how this difference will operate; what effects it must produce." – George Washington, letter to John Bannister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:286

"Men may speculate as they will; they may talk of patriotism; they may draw a few examples from ancient story, of great achievements performed by its influence; but whoever builds upon it, as a sufficient Basis for conducting a long and [bloody] War, will find themselves deceived in the end. We must take the passions of Men as Nature has given them, and those principles as a guide which are generally the rule of Action. I do not mean to exclude altogether the Idea of Patriotism. I know it exists, and I know it has done much in the present Contest. But I will venture to assert, that a great and lasting War can never be supported on this principle alone. It must be aided by a prospect of Interest or some reward. For a time, it may, of itself push Men to Action; to bear much, to encounter difficulties; but it will not endure unassisted by Interest." – George Washington, letter to John Bannister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:286

"[T]o discerning Men, nothing can be more evident, than that a Peace on the principles of dependance, however limited, after what has happened, would be to the last degree dishonourable and ruinous." – George Washington, letter to John Bannister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:287

"The wishes of the people, seldom founded in deep disquisitions, or resulting from other reasonings than their present feelings, may not entirely accord with our true policy and interest. If they do not, to observe a proper line of conduct for promoting the one, and avoiding offence to the other, will be a work of great difficulty." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:288

"Nothing short of independence, it appears to me, can possibly do. A peace on other terms would, if I may be allowed the expression, be a peace of war. The injuries we have received from the British nation were so unprovoked, and have been so great and so many, that they can never be forgotten. Besides the feuds, the jealousies, the animosities, that would ever attain a union with them; besides the importance, the advantages, we should derive from an unrestricted commerce; our fidelity as a people, our gratitude, our character as men, are opposed to a coalition with them as subjects, but in case of the last extremity. Were we easily to accede to terms of dependence, no nation, upon future occasions, let the oppressions of Britain be never so flagrant and unjust, would interpose for our relief; or, at most, they would do it with a cautious reluctance, and upon conditions most probably that would be hard, if not dishonorable to us. France, by her supplies, has saved us from the yoke thus far; and a wise and virtuous perseverance would, and I trust will, free us entirely." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, Valley Forge, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:289

"It is our policy to be prejudiced against them in time of War; and though they are Citizens having all the Ties, and interests of Citizens, and in most cases property totally unconnected with the Military Line. If we would pursue a right System of policy, in my Opinion, there should be none of these distinctions." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:291

"We should all be considered, Congress, Army, &c. as one people, embarked in one Cause, in one interest; acting on the same principle and to the same End. The distinction, the Jealousies set up, or perhaps only incautiously let out, can answer not a single good purpose. They are impolitic in the extreme." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:291

"Among Individuals, the most certain way to make a Man your Enemy, is to tell him, you esteem him such." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:291

"[W]ithout arrogance, or the smallest deviation from truth it may be said, that no history, now extant, can furnish an instance of an Army's suffering such uncommon hardships as ours have done, and bearing them with the same patience and Fortitude. To see Men without Cloathes to cover their nakedness, without Blankets to lay on, without Shoes, by which their Marches might be traced by the Blood from their feet, and almost as often without Provisions as with; Marching through frost and Snow, and at Christmas taking up their Winter Quarters within a day's March of the enemy, without a House or Hut to cover them till they could be built and submitting to it without a murmur, is a mark of patience and obedience which in my opinion can scarce be parallel'd." – George Washington, letter to John Banister, April 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:291

General Orders – May 2, 1778

"The Commander in Chief directs that divine Service be performed every Sunday at 11 oClock in those Brigades to which there are Chaplains; those which have none to attend the places of worship nearest to them. It is expected that Officers of all Ranks will by their attendance set an Example to their men. ... While we are zealously performing the duties of good Citizens and soldiers we certainly ought not to be inattentive to the higher duties of Religion. To the distinguished Character of Patriot, it should be our highest Glory to add the more distinguished Character of Christian. The signal Instances of providential Goodness which we have experienced and which have now almost crowned our labours with complete Success, demand from us in a peculiar manner the warmest returns of Gratitude and Piety to the Supreme Author of all Good." – George Washington, General Orders, Headquarters, Valley Forge, May 2, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:342-343

"No fatigue Parties to be employed on Sundays till further Orders." – George Washington, General Orders, After Orders, Headquarters, Valley Forge, May 2, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:343

Letter to Major General Alexander McDougall – May 5, 1778

"I very much fear that we, taking it for granted that we have nothing more to do, because France has acknowledged our Independency and formed an alliance with us, shall relapse into a state of supineness and perfect security." – George Washington, letter to Major General Alexander McDougall, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, May 5, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:352

General Orders – May 5, 1778

"It having pleased the Almighty ruler of the Universe propitiously to defend the Cause of the United American-States and finally by raising us up a powerful Friend among the Princes of the Earth to establish our liberty and Independence up lasting foundations, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the divine Goodness and celebrating the important Event which we owe to his benign Interposition. ... The several Brigades are to be assembled for this Purpose at nine o'Clock tomorrow morning when their Chaplains will communicate the Intelligence contain'd in the Postscript to the Pennsylvania Gazette of the 2nd. instant and offer up a thanksgiving and deliver a discourse suitable to the Occasion.." – George Washington, General Orders, After Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Tuesday, May 5, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:354-355

General Orders – May 21, 1778

At a Brigade Court Martial May 18th, 1778, Lieutt. Colo. [John] Cropper, President, Captain Edward Hull of the 15th. Virginia Regiment tried for gaming when he ought to have been on the Parade the 12th. instant unanimously found guilty of that part of the Charge relative to gaming but acquitted of non-attendance on the Parade and sentenced to be reprimanded by the Commanding Officer of the Brigade in presence of all the Officers thereof. ... At the same Court Lieutt. Thomas Lewis of the said Regiment tried upon a similar charge, found guilty and sentenced the same as Captain Hull. ... The Commander in Chief however unwilling to dissent from the judgment of a Court Martial is obliged utterly to disapprove the sentences, the punishment being in his opinion totally inadequate to the offence. A practice so pernicious in itself as that of gaming, so prejudicial to good order and military discipline; So contrary to positive and repeated General Orders, carried to so Enormous a height as it appears, and aggravated certainly in Case of Lieutt. Lewis by an additional offence of no trifling military consequence, Absence from Parade, demanded a much severer Penalty than simply a reprimand. Captn. Hull and Lieutt. Lewis are to be released from their Arrest." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, V. Forge, Thursday, May 21, 1778" – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Valley Forge, May 29, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:431-432

General Orders – May 22, 1778

"At a General Court Martial at Foster town, New Jersey, May 18th. 1778; Lieutt. Colo. De Hart, Prest. Lieutt. Joseph Jay of the 2nd. New Jersey Regiment tried for a scandalous neglect of duty in absenting himself from his Regiment near one year without leave; Also for gambling and gaming contrary to general orders; unanimously found guilty of both charges and sentenced to be cashiered. His Excellency the Commander in Chief approves the sentence and orders it to take place immediately." – George Washington, General Orders, Head-Quarters, V. Forge, Friday, May 22, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:433

Letter to Robert Morris – May 25, 1778

"I rejoice most sincerely with you, on the glorious change in our prospects, Calmness and serenity, seems likely to succeed in some measure, those dark and tempestuous clouds which at times appeared ready to overwhelm us, The game, whether well or ill played hitherto, seems now to be verging fast to a favourable issue, and cannot I think be lost, unless we throw it away by too much supineness on the one hand, or impetuosity on the other, God forbid that either of these should happen at a time when we seem to be upon the point of reaping the fruits of our toil and labour, A stroke, and reverse, under such circumstances, would be doubly distressing." – George Washington, letter to Robert Morris, Valley-forge, May 25, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:453

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – May 29, 1778

"Had such a chapter as you speak of been written to the rulers of mankind it would I am persuaded, have been as unavailing as many others upon subjects of equal importance—We may lament that things are not consonant with our wishes, but cannot change the nature of Men, and yet those who are distressed by the folly and perverseness of it, cannot help complaining, as I would do on the old score of regulation and arrangement, if I thought any good would come of it." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Valley Forge, May 29, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:483

Letter to Landon Carter – May 30, 1778

"Were I not warm in my acknowledgments for your distinguished regard, I should feel that sense of ingratitude, which I hope will never constitute a part of my character, nor find a place in my bosom." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Valley Forge, May 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:492

"Providence has a joint claim to my humble and grateful thanks, for its protection and direction of me, through the many difficult and intricate scenes, which this contest hath produced; and for the constant interposition in our behalf, when the clouds were heaviest and seemed ready to burst upon us." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Valley Forge, May 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:492

"To paint the distresses and perilous situation of this army in the course of last winter, for want of cloaths, provisions, and almost every other necessary, essential to the well-being, (I may say existence,) of an army, would require more time and an abler pen than mine; nor, since our prospects have so miraculously brightened, shall I attempt it, or even bear it in remembrance, further than as a memento of what is due to the great Author of all the care and good, that have been extended in relieving us in difficulties and distress." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Valley Forge, May 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:492

"It is a measure much to be wished, and I believe would not be displeasing to the body of that people; but, while Carleton remains among them, with three or four thousand regular troops, they dare not avow their sentiments, (if they really are favorable,) without a strong support." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Valley Forge, May 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:492

"The draughts of bills as mentioned by you, and which have since passed into acts of British legislation, are so strongly marked with folly and villany, that one can scarce tell which predominates, or how to be surprised at any act of a British minister. This last trite performance of Master North's is neither more nor less than an insult to common sense, and shows to what extremity of folly wicked men in a bad cause are sometimes driven; for this rude Boreas, who was to bring America to his feet, knew at the time of draughting these bills, or had good reason to believe, that a treaty had actually been signed between the court of France and the United States. By what rule of common sense, then, he could expect that such an undisguised artifice would go down in America I cannot conceive. But, thanks to Heaven, the tables are turned; and we, I hope, shall have our independence secured, in its fullest extent, without cringing to this Son of Thunder, who I am persuaded will find abundant work for his troops elsewhere; on which happy prospect I sincerely congratulate you and every friend to American liberty." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Valley Forge, May 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:494

Letter to John Augustine Washington – May 1778

"The Arts of the enemy, and the low dirty tricks which they are daily practising is an evincing proof that they are lost to all Sense of virtue and honor, and that they will stick at nothing however incompatible with truth and manliness to carry their points." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Valley Forge, May 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:500

"I have often regretted the pernicious (and what appears to me, fatal) policy of having our able Men engaged in the formation of the more local Governments, and filling Officers in their respective States, leaving the great national concern, on wch. the superstructure of all, and every of them does absolutely depend, and without which none can exist, to be managed by Men of more contracted abilities." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Valley Forge, May 1778; Fitzpatrick 11:501

General Orders – June 6, 1778

"At a General Court Martial whereof Colo. Chambers was President June 2nd, 1778; Captn. [Jacob Stake of the 10th. Pennsylvania Regiment tried for propagating a report that Colo. George Nagle was seen on the 15th. of May drinking either Tea or Coffee in Serjeant [Thomas] Howcraft's tent with his Whore, her Mother, the said Howcraft and his Family to the Prejudice of good Order and military discipline. ... The Court having considered the Charge and Evidence are unanimously of opinion that Captn. Stake's Justification is sufficient and do acquit him of the Charge exhibited against him. ... The General approves the Acquittal." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, June 6, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:23

"At the same Court Lieutt. Samuel Jones of the 15th. Virginia Regiment tried for concealing and denying that he had in his Possession a pair of Mittins belonging to Captn. [Edwin] Hull; 2ndly, Gaming on the 12th. of May and at sundry other times; 3rdly, Behaving in a manner unbecoming an Officer and Gentleman in treating Captn. Hull with abusive language while under an Arrest and endeavouring to incense the Officers of his Regiment against him. ... The Court having considered the charges and the Evidence are of Opinion that Lieutenant Jones is guilty of the charges exhibited against him, being breaches of the 5th. Article of 18th. section of the Articles of War, of repeated General Orders and of 21st. Article of 14th. section of the Articles of War and do sentence him to be discharged from the service. ... The General is intirely disposed to believe from the Representations he has received in favor of Lieutenant Jones that he was incapable of having retained the Gloves with a fraudulent intention, but as he has been clearly proved to have been guilty of the pernicious Practice of Gaming which will invariably meet with every Mark of His Disapprobation he confirms the sentence of dismissing Lieutt. Jones." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Valley Forge, June 6, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:23-24

General Orders – June 11, 1778

"The Commander in Chief having received ample Testimony of the general good Character and behaviour of Lieutt. Jones who was sentenced to be dismissed the service by a General Court-Martial, which sentence was approved by Him on the 6th. instant, and being further satisfied by Generals Woodford, Scott and other Officers that that Gentleman is not addicted to the Vice of Gaming restores him to his Rank and Command in the Regt. he belong'd to and in the line of the Army." – George Washington, General Orders, Head

General Orders – June 30, 1778

"Seven o'Clock this evening is appointed that We may publicly unite in thanksgiving to the supreme Disposer of human Events for the Victory which was obtained on Sunday over the Flower of the British Troops." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Englishtown, June 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:131

Letter to John Augustine Washington – July 4, 1778

"General Lee having the command of the Van of the Army, consisting of fully 5000 chosen Men, was ordered to begin the Attack next Morning so soon as the enemy began their March, to be supported by me. But, strange to tell! when he came up with the enemy, a retreat commenced; whether by his order, or from other causes, is now the subject of inquiry, and consequently improper to be descanted on, as he is in arrest, and a Court Martial sitting for tryal of him. A Retreat however was the fact, be the causes as they may; and the disorder arising from it would have proved fatal to the Army had not that bountiful Providence which has never failed us in the hour of distress, enabled me to form a Regiment or two (of those that were retreating) in the face of the Enemy..." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Brunswick in New Jersey, July 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:156-157

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – July 24, 1778

"The ambition of these men...is unlimited and unbounded; and the singular instances of rank, which have been conferred upon them, in but too many cases, have occasioned general dissatisfaction and general complaint. The feelings of our own Officers have been much hurt by it, and their ardour and love for the service greatly damped. Should a like proceeding still be practised, it is not easy to say what extensive murmurings and consequences may ensue. I will further add, that we have already a full proportion of Foreign Officers in our General Councils and should their number be increased, it may happen upon many occasions, that their voices may equal if not exceed, the rest." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Camp near White Plains, July 24, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:224

"I trust you think me so much a Citizen of the World, as to believe that I am not easily warped or led away, by attachments merely local or American; Yet, I confess, I am not entirely without them, nor does it appear to me that they are unwarrantable, if confined within proper limits. Fewer promotions in the foreign line, would have been productive of more harmony, and made our warfare more agreeable to all parties. The frequency of them, is the source of jealousy and of disunion. We have many, very many, deserving Officers, who are not opposed to merit wheresoever it is found, nor insensible of the advantages derived from a long service in an experienced Army, nor to the principles of policy. Where any of these principles mark the way to rank, I am persuaded, they yield a becoming and willing acquiescence; but where they are not the basis, they feel severely." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Camp near White Plains, July 24, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:224-225

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – July 24, 1778

"I do most devoutly wish, that we had not a single foreigner among us, except the Marquis de Lafayette, who acts upon very different principles from those which govern the rest." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, White Plains, July 24, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:227

"They may be divided into three classes, namely, mere adventurers without recommendation, or recommended by persons, who do not know how else to dispose of or provide for them; men of great ambition, who would sacrifice every thing to promote their own personal glory; or mere spies, who are sent here to obtain a thorough knowledge of our situation and circumstances, in the execution of which, I am persuaded, some of them are faithful emissaries, as I do not believe a single matter escapes unnoticed, or unadvised at a foreign court." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, White Plains, July 24, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:227

Letter to Colonel George Baylor – August 3, 1778

"As you seem to have proceeded as far as you can in the purchase of Horses without indulging the exorbitant demands of the holders, I would have you desist, and come immediately to Camp with all the Officers, Men and Horses. If you have any Arms or Accoutrements unfinished, or any Men and Horses unfit to come forward when this order reaches you, I would have you leave an Officer, upon whose diligence you can depend, to bring them on when they are ready. Lieut. Baylor under arrest for gaming, is to come on with you." – George Washington, letter to Colonel George Baylor, Head Quarters, White Plains, August 3, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:270-271

Letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Jr. – August 20, 1778

"It is not a little pleasing, nor less wonderful to contemplate, that after two years Manoeuvring and undergoing the strangest vicissitudes that perhaps ever attended any one contest since the creation both Armies are brought back to the very point they set out from and, that that, which was the offending party in the beginning is now reduced to the use of the spade and pick axe for defence." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Jr., August 20, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:343

"The Hand of Providence has been so conspicuous in all this, that he must be worse than an infidel that lacks faith, and more than wicked, that has not gratitude enough to acknowledge his obligations." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Thomas Nelson, Jr., August 20, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:343

Letter to Major General William Heath – August 28, 1778

"It is our duty to make the best of our misfortunes, and not to suffer passion to interfere with our interest and the public good." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters, White Plains, August 28, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:365

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 1, 1778

"I feel every thing that hurts the Sensibility of a Gentleman." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, White Plains, September 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:382

"[I]n a free, and republican Government, you cannot restrain the voice of the multitude; every Man will speak as he thinks, or more properly without thinking, consequently will judge of Effects without attending to the Causes." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, White Plains, September 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:383

"It is the Nature of Man to be displeas'd with every thing that disappoints a favourite hope, or flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them, to condemn without investigating circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, White Plains, September 1, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:383

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – September 4, 1778

"I take the liberty of transmitting to Congress, a Memorial I received from the Reverend Mr. [Peter] Tetard [former chaplain of the Fourth New York Regiment]. From the certificates annexed to it he appears to be a Man of great merit and from every account he has suffered in the extreme, in the present contest. His attachment, services and misfortunes seem to give him a claim to a generous notice; but according to the now establishment of the Army, it is not in my power to make any provision for him. I therefore recommend his case to the attention and consideration of Congress." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Head Quarters, White Plains, September 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:401

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – September 5, 1778

"It is...our interest and truest policy to give a Currency, to fix a value, as far as it may be practicable, upon all occasions, upon that which is to be the medium of our internal commerce and the support of the War." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, West Plains, September 5, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:404

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – September 6, 1778

"The violent gale which dissipated the two fleets when on the point of engaging, and the withdrawing of the Count D'Estaing to Boston may appear to us as real misfortunes; but with you I consider storms and victory under the direction of a wise providence who no doubt directs them for the best of purposes, and to bring round the greatest degree of happiness to the greatest number of his people." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Head Quarters, September 6, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:406

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 25, 1778

"The Sentiments of affection and attachment which breathe so conspicuously in all your Letters to me, are at once pleasing and honourable; and afford me abundant cause to rejoice at the happiness of my acquaintance with you. Your love of liberty; The just sense you entertain of this valuable blessing, and your Noble, and disinterested exertions in the cause of it, added to the innate goodness of your heart, conspire to render you dear to me; and I think myself happy in being linked with you in bonds of strictest friendship." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Fredericksburg in the State of New York, September 25, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:500

Letter to Brigadier General William Woodford – September 30, 1778

"I am much obliged by your sending Doctor [David] Griffith [surgeon and chaplain of the Third Virginia Regiment] to the assistance of Colonel Baylor, Major Clough &ca. I regret their unhappy situation and the misfortune that has befallen their Corps." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Woodford, Head Quarters, near Fredericksburg, September 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 12:529

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – October 3, 1778

"I am well convinced myself, that the Enemy, long ere this, are perfectly well satisfied that the possession of our Towns, while we have an Army in the field, will avail them little. It involves us in difficulty, but does not, by any means, insure them conquest. They will know, that it is our Arms, not defenceless Towns, they have to Subdue, before they can arrive at the haven of their Wishes, and that, till this end is accomplished, the Superstructure they have been endeavouring to raise, "like the baseless fabric of a vision" falls to nothing." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Fishkill, October 3, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:15

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – October 4, 1778

"Can we carry on the War much longer? certainly NO , unless some measures can be devised, and speedily executed, to restore the credit of our Currency, restrain extortion, and punish forestallers. ... Without these can be effected, what funds can stand the present expences of the Army ? And what Officer can bear the weight of prices, that every necessary Article is now got to? A Rat, in the shape of a Horse, is not to be bought at this time for less than £200; a Saddle under thirty or Forty; Boots twenty, and Shoes and other articles in like proportion. How is it possible therefore for Officers to stand this, without an increase of pay? And how is it possible to advance their Pay when Flour is selling (at different places) from five to fifteen pounds pr. Ct., Hay from ten to thirty pounds pr. Tunn, and Beef and other essentials, in this proportion." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Fish-kill, October 4, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:21

Letter to Reverend Alexander McWhorter – October 12, 1778

"There are now under sentence of death, in the provost, a Farnsworth and Blair, convicted of being spies from the enemy, and of publishing counterfeit Continental currency. It is hardly to be doubted but that these unfortunate men are acquainted with many facts respecting the enemys affairs, and their intentions which we have not been able to bring them to acknowlege. Besides the humanity of affording them the benefit of your profession, it may in the conduct of a man of sense answer another valuable purpose. And while it serves to prepare them for the other world, it will naturally lead to the intelligence we want in your inquiries into the condition of their spiritual concerns. You will therefore be pleased to take the charge of this matter upon yourself, and when you have collected in the course of your attendance such information as they can give you will transmit the whole to me." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Alexander McWhorter, Chaplain of the Artillery Brigade, Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, October 12, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:71-72

Letter to Comte D'Estaing – October 13, 1778

"I have the honor to send your Excellency the British account of the late engagement between the two fleets respectively under the command of Monsieur D'orvilliers and Admiral Keppel, contained in a letter from the latter; published by authority, which I have just received from New York. The insipid terms of this letter; the frivolous pretext assigned for not renewing the engagement, the damage confessed to have been received, the considerable number of the killed and wounded announced to the public in the shape of an official report, which from the customary practice cannot be suspected of exaggeration, and the acknowledged necessity of returning immediately into Port, are circumstances that prove at least the enemy have had no great cause of triumph in this affair." – George Washington, letter to Comte D'Estaing, Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, October 13, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:72

Letter to Andrew Lewis – October 15, 1778

"No Man can be more thoroughly impressed with the necessity of offensive operations against Indians in every kind of rupture with them, than I am; nor can any Man feel more sensibly for General Mc. Intosh than I do, on two Accts., the Public and his own. But ours is a kind of struggle designed I dare say by Providence to try the patience, fortitude and virtue of Men; none therefore that are engaged in it, will suffer themselves, I trust, to sink under difficulties, or be discouraged by hardships. General Mc. Intosh is only experiencing upon a small Scale, what I have had an ample share of upon a large one; and must, as I have been obliged to do in a variety of Instances, yield to necessity; that is, to use a vulgar Phraze, shape his Coat according to his Cloth, or in other Words if he cannot do as he wishes, he must do what he can." – George Washington, letter to Andrew Lewis, Fredericksburg in the State of New York, October 15, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:79

"If the Enemy mean to hold their present Posts in the United states the presumption is, that their operations next Campaign will be vigorous and decisive because feeble efforts can be of no avail unless by a want of Virtue we ruin and defeat ourselves; which, I think, is infinitely more to be dreaded than the whole force of G. Britain, assisted as they are by Hessian, Indian, and Negro Allies; for certain

I am, that unless Extortion, forestalling and other practices which have crept in and become exceedingly prevalent and injurious to the common cause, can meet with proper checks, we must inevitably sink under such a load of accumulated oppression." – George Washington, letter to Andrew Lewis, Fredericksburg in the State of New York, October 15, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:79-80

General Orders – October 21, 1778

"Purity of Morals being the only sure foundation of publick happiness in any Country and highly conducive to order, subordination and success in an Army, it will be well worthy the Emulation of Officers of every rank and Class to encourage it both by the Influence of Example and the penalties of Authority. It is painful to see many shameful Instances of Riot and Licentiousness among us; The wanton Practice of swearing has risen to a most disgusting height; A regard to decency should conspire, with a Sense of Morality to banish a vice productive of neither Advantage or Pleasure." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Fredericksburgh, October 21, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:118-119

Letter to Brigadier General Charles Scott – October 27, 1778

"I am sorry that any officers should be so far lost to all sense of honor and duty, as to talk of resigning, because they have not marched with the Corps to which they belong. I would have you inform any of those that talk at this rate, that if they leave their post or command before they are regularly drawn off or relieved, or shall directly or indirectly cause any Soldier to do the like, they shall be punished, as far as martial law will extend without favor or mitigation. It is true that officers who conceive they are to go when and where they please are better out of than in the service, but will not be indulged under the present circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Charles Scott, Head Quarters, Fredericksburg, October 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:166

Letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress – November 14, 1778

"I am heartily disposed to entertain the most favourable sentiments of our new ally and to cherish them in others to a reasonable degree; but it is a maxim, founded on the universal experience of mankind, that no nation is to be trusted farther than it is bound by its own interest; and no prudent statesman or politician will venture to depart from it." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Fredericksburgh, November 14, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:256

"I do not like to add to the number of our national obligations. I would wish as much as possible to avoid giving a foreign power new claims of merit for services performed, to the United States, and would ask no assistance that is not indispensable." – George Washington, letter to Henry Laurens, President of Congress, Fredericksburgh, November 14, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:257

Letter to John Augustine Washington – November 26, 1778

"[T]here ways are as impervious to the view." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Fredericksburg in New York, November 26, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:334

"I had expectations, but not very sanguine ones, that the Enemy were about to evacuate New York and bid adieu to the United States. Appearances have changed, and they now seem busied in preparing for the Winter. What their real designs are, I know not, like others, in distress, they are indecisive and foolish; waiting, I am persuaded, for the meeting of Parliament, that the Ministry may shelter themselves under their Wings, and the report of the Commissioners; who, if I mistake not, will contribute to the delusion by their representation of our distresses, arising from the depreciation of our Paper currency, and want of public virtue; which, in fact, is not a little alarming; and to which, if it were possible, it is high time remedies were applied; for unless something can be done, and speedily, to give credit to the former, and that will act as a stimulus to the latter, I think it does not require the gift of prophecy to foretell the consequences. There is such a thirst for gain, and such infamous advantages taken to forestall, and engross those Articles which the Army cannot do without, thereby enhancing the cost of them to the public fifty or a hundred pr. Ct., that it is enough to make one curse their own Species, for possessing so little virtue and patriotism." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Fredericksburg in New York, November 26, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:335

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – November 27, 1778

"It is most devoutly to be wished that some happy expedient could be hit upon to restore credit to our paper emissions and punish the infamous practice of forestalling and engrossing, such articles as are essentially necessary to the very existence of the army and which by this means come to it through the hands of these people at 50 pr. Ct. advance; to the great injury, and depreciation of our Money, by accumulating, the quantum necessary for ordinary purchases to an amazing Sum, which must end in our total stagnation of all purchases unless some remedy can be soon and effectually applied." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Fredericksburg in the State of N. York, November 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:347-348

"It is...most devoutly to be wished that faction was at an end and that those to whom every thing dear and valuable is entrusted would lay aside party views and return to first principles. happy, happy, thrice happy Country if such was the government of it, but alas ! we

are not to expect that the path is to be strewn with flowers. That great and good Being who rules the Universe has disposed matters otherwise and for wise purposes I am persuaded." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Fredericksburg in the State of N. York, November 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:348

"It is eleven O'clock at Night and I am to set out early in the Morning, for which reason I shall only add my thanks for the favourable Sentiments you are pleased to entertain for, and have expressed of me but in a more especial manner for your good wishes and prayers." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Fredericksburg in the State of N. York, November 27, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:349

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel William Washington – November 30, 1778

"With respect to Cornet [Walker] Baylor, I am sorry he should have remained in arrest so long, and were he not charged with Gaming, I would release him from it; but as he is, you will direct a Court to sit when you get in Quarters. There will be several of the Officers of Bland's Regiment at Winchester, who can compose it in part." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel William Washington, November 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:360

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – December 12, 1778

"It gives me very sincere pleasure to find that there is likely to be a coalition of the Whigs in your State (a few only excepted) and that the assembly of it, are so well disposed to second your endeavours in bringing those murderers of our cause (the monopolizers, forestallers, and engrossers) to condign punishment. It is much to be lamented that each State long ere this has not hunted them down as the pests of society, and the greatest Enemies we have to the happiness of America. I would to God that one of the most atrocious of each State was hung in Gibbets upon a gallows five times as high as the one prepared by Haman." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, December 12, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:383

"No punishment, in my opinion, is too great for the man who can build his greatness upon his country's ruin." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, December 12, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:383

"As Peace and retirement are my ultimate aim, and the most pleasing and flattering hope of my Soul, every thing advansive of this end, contributes to my satisfaction, however difficult and inconvenient in the attainment; and will reconcile any place and all circumstances to my feelings whilst I continue in Service." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, December 12, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:385

Letter to Colonel Benedict Arnold – December 13, 1778

"I am under more apprehensions on account of our own dissensions than of the efforts of the Enemy." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Benedict Arnold, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, December 13, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:393

Letter to Lund Washington – December 17, 1778

"I am afraid Jack Custis, in spite of all the admonition and advice I gave him against selling faster than he bought, is making a ruinous hand of his Estate; and if he has not closed his bargains beyond the possibility of a caval, I shall not be much surprized to hear of his having trouble with the Alexanders; notwithstanding your opinion of Bobs disposition to fulfil engagements. Jack will have made a delightful hand of it, should the money continue to depreciate as it has lately done, having Sold his own land in a manner for a Song, and be flung in his purchases of the Alexanders. If this should be the case, it will be only adding to the many proofs we daily see of the folly of leaving bargains unbound by solemn covenants. I see so many instances of the rascallity of Mankind, that I am almost out of conceit of my own species; and am convinced that the only way to make men honest, is to prevent their being otherwise, by tying them firmly to the accomplishment of their contracts." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Middlebrook, December 17, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:408

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel Henry Miller – December 18, 1778

A good Officer cannot feel more real concern, to find that his domestic affairs, and the circumstances of his family, make it necessary for him to leave the army, than I do myself in losing his services." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Henry Miller, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, December 18, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:433

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – December 19, 1778

"There is nothing I have more at heart than the ease and security of every part of the Country and its inhabitants." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, December 19, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:434

"You are sensible, sir, that in military operations, there are many partial evils which must be submitted to, to attain the principal end to which they are directed. However desirable the protection of those parts of the country most contiguous to the enemy, and the convenience of the inhabitants, in general; these are sometimes obliged to give place to other considerations of greater magnitude. ." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, December 19, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:434

Letter to Major General John Sullivan – December 20, 1778

"It is not however my desire to remove the band in case it has been procured [at the cost of] the officers, and is kept up at their private expence. This is a prerogative I could not think of assuming. But on the other hand, if it belongs to, and is supported by the public, [I shall adhere to my former order], you must [certainly] be of opinion with me that the necessity for such a thing is much greater here than it can be any where else. Under these circumstances, I could wish the matter to be considered; [especially when I add that I can make no distinction in Corps. A Band is no part of our establishmt., to indulge one Regiment therefore and refuse another (equal in pretensions) is setting up invidious distinctions which cannot be productive of any good but may of much evil and ought to be avoided.]" – George Washington, letter to Major General John Sullivan, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 20, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:441

"The 30th. of this Month being prescribed by the honorable Congress as a day of thanksgiving, you will be pleased to have the same observed in the army under your command." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Sullivan, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 20, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:441

General Orders – December 22, 1778

"The Honorable The Congress having been pleased by their Proclamation of the 21st. of November last to appoint Wednesday the 30th. instant as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise for the great and numerous Providential Mercies experienced by the People of These States in the course of the present War, the same is to be religiously observed throughout the Army in the manner therein directed, and the different Chaplains will prepare discourses suited to the Occasion." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 22, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:450-451

Letter to Benjamin Harrison – December 30, 1778

"[T]o stand well in the good opinion of my Countrymen constitutes my chiefest happiness; and will be my best support under the perplexities and difficulties of my present Station." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, December 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:463

"[I]t appears as dear to me as ever the Sun did in its meridian brightness, that America never stood in more eminent need of the wise, patriotic, and Spirited exertions of her Sons than at this period and if it is not a sufficient cause for genl. lamentation, my misconception of the matter impresses it too strongly upon me, that the States seperately are too much engaged in their local concerns, and have too many of their ablest men withdrawn from the general Council for the good of the common weal." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, December 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:464

"[A]s there can be no harm in a pious wish for the good of ones Country I shall offer it as mine that each State wd. not only choose, but absolutely compel their ablest Men to attend Congress; that they would instruct them to go into a thorough investigation of the causes that have produced so many disagreeable effects in the Army and Country; in a word that public abuses should be corrected." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, December 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:464

"If I was to be called upon to draw A picture of the times, and of Men; from what I have seen, heard, and in part know I should in one word say that idleness, dissipation and extravagance seem to have laid fast hold of most of them. That Speculation, peculation, and an insatiable thirst for riches seems to have got the better of every other consideration and almost of every order of Men. That party disputes and personal quarrels are the great business of the day whilst the momentous concerns of an empire, a great and accumulated debt; ruined finances, depreciated money, and want of credit (which in their consequences is the want of every thing) are but secondary considerations and postponed from day to day, from week to week as if our affairs wore the most promising aspect; after drawing this picture, which from my Soul I believe to be a true one I need not repeat to you that I am alarmed and wish to see my Countrymen roused. I have no resentments, nor do I mean to point at any particular characters; this I can declare upon my honor for I have every attention paid me by Congress than I can possibly expect and have reason to think that I stand well in their estimation but in the present situation of things I cannot help asking: Where is Mason, Wythe, Jefferson, Nicholas, Pendleton, Nelson, and another I could name; and why, if you are sufficiently impressed with your danger, do you not (as New Yk. has done in the case of Mr. Jay) send an extra Member or two for at least a certain limited time till the great business of the Nation is put upon a more respectable and happy establishmt. Your Money is now sinking 5 pr. Ct. a day in this City; and I shall not be surprized if in the course of a few months a total stop is put to the currency of it. And yet an assembly, a concert, a Dinner, or Supper (that will cost three or four hundred pounds) will not only take Men of from acting in but even from thinking of this business while a great part of the Officers of your Army from absolute necessity are quitting the Service and the more virtuous few rather than do this are sinking by sure degrees into beggery and want. I again repeat to you that this is not an exaggerated acct.; that it is an alarming one I do not deny, and confess to you that

I feel more real distress on acct. of the prest. appearances of things than I have done at any one time since the commencement of the dispute." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:466-468

"Providence has heretofore taken us up when all other means and hope seemed to be departing from us, in this I will confide." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, December 30, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:468

Letter to Brigadier General James Clinton – December 31, 1778

"I always hear of capital executions with concern, and regret that there should occur so many instances in which they are necessary." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General James Clinton, Philadelphia, December 31, 1778; Fitzpatrick 13:471

Letter to John Parke Custis – January 2, 1779

"You say, I shall be surprised at the slow progress made by your assembly in the passage of the bills through both houses. I really am not, nor shall I, I believe, be again surprised at anything; for it appears to me that idleness and dissipation seems to have taken such fast hold of every body, that I shall not be at all surprised if there should be a general wreck of everything." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 2, 1779; Fitzpatrick 13:478

Letter to the Committee of Conference – January 20, 1779

"When men are employed and have the incitements of military honor to engage their ambition and pride, they will cheerfully submit to inconveniencies, which in a state of tranquility would appear insupportable." – George Washington, letter to the Committee of Conference, Philadelphia, January 20, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:28

Letter to John Jay, President of Congress – March 15, 1779

"For my own part, I confess I should be cautious of admitting the supposition that the War will terminate without another desperate effort on the part of the enemy." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, President of Congress, Middle brook, March 15, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:243

Letter to South Carolina President John Rutledge – March 15, 1779

"Lieutenant Colonel Laurens, who will have the honor of delivering you this, has served two Campaigns in my Family in quality of aide De Camp. The whole tenor of his conduct has been such as to intitle him to my particular friendship and to give me a high opinion of his talents and merit. In the field he has given very distinguishing proofs of his bravery upon several interesting occasions. His military zeal and a concern for his own country have determined him to leave this for a time to offer his services, where he thinks they will be more essential. Though unwilling to part with him, I could not oppose his going to a place where he is called by such powerful motives, and where I am persuaded he will be extremely useful. I have therefore given him leave of absence 'till a change of affairs will permit his return, when I shall be happy to see him resume his place in my family." – George Washington, letter to South Carolina President John Rutledge, Middle Brook, March 15, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:245

Letter to Thomas Nelson – March 15, 1779

"It gives me very singular pleasure to find that you have again taken a Seat in Congress; I think there never was a time when cool and dispassionate reasoning, strict attention and application, great integrity, and (if it was in the nature of things, unerring) wisdom were more to be wished for than the present. Our Affairs, according to my judgment, are now come to a crisis, and require no small degree of political skill, to steer clear of those shelves and Rocks which tho deeply buried, may wreck our hopes, and throw us upon some inhospitable shore. Unanimity in our Councils, disinterestedness in our pursuits, and steady perseverance in our national duty, are the only means to avoid misfortunes; if they come upon us after these we shall have the consolation of knowing that we have done our best, the rest is with the Gods." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Nelson, Middle brook, March 15, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:246

Letter to Henry Laurens – March 20, 1779

"[M]ost of the good and evil things of this life are judged of by comparison." – George Washington, letter to the Henry Laurens, Middle brook, March 20, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:267

Letter to George Mason – March 27, 1779

"Though it is not in my power to devote much time to private correspondences, owing to the multiplicity of public letters (and other business) I have to read, write, and transact; yet I can with great truth assure you, that it would afford me very singular pleasure to be favoured at all times with your sentiments in a leisure hour, upon public matters of general concernment as well as those which more immediately respect your own State (if proper conveyances would render prudent a free communication). I am particularly desirous of it at this time, because I view things very differently, I fear, from what people in general do who seem to think the contest is at an end; and to make money, and get places, the only things now remaining to do. I have seen without dispondency (even for a moment) the hours which America have stiled her gloomy ones, but I have beheld no day since the commencement of hostilities that I have thought her liberties in such eminent danger as at present." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Middlebrook, March 27, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:299

"Friends and foes seem now to combine to pull down the goodly fabric we have hitherto been raising at the expence of so much time, blood, and treasure; and unless the bodies politick will exert themselves to bring things back to first principles, correct abuses, and punish our internal foes, inevitable ruin must follow. Indeed we seem to be verging so fast to destruction, that I am filled with sensations to which I have been a stranger till within these three Months. Our Enemy behold with exultation and joy how effectually we labour for their benefit; and from being in a state of absolute despair, and on the point of evacuating America, are now on tiptoe; nothing therefore in my judgment can save us but a total reformation in our own conduct, or some decisive turn to affairs in Europe. The former alas! to our shame be it spoken! is less likely to happen than the latter, as it is now consistent with the views of the Speculators, various tribes of money makers, and stock jobbers of all denominations to continue the War for their own private emolument, without considering that their avarice, and thirst for gain must plunge every thing (including themselves) in one common Ruin." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Middlebrook, March 27, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:300

"To me, it appears no unjust simile to compare the affairs of this great Continent to the mechanism of a clock, each state representing some one or other of the smaller parts of it which they are endeavoring to put in fine order without considering how useless & unavailing their labor is unless the great Wheel or Spring which is to set the whole in motion is also well attended to & kept in good order." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Middlebrook, March 27, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:301

"When it is also known that idleness & dissipation take place of close attention & application, a man who wishes well to the liberties of his Country and desires to see its rights established cannot avoid crying out where are our men of abilities? Why do they not come forth to save their Country? let this voice my dear Sir call upon you—Jefferson & others—do not from a mistaken opinion that we are about to set down under our own vine, & our own fig tree, let our hitherto noble struggle end in ignom'y—believe me when I tell you there is danger of it." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Middlebrook, March 27, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:301

Letter to James Warren – March 31, 1779

"Our conflict is not likely to cease so soon as every good Man would wish. The measure of iniquity is not yet filled; and unless we can return a little more to first principles, and act a little more upon patriotic ground, I do not know when it will, or, what may be the Issue of the contest. Speculation, Peculation, Engrossing, forestalling with all their concomitants, afford too many melancholy proofs of the decay of public virtue; and too glaring instances of its being the interest and desire of too many who would wish to be thought friends, to continue the War." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Speaker of the Assembly of Massachusetts, Middlebrook, March 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:312

"Nothing I am convinced but the depreciation of our Currency proceeding in a great measure from the foregoing Causes, aided by Stock jobbing, and party dissensions has fed the hopes of the Enemy and kept the B. Arms in America to this day. They do not scruple to declare this themselves, and add, that we shall be our own conquerors. Cannot our common Country Am. [America] possess virtue enough to disappoint them? Is the paltry consideration of a little dirty pelf to individuals to be placed in competition with the essential rights and liberties of the present generation, and of Millions yet unborn? Shall a few designing men for their own aggrandizement, and to gratify their own avarice, overset the goodly fabric we have been rearing at the expence of so much time, blood, and treasure? and shall we at last become the victims of our own abominable lust of gain? Forbid it heaven! forbid it all and every State in the Union! by enacting and enforcing efficacious laws for checking the growth of these monstrous evils, and restoring matters, in some degree to the pristine state they were in at the commencement of the War." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Speaker of the Assembly of Massachusetts, Middlebrook, March 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:312-313

"Our cause is noble, it is the cause of Mankind! and the danger to it, is to be apprehended from ourselves. Shall we slumber and sleep then while we should be punishing those miscreants who have brot. these troubles upon us and who are aiming to continue us in them, while we should be striving to fill our Battalions, and devising ways and means to appreciate the currency; on the credit of wch. every thing depends?" – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Speaker of the Assembly of Massachusetts, Middlebrook, March 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:313

"Let vigorous measures be adopted; not to limit the prices of Articles, for this I believe is inconsistent with the very nature of things, and impracticable in itself, but to punish Speculators, forestallers, and extortioners, and above all to sink the money by heavy taxes. To promote public and private oeconomy; Encourage Manufactures &ca. Measures of this sort gone heartily into by the several States would strike at once at the root of all our evils and give the coup de grace to British hope of subjugating this Continent, either by their Arms or their Arts. The first, as I have before observed, they acknowledge is unequal to the task; the latter I am sure will be so if we are not lost to every thing that is good and virtuous." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Speaker of the Assembly of

General Orders – April 2, 1779

"The Court Martial appointed to try Colonel Ogden charged with 1st. Neglect of duty in general. 2nd. Repeated frauds against the Public and also the officers and soldiers under his command. 3rd. Cowardice. 4th. Gaming, have declared it their opinion, "That he is not guilty of the 1st. charge, that he is not guilty of the second, and are unanimously of opinion that he is not guilty of the 3rd. charge and have unanimously acquitted him with honor." ... "They are unanimously of opinion that he is guilty of the 4th. charge, being a breach of the Commander in Chief's orders dated the 8th. of January 1778, and have sentenced him to be severely reprimanded in general orders." ... The General approves the sentence of the Court and it gives him pleasure to find that Colonel Ogden of whom he always entertained a high opinion, has been acquitted of the three first charges exhibited against him; He also would have been happy if there had been no circumstances to justify the fourth and last; but he is under the painful necessity of observing, that there are circumstances, and such too as most fully authorize the sentence of the Court. The General is sorry that a Gentleman at the head of a Regiment who both in practice and precept ought to shew the most pointed attention and adherence to all orders, to influence and determine the conduct of those, acting in subordinate stations to him, should be among the first to break them. ... The officer who acts thus, countenances a relaxation of discipline and the introduction of disorder, and cannot prevent, much less punish, offences in others which he himself commits. ... All General Orders are in force 'till they are set aside or altered by subsequent ones issuing from proper authority or 'till the occasion ceases which produced them. Colo. Ogdon knows this and he must have known also that the particular order which was the subject of the Court Martial's consideration of the 4th. charge against him, remained unaltered and the infraction of it is more censurable, if possible, than that of any other, inasmuch as the order was intended to prevent the most pernicious Vice that can obtain in an Army, the vice of gaming!" – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, April 2, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:326-327

Letter to John Jay, President of Congress – April 2, 1779

"The Act recommending a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer shall be duly attended to." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 2, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:328

Letter to William Fitzhugh – April 10, 1779

"It is no easy matter to develop the enemys designs; one would think it scarcely possible that they should keep a large force in America another campaign merely to hold possession of New York and Rhode Island, and yet I should not be much surprized if that should be the case, as they seem to entertain great hopes from the depreciated, and depreciating state of our currency and other causes, towards which too many among ourselves who wish to be thought friends, contribute not a little. It is a melancholy thing to see such a decay of public virtue, and the fairest prospects over cast and clouded by a host of infamous harpies, who to acquire a little pelf, would involve this great Continent in inextricable ruin." – George Washington, letter to William Fitzhugh, Middle brook, April 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:364-365

"Something important I think must soon happen in the West Indies which may, if favourable to our Allies, put an end to the War, and prolong it but a little if we act wisely and have virtue, if they should not; taxing heavily in the meanwhile as the most natural cure for the of paper money, and the best means of restoring public virtue which has yielded too much to the temptations flowing from this source." – George Washington, letter to William Fitzhugh, Middle brook, April 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:365

General Orders – April 12, 1779

"The Honorable the Congress having recommended it to the United States to set apart Thursday the 6th. day of May next to be observed as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to acknowledge the gracious interpositions of Providence; to deprecate deserved punishment for our Sins and Ingratitude, to unitedly implore the Protection of Heaven; Success to our Arms and the Arms of our Ally: The Commander in Chief enjoins a religious observance of said day and directs the Chaplains to prepare discourses proper for the occasion; strictly forbidding all recreations and unnecessary labor." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, April 12, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:369

Letter to John Jay, President of Congress – April 14, 1779

"Conscious that it is the aim of my actions to promote the public good, and that no part of my conduct is influenced by personal enmity to individuals, I cannot be insensible to the artifices employed by some men to prejudice me in the public esteem." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Middle brook, April 14, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:378

"I discovered very early in the war symptoms of coldness and constraint in General Gates behavior to me. These increased as he rose into greater consequence; but we did not come to a direct breach, 'till the beginning of last year. This was occasioned, by a correspondence, which I thought rather made free with me between General Gates and Conway, which accidentally came to my

knowledge. The particulars of this affair you will find delineated in the packet herewith indorsed 'papers respecting General Conway.' Besides the evidence contained in them of the genuineness of the offensive correspondence, I have other proofs still more convincing, which, having been given me in a confidential way, I am not at liberty to impart. ... After this affair subsided, I made a point of treating Genl. Gates with all the attention and cordiality in my power, as well from a sincere desire of harmony, as from an unwillingness to give any cause of triumph to our enemies from an appearance of dissension among ourselves. I can appeal to the world and to the whole Army whether I have not cautiously avoided every word or hint that could tend to disparage General Gates in any way." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Middle brook, April 14, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:385

Letter to Burwell Bassett – April 22, 1779

"It is most devoutly to be wished that the several States would adopt some vigorous measures for the purpose of giving credit to the paper currency and punishment of speculators, forestallers and others who are preying upon the vitals of this great Country and putting every thing to the utmost hazard. Alas! what is virtue come to; what a miserable change has four years produced in the temper and dispositions of the Sons of America! It really shocks me to think of it!" – George Washington, letter to Burwell Bassett, Camp at Middle brook, April 22, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:432

General Orders – May 5, 1779

"The General reminds the Army that tomorrow is the General Fast; He expects it will be observed according to the order of the 12th. of April last. No exercising or fatigue to be permitted thereon." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, Wednesday, May 5, 1779; Fitzpatrick 14:504

Letter to Brigadier General William Maxwell – May 10, 1779

"All that the common soldiery of any country can expect is food and cloathing. The pay given in other armies is little more than nominal, very low in the first instance and subject to a variety of deductions that reduce it to nothing. This is the case with the British troops though I believe they receive more than those of any of the European armies. The idea of maintaining the families at home, at public expence, is peculiar to us; and is incompatible with the finances of any government. Our troops have been uniformly better fed than any others; they are at this time very well clad, and I hope will continue to be so. While this is the case they will have no just cause of complaint." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Maxwell, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:33

Letter to John Jay, President of Congress – May 10, 1779

"You give an affecting summary of the causes of the national evils we feel, and the still greater we have reason to apprehend. ... To me it appears, that our affairs are in a very delicate situation; and, what is not the least to be lamented, is that many people think they are in a very flourishing way; and seem in a great measure insensible to the danger with which we are threatened. If Britain should be able to make a vigorous campaign in America, this summer, in the present depreciation of our money, scantiness of supplies, want of virtue and want of exertion, 'tis hard to say what may be the consequence." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, President of Congress, Hd. Qrs. Middle brook, May 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:38-39

Speech to Delaware Indian Chiefs – May 12, 1779

"I am a Warrior. My words are few and plain; but I will make good what I say. 'Tis my business to destroy all the Enemies of these States and to protect their friends. You have seen how we have withstood the English for four years; and how their great Armies have dwindled away and come to very little; and how what remains of them in this part of our great Country, are glad to stay upon Two or three little Islands, where the Waters and their Ships hinder us from going to destroy them. The English, Brothers, are a boasting people. They talk of doing a great deal; but they do very little. They fly away on their Ships from one part of our Country to an other; but as soon as our Warriors get together they leave it and go to some other part. They took Boston and Philadelphia, two of our greatest Towns; but when they saw our Warriors in a great body ready to fall upon them, they were forced to leave them. ... Brothers: We have till lately fought the English all alone. Now the Great King of France is become our Good Brother and Ally. He has taken up the Hatchet with us, and we have sworn never to bury it, till we have punished the English and made them sorry for All the wicked things they had in their Hearts to do against these States. And there are other Great Kings and Nations on the other side of the big Waters, who love us and wish us well, and will not suffer the English to hurt us. ... Brothers: Listen well to what I tell you and let it sink deep into your Hearts. We love our friends, and will be faithful to them, as long as they will be faithful to us. We are sure our Good brothers the Delawares will always be so. But we have sworn to take vengeance on our Enemies, and on false friends." – George Washington, speech to the Delaware Indian Chiefs on May 12, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:54-55

"You do well to wish to learn our arts and ways of life, and above all, the religion of Jesus Christ. These will make you a greater and happier people than you are." – George Washington, speech to the Delaware Indian Chiefs on May 12, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:55

"Brothers: There are some matters about which [I do not open my Lips, because they belong to Congress, and not to us warriors; you are going to them, they will tell you all you wish to know. ... Brothers: When you have seen all you want to see, I will then wish you a good Journey to Philadelphia. I hope you may find there every thing your hearts can wish, that when you return home you may be able to tell your Nation good things of us. And I pray God he may make your Nation wise and Strong, that they may always see their own] true interest and have courage to walk in the right path; and that they never may be deceived by lies to do any thing against the people of these States, who are their Brothers and ought always to be one people with them." – George Washington, speech to the Delaware Indian Chiefs on May 12, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:55-56

Letter to John Augustine Washington – May 12, 1779

"We...have been dreaming of Peace and Independance, and striving to enrich ourselves on the spoils and ruin of our Country, by preying upon the very vitals of it. In a word, our conduct has been the very reverse of the enemy's, for while they were doing every thing to prepare vigorously for the Campaign now opening, we were doing nothing, nay, worse than nothing; but considering how cautious I intended to be, I have said more than enough; and shall add no more on this head, but lament, which I do most pathetically that decay of public virtue with which people were inspired at the beginning of this contest. Speculation, peculation, with all their concomitants, have taken such deep root in almost every Soil, that little else but money making is attended to, the great business may get forward as it can. No effectual measures have been taken except in Virginia, to compleat the Continental Battalions, the Work is but now beginning in most other States, and upon such a plan as to promise very little Success; when the Men ought to be in the field. In a word, such a stupor seems to pervade our whole system, and has siezed upon every State, that it is melancholy to think of." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Middlebrook, May 12, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:60

Letter to Major General John Sullivan – May 15, 1779

"Under the circumstances which you have mentioned, and from the usefulness that Colonel Butler conceives Dr. [David] Jones [Chaplain of the Pennsylvania brigade] may be of, I have consented to his joining Col. Butler, and directed him to you in case you should have any commands." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Sullivan, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 15, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:85

Letter to John Armstrong – May 18, 1779

"To please every body is impossible; were I to undertake it I should probably please no body. If I know myself I have no partialities. I have from the beginning, and I will to the end pursue to the best of my judgment and abilities one steady line of conduct for the good of the great whole." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, Head Qrs., Middlebrook, May 18, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:97

"The hour therefore is certainly come when party differences and disputes should subside; when every Man (especially those in Office) should with one hand and one heart pull the same way and with their whole strength." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, Head Qrs., Middlebrook, May 18, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:99

Letter to Lund Washington – May 29, 1779

"I look upon every dispensation of Providence as designed to answer some valuable purpose, and hope I shall always possess a sufficient degree of fortitude to bear without murmuring any stroke which may happen, either to my person or estate, from that quarter." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Headquarters, Middlebrook, May 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:180

"I cannot, with any degree of patience, behold the infamous practices of speculators, monopolizers, and all that class of gentry which are preying upon our very vitals, and, for the sake of a little dirty pelf, are putting the rights and liberties of the country into the most imminent danger, and continuing a war destructive to the lives and property of the valuable part of this community, which would have ceased last fall as certain as we now exist but for the encouragements the enemy derived from this source, the depreciation of the money (which in a great measure is the consequence of it) and our own internal divisions." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Headquarters, Middlebrook, May 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:180

Instructions to Major General John Sullivan – May 31, 1779

"I beg leave to suggest as general rules that ought to govern your operations, to make rather than receive attacks attended with as much impetuosity, shouting and noise as possible, and to make the troops act in as loose and dispersed a way as is consistent with a proper degree of government concert and mutual support. It should be previously impressed upon the minds of the men when ever they have an opportunity, to rush on with the warhoop and fixed bayonet. Nothing will disconcert and terrify the indians more than this." – George Washington, instructions to Major General John Sullivan, Head Quarters, Middlebrook, May 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:190

"When we have effectually chastized them we may then listen to peace and endeavour to draw further advantages from their fears. But even in this case great caution will be necessary to guard against the snares which their treachery may hold out." – George Washington, instructions to Major General John Sullivan, Head Quarters, Middle Brook, May 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:192

Letter to the Minister, Elders and Deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church – June 2, 1779

"I trust the goodness of the cause and the exertions of the people under divine protection will give us that honourable peace for which we are contending. Suffer me Gentlemen to wish the reformed church at Raritan a long continuance of its present Minister and consistory and all the blessings which flow from piety and religion." – George Washington, letter to the Minister, Elders, and Deacons of the Dutch Reformed Church at Raritan, [Middle brook Camp, June 2, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:210

Letter to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne – July 10, 1779

"Single men in the night will be more likely to ascertain facts than the best glasses in the day." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, New Windsor, July 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:397

"The usual time for exploits of this kind is a little before day for which reason a vigilant Officer is then more on the watch I therefore recommend a midnight hour. ... A Dark Night and even a Rainy one if you can find the way, will contribute to your success." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, New Windsor, July 10, 1779; Fitzpatrick 15:398

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – July 29, 1779

"To stand well in the estimation of one's country is a happiness that no rational creature can be insensible of." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Middle Brook, July 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:8

"If I had ever assumed the Character of a Military genius and the Officer of experience. If undr. these false colors I had solicited the command I was honoured with, or if after my appointment, I had presumptuously driven on under the sole guidance of my own judgment and self will, and misfortunes the result of obstinacy and misconduct, not of necessity, had followed, I should have thought myself a proper subject for the lash, not only of his, but the pen of every other writer, and a fit object for public resentmt." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Middle Brook, July 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:8

"Discouraging as this is, I feel more from the state of our currency, and the little attention which hitherto, appears to have been paid to our finances than from the smallness of our Army. And yet (Providence having so often taken us up when bereft of every other hope) I trust we shall not fail even in this. The present temper and disposition of the people to facilitate a loan, to discountence Speculation, and to appreciate the money is a happy presage of resulting good; and ought to be cherished by every possible means not repugnant to good order and government." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Middle Brook, July 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:10

General Orders – July 29, 1779

"Many and pointed orders have been issued against that unmeaning and abominable custom of Swearing, notwithstanding which, with much regret the General observes that it prevails, if possible, more than ever; His feelings are continually wounded by the Oaths and Imprecations of the soldiers whenever he is in hearing of them. ... The Name of That Being, from whose bountiful goodness we are permitted to exist and enjoy the comforts of life is incessantly imprecated and prophaned in a manner as wanton as it is shocking. For the sake therefore of religion, decency and order, the General hopes and trusts that officers of every rank will use their influence and authority to check a vice, which is as unprofitable as it is wicked and shameful. ... If officers would make it an invariable rule to reprimand, and if that does not do punish soldiers for offences of this kind it could not fail of having the desired effect." – George Washington, General Orders, July 29, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:13

Letter to Isaac Schultz, Moses Gale, and Leonord D. Nicoll – July 31, 1779

"I was favoured with your letter by Esquire Nicoll. It gives me pain at all times, to put the inhabitants of any part of the Country to an inconvenience, nor is it ever done but from necessity and a regard to the Public good. In the present instance I can only say that if you can point out proper places for the accommodation of the sick that may be approved by Genl. Greene and the director Genl. of the Hospital, I shall be happy, to find the Church at New Windsor, appropriated to the use for which it was originally intended; if not, I make no doubt you will readily acquiesce, in a matter so essential to the public good." – George Washington, letter to Isaac Schultz, Moses Gale, and Leonord D. Nicoll, Trustees of the church at New Windsor, West Point, July 31, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:25

Letter to Reverend Uzal Ogden – August 5, 1799

"I have received, and with pleasure read, the Sermon [A sermon on practical religion. Inscribed to Christians of every denomination....] you were so obliging as to send me. I thank you for this proof of your attention. I thank you also for the favourable sentiments you have been pleased to express of me. But in a more especial mann. I thank you for the good wishes and prayers you offer in my behalf. These have a just claim to the gratitude of Revd." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Uzal Ogden, West-point, August 5, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:51

Letter to Dr. John Cochran, Surgeon General – August 16, 1779

"I hate deception, even where the imagination only is concerned." – George Washington, letter to Dr. John Cochran, Surgeon General, West Point, August 16, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:116

Letter to Major General Robert Howe – August 17, 1779

"Few men have virtue to withstand the highest bidder." – George Washington, letter to Major General Robert Howe, Head Quarters, West Point, August 17, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:119

Letter to Major General William Heath – August 18, 1799

"The intercourse which you mention to be carrying on by Women, with Verplank's point, may be attended with many bad consequences, or at least great inconveniences and must be suppressed. Those now detained, may be released under strict injunctions never to do the like again, and at the peril of being closely confined and otherwise severely punished, if they are detected. Genl. Nixon will have this idea propagated as generally as he can, and if the Women will persevere in the practice, however disagreeable the measure, they must be sent to Camp and be at least confined in the provost." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters, August 18, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:128

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – August 22, 1779

"I shall never attempt to palliate my own faults by exposing those of another." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, West Point, August 22, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:151

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 30, 1779

"Your forward zeal in the cause of liberty; Your singular attachment to this infant World; Your ardent and persevering efforts, not only in America but since your return to France to serve the United States; Your polite attention to Americans, and your strict and uniform friendship for me, has ripened the first impressions of esteem and attachment which I imbibed for you into such perfect love and gratitude that neither time nor absence can impair." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, West Point, September 30, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:369

"The glorious successes of Count d'Estaing in the West Indies at the same time that it adds dominion to France and fresh lustre to her Arms is a source of new and unexpected misfortune to our tender and generous parent and must serve to convince her of the folly of quitting the substance in pursuit of a shadow; and as there is no experience equal to that which is bought I trust she will have a superabundance of this kind of knowledge and be convinced as I hope all the World, and every tyrant in it will that the best and only safe road to honour, glory, and true dignity, is justice." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, West Point, September 30, 1779; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 16:373

"No distance can keep anxious lovers long asunder." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, West Point, September 30, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:376

"But alas! will you not remark that amidst all the wonders recorded in holy writ no instance can be produced where a young Woman from real inclination has preferred an old man." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, West Point, September 30, 1779; Fitzpatrick 16:376

Letter to Edmund Pendleton – November 1, 1779

"A New scene, though rather long delayed, is opening to our view and of sufficient importance to interest the hopes and fears of every well wisher to his Country and will engage the attention of all America. This I say on a supposition that the delays to the Southward and advanced season does not prevent a full and perfect co-operation with the French fleet in this quarter. Be this as it may; every thing in the preparatory way that depends upon me is done, and doing. To Count D'Estaing then, and that good Providence wch. has

so remarkably aided us in all our difficulties, the rest is committed." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, West Point, November 1, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:51

"[E]very other effort is in vain unless something can be done to restore its credit. Congress, the States individually, and individuals of each state, should exert themselves to effect this great end. It is the only hope; the last resource of the enemy; and nothing but our want of public virtue can induce a continuance of the War. Let them once see, that as it is in our power, so it is our inclination and intention to overcome this difficulty, and the idea of conquest, or hope of bringing us back to a state of dependance, will vanish like the morning dew; they can no more encounter this kind of opposition than the hoar frost can withstand the rays of an all clearing Sun. The liberties and safety of this Country depend upon it. the way is plain, the means are in our power, but it is virtue alone that can effect it." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, West Point, November 1, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:52

Letter to Major General William Heath – November 21, 1779

"I send herewith a Mr. [John] Elliot [former Chaplain of the 2nd Connecticut Regiment] who lately came out of New York. He was formerly Chaplain to Colo. Chas. Webbs Regiment, but being dismissed from that service and disappointed in some other matters he went in to the Enemy; and now says he has come out again to throw himself upon the mercy of the State of Connecticut of which he was an inhabitant. You will therefore be pleased to send him on to the State under charge of some of the Officers who are going upon furlough." – George Washington, letter to Major General William Heath, Head Quarters, November 21, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:154-155

General Orders – November 27, 1779

"Whereas it becomes us humbly to approach the throne of Almighty God, with gratitude and praise for the wonders which his goodness has wrought in conducting our fore-fathers to this western world; for his protection to them and to their posterity amid difficulties and dangers; for raising us, their children, from deep distress to be numbered among the nations of the earth; and for arming the hands of just and mighty princes in our deliverance; and especially for that he hath been pleased to grant us the enjoyment of health, and so to order the revolving seasons, that the earth hath produced her increase in abundance, blessing the labors of the husbandmen, and spreading plenty through the land; that he hath prospered our arms and those of our ally; been a shield to our troops in the hour of danger, pointed their swords to victory and led them in triumph over the bulwarks of the foe; that he hath gone with those who went out into the wilderness against the savage tribes; that he hath stayed the hand of the spoiler, and turned back his meditated destruction; that he hath prospered our commerce, and given success to those who sought the enemy on the face of the deep; and above all, that he hath diffused the glorious light of the gospel, whereby, through the merits of our gracious Redeemer, we may become the heirs of his eternal glory: therefore,

RESOLVED, That it be recommended to the several states, to appoint Thursday, the 9th of December next, to be a day of public and solemn thanksgiving to Almighty God for his mercies, and of prayer for the continuance of his favor and protection to these United States; to beseech him that he would be graciously pleased to influence our public councils, and bless them with wisdom from on high, with unanimity, firmness, and success; that he would go forth with our hosts and crown our arms with victory; that he would grant to his church the plentiful effusions of divine grace, and pour out his holy spirit on all ministers of the gospel; that he would bless and prosper the means of education, and spread the light of christian knowledge through the remotest corners of the earth; that he would smile upon the labours of his people and cause the earth to bring forth her fruits in abundance; that we may with gratitude and gladness enjoy them; that he would take into his holy protection our illustrious ally, give him victory over his enemies, and render him signally great, as the father of his people and the protector of the rights of mankind; that he would graciously be pleased to turn the hearts of our enemies, and to dispense the blessings of peace to contending nations; that he would in mercy look down upon us, pardon our sins and receive us into his favor, and finally, that he would establish the independence of these United States upon the basis of religion and virtue, and support and protect them in the enjoyment of peace, liberty and safety."

– George Washington, General Orders, quoting a congressional proclamation, November 27, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:189-190

Letter to New Jersey Governor William Livingston – December 7, 1779

"[T]o persevere in one's duty and be silent, is the best answer to calumny." – George Washington, letter to Governor William Livingston, Morris Town, December 7, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:225

Letter to Major General John Sullivan – December 15, 1779

"A slender acquaintance with the world must convince every man, that actions, not words, are the true criterion of the attachment of his friends, and that the most liberal professions of good will are very far from being the surest marks of it. I should be happy that my own experience had afforded fewer examples of the little dependence to be placed upon them." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Sullivan, Morristown, December 15, 1779; Fitzpatrick 17:266

Letter to Major General Nathanael Greene – January 22, 1780

"Appear's, and facts must speak for themselves." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Morristown, January 22, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:423

"To share a common lot, and participate the inconveniencies wch. the Army (from the peculiarity of our circumstances are obliged to undergo) has, with me, been a fundamental principle" – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Morristown, January 22, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:423

Letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress – January 27, 1780

"I have now the pleasure to inform Congress that the situation of the army for the present is, and it has been for some days past, comfortable and easy on the score of provision. We were reduced at last to such extremity, and without any prospect of being relieved in the ordinary way, that I was obliged to call upon the magistrates of every county in the state for specific quantities to be supplied in a limited number of days. I should be wanting in justice to their zeal and attachment, and to that of the inhabitants of the state in general, were I not to inform Congress, that they gave the earliest and most chearful attention to my requisitions, and exerted themselves for the army's relief in a manner that did them the highest honor. They more than complied with the requisitions in many instances, and owing to their exertions, the army in great measure has been kept together." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, January 27, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:449-450

General Orders – January 27, 1780

"By the same Court, Captain [William] Price of the 2nd. Maryland regiment was tried for "Gaming with Cards for money," for "Neglect of duty, Gambling, Behaving in a manner unbecoming the character of an officer," for "Secretly striking Lieutenant [Edward] Davall with a can when he was executing his duty," for "Disorderly and mutinous conduct in the presence of the soldiers of the regiment and for abuse after being reported for other crimes"; acquitted of the 1st. 2nd. 3rd. and 4th. charges, and found guilty of the 5th. charge, the 1st. part of the 6th. charge and the 7th. charge and sentenced to be reprimanded by division orders. ... The Commander in Chief approves the sentences." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Morristown, Thursday, January 27, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:458-459

Letter to Elbridge Gerry – January 29, 1780

"There is nothing so likely to produce peace as to be well prepared to meet an enemy." – George Washington, letter to Elbridge Gerry, Morristown, January 29, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:463

"With respect to provision; the situation of the Army is comfortable at present on this head and I ardently pray that it may never be again as it has been of late." – George Washington, letter to Elbridge Gerry, Morristown, January 29, 1780; Fitzpatrick 17:464

Letter to Lord Stirling – March 5, 1780

"Orders, unless they are followed by close attention to the performance of them, are of little avail. They are read by some, only heard of by others, and inaccurately attended to by all, whilst by a few, they are totally disregarded." – George Washington, letter to Lord Stirling, Morristown, March 5, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:71

"Example whether it be good or bad has a powerful influence, and the higher in Rank the Officer is who sets it, the more striking it is." – George Washington, letter to Lord Stirling, Morristown, March 5, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:72

General Orders – March 23, 1780

"The day appointed for Fasting, humiliation and prayer will be observed by the Army, agreeable to the proclamation." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, March 23, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:146

Letter to Major General Arthur St. Clair – April 2, 1780

"Mr. Beatty shall have my instructions to interchange a certificate with Mr. Loring assenting to the proposal that chaplains belonging to either army, when taken are not to be considered as prisoners of war but immediately released." – George Washington, letter to Major General Arthur St. Clair, Head Quarters, Morristown, April 2, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:202

Letter to John Beatty – April 4, 1780

"Mr. Loring the British Commissary of prisoners is to send you out a writing declaritive on the part of the enemy that no chaplain belonging to the American Army when taken shall be considered as prisoners of war but immediately released. As an interchange of writings is to take place between you and Mr. Loring, you will send me his and a draught of the one you mean to return him, that both may be examined before they are confirmed by a mutual interchange." – George Washington, letter to John Beatty, April 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:216

General Orders – April 6, 1780

"The Commander in Chief would have been much happier in an occasion of bestowing commendations on an officer who has rendered such distinguished services to his Country as Major General Arnold; but in the present case a sense of duty and a regard to candor oblige him to declare, that he considers his conduct in the instance of the permit as peculiarly reprehensible, both in a civil and military view, and in the affair of the waggons as "Imprudent and improper." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Morristown, April 6, 1780; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 18:225

"The Honorable the Congress having been pleased by their proclamation of the 11th. of last month to appoint wednesday the 22nd. instant to be set apart and observed as a day of Fasting Humiliation and Prayer for certain special purposes therein mentioned, and recommended that there should be no labor or recreations on that day; The same is to be observed accordingly thro'out the Army and the different Chaplins will prepare discourses suited to the several objects enjoined by the said Proclamation." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Morristown, April 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:225

Letter to Lund Washington – April 6, 1780

"You ask how I am to be rewarded for all this? There is one reward that nothing can deprive me of, and that is, the consciousness of having done my duty with the strictest rectitude, and most scrupulous exactness, and the certain knowledge, that if we should, ultimately, fail in the present contest, it is not owing to the want of exertion in me, or the application of every means that Congress and the United States, or the States individually, have put into my hands." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Morris-Town, May 19, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:392

Letter to Lund Washington – May 19, 1780

"You ask how I am to be rewarded for all this? There is one reward that nothing can deprive me of, and that is, the consciousness of having done my duty with the strictest rectitude, and most scrupulous exactness, and the certain knowledge, that if we should, ultimately, fail in the present contest, it is not owing to the want of exertion in me, or the application of every means that Congress and the United States, or the States individually, have put into my hands." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Morris-Town, May 19, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:392

"[Provi]dence, to whom we are infinitely more indebted than we are to our own wisdom, or our own exertions, has always displayed its power and goodness, when clouds and thick darkness seemed ready to overwhelm us. The hour is now come when we stand much in need of another manifestation of its bounty however little we deserve it." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Morris-Town, May 19, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:392

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – May 28, 1780

"The Court of France has made a glorious effort for our deliverance, and if we disappoint its intentions by our supineness we must become contemptible in the eyes of all mankind; nor can we after that venture to confide that our allies will persist in an attempt to establish what it will appear we want inclination or ability to assist them in." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Morris Town, May 28, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:435

"The maritime resources of Great Britain are more substantial and real than those of France and Spain united. Her commerce is more extensive than that of both her rivals; and it is an axiom that the nation which has the most extensive commerce will always have the most powerful marine." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Morris Town, May 28, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:436

"In modern wars the longest purse must chiefly determine the event. I fear that of the enemy will be found to be so. Though the government is deeply in debt and of course poor, the nation is rich and their riches afford a fund which will not be easily exhausted. Besides, their system of public credit is such that it is capable of greater exertions than that of any other nation. Speculatists have been a long time foretelling its downfall, but we see no symptoms of the catastrophe being very near. I am persuaded it will at least last out the war, and then, in the opinion of many of the best politicians it will be a national advantage. If the war should terminate successfully the crown will have acquired such influence and power that it may attempt any thing, and a bankruptcy will probably be made the ladder to climb to absolute authority. Administration may perhaps wish to drive matters to this issue; at any rate they will not be restrained by an apprehension of it from forcing the resources of the state. It will promote their present purposes on which their all is

at stake and it may pave the way to triumph more effectually over the constitution. With this disposition I have no doubt that ample means will be found to prosecute the war with the greatest vigor." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Morris Town, May 28, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:436-437

Letter to Joseph Jones – May 31, 1780

"Certain I am that unless Congress speaks in a more decisive tone; unless they are vested with powers by the several States competent to the great purposes of War, or assume them as matter of right; and they, and the states respectively, act with more energy than they hitherto have done, that our Cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill-timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expences, and derive no benefit from them. One state will comply with a requisition of Congress, another neglects to do it. a third executes it by halves, and all differ either in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up hill, and ever shall be (while such a system as the present one, or rather want of one prevails) unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Jones, Morris Town, May 31, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:453

"I see one head gradually changing into thirteen. I see one Army branching into thirteen; and instead of looking up to Congress as the supreme controuling power of the united States, are considering themselves as dependent on their respective States. In a word, I see the powers of Congress declining too fast for the consequence and respect which is due to them as the grand representative body of America, and am fearful of the consequences of it." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Jones, Morris Town, May 31, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:453

Letter to Abraham Skinner – June 4, 1780

"I lately received a letter from a Mr. Frazier at Rutland, a Chaplain to the 71 Regt. As it was mutually agreed at the last meeting of the Commissioners to release all Gentlemen of his Cloth, you will be pleased to take the first opportunity of giving the necessary orders, to that effect." – George Washington, letter to Abraham Skinner, Head Quarters, Morris Town, June 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:475

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – June 11, 1780

"I most sincerely condole with your Excellency on the late severe stroke which you have met with in your family. Although calamities of this kind are what we should all be prepared to expect, yet few, upon their arrival, are able to bear them with a becoming fortitude. Your determination however to seek assistance from the great disposer of all human events is highly laudable, and is the source from whence the truest consolation is to be drawn." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Head Quarters, near Springfield, June 11, 1780; Fitzpatrick 18:511

Letter to James Bowdoin – June 14, 1780

"With respect to Charles Town, although I have received no Official advices of it on our part, the loss of it seems placed beyond doubt. The Articles of Capitulation are published in a York Gazette Extraordinary by Authority, which were signed the 12 of May, with all the preliminary negotiations between the Commanders. The Garrison, at least the part denominated Continental, are prisoners of War. This is a severe blow; but not such as will ruin us, if we exert ourselves virtuously and as we are able. Something like it seems to have been necessary, to rouse us from the more than thrice unaccountable state of security in which we were sunk. Heaven grant the blow may have this effect. If it should, the misfortune may prove a benefit and the means of saving us." – George Washington, letter to James Bowdoin, Head Quarters, Springfield in New Jersey, June 14, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:9

Letter to Robert Livingston – June 29, 1780

"[T]he opinion and advice of my friends I receive at all times as a proof of their friendship and am thankful when they are offered." – George Washington, letter to Robert Livingston, Ramapough, June 29, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:91

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania – July 4, 1780

"In general I esteem it a good maxim, that the best way to preserve the confidence of the people durably is to promote their true interest." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Bergen County, July 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:114

"When any great object is in view, the popular mind is roused into expectation, and prepared to make sacrifices both of ease and property. If those, to whom they confide the management of their affairs, do not call them to make these sacrifices, and the object is not attained, or they are involved in the reproach of not having contributed as much as they ought to have done towards it, they will be mortified at the disappointment, they will feel the censure, and their resentment will rise against those, who, with sufficient

authority, have omitted to do what their interest and their honor required." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Bergen County, July 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:114

"Extensive powers not exercised as far as was necessary have, I believe, scarcely ever failed to ruin the possessor." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Bergen County, July 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:114

"In offering my respects to Mrs. Reed, I must be permitted to accompany them with a tender of my very warm acknowledgments to her and you for the civilities and attention both of you have been pleased to show Mrs. Washington; and for the honor you have done me in calling the young Christian by my name." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, Headquarters, Bergen County, July 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:115

Letter to Fielding Lewis – July 6, 1780

"I may lament in the bitterness of my Soul, that the fatal policy which has pervaded all our measures from the beginning of the War, and from which no experience however dear bought can change, should have reduced our army to so low an ebb as not to have given a more effectual opposition to those movements than we did; or that we should be obliged to be removing our Stores from place to place to keep them out of the way of the enemy instead of driving that enemy from our Country, but our weakness envited these insults, and why they did not attempt at least to do more than they did, I cannot conceive." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 19:130-131

"Nor will it be easy to make any one at the distance of 400 miles believe that our army, weakened as it is by the expiration of men's enlistments, should at times be five or six days together without meat—then as many without bread—and once or twice, two or three days together without either—and that, in the same army, there should be numbers of men with scarcely as much cloathing as would cover their nakedness, and at least a fourth of the whole with not even the shadow of a blanket, severe as the winter has been. Under these circumstances it is no difficult matter to conceive what a time I must have had to keep up appearances and prevent the most disastrous consequences." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:131

"[A]ll the business is now *attempted*, for it is not done, by a timid kind of recommendation from Congress to the States; the consequence of which is, that instead of pursuing one uniform system which in the execution shall corrispond in time and manner, each State undertakes to determine, 1st. whether they will comply or not 2d. In what manner they will do it, &ca. 3dly. in what time; by which means scarcely any one measure is, or can be executed, while great expences are incurred and the willing and zealous states ruined. In a word, our measures are not under the influence and direction of one council, but thirteen, each of which is actuated by local views and politics, without considering the fatal consequences of not complying with plans which the united wisdom of America in its representative capacity have digested, or the unhappy tendency of delay, mutilation, or alteration." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:131-132

"Unless the States will content themselves with a full and well-chosen representation in Congress and vest that body with absolute powers in all matters relative to the great purposes of war, and of general concern...we are attempting an impossibility, and very soon shall become (if it is not already the case) a many-headed monster--a heterogenous mass--that never will or can steer to the same point." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:132

"The contest among the different States now , is not which shall do most for the common cause, but which shall do least, hence arise disappointments and delay; one State waiting to see what another will or will not do through fear of doing too much and by their deliberations, alterations, and sometimes refusals to comply with the requisitions of Congress, after that Congress have spent months in reconciling (as far as it is possible) jarring Interests in order to frame their resolutions as far as the nature of the case will admit, upon principles of equality." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:132

"We may rely upon it, that we shall never have Peace till the enemy are convinced that we are in a condition to carry on the War. It is no new maxim in politics that for a nation to obtain Peace, or insure it, It must be prepared for War." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19, 133

"To rectify past blunders is impossible, but we might profit by the experience of them." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:133

Letter to John Augustine Washington – July 6, 1780

"[I]t has ever been our conduct and misfortune to Slumber and Sleep while we should be deligent in preparation; and when pressed by irresistable necessity and when we can delay no longer, then to bring ourselves to the brink of destruction by expensive and temporary expedients. In a word, we have no system, and seem determined not to profit by experience. We are, during the winter, dreaming of Independance and Peace, without using the means to become so. In the Spring, when our Recruits should be with the Army and in training, we have just discovered the necessity of calling for them. and by the Fall, after a distresed, and inglorious campaign for want of them, we begin to get a few men, which come in just time enough to eat our Provisions, and consume our Stores without rendering

any service; thus it is, one year Rolls over another, and with out some change, we are hastening to our Ruin." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, July 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:135

Letter to Joseph Jones – August 13, 1780

"It does not require, I am sure, with you argument at this time of day to prove, that there is no set of Men in the United States (considered as a body) that have made the same sacrifices of their Interest in support of the common cause as the Officers of the American Army; that nothing but [a love of their Country,] of honor, and a desire of seeing their labours crowned with success could possibly induce them to continue one moment in Service. That no Officer can live upon his pay, that hundreds having spent their little all in addition to their scant public allowance have resigned, because they could no longer support themselves as Officers; that numbers are, at this moment, rendered unfit for duty for want of Cloathing, while the rest are wasteing their property and some of them verging fast to the gulph of poverty and distress." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Jones, Head Quarters, Tappan, August 13, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:368

Letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress – August 20, 1780

"The politic's of Princes are fluctuating, more guided often by a particular prejudice, whim, or interest, than by extensive views of policy." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:407

"The change or caprice of a single Minister is capable of altering the whole system of Europe." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:407

"[I]t is the true policy of America not to content herself with temporary expedients, but to endeavor, if possible, to give consistency and solidity to her measures." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:407

"Had we formed a permanent army in the beginning, which, by the continuance of the same men in service, had been capable of discipline, we never should have had to retreat with a handful of men across the Delaware in '76, trembling for the fate of America, which nothing but the infatuation of the enemy could have saved; we should not have remained all the succeeding winter at their mercy, with sometimes scarcely a sufficient body of men to mount the ordinary guards, liable at every moment to be dissipated, if they had only thought proper to march against us: we should not have been under the necessity of fighting at Brandywine, with an unequal number of raw troops, and afterwards of seeing Philadelphia fall a prey to a victorious army; we should not have been at Valley Forge with less than half the force of the enemy, destitute of every thing, in a situation neither to resist nor to retire; we should not have seen New York left with a handful of men, yet an overmatch for the main army of these States, while the principal part of their force was detached for the reduction of two of them; we should not have found ourselves this spring so weak, as to be insulted by five thousand men, unable to protect our baggage and Magazines, their security depending on a good countenance, and a want of enterprise in the enemy; we should not have been the greatest part of the war inferior to the enemy, indebted for our safety to their inactivity, enduring frequently the mortification of seeing inviting opportunities to ruin them pass unimproved for want of a force, which the country was completely able to afford; to see the Country ravaged, our towns burnt, the inhabitants plundered, abused, murdered with impunity from the same cause." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:408-409

"Nor have the ill effects been confined to the military line. A great part of the embarrassments in the civil departments flow from the same source. The derangement of our finances is essentially to be ascribed to it. The expenses of the war, and the Paper emissions, have been greatly multiplied by it. We have had, a great part of the time, two sets of men to feed and pay, the discharged men going home and the Levies coming in. This was more remarkable in '75 and '76. The difficulty and cost of engaging men have increased at every successive attempt, till among the present levies we find there are some, who have received a hundred and fifty dollars in specie for five months' service, while our officers are reduced to the disagreeable necessity of performing the duties of drill sergeants to them, and with this mortifying reflection annexed to the business, that, by the time they have taught those men the rudiments of a soldier's duty, their term of service will have expired, and the work is to recommence with an entire new set. The consumption of Provision, arms, accoutrements, stores of every kind, has been doubled in spite of every precaution I could use, not only from the cause just mentioned, but from the carelessness and licentiousness incident to militia and irregular Troops. Our discipline also has been much injured, if not ruined, by such frequent changes. The frequent calls upon the militia have interrupted the cultivation of the Land, and of course have lessened the quantity of its produce, occasioned a scarcity, and enhanced the prices. In an army so unstable as ours, order and economy have been impracticable. No person, who has been a close observer of the progress of our affairs, can doubt that our currency has depreciated without comparison more rapidly from the system of short enlistments, than it would have done otherwise." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:409-410

"Had we kept a permanent army on foot, the enemy could have had nothing to hope for, and would in all probability have listened to terms long since." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:410

"Many circumstances will contribute to a negotiation. An Army on foot not only for another Campaign but for several Campaigns, would determine the enemy to pacific measures, and enable us to insist upon favourable terms in forcible language. An Army insignificant in numbers, dissatisfied, crumbling into pieces, would be the strongest temptation they could have to try the experiment a little longer. It is an old maxim, that the surest way to make a good peace is to be well prepared for War." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Headquarters, Orange Town, August 20, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:410-411

Letter to Samuel Washington – August 31, 1780

"We are always without an Army, or have a raw and undisciplined one, engaged for so short a time that we are not fit either for the purposes of offence or defence, much less is it in our power to project schemes and execute plans which depend upon well disciplined and permanent Troops. One half the year is spent in getting Troops into the Field, the other half is lost in discharging them, from their limited Service, and the manner and time in which they come and go, the public in the meanwhile incurring an immense expence in paying two sets, that is, the comers and goers, at the same instant. In a waste of Provisions, Stores, Arms, and a thousand things which can scarce be enumerated. In a word short enlistments has been the primary cause of the continuance of the War, and every evil which has been experienced in the course of it." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Camp near Fort Lee, August 31, 1780; Fitzpatrick 19:481

Letter to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne – September 6, 1780

"Let all differences subside; the situation of our affairs never required it more, and in the Emphatical terms of your and General Irvine's Letter, of which You inclosed a Copy; Let all be as a band of Brothers and rise superior to every injury, whether real or imaginary and persevere in the arduous but glorious struggle in which we are engaged, 'till Peace and Independence are secured to our Country." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Anthony Wayne, Head Quarters, September 6, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:2

Letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress – September 15, 1780

"Regular Troops alone are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defence as offence, and whenever a substitute is attempted it must prove illusory and ruinous. No Militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. Even those nearest the seat of War are only valuable as light Troops to be scattered in the woods and plague rather than do serious injury to the Enemy. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single instance that can justify a different opinion; and it is most earnestly to be wished the liberties of America may no longer be trusted in any material degree to so precarious a dependence." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress, Head Quarters, New Bridge, September 15, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:49

General Orders – September 21, 1780

"At the General Court martial whereof Colonel Jackson is president, the 16th. Instant, Major Murnan of the corps of Engineers was tried for "Unofficer and ungentlemanlike behavior in taking possession of the quarters of the Reverend David Jones [Chaplain of a Pennsylvania brigade] in his Absence and for similar behavior to him in his quarters." The Court are of opinion that Major Murnan having a right to take possession of the quarters which Mr. Jones calls his is not Guilty of unofficer and ungentlemanlike conduct in taking possession of them. The Court do acquit Major Murnan of the charge against him. ... Major General Greene confirms the opinion of the court. ... Major Murnan is released from Arrest." – George Washington, Head Quarters, Orangetown, Thursday, September 21, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:76

General Orders – September 26, 1780

"Treason of the blackest dye was yesterday discovered! General Arnold who commanded at Westpoint, lost to every sentiment of honor, of public and private obligation, was about to deliver up that important Post into the hands of the enemy. Such an event must have given the American cause a deadly wound if not a fatal stab. Happily the treason has been timely discovered to prevent the fatal misfortune. The providential train of circumstances which led to it affords the most convincing proof that the Liberties of America are the object of divine Protection. ... At the same time that the Treason is to be regretted the General cannot help congratulating the Army on the happy discovery. Our Enemies despairing of carrying their point by force are practising every base art to effect by bribery and Corruption what they cannot accomplish in a manly way." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Orangetown, September 26, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:95

"Great honor is due to the American Army that this is the first instance of Treason of the kind where many were to be expected from the nature of the dispute, and nothing is so bright an ornament in the Character of the American soldiers as their having been proof against all the arts and seduction of an insidious enemy." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Orangetown, September 26, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:95

"Arnold has made his escape to the Enemy but Mr. Andre the Adjutant General to the British Army who came out as a spy to negotiate the Business is our Prisoner. ... His Excellency the commander in Chief has arrived at West-point from Harford and is no doubt taking the proper measures to unravel fully, so hellish a plot." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Orangetown, September 26, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:95-96

Letter to Comte de Rochambeau – September 27, 1780

"On my arrival here a very disagreeable scene unfolded itself. By a lucky accident, a conspiracy of the most dangerous nature, the object of which was to sacrifice this post, has been detected. General Arnold, who has sullied his former glory by the blackest treason, has escaped to the enemy. This is an event that occasions me equal regret and mortification; but traitors are the growth of every country and in a revolution of the present nature, it is more to be wondered at, that the catalogue is so small than that there have been found a few." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, Head Quarters, near West Point, September 27, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:97

Letter to John Mathews – October 4, 1780

"I have no scruple in declaring I most firmly believe that the Independance of the United States never will be established till there is an Army on foot for the War; that [if we are to rely on occasional or annual Levies] we must sink under the expence; and ruin must follow." – George Washington, letter to John Mathews, Tappan, October 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:113

"From long experience and the fullest conviction, I have been, and now am decidedly in favr. of a permanent force; but knowing the jealousies wch. have been entertained on this head; Heaven knows how unjustly, [and the cause of which could never be apprehended were a due regard had to our local and other circumstances, even if ambitious views could be supposed to exist]; and that our political helm was in another direction, I forbore to press my Sentiments [for a time]; but at a [moment] when we are tottering on the brink of a precipice, silence would [have been] criminal." – George Washington, letter to John Mathews, Tappan, October 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:115

Letter to James Duane – October 4, 1780

"The satisfaction I have in any successes that attend us or even in the alleviation of misfortunes is always allayed by a fear that it will lull us into security. Supineness and a disposition to flatter ourselves seem to make parts of our national character; when we receive a check and are not quite undone, we are apt to fancy we have gained a victory; and when we do gain any little advantage, we imagine it decisive and expect the war is immediately to end. The history of the war is a history of false hopes and temporary expedients. Would to God they were to end here!" – George Washington, letter to James Duane, Hd. Qrs., Tappan, October 4, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:117

Letter to Brigadier General John Cadwalader – October 5, 1780

"The favourable disposition of Spain; the promised succour from France; the combined force in the West Indies; The declaration of Russia (acceded to by other powers of Europe, humiliating to the Naval pride and power of Great Britain); the Superiority of France and Spain by Sea in Europe; The Irish claims and English disturbances, formed in the agregate, an opinion in my breast (which is not very susceptible of peaceful dreams) that the hour of deliverance was not far distant; for that however unwilling Great B: might be to yield the point, it would not be in her power to continue the contest. but alas these prospects, flattering as they were, have prov'd delusory, and I see nothing before us but accumulating distress." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General John Cadwalader, Tappan, October 5, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:121

"Our case is not desperate, if virtue exists in the people and there is wisdom among our rulers; but to suppose that this great revolution can be accomplished by a temporary army; that this Army will be subsisted by State supplies, and that taxation alone is adequate to our wants, is, in my Opinion absurd and as unreasonable as to expect an Inversion in the order of nature to accommodate itself to our views." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General John Cadwalader, Tappan, October 5, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:122

Letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress – October 11, 1780

"Nothing can be more obvious than that a sound Military establishment and the interests of oeconomy are the same." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 11, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:159

Letter to Colonel Henry Laurens – October 13, 1780

"In no instance since the commencement of the War has the interposition of Providence appeared more conspicuous than in the rescue of the Post and Garrison of West point from Arnolds villainous perfidy." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 13, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:173

"I am mistaken if at *this time*, Arnold is undergoing the torments of a mental Hell. He wants feeling! From some traits of his character which have lately come to my knowledge, he seems to have been so hackneyed in villainy, and so lost to all sense of honor and shame that while his faculties will enable him to continue his sordid pursuits there will be no time for remorse." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 13, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:173

Letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania – October 18, 1780

"[Benedict] Arnold's conduct is so villainously perfidious, that there are no terms that can describe the baseness of his heart. That overruling Providence which has so often, and so remarkably interposed in our favor, never manifested itself more conspicuously than in the timely discovery of his horrid design of surrendering the Post and Garrison of West point into the hands of the enemy. I confine my remark to this single Act of perfidy for I am far from thinking he intended to hazard a defeat of this important object by combining another with it, altho' there were circumstances which led to a contrary belief. The confidence, and folly which has marked the subsequent conduct of this man, are of a piece with his villainy; and all three are perfect in their kind. The interest you take in my supposed escape, and the manner in which you speak of it, claim my thanks [as much] as if he had really intended to involve my fate with that of the Garrison, and [I consider it as] a fresh instance of your affectionate regard for me." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Reed, President of Pennsylvania, Hd. Qrs., Passaic Falls, October 18, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:213

Letter to George Mason – October 22, 1780

"If we mean to continue our struggles (and it is to be hoped we shall not relinquish our claim) we must do it upon an entire new plan. We must have a permanent force; not a force that is constantly fluctuating and sliding from under us as a pedestal of Ice would do from a Statue in a Summers day. Involving us in expence that baffles all calculation, an expence which no funds are equal to. We must at the same time contrive ways and means to aid our Taxes by Loans, and put our finance upon a more certain and stable footing than they are at prest." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 22, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:242

"Our Civil government must likewise undergo a reform, ample powers must be lodged in Congress as the head of the Federal Union, adequate to all the purposes of War. Unless these things are done, our efforts will be in vain, and only serve to accumulate expence, add to our perplexities, and dissatisfy the people without a prospect of obtaining the prize in view." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 22, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:242

"We are without money, and have been so for a great length of time, without provision and forage except what is taken by Impress; without Cloathing; and shortly shall be (in a manner) without Men. In a word, we have lived upon expedients till we can live no longer, and it may truly be said that, the history of this War is a history of false hopes, and temporary devices, instead of System, and oeconomy which results from it." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Head Quarters, Passaic Falls, October 22, 1780; Fitzpatrick 20:242

Letter to Mrs. Sarah Bache – January 15, 1781

"Amidst all the distresses and sufferings of the Army, from whatever sources they have arisen, it must be a consolation to our Virtuous Country Women that they have never been accused of with holding their most zealous efforts to support the cause we are engaged in, and encourage those who are defending them in the Field. The Army do not want gratitude, nor do they Misplace it in this instance." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Sarah Bache, Head Quarters, New Windsor, January 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:102

"For nothing in human life, can afford a liberal Mind, more rational and exquisite satisfaction, than the approbation of a Wise, a great and virtuous Man." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Sarah Bache, Head Quarters, New Windsor, January 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:102

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens – January 15, 1781

"[E]xperience has demonstrated the impracticability, long to maintain a paper credit without funds for its redemption. The depreciation of our currency was, in the main, a necessary effect of the want of those funds." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, New Windsor, January 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:106

"[N]o nation will have it more in its power to repay what it borrows than this. Our debts are hitherto small. The vast and valuable tracts of unlocated lands, the variety and fertility of climates and soils; the advantages of every kind, which we possess for commerce, insure to this country a rapid advancement in population and prosperity and a certainty, its independence being established, of redeeming in a short term of years, the comparatively inconsiderable debts it may have occasion to contract." – George Washington, letter to

General Orders – January 30, 1781

"We began a Contest for Liberty and Independence ill provided with the means for war, relying on our own Patriotism to supply the deficiency. We expected to encounter many wants and distresses and We should neither shrink from them when they happen nor fly in the face of Law and Government to procure redress. There is no doubt the public will in the event do ample justice to men fighting and suffering in its defence. But it is our duty to bear present Evils with Fortitude looking forward to the period when our Country will have it more in its power to reward our services." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New Windsor, Tuesday, January 30, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:159

"History is full of Examples of armies suffering with patience extremities of distress which exceed those we have suffered, and this in the cause of ambition and conquest not in that of tile rights of humanity of their country, of their families of themselves; shall we who aspire to the distinction of a patriot army, who are contending for every thing precious in society against every thing hateful and degrading in slavery, shall We who call ourselves citizens discover less Constancy and Military virtue than the mercenary instruments of ambition? Those who in the present instance have stained the honor of the American soldiery and sullied the reputation of patient Virtue for which they have been so long eminent can only atone for their pusillanimous defection by a life devoted to a Zealous and exemplary discharge of their duty." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New Windsor, Tuesday, January 30, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:159

Letter to Robert R. Livingston – January 31, 1781

"The Committees now forming, are at this crisis, disagreeable things; and if they cannot be counteracted or diverted from their original purposes may outgo the views of the well meaning members of them and plunge this Country into deeper distress and confusion than it has hitherto experienced, though I have no doubt but that the same bountiful Providence which has relieved us in a variety of difficulties heretofore will enable us to emerge from them ultimately, and crown our struggles with success." – George Washington, letter to Robert R. Livingston, New Windsor, January 31, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:164

Letter to Samuel Huntington, President of Congress – February 3, 1781

"I shall...content myself with observing, that it appears to me indispensable there should be an extension of the present corporal punishment; and also that it would be useful to authorise Courts Martial to sentence delinquents to labor at public works, perhaps even for some crimes, particularly desertion, to transfer them from the land to the sea service, where they have less opportunity to indulge their inconstancy. A variety in punishments is of utility as well as a proportion. The number of lashes may either be indefinite, left to the discretion of the Court to fix, or limited to a larger number: in this case, I would recommend five hundred." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, Head Quarters, New Windsor, February 3, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:179

Letter to John Sullivan – February 4, 1781

"I can venture to advance from a thorough knowledge of him, that there are few men to be found, of his age, who has a more general knowledge than he possesses, and none whose Soul is more firmly engaged in the cause, or who exceeds him in probity and Sterling virtue." – George Washington, letter to John Sullivan, New Windsor, February 4, 1781; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 21, 181

Letter to Comte de Rochambeau – February 26, 1781

"I have an increase of happiness from the subsequent intelligence you do me the favour to communicate respecting Count D'Estaings success. This repetition of advices justifies a confidence in their truth [which I pray God may be confirmed in its greatest extent.]" – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, February 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:298

Letter to John Parke Custis – February 28, 1781

"To be disgusted at the decision of questions because they are not consonant to your own ideas, and to withdraw ourselves from public assemblies, or to neglect our attendance at them upon suspicion that there is a party formed who are enimical to our Cause, and to the true interest of our Country is wrong because these things may originate in a difference of opinion; but supposing the fact is otherwise and that our suspicions are well founded it is the indispensable duty of every patriot to counteract them by the most steady and uniform opposition." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, New Windsor, February 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:318

"[I]n the most striking point of view the indispensable necessity, the great and good policy of each State's sending its ablest and best men to Congress? Men who have a perfect understanding of the constitution of their Country, of its policy and Interests, and of vesting that body with competent powers. Our Independence depends upon it; our respectability and consequence in Europe depends upon it; our greatness as a Nation, hereafter, depends upon it." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, New Windsor, February 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:320

"[A] nominal head, which at present is but another name for Congress, will no longer do. That honble body, after hearing the interests and views of the several States fairly discussed and explained by their respective representatives, must dictate, not merely recommend, and leave it to the States afterwards to do as they please, which, as I have observed before, is in many cases, to do nothing at all." – George Washington, letter to John Parke Custis, New Windsor, February 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:320-321

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – March 9, 1781

"We have...abundant reason to thank providence for its many favourable interpositions in our behalf. It has, at times been my only dependence for all other resources seemed to have fail'd us." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Newport, March 9, 1781; Fitzpatrick: Vol 21:332

Letter to the Inhabitants of Providence – March 14, 1781

"The confidence and affection of his fellow Citizens is the most valuable and agreeable reward a Citizen can receive. Next to the happiness of my Country, this is the most powerful inducement I can have to exert my self in its Service. Conscious of a sincere desire to promote that great object, however short of my wishes the success of my endeavours may fall I console myself with a perswasion that the goodness of my intentions in some measure justifies your approbation." – George Washington, letter to the Inhabitants of Providence, Providence R.I., March 14, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:337; Fitzpatrick 21:337-338

"The determination you are pleased to express of making every effort for giving vigour to our military operations is consonant with the Spirit that has uniformly actuated this State. It is by this disposition alone we can hope, under the protection of Heaven, to secure the important blessings for which we contend." – George Washington, letter to the Inhabitants of Providence, Providence R.I., March 14, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:338

Letter to Benjamin Harrison – March 21, 1781

"I do not delay a moment to thank you for the interesting matter contained in it, and to express my surprize at that part which respects a pension for my mother." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, New Windsor, March 21, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:340-341

"I did, at her request but at my own expence, purchase a commodious house, garden and Lotts (of her own choosing) in Fredericksburg, that she might be near my Sister Lewis, her only daughter." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, New Windsor, March 21, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:341

"[C]onfident I am that she has not a child that would not divide the last sixpence to relieve her from real distress. This she has been repeatedly assured of by me: and all of us, I am certain, would feel much hurt, at having our mother a pensioner, while we had the means of supporting her; but in fact she has an ample income of her own." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Harrison, New Windsor, March 21, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:341-342

Letter to Joseph Willard – March 22, 1781

"The Arts and Sciences essential to the prosperity of the State and to the ornament and happiness of human life have a primary claim to the encouragement of every lover of his Country and mankind." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Willard, New Windsor, March 22, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:352

Letter to Reverend Jacob Johnson – March 23, 1781

"In answer to your request to be appointed Chaplain of the Garrison at Wyoming I have to observe; that there is no provision made by Congress for such an establishment; without which, I should not be at liberty to make any appointment of the kind, however necessary or expedient (in my opinion) or however I might be disposed to give every species of countenance and encouragement to the cultivation of Virtue, Morality and Religion." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jacob Johnson, Head Quarters, New Windsor, March 23, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:366

Letter to Major General John Armstrong – March 26, 1781

"We ought not to look back, unless it is to derive useful lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dear bought experience. To inveigh against things that are past and irremediable, is displeasing; but to steer clear of the shelves and rocks we have struck upon, is the part of wisdom, equally incumbent on political, as other men, who have their own little bark, or that of others to navigate through the intricate paths of life, or the trackless Ocean to the haven of security. and rest." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, New Windsor, March 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:378

"Our affairs are brought to an awful crisis, that the hand of Providence, I trust, may be more conspicuous in our deliverance. ... The many remarkable interpositions of the divine governmt. in the hours of our deepest distress and darkness, have been too luminous to suffer me to doubt the happy issue of the present contest; but the period for its accomplishmt. may be too far distant for a person of my years, whose Morning and Evening hours, and every moment (unoccupied by business), pants for retirement; and for those domestic and rural enjoyments which in my estimation far surpasses the highest pageantry of this world." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, New Windsor, March 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:378

"It is perhaps, the greatest of the great evils attending this contest, that States as well as individuals, had rather wish well, than act well; had rather see a thing done, than do it; or contribute their just proportion to the doing it. This conduct is not only injurious to the common cause but in the end most expensive to themselves; besides the distrusts and jealousies which are sown by such conduct." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, New Windsor, March 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:379

"To expect brick without straw, is idle, and yet I am called upon with as much facility to furnish Men and means for every service and every want as if every iota required of the States had been furnished, and the whole was at my disposal; when the fact is, I am scarcely able to provide a garrison for West point, or to feed the Men that are there. This, and ten thousand reasons which I could assign, prove the necessity of something more than recommendatory powers in Congress. If that body is not vested with a controuling power in matters of common concern, and for the great purposes of War, I do not scruple to give it, decidedly, as my opinion, that it will be impossible to prosecute it to any good effect. Some States are capitally injured, if not ruin'd by their own exertions and the neglects of others while by these irregularities the strength and resources of the Country never are, nor can be employed to advantage." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, New Windsor, March 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:379

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – April 22, 1781

"[W]e know that the alteration of a single word does, oftentimes, pervert the Sense, or give force to expression unintended by the letter writer." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, New Windsor, April 22, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:491

"That the enemy fabricated a number of Letters for me formerly, is a fact well known; that they are not less capable of doing it now, few will deny..." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, New Windsor, March 26, 1781; Fitzpatrick 21:491

General Orders – April 27, 1781

"Congress having been pleased to set apart and appoint Thursday the 3d. of May next for fasting humiliation and prayer, the General enjoins a strict obedience to it in the Army and calls upon the Chaplains thereof to prepare discourses suitable to the occasion. ... All duties of Fatigue are to cease on that day." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New Windsor, April 27, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:2

Letter to Lund Washington – April 30, 1781

"I am very sorry to hear of your loss; I am a little sorry to hear of my own; but that which gives me most concern, is, that you should go on board the enemys Vessels, and furnish them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me, to have heard, that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my House, and laid the Plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshments to them with a view to prevent a conflagration." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, New Windsor, April 30, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22

"I am thoroughly perswaded that you acted from your best judgment; and believe, that your desire to preserve my property, and rescue the buildings from impending danger, were your governing motives. But to go on board their Vessels; carry them refreshments; commune with a parcel of plundering Scoundrels, and request a favor by asking the surrender of my Negroes, was exceedingly ill-judged, and 'tis to be feared, will be unhappy in its consequences, as it will be a precedent for others, and may become a subject of animadversion." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, New Windsor, April 30, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:14

Entry in Military Journal – May 1, 1781

"Instead of having magazines filled with provisions, we have a scanty pittance scattered here and there in the distant states. Instead of having our arsenals well supplied with military stores, they are poorly provided, and the workmen all leaving them. Instead of having the various articles of field equipage in readiness, the Quarter-master-general is but now applying to the several states to provide these

things for their troops respectively. ... Instead of having a regular system of transportation established upon credit, or funds in the Quarter-master's hands to defray the contingent expenses thereof, we have neither the one nor the other; and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by impressment, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tempers, and alienating their affections. ... Instead of having the regiments completed agreeable to the requisitions of Congress, scarce any state in the union has at this hour one eighth part of its quota in the field, and there is little prospect of ever getting more than half. In a word, instead of having any thing in readiness to take the field, we have nothing; and, instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered and gloomy prospect of a defensive one; unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, troops, and money, from our generous allies, and these at present are too contingent to build upon." – George Washington, entry in Journal of Military transactions, May 1, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:23 Note

Letter to Chevalier de Chastellux – May 7, 1781

"May you participate in those blessings you have invoked heaven for me, and may you live to see a happy termn. of a struggle which was begun and has been continued for the purpose of rescuing America from impending Slavery, and securing to its Inhabitants their indubitable rights in which you bear a conspicuous part..." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de Chastellux, New Windsor, May 7, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:55

Letter to John Sullivan – May 11, 1781

"It is much easier to avoid disagreements than to remove discontentts." – George Washington, letter to John Sullivan, New Windsor, May 11, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:70

General Orders – May 30, 1781

"The Honorable the Congress have been pleased to pass the following Resolves: ... Resolved That the Commander in Chief be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to arrange the brigade chaplains of the several State lines serving with the army, and the commanding general of the southern army those of line serving with that army; so as to retain in service no more chaplains of each line than are equal to the number of brigades: ... That every chaplain deemed and certified to the Board of War to be supernumerary, be no longer continued in service, and be entitled to have their depreciation made good, and to the half-pay of captains for life." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, New Windsor, Wednesday, May 30, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:135-136

Letter to John Mathews – June 7, 1781

"[W]e must not despair; the game is yet in our own hands; to play it well is all we have to do, and I trust the experience of error will enable us to act better in future. A cloud may yet pass over us, individuals may be ruined; and the Country at large, or particular States, undergo temporary distress; but certain I am, that it is in our power to bring the War to a happy conclusion." – George Washington, letter to John Mathews, New Windsor, June 7, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:176

Letter to Fielding Lewis – June 28, 1781

"I lament most sincerely, the System of policy which has been but too generally adopted in all the States, to wit, that of temporary expedients; which like quack medicines are so far from removing the causes of complaint that they only serve to increase the disorder; this has, in a most remarkable manner, been the case with respect to short enlistmts; which has been the primary cause of all our misfortunates." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, Peaks-kill, June 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:282

"A Man may err once, and he may err twice but when those who possess more than a common share of abilities persevere in a regular course of destructive policy, one is more apt to suspect their hearts than their heads." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, Peaks-kill, June 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:283

Letter to Theodorick Bland – July 8, 1781

"I derivd much satisfaction from Colo. Carys acct. of the Spirit and temper of our Country men, and rejoice to hear that so few of them have joined the enemy. Would to God they could rise as one Man, and extirpate Lord Cornwallis and his whole Band." – George Washington, letter to Theodorick Bland, Head Qrs. near Dobbes Ferry, July 8, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:341

Letter to the Board of War – July 9, 1781

"I have recd yours of the 5th. inclosing letters from two Chaplains of the German Regts. on the subject of their exchanges. I beg leave to inform you that at a meeting of Commissioners last year at Amboy it was stipulated that all Gentlemen of that Function should be

mutually released and that they should not be subjects of capture in future. You will therefore signify this to Colo. Wood and desire him to permit not only them but any others to go to New York." – George Washington, letter to the Board of War, Head Quarters near Dobbs's ferry, July 9, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:344

Letter to Richard Henry Lee – July 15, 1781

"I never suffer reports, unsupported by proofs, to have weight in my Mind." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henry Lee, Camp near Dobb's ferry, July 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:382

Letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux – July 19, 1781

"You have taken a most effectual method of obliging me to accept your Cask of Claret, as I find, by your ingenious manner of stating the case, that I shall, by a refusal, bring my patriotism into question, and incur a suspicion of want of attachment to the French Nation, and of regard to you, [which. of all things I wish to avoid] I will not enter into a discussion of the point of divinity, as I [perceive] you are a Master at that Weapon. ... In short, my dear sir, my only scruple arises from a fear of depriving you of an Article that you cannot conveniently replace in this Country. You can only relieve me by promising to partake very often of that hilarity which a Glass of good Claret seldom fails to produce." – George Washington, letter to the Chevalier de Chastellux, Head Quarters, July 19, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:394-395

Letter to Thomas McKean, President of Congress – July 21, 1781

"I take this Opportunity most sincerely to congratulate you Sir, on the Honor conferred on you by Congress, in being elected to preside in that most respectable Body; happy, as I expect to be in your Correspondence, I dare say I shall have no Reason to complain of the Mode of your conducting it; as from a knowledge of your Character I flatter myself it will ever be performed with great Propriety." – George Washington, letter to Thomas McKean, President of Congress, Head Quarters near Dobbs Ferry, July 21, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:404

"I am happy to be informed by Accounts from all Parts of the Continent, of the agreeable Prospect of a very plentiful Supply of almost all the Productions of the Earth. Blessed as we are with the Bounties of Providence, necessary for our support and Defence, the Fault must surely be our own (and great indeed will it be), if we do not, by a proper Use of them, attain the noble Prize for which we have so long been contending, the Establishment of Peace, Liberty and Independence." – George Washington, letter to Thomas McKean, President of Congress, Head Quarters near Dobbs Ferry, July 21, 1781; Fitzpatrick 22:405

Letter to the Citizens and Inhabitants of the Town of Baltimore – September 8, 1781

"I most sincerely thank you for your Prayers and good Wishes. May the Author of all Blessing aid our united Exertions in the Cause of Liberty. And may the particular Favor of Heaven rest on you Gentlemen, and the worthy Citizens of this flourishing Town of Baltimore." – George Washington, letter to the Citizens and Inhabitants of the Town of Baltimore, Baltimore, September 8, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:108-109

Letter to Reverend John Hurt – September 25, 1781

"I have received your Letter of Yesterday. It is a fact, that, by particular agreement with Sir Hry Clinton, the Chaplains both of the American and British Armies, are exempted from Detention by Capture or Parole; pleading therefore that Stipulation I know no reason the Enemy can have for detain[ing] you a Prisoner of War, or holding you under Parole; but should suppose you at your Liberty; several of their Chaplains have been released without any Compensation. ... As to Want of Pay, it is the common Misfortune attending the Army, and which cannot at present be relieved by me. Measures are however taking to put the Pay of the Troops upon a better Footing than has for some Time past been experienced. ... I have found it very difficult to obtain a few Horses which were wanted for myself and some Gentlemen of the French Army, so that it is not in my Power to afford you Assistance in that Respect." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Hurt, Williamsburg, September 25, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:139-140

Letter to Major General Nathanael Greene – October 6, 1781

"I have happily had but few differences with those with whom I have the honor of being connected in the Service; with whom, and of what nature these have been, you know. I bore much for the sake of peace and the public good. My conscience tells me I acted rightly in these transactions, and should they ever come to the knowledge of the world I trust I shall stand acquitted by it." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Camp before York, October 6, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:109

Letter to Charles, Lord Cornwallis – October 18, 1781

"The Garrisons of York and Gloucester, including the Seamen, as you propose, will be received Prisoners of War. The Condition annexed, of sending the British and German Troops to the parts of Europe to which they respectively belong, is inadmissible. Instead of this, they will be marched to such parts of the Country as can most conveniently provide for their Subsistence; and the Benevolent Treatment of Prisoners, which is invariably observed by the Americans, will be extended to them. The same Honors will be granted to the Surrendering Army as were granted to the Garrison of Charles Town." – George Washington, letter to Charles, Lord Cornwallis, Head Quarters before York, October 18, 1781; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745—1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 23:237

Letter to Comte de Grasse – October 19, 1781

"I entreat Yr. Excellcy. to accept the sincere and ardent vows which I make for your recovery, and the preservation of a Health so dear to our two Nations. I would not delay a moment to wait upon Yr Excellency, and assure you in person of all my regret upon this occasion; if the definitive Signature of the Capitulation which I expect will take place today, did not deprive me of the power." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Grasse, Head Quarters Before York, October 19, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:239

General Orders – October 20, 1781

"Divine Service is to be performed tomorrow in the several Brigades or Divisions. ... The Commander in Chief earnestly recommends that the troops not on duty should universally attend with that seriousness of Department and gratitude of Heart which the recognition of such reiterated and astonishing interpositions of Providence demand of us." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters Before York, Saturday, October 20, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:247

Letter to Comte de Grasse – October 28, 1781

"I will not take a final leave of you my dear General, because I hope that I shall have the satisfaction of hearing from you several times before Your Departure. I am much afflicted at hearing the continuance of Yr indisposition; my ardent vows are repeated for your speedy reestablishment. I entreat You to give me intelligence as soon as possible of it and to accept the sincere assurances of the friendship with which I have the honor etc." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Grasse, October 28, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:287

Letter to Comte de Grasse – November 5, 1781

"The Enemy in their ravages of this Country which was celebrated for its race of horses, did not spare that useful accessory in war; and it has been impossible to recover such as I should have wished to present to Your Excellency. Such as these are I entreat you my dear General to accept them, and my excuse for their not being equal to my wishes. ... The british fleet as I expected declined giving Your Excellency an opportunity for combat; they have been seen standing Southerly and will probably confine their attention to reinforcing and supplying their most interesting maritime posts. Your continued presence here has given a security to our movements, which is an additional obligation to us. ... I entreat your Excellency to accept my ardent vows for the speedy and perfect reestablishment of your health, and the sentiments of sincere friendship with which I shall ever remain." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Grasse, November 5, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:336

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. – November 6, 1781

"I came here in time to see Mr. [John Parke] Custis breathe his last. About Eight o'clock yesterday Evening he expired. The deep and solemn distress of the Mother, and affliction of the Wife of this amiable young Man, requires every comfort in my power to afford them; the last rights of the deceased I must also see performed; these will take me three or four days; when I shall proceed with Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Custis to Mount Vernon." – George Washington, letter Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Eltham, November 6, 1781; Fitzpatrick 37:554-555

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – November 15, 1781

"On that day [November 5] I arrived at Eltham (the Seat of Colo. Bassett) time enough to see poor Mr. Custis breathe his last; this unexpected and affecting event threw Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Custis (who were both present) into such deep distress, that the circumstances of it and a duty I owed the deceased in assisting at his funeral rights prevented my reaching this place till the 13th; and business here, and on the road will put it out of my power to arrive at Philadelphia before the last days of the prest. Month." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:340

"Without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, every thing honorable and glorious." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:341

"If I should be deprived of the pleasure of a personal interview with you before your departure, permit me my dear Marquis to adopt this method of making you a tender of my ardent Vows for a propitious voyage, a gracious reception from your Prince, an honorable reward for your Services, a happy meeting with your lady and friends, and a safe return in the Spring." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:343

Letter to Thomas McKean – November 15, 1781

"I have the Honor to acknowledge the Receipt of your Favor. of the 31st. ulto. covering the Resolutions of Congress of 29th. and a Proclamation for a Day of public Prayer and Thanksgiving; And have to thank you Sir! most sincerely for the very polite and affectionate Manner in which these Inclosures have been conveyed. The Success of the Combined Arms against our Enemies at York and Gloucester, as it affects the Welfare and Independence of the United States, I viewed as a most fortunate Event. In performing my Part towards its Accomplishment, I consider myself to have done only my Duty and in the Execution of that I ever feel myself happy. And at the same Time, as it agurs [sic] well to our Cause, I take a particular Pleasure in acknowledging, that the interposing Hand of Heaven in the various Instances of our extensive Preparations for this Operation, has been most conspicuous and remarkable." – George Washington, letter to Thomas McKean, Mount Vernon, November 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:343

Letter to Inhabitants of Alexandria – November 19, 1781

"The great Director of events has carried us thro' a variety of Scenes during this long and bloody contest in which we have been for Seven Campaigns, most nobly struggling. The present prospect is pleasing, the late success at York Town is very promising, but on our own Improvement depend its future good consequences, a vigorous prosecution of this Success, will in all probability, procure us what we have so long wished to secure, an establishment of Peace, liberty and Independence. A Relaxation of our Exertions at this moment may cost us many more toilsome Campaigns, and be attended with the most unhappy consequences." – George Washington, letter to William Ramsay, John Fitzgerald, Robert Hooe, and the other Inhabitants of Alexandria, November 19, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:356

Letter to James McHenry – December 11, 1781

"You know it is an old and true Maxim that to make a good peace, you ought to be well prepared to carry on the War." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Philadelphia, December 11, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:381

Letter to Major General Nathanael Greene – December 15, 1781

"Mrs. Greene is now in this place on her way to So. Carolina. She is in perfect health, and in good spirits, and thinking no difficulties too great not to be surmounted in the performance of this visit, it shall be my endeavour to strew the way over with flowers. Poor Mrs. Washington who has met with a most severe stroke in the loss of her amiable Son, and only Child Mr. Custis, is here with me, and joins me most cordially in every wish that tends to your happiness and glory." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Philadelphia, December 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:392

"I really know not what to say on the subject of Retaliation. Congress have it under consideration and we must await their determination. Of this I am convinced, that of all Laws it is the most difficult to execute, where you have not the transgressor himself in your possession. Humanity will ever interfere and plead strongly against the sacrifice of an innocent person for the guilt of another." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Philadelphia, December 15, 1781; Fitzpatrick 23:391

Circular to the States – January 31, 1782

"[A]ltho' we cannot, by the best concerted plans, absolutely command success, altho', the race is not always to the swift, or the Battle to the strong, yet without presumptuously waiting for Miracles to be wrought in our favour, it is our *indispensible Duty*, with the deepest gratitude to Heaven for the past, and humble confidence in its smiles on our future operations, to make use of all the Means in our power for our defence and security." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Philadelphia, January 31, 1782; Fitzpatrick 23:478

General Orders – April 22, 1782

"The United States in Congress Assembled having been pleased by their Proclamation, dated the 19th March last, to appoint Thursday next the 25th. Instant to be set apart as a day of Fasting, humiliation and Prayr for certain special purposes therein Mentioned: the same is to be Observed accordingly throughout the Army, and the different Chaplains will prepare Discourses Suited to the Several Objects enjoyn'd by the said Proclamation." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Newburgh, Monday, April 22, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:151

Letter to Brigadier General Moses Hazen – May 3, 1782

"The Enemy, persisting in that barborous line of Conduct they have pursued during the course of this War, have lately most inhumanly executed Captain Joshua Huddy of the Jersey State Troops, taken Prisoner by them at a Post on Tom's River, and in consequence, I have written to the British Commander in Chief, that unless the Perpetrators of that horrid deed were delivered up I should be under the disagreeable necessity of Retaliating, as the only means left to put a stop to such inhuman proceedings. ... You will therefore immediately on receipt of this designate, by Lot for the above purpose, a British Captain who is an unconditional Prisoner, if such a one is in your possession; if not, a Lieutenant under the same circumstances from among the Prisoners at any of the Posts either in Pennsylvania or Maryland. So soon as you have fixed on the Person, you will send him under a safe Guard to Philadelphia, where the Minister of War will order a proper Guard to receive and conduct him to the place of his Destination. ... For your information respecting the Officers who are Prisoners in our possession I have ordered the Commisry of Prisoners to furnish you with a List of them; it will be forwarded with this. I need not mention to you that every possible tenderness, that is consistent with the Security of him, should be shewn to the person whose unfortunate Lot it may be to suffer." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General Moses Hazen, Head Quarters, May 3, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:217

Letter to Colonel Lewis Nicola – May 22, 1782

"With a mixture of great surprise and astonishment I have read with attention the Sentiments you have submitted to my perusal. Be assured Sir, no occurrence in the course of the War, has given me more painful sensations than your information of there being such ideas existing in the Army as you have expressed, and I must view with abhorrence, and reprehend with severity. For the present, the communicatn. of them will rest in my own bosom, unless some further' agitation of the matter, shall make a disclosure necessary." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Lewis Nicola, Newburgh, May 22, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:272

"I am much at a loss to conceive what part of my conduct could have given encouragement to an address which to me seems big with the greatest mischiefs that can befall my Country. If I am not deceived in the knowledge of myself, you could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable; at the same time in justice to my own feelings I must add, that no Man possesses a more sincere wish to see ample justice done to the Army than I do, and as far as my powers and influence, in a constitutional way extend, they shall be employed to the utmost of my abilities to effect it, should there be any occasion. Let me conjure you then, if you have any regard for your Country, concern for yourself or posterity, or respect for me, to banish these thoughts from your Mind, and never communicate, as from yourself, or any one else, a sentiment of the like Nature." – George Washington, letter to Colonel Lewis Nicola, Newburgh, May 22, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:272

Letter to Archibald Cary – June 15, 1782

"I very sincerely condole with you on your late heavy loss, but he that gave has a right to take away, and it is the duty of us all to submit to his Will, altho' we cannot but feel the strokes we sustain." – George Washington, letter to Archibald Cary, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 15, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:346

"[I]f I may be allowed to speak figuratively, our Assemblies in Politics are to be compared to the Wheels of a Clock in Mechanics; the whole for the general purposes of War shd. be set in motion by the grt. Wheel (Congress) and if all will do their parts the Machine works easy; but a failure in one disorders the whole, and without the large one (wch. set the whole in motn.) nothg can be done; it is by the united wisdom and exertions of the whole, in Congress, who, I presume, do justice to all (but if they fail by being disproportionate in the first instance it should in my opinion be sought for and remedied in the Second rather than derange the whole business of a Campaign by the delays incident to contention) that we are to depend upon. without this we are no better than a rope of Sand and are as easily broken asunder." – George Washington, letter to Archibald Cary, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 15, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:347

"I pant for retirement and am perswaded that an end of our warfare is not to be obtained but by vigorous exertions. ... I can truely say that the first wish of my Soul is to return speedily into the bosom of that Country which gave me birth and in the sweet enjoyment of demestick pleasures and the Company of a few friends to end my days in quiet when I shall be call'd from this Stage." – George Washington, letter to Archibald Cary, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 15, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:347

Letter to the Ministers, Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Dutch Church at Albany – June 28, 1782

"While I consider the approbation of the Wise and the Virtuous as the highest possible reward for my services, I beg you will be assured, Gentlemen, that I now experience the most sensible pleasure from the favorable sentiments you are pleased to express of my Conduct. ... Your benevolent wishes and fervent prayers for my personal welfare and felicity, demand all my gratitude. May the preservation of your civil and religious Liberties still be the care of an indulgent Providence; and may the rapid increase and universal extension of knowledge virtue and true Religion be the consequence of a speedy and honorable Peace." – George Washington, letter to the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons of the Reformed Dutch Church at Albany, Albany, June 28, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:389-390

Letter to the Magistrates and Military Officers of Schenectady – June 30, 1782

"In a cause so just and righteous as ours, we have every reason to hope the divine Providence will still continue to crown our Arms with success, and finally compel our Enemies to grant us that Peace upon equitable terms, which we so ardently desire. ... May you, and the good People of this Town, in the mean time be protected from every insidious or open foe, and may the complicated blessings of Peace soon reward your arduous Struggles for the establishment of the freedom and Independence of our common Country." – George Washington, letter to the Magistrates and Military Officers of Schenectady, Schenectady, June 30, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:390

Letter to the Reformed Dutch Church of Schenectady – June 30, 1782

"Whilst I join in adoring that Supreme being to whom alone can be attributed the signal successes of our Arms I can not but express gratitude to you, for so distinguished a testimony of your regard ... May the same providence that has hitherto in so remarkable a manner Envinced the Justice of our Cause, lead us to a speedy and honorable peace; and may its attendant Blessings soon restore this once flourishing Town to its former Prosperity." – George Washington, letter to the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons of the Reformed Dutch Church of Schenectady, Schenectady, June 30, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:391

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens – July 10, 1782

"That spirit of Freedom which at the commencement of this contest would have gladly sacrificed every thing to the attainment of its object has long since subsided, and every selfish Passion has taken its place; it is not the public but the private Interest which influences the generality of Mankind nor can the Americans any longer boast an exception." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel John Laurens, Head Quarters, July 10, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:421

Letter to James McHenry – July 18, 1782

"At present, we are enveloped in darkness; and no Man, I believe, can foretell all the consequences which will result from the Naval action in the West Indies. to say no worse of it, it is an unfortunate affair. and if the States cannot, or will not rouse to more vigorous exertions, they must submit to the consequences. Providence has done much for us in this contest, but we must do something for ourselves, if we expect to go triumphantly through with it." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Philadelphia, July 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:432

Letter to John Price Posey – August 7, 1782

"Conscience...seldom comes to a Mans aid while he is in the zenith of health, and revelling in pomp and luxury upon ill gotten spoils; it is generally the last act of his life and comes too late to be of much service to others here, or to himself hereafter." – George Washington, letter to John Price Posey, Newburgh, August 7, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:486

Letter to Watson & Cassoul – August 10, 1782

"If my endeavours to avert the evil, with which this Country was threatned, by a deliberate plan of Tyranny, should be crowned with the success that is wished; the praise is due to the Grand Architect of the Universe; who did not see fit to Suffer his Superstructures, and justice, to be subjected to the ambition of the princes of this World, or to the rod of oppression, in the hands of any power upon Earth. ... For your affectionate Vows, permit me to be grateful; and offer mine for true Brothrs. in all parts of the World." – George Washington, letter to Watson & Cassoul, State of New York, August 10, 1782; Fitzpatrick 24:497

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary of War – August 16, 1782

"I shall have no objection to the exchange of the foreign Officers you mention in your favor of the 10th Inst. provided it does not contravene the spirit of the Resolution of Congress which directs Exchanges to be made according to priority of capture. Nor for my own part, shall I make any difficulty in acceding to a late proposal of Sir Guy Carleton, for considering Chaplains, Surgeons, and Hospital Officers in future as not proper Subjects to be retained as prisoners of War, unless any of them should hold Commissions in the Line; indeed, I do not see that any very ill consequences would ensue from liberating those already in our possession. I submit therefore this matter to your discretion." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary at War, Head Quarters, Newburgh, August 16, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:26

Letter to Reverend William Smith – August 18, 1782

"To the Gentlemen who moved the matter, and the assembly for adopting it, I am much indebted for the honor conferred on me, by giving my name to the College at Chester. at the same time that I acknowledge the honor I feel a grateful sensibility for the manner of bestowing it; which, as it will remain a monument of their esteem, cannot but make a deep impression on my Mind; only to be

increased by the flattering assurance of the lasting and extensive usefulness of the Seminary." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Smith, Head Quarters, Newburgh, August 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:37

"If the trifling sum of Fifty Guineas will be considered as an earnest of my wishes for the prosperity of this Seminary, I shall be ready to pay it to the order of the Visitors whenever it is their pleasure to call for it; it is too trifling to stand in any other point of view, nor would I wish it to do so. with much pleasure should I consent to have my name enrolled among the worthy Visitors and Governors of this College, but convinced as I am, that it never will be in my power to give the attendance wch. by Law is required, my name could only be inserted to the exclusion of some other, whose abilities and proximity might enable him to become a more useful member." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Smith, Head Quarters, Newburgh, August 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:37

"When that period shall arrive when we can hail the blest return of Peace, it will add to my pleasures to see this infant Seat of learning rising into consistency, and proficiency in the Sciences under the nurturing hands of its founders." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Smith, Head Quarters, Newburgh, August 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:37

Letter to Sir Guy Carleton – August 18, 1782

"That part of your Letter of the 7th. of July, which respects the Situation of Clergymen, Surgeons, Physicians and Apothecaries will become a Matter of Discussion at the Meeting of the Commissioners. ... I will only observe that with respect to Clergy men, those Gentlemen, by a Stipulation entered into by Commissioners at Amboy, were exempted from being considered as prisoners of War on either Side; and those then in Captivity were and have been Since mutually released." – George Washington, letter to Sir Guy Carleton, Head Quarters, August 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:38

Letter to Major General Henry Knox – September 12, 1782

"I sincerely condole with Mrs. Knox on the loss you have sustained [death of their son]. In determining to submit patiently to the decrees of the Allwise disposer of Human events, you will find the only true and substantial comfort under the greatest of calamities. In addition to this, the lenient hand of time will no doubt be necessary to soothe the keener feelings of a fond and tender Mother." – George Washington, letter to Major General Henry Knox, Head Quarters, September 12, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:150 Note

Letter to James McHenry – September 12, 1782

"If we are wise, let us prepare for the worst; there is nothing which will so soon produce a speedy and honorable Peace as a State of preparation for War, and we must either do this, or lay our acct. for a patched up inglorious Peace, after all the Toil, Blood, and treasure we have spent. This has been my uniform opinion, a doctrine I have endeavoured, amidst the torrent of expectation of an approaching Peace, to inculcate; the event, I am sure, will justify me in it." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Verplancks point, September 12, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:151

Instructions to Major Generals Heath and Knox – September 23, 1782

"By the 8th. section of the same Resolve it is said "Chaplains, Surgeons or Hospital Officers who shall be captured in future may not be considered as prisoners of War." The construction to be put upon this is, in no case a General Cartel should be established Chaplains under a former stipulation have been mutually released." – George Washington, Instructions to Major Generals Heath and Knox, Head Quarters, Verplancks Point, September 23, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:196

Letter to Reverend Samuel Cooper – September 24, 1782

"In one Opinion however I am most firmly fixed; that in the present Situation it is our Duty to be preparing in the best manner possible for a Continuance of the War, and to exert our utmost powers to bring to a happy Conclusion, in the Way we have hitherto pursued it, a Contest in which we have so long been engaged, and in which we have so often, and conspicuously experienced, the Smiles of Heaven, and in this Circumstance, to wait the Issue of Events." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Samuel Cooper, Head Quarters, September 24, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:200

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary at War – October 2, 1782

"Painful as the task is to describe the dark side of our affairs, it sometimes becomes a matter of indispensable necessity." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln Secretary at War, October 2, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:226

"The Complaint of Evils which they suppose almost remedies less are, the total want of Money, or the means of existing from One day to another, the heavy debts they have already incurred, the loss of Credit, the distress of their Families (i e such as are Married) at

home, and the prospect of Poverty and Misery before them." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary at War, October 2, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:226

"It is vain Sir, to suppose that Military Men will acquiesce contently with bare rations, when those in the Civil walk of life (unacquainted with half the hardships they endure) are regularly paid the emoluments of Office; while the human Mind is influenced by the same passions, and have the same inclinations to indulge it cannot be. A Military Man has the same turn to sociability as a person in Civil life; he conceives himself equally called upon to live up to his rank; and his pride is hurt when circumstances restrain him." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary at War, October 2, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:226

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture, so far as the real life would justify me in doing, or I would give Anecdotes of patriotism and distress which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of Mankind; but you may rely upon it, the patience and long sufferance of this Army are almost exhausted, and that there never was so great a spirit of Discontent as at this instant." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Secretary at War, October 2, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:228

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – October 20, 1782

"It may I believe with much truth be said, that a greater harmony between two Armies never subsisted than that which has prevailed between the French and American since the first junction of them last year." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Verplanks point, October 20, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:279

"As I despair of seeing my home this Winter I have just sent for Mrs. Washington who will think herself honored by your and Madm. La Fayette's notice. Make a tender of my best respects to her, and offer a blessing in my name to your Son, and my Godson." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Verplanks point, October 20, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:281

Letter to the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons of the Reformed Dutch Protestant Church – November 16, 1782

"Convinced that our Religious Liberties were as essential as our Civil, my endeavours have never been wanting to encourage and promote the one, while I have been contending for the other; and I am highly flattered by finding that my efforts have met the approbation of so respectable a body. ... In return for your kind concern for my temporal and eternal happiness, permit me to assure you that my wishes are reciprocal; and that you may be enabled to hand down your Religion pure and undefiled to a Posterity worthy of their Ancesters is the fervent prayer of Genre." – George Washington, letter to the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons of the Reformed Dutch Protestant Church of Kingston, Kingston, November 16, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:346-347

General Orders – November 17, 1782

"Tomorrow being thanksgiving day a Gill of West India rum per man is to be delivered to the troops." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Newburgh, Wednesday, November 17, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:375

Letter to Major Benjamin Tallmadge – December 10, 1782

"[H]owever it may be the practice of the world, and those who see objects but partially, or thro' a false medium, to consider *that* only as meritorious which is attended with success, I have accustomed myself to judge of human actions very differently, and to appreciate them, by the manner in which they are conducted, more than by the *Events*; which, it is not in the power of human foresight or prudence to command." – George Washington, letter to Major Benjamin Tallmadge, Head Quarters, Newburgh, December 10, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:415

Letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress – December 14, 1782

"I recollect subscribing, when I was in Philadelphia last Winter, Twenty, or 25 Guineas towards the support of the Children of the late Revd Mr. Caldwell. No person has called upon me since for this Money; I therefore take the liberty (as the Paper was in your hands) of asking you to whom I am to pay it?" – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Newburgh, December 14, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:427

Letter to Bartholomew Dandridge – December 18, 1782

"I am fully perswaded, from all Accts. that in Posey you have to deal with a most consummate villain; and from your own, that you have pursued the most prudent method of managing him, and for obtaining that justice wch. is due to Mr. Custis's Estate. I am clear in Sentiment with you, that he should be removed from his present Stewardship as soon as it can be done with any degree of propriety; for be assured Sir that a Man so devoid of principle as he is to be guilty, not only of the barefaced frauds with which he is accused; but the abominable Sin of ingratitude, will neglect no opportunity of converting to his own use when he can do it with impunity every

species of property that is committed to his care; and will do it the more readily after his reputation will have Suffered, than before. The most hardened villain, altho' he Sins without remorse, wishes to cloak his iniquity, if possible, under specious appearances; but when character is no more, he bids defiance to the opinions of Mankind, and is under no other restraint than that of the Law, and the punishments it inflicts. Posey, I am perswaded, will be no exception to this rule; and that the sooner the Estate can be taken out of his hands the less it will suffer; as it cannot be in worse." – George Washington, letter to Bartholomew Dandridge, Newburgh, December 18, 1782; Fitzpatrick 25:443-444

Letter to Major General John Armstrong – January 10, 1783

"The Army, as usual, are without Pay; and a great part of the Soldiery without Shirts; and tho' the patience of them is equally thread bear, the States seem perfectly indifferent to their cries. In a word, if one was to hazard for them an opinion, upon this subject, it would be, that the Army had contracted such a habit of encountering distress and difficulties, and of living without money, that it would be impolitic and injurious to introduce other customs in it! We have however, but this depended upon ourselves, built the most comfortable Barracks in the vicinity of this place that the Troops have ever yet been in." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, Newburgh, January 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:27

"I offer you the compliments of the Season and wish you may possess health and spirits to enjoy, after we shall have seated ourselves under our own Vines and Figtrees, if it is the gracious will of Providence to permit it, the return of many happy years." – George Washington, letter to Major General John Armstrong, Newburgh, January 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:27

Letter to Bushrod Washington – January 15, 1783

"Your Father, who seems to entertain a very favorable opinion of your prudence, and I hope you merit it: in one or two of his letters to me, speaks of the difficulty he is under to make you remittances. Whether this arises from the scantiness of his funds, or the extensiveness of your demands, is matter of conjecture, with me. I hope it is not the latter, because common prudence, and every other consideration which ought to have weight in a reflecting mind is opposed to your requiring more than his conveniency and a regard to his other Children will enable him to pay; and because he holds up no idea in his Letter which would support me in the conclusion. yet when I take a view of the inexperience of Youth, the temptations in, and vices of Cities; and the distresses to which our Virginia Gentlemen are driven by an accumulation of Taxes and the want of a market; I am almost inclined to ascribe it, in part to both." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:38

"[I]t is not the mere study of the Law, but to become eminent in the profession of it, which is to yield honor and profit." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:39

"That the Company in which you will improve most, will be least expensive to you; and yet I am not such a Stoic as to suppose you will, or to think it right that you ought, always to be in Company with Senators and Philosophers; but, of the young and juvenile kind let me advise you to be choice. It is easy to make acquaintances, but very difficult to shake them off, however irksome and unprofitable they are found after we have once committed ourselves to them; the indiscretions, and scrapes which very often they involuntarily lead one into, proves equally distressing and disgraceful." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:39

"Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence; true friendship is a plant of slow growth, and must undergo and withstand the shocks and adversity before it is entitled to the appellation." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:39

"Let your heart feel for the affliction, and distresses of every one, and let your hand give in proportion to your purse; remembering always, the estimation of the Widows mite. But, that it is not every one who asketh, that deserveth charity; all however are worthy of the enquiry, or the deserving may suffer." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Newburgh, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:40

"Do not conceive that fine Clothes make fine Men, any more than fine feathers make fine Birds. A plain genteel dress is more admired and obtains more credit than lace and embroidery in the Eyes of the judicious and sensible." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:40

"[A]void Gaming. This is a vice which is productive of every possible evil. equally injurious to the morals and health of its rotaries. It is the child of Avarice, the brother of inequity, and father of Mischief. It has been the ruin of many worthy families; the loss of many a man's honor; and the cause of Suicide. To all those who enter the list, it is equally fascinating; the Successful gamester pushes his good fortune till it is over taken by a reverse; the loosing gamester, in hopes of retrieving past misfortunes, goes on from bad to worse; till grown desperate, he pushes at every thing; and loses his all. In a word, few gain by this abominable practice (the profit, if any, being diffused) while thousands are injured." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:40

"[M]erit rarely goes unrewarded." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, January 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:40

Letter to John Augustine Washington – January 16, 1783

"In Gods name how did my Brothr. Saml. contrive to get himself so enormously in debt ? Was it by purchases? By misfortunes? or sheer indolence and inattention to business? From whatever cause it proceeded, the matter is now the same, and curiosity only prompts the enquiry, as it does to know what will be saved, and how it is disposed of. In the list of his debts did it appear that I had a claim upon him for the purchase money of the Land I sold Pendleton on Bullskin? I have never received a farthing for it yet, and think I have been informed by him that he was to pay it." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Newburgh, January 16, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:41

"I have lately received a letter from my Mother in which she complains much of the Knavery of the Overseer at the little Falls Quarter . that She says she can get nothing from him. it is pretty evident I believe, that I get nothing from thence, which I have the annual rent of between Eighty and an hundred pounds to pay. The whole profit of the Plantation according to her Acct. is applied to his own use , which is rather hard upon me as I had no earthly inducement to meddle with it but to comply with her wish, and to free her from care, this like every other matter of private concern, with me, has been totally neglected." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Newburgh, January 16, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:42

"About two years ago a Gentleman of my acquaintance informed me that it was in contemplation to 'move for a pension for her in the Virginia Assembly. That he did not suppose I knew of the measure, or that it would be agreeable to me to have it done; but wished to know my sentiments on it. I instantly wrote him that it was new and astonishing to me and begged that he would prevent the motion if possible, or oppose it if made; for I was sure she had not a Child that would not share the last farthing with her, and that would not be hurt at the idea of her becoming a Pensioner, or in other words receiving charity." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Newburgh, January 16, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:43

"I learn from very good authority that she is upon all occasions, and in all Companies complaining of the hardness of the times, of her wants and distresses; and if not in direct terms, at least by strong innuendos inviting favors which not only makes her appear in an unfavourable point of view but those also who are connected with her. That she can have no real wants that may not be supplied I am sure of; imaginary wants are indefinite and oftentimes insatiable, because they are boundless and always changing." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Newburgh, January 16, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:43

Letter to Major Thomas Lansdale – January 25, 1783

"The true distinction, Sir, between what is called a fine Regiment, and an indifferent one, will ever, upon investigation, be found to originate in, and depend upon the care, or the inattention, of the Officers belonging to them. That Regiment, whose Officers are watchful of their Men, and attentative to their wants, who will see that proper use is made, and a proper account taken, of whatever is drawn for them; and that Regimental and Company Inspections are frequent, in order to examine into the state of their Arms, Ammunition, Clothing and other necessaries to prevent loss or embezzlement. Who will see that the Soldiers Clothes are well made, kept whole, and Clean. That their Hurts are swept and purified; that their Provisions is in good order well Cooked, and Eat at proper hours; that the Trash, and all kinds of Offal is either burnt, or buried; That Vaults or proper necessaries are erected, and every person punished who shall on these occasions go elsewhere in the Camp. Those Officers I say who attend to these things, and their duty strictly enjoins it on them, give health, comfort, and a Military pride to their Men which fires and fits them for everything great and noble. It is by this means the character of a Regiment is exalted, while Sloth inattention and neglect produce the reverse of these in every particular and must infallibly lessen the reputation of the Corps." – George Washington, letter to Major Thomas Lansdale, Newburgh, January 25, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:68

Letter to Major General Nathanael Greene – February 6, 1783

"If Historiographers should be hardy enough to fill the page of History with the advantages that have been gained with unequal numbers (on the part of America) in the course of this contest, and attempt to relate the distressing circumstances under which they have been obtained, it is more than probable that Posterity will bestow on their labors the epithet and marks of fiction; for it will not be believed that such a force as Great Britain has employed for eight years in this Country could be baffled in their plan of Subjugating it by numbers infinitely less, composed of Men oftentimes half starved; always in Rags, without pay, and experiencing, at times, every species of distress which human nature is capable of undergoing." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Newburgh, February 6, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:104

Letter to Lund Washington – February 12, 1783

"I have often told you, and I repeat it with much truth; that the entire confidence which I placed in your integrity made me easy, and I was always happy at thinking that my Affairs were in your hands, which I could not have been, if they had been under the care of a common Manager; but this did not exempt me from the desires which all men have, of knowing the exact state of them. I have now to beg that you will not only send me the Account of your receipts, and expenditures of Specie; but of every kind of money subsequent to the Acct. exhibited at Valley Forge, which ended sometime in April 1778. ... I want to know before I come home (as I shall come home with empty pockets whenever Peace shall take place) how Affairs stand with me, and what my dependence is." – George Washington,

General Orders – February 15, 1783

"The New building being so far finished as to admit the troops to attend public worship therein after tomorrow, it is directed that divine Service should be performed there every Sunday by the several Chaplains of the New Windsor Cantonment, in rotation and in order that the different brigades may have an opportunity of attending at different hours in the same day (when ever the weather and other circumstances will permit which the Brigadiers and Commandants of brigades must determine) the General recommends that the Chaplains should in the first place consult the Commanding officers of their Brigades to know what hour will be most convenient and agreeable for attendance that they will then settle the duty among themselves and report the result to the Brigadiers and Commandants of Brigades who are desired to give notice in their orders and to afford every aid and assistance in their power for the promotion of that public Homage and adoration which are due to the supreme being, who has through his infinite goodness brought our public Calamities and dangers (in all humane probability) very near to a happy conclusion." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Newburgh, Saturday, February 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:135

"The General has been surprised to find in Winter Qrs. that the Chaplains have frequently been almost all absent, at the same time, under an idea their presence could not be of any utility at that season; he thinks it is proper, he should be allowed to judge of that matter himself, and therefore in future no furloughs will be granted to Chaplains except in consequence of permission from Head quarters, and any who may be now absent without such permission are to be ordered by the Commanding officers of their Brigades to join immediately, after which not more than one third of the whole number will be indulged with leave of absence at a time. They are requested to agree among themselves upon the time and length of their furloughs before any application shall be made to Head quarters on the subject." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Newburgh, Saturday, February 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:135-136

"The Commander in Chief also desires and expects the Chaplains in addition to their public functions will in turn constantly attend the Hospitals and visit the sick, and while they are thus publickly and privately engaged in performing the sacred duties of their office they may depend upon his utmost encouragement and support on all occasions, and that they will be considered in a very respectable point of light by the whole Army." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, Newburgh, Saturday, February 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:136

Letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison – March 4, 1783

"Congress are in fact, but the People; they return to them at certain short periods; are amenable at all times for their conduct, and subject to a recall at any moment. What interest therefore can a man have, under these circumstances distinct from his Constituents." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Newburgh, March 4, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:184

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – March 4, 1783

"The predicament in which I stand as Citizen and Soldier, is as critical and delicate as can well be conceived. It has been the Subject of many contemplative hours. The sufferings of a complaining Army on one hand, and the inability of Congress and tardiness of the States on the other, are the forebodings of evil, and may be productive of events which are more to be deprecated than prevented; but I am not without hope, if there is such a disposition shewn as prudence and policy will dictate, to do justice, that your apprehensions, in case of Peace, are greater than there is cause for." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Newburgh, March 4, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:186

"[I]t is clearly my opinion, unless Congress have powers competent to all *general* purposes, that the distresses we have encountered, the expence we have incurred, and the blood we have spilt in the course of an Eight years war, will avail us nothing." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Newburgh, March 4, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:188

Letter to James Mitchell Varnum – March 10, 1783

"I have had the honor to receive your favor of the 21st. Ult. and beg your acceptance of my particular acknowledgments for the honorable and flattering manner in which you have spoken of me, in the dedication to your Oration, delivered before our Brethren at Providence. ... The Sentiments which you have expressed in your Oration [delivered in The Episcopal Church in Providence, Rhode Island on December 27, 1782] I have read with pleasure." – George Washington, letter to James Mitchell Varnum, Newburgh, March 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:202-203

The Newburgh Address – March 15, 1783

"Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for, I have grown not only gray, but almost blind in the service of my country." – George Washington, address to officers of the Army, upon fumbling for his glasses before delivering his response to the

first Newburgh Address, Headquarters, Newburg, New York, March 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:222 (Included in a note by Worthington Chauncey Ford of a letter from Col. David Cobb recounting General Washington's speech.)

"[F]or if Men are to be precluded from offering their Sentiments on a matter, which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences, that can invite the consideration of Mankind, reason is of no use to us; the freedom of Speech may be taken away, and, dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep, to the Slaughter." – George Washington, address to officers of the Army, upon fumbling for his glasses before delivering his response to the first Newburgh Address, Headquarters, Newburg, New York, March 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:225

"[L]et me entreat you, Gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures, which, viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity, and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained." – George Washington, address to officers of the Army, upon fumbling for his glasses before delivering his response to the first Newburgh Address, Headquarters, Newburg, New York, March 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:226

"And let me conjure you, in the name of our common Country, as you value your own sacred honor, as you respect the rights of humanity, and as you regard the Military and National character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the Man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our Country, and who wickedly attempts to open the flood Gates of Civil discord, and deluge our rising Empire in Blood." – George Washington, letter to Officers of the Army, "The Newburgh Address," March 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:226

"You will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superior to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings; And you will, by the dignity of your Conduct, afford occasion for Posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to Mankind, had this day been wanting, the World had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining." – George Washington, letter to Officers of the Army, "The Newburgh Address," March 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:227

Letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress – March 18, 1783

"The result of the proceedings of the grand Convention of the Officers, which I have the honor of enclosing to your Excellency for the inspection of Congress, will, I flatter myself, be considered as the last glorious proof of Patriotism which could have been given by Men who aspired to the distinction of a patriot Army; and will not only confirm their claim to the justice, but will increase their title to the gratitude of their Country." – George Washington, letter to the Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:229

"[T]he establishment of funds, and security of the payment of all the just demands of the Army will be the most certain means of preserving the National faith and future tranquillity of this extensive Continent, is my decided opinion." – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:231

"If the whole Army have not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, then have I been beguiled by prejudice, and built opinion on the basis of error. If this Country should not in the Event perform every thing which has been requested in the late Memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited void of foundation." – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:231

"If they are to wade thro' the vile mire of dependency and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honor," then shall I have learned what ingratitude is, then shall I have realized a tale, which will imbitter every moment of my future life. But I am under no such apprehensions, a Country rescued by their Arms from impending ruin, will never leave unpaid the debt of gratitude." – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:232

"The consciousness of having attempted faithfully to discharge my duty, and the approbation of my Country will be a sufficient recompense for my Services." – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:232

Letter to Joseph Jones – March 18, 1783

"[N]othing is too extravagant to expect from men, who conceive they are ungratefully, and unjustly dealt by." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Jones, Newburgh, March 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:234

General Orders – March 22, 1783

"In justice to the zeal and ability of the Chaplains, as well as to his own feelings, the Commander in chief thinks it a duty to declare the regularity and decorum with which divine service is now performed every sunday, will reflect great credit on the army in general, tend to improve the morals, and at the same time, to increase the happiness of the soldiery, and must afford the most pure and rational

entertainment for every serious and well disposed mind. ... No fatigue except on extra occasions, nor General review or inspections to be permitted on the Sabbath day." – George Washington, General Orders, March 22, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26, p.250

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – March 23, 1783

"I hope it is unnecessary to repeat to you, that whether during the continuance of the War, or after the olive branch shall have extended itself over this Land (for which I most devoutly pray) I shall be happy to see you on Columbias shore." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Hd. Qrs., Newburgh, March 23, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:255

Letter to Major General Nathanael Greene – March 31, 1783

"It remains only for the States to be Wise, and to establish their Independence on that Basis of inviolable efficacious Union, and firm Confederation, which may prevent their being made the Sport of European Policy; may Heaven give them Wisdom to adopt the Measures still necessary for this important Purpose." – George Washington, letter to Major General Nathanael Greene, Head Quarters, March 31, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:275

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – March 31, 1783

"No Man in the United States is, or can be more deeply impressed with the necessity of a reform in our present Confederation than myself. No Man perhaps has felt the bad effects of it more sensibly; for the defects thereof, and want of Powers in Congress, may justly be ascribed the prolongation of the War, and consequently the expenses occasioned by it. More than half the perplexities I have experienced in the course of my command, and almost the whole of the difficulties and distress of the Army, have their origin here; but still the prejudices of some, the designs of others, and the mere Machinery of the Majority, makes address and management necessary to give weight to opinions which are to Combat the doctrines of those different classes of Men, in the field of Politics." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Newburg, March 31, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:277

Letter to Theodorick Bland – April 4, 1783

"I fix it as an indispensible Measure, that previous to the Disbandg the Army, all their Accounts, should be compleatly liquidated and settled; and that every person shall be ascertained of the Ballance due to him. And it is equally essential, in my Opinion, that this Settlement should be effected with the Army in its collected Body, without any dispersion of the different Lines to their respective States; for in this [way] the Accounts will be drawn into [one view], properly digested upon one general System, and compared with a variety of Circumstances, which will require References upon a much easier plan than to be diffused over all the States: the Settlements will be effected with greater Ease, in less Time, and with much more Oeconomy in this, than in a scattered Situation. At the same Time, Jealousies will be removed, the Minds of the Army will be impressed with greater Ease and Quiet, and they better prepared, with good Opinions and proper Dispositions to fall back into the great Mass of Citizens." – George Washington, letter to Theodorick Bland, Head Quarters, April 4, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:286

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – April 4, 1783

"I will now, in strict confidence mention a matter which may be useful for you to be informed of, It is that some Men (and leading ones too) in this Army, are beginning to entertain suspicions that Congress, or some Members of it, regardless of the past suiterings and present distresses, maugre the justice which is due to them, and the returns which a grateful people should make to Men who certainly have contributed more than any other class to the establishment of Independency, are to be made use of as mere Puppets to establish Continental funds; and that rather than not succeed in this measure, or weaken their ground, they would make a sacrifice of the Army and all its interests. I have two reasons for mentioning this matter to you: the one is, that the Army (considering the irritable state it is in, its sufferings and composition) is a dangerous instrument to play with. the other, that every possible means consistent with their own views (which certainly are moderate) should be essayed to get it disbanded without delay. I might add a third: it is that the Financier is suspected to be at the bottom of this Scheme." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, April 4, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:292-293

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette - April 5, 1783

"We now stand an Independent People, and have yet to learn political Tactics. We are placed among the Nations of the Earth, and have a character to establish; but how we shall acquit ourselves time must discover; the probability, at least I fear it is, that local, or state Politics will interfere too much with that more liberal and extensive plan of government which wisdom and foresight, freed from the mist of prejudice, would dictate; and that we shall be guilty of many blunders in treading this boundless theatre before we shall have arrived at any perfection in this Art. In a word that the experience which is purchased at the price of difficulties and distress, will alone convince us that the honor, power, and true Interest of this Country must be measured by a Continental scale; and that every departure therefrom weakens the Union, and may ultimately break the band, which holds us together. To avert these evils, to form a

Constitution that will give consistency, stability and dignity to the Union; and sufficient powers to the great Council of the Nation for general purposes is a duty which is incumbent upon every Man who wishes well to his Country, and will meet with my aid as far as it can be rendered in the private walks of life; for hence forward my Mind shall be unbent; and I will endeavor to glide down the stream of life 'till I come to that abyss, from whence no traveller is permitted to return." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Headquarters, Newburgh, April 5, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:298

"A Country [France] to which I shall ever feel a Warm Affection." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Headquarters, Newburgh, April 5, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:299

"The scheme, my dear Marqs. which you propose as a precedent, to encourage the emancipation of the black people of this Country from that state of Bondage in wch. they are held, is a striking evidence of the benevolence of your Heart. I shall be happy to join you in so laudable a work." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Headquarters, Newburgh, April 5, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:300

Letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress – April 18, 1783

"I must beg the Liberty to suggest to Congress an Idea which has been hinted to me, and which has affected my Mind very forcibly. That is, that at the Discharge of the Men engaged for the War, Congress should be pleased to suffer those Men, non Commisssd Officers and Soldiers, to take with them as their own property, and as a Gratuity, the Arms and Accoutrements they now hold. This Act would raise pleasing Sensations in the Minds of those worthy and faithfull Men, who, from their early engaging in the War, at moderate Bounties, and from their patient continuing, under innumerable distresses, have not only deserved nobly from their Country, but have obtained an honorable Distinction over those, who, with shorter Terms, have gained large pecuniary Rewards. This Act, at a comparative small Expencc, would be deemed an honorable Testimonial from Congress of the Regard they bear to those distinguished Worthies, and the Sense they have of their suffering Virtues and Services, which have been so happily instrumental towards the security and Establishment of the Rights Liberties and Independence of this rising Empire. These constant companions of their Toils and Dangers, preserved with sacred Care, would be handed down from the present possessors, to their Children, as honorable Badges of Bravery and military Merit; and would probably be bro't forth, on some future Occasion, with Pride and Exultation, to be improved, with the same military Ardor and Emulation, in the Hands of posterity, as they have been used by their forefathers in the present Establishment and foundation of our National Independence and Glory." – George Washington, letter to the President of Congress, Head Quarters, April 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:332

General Orders – April 18, 1783

"The Commander in Chief orders the Cessation of Hostilities between the United States of America and the King of Great Britain to be publicly proclaimed tomorrow at 12 o'clock at the New building, and that the Proclamation which will be communicated herewith, be read tomorrow evening at the head of every regiment and corps of the army. After which the Chaplains with the several Brigades will render thanks to almighty God for all his mercies, particularly for his over ruling the wrath of man to his own glory, and causing the rage of war to cease amongst the nations." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, April 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:334

"While the General recollects the almost infinite variety of Scenes thro which we have passed, with a mixture of pleasure, astonishment, and gratitude; While he contemplates the prospects before us with rapture; he can not help wishing that all the brave men (of whatever condition they may be) who have shared in the toils and dangers of effecting this glorious revolution, of rescuing Millions from the hand of oppression, and of laying the foundation of a great Empire, might be impressed with a proper idea of the dignified part they have been called to act (under the Smiles of providence) on the stage of human affairs." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, April 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:335

"Happy, thrice happy shall they be pronounced hereafter, who have contributed any thing, who have performed the meanest office in erecting this stupendous fabrick of Freedom and Empire on the broad basis of Independency; who have assisted in protecting the rights of humane nature and establishing an Asylum for the poor and oppressed of all nations and religions." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, April 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:335

"The glorius task for which we first fleu to Arms being thus accomplished, the liberties of our Country being fully acknowledged, and firmly secured by the smiles of heaven, on the purity of our cause, and the honest exertions of a feeble people (determined to be free) against a powerful Nation (disposed to oppress them) and the Character of those who have persevered, through every extremity of hardship; suffering and danger being immortalized by the illustrious appellation of the patriot Army: Nothing now remains but for the actors of this mighty Scene to preserve a perfect, unvarying, consistency of character through the very last act; to close the Drama with applause; and to retire from the Military Theatre with the same approbation of Angells and men which have crowned all their former vertuous Actions." – George Washington, General Orders, Head Quarters, April 18, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:336

General Orders – April 19, 1783

"Lieutenant [Ebenezer] Smith of the 6th. Massachusetts regimt. was tried at the General courtmartial of which Colo. H. Jackson is president, charged with conduct unbecoming the character of an officer by inviting several noncommissioned officers of the 2d.

Connecticut regiment to his Quarters at Mr. Cranes in the highlands, Drinking and gaming with them and by his request detaining them from their regiments at evening and morning Roll call. The Court are of opinion that the charges against Lt. Smith are not only not supported but are entirely groundless and they do in the fullest manner acquit him. ... The Commander in chief approves the opinion of the Court. Lt. Smith is released from his Arrest." – George Washington, General Orders, Saturday, April 19, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:339

Sentiments on a Peace Establishment, to Alexander Hamilton – May 2, 1783

"Altho' a large standing Army in time of Peace hath ever been considered dangerous to the liberties of a Country, yet a few Troops, under certain circumstances, are not only safe, but indispensably necessary." – George Washington, "Sentiments on a Peace Establishment" in a letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:375

"Rum should compose no part of a Soldier's Ration; but Vinegar in large quantities should be issued." – George Washington, "Sentiments on a Peace Establishment" in a letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:385

"I would ask, if promotion by Seniority is not one? That it is a good general rule admits of no doubt, but that it should be an invariable one, is in my opinion wrong. It cools, if it does not destroy, the incentives to Military Pride and Heroic Actions. On the one hand, the sluggard, who keeps within the verge of his duty, has nothing to fear. On the other hand, the enterprising Spirit has nothing to expect. Whereas, if promotion was the sure reward of Merit, all would contend for Rank and the service would be benefited by their Struggles for Promotion." – George Washington, "Sentiments on a Peace Establishment" in a letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:386

"It may be laid down, as a primary position, and the basis of our system, that every citizen who enjoys the protection of a free government, owes not only a proportion of his property, but even of his personal services to the defence of it, and consequently that the Citizens of America (with a few legal and official exceptions) from 18 to 50 Years of Age should be borne on the Militia Rolls, provided with uniform Arms, and so far accustomed to the use of them, that the Total strength of the Country might be called forth at Short Notice on any very interesting Emergency." – George Washington, "Sentiments on a Peace Establishment" in a letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:389

Letter to Major General Israel Putnam – June 2, 1783

"Ingratitude has been experienced in all Ages, and Republics in particular have ever been famed for the exercise of that unnatural and Sordid Vice." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Head Quarters, June 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:463

"I anticipate with pleasure the Day, and that I trust not far off, when I shall quit the busy Scenes of a military Employment, and retire to the more tranquil Walks of Domestic Life. In that, or whatever other Situation, Providence may dispose of my future Days, the Remembrance of the many friendships and Connections I have had the happiness to contract with the Gentlemen of the Army, will be one of my most grateful Reflections." – George Washington, letter to Major General Israel Putnam, Head Quarters, June 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:463

Circular to the States – June 8, 1783

"The great object for which I had the honor to hold an appointment in the Service of my Country, being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and to return to that domestic retirement, which, it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance, a Retirement, for which I have never ceased to sigh through a long and painful absence, and in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the World) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:483

"When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favorable manner in which it has terminated, we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing; this is a theme that will afford infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind, whether the event in contemplation, be considered as the source of present enjoyment or the parent of future happiness; and we shall have equal occasion to felicitate ourselves on the lot which Providence has assigned us, whether we view it in a natural, a political or moral point of light." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:484

"The Citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole Lords and Proprietors of a vast Tract of Continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the World, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life, are now by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and Independency; They are, from this period, to be considered as the Actors on a most conspicuous Theatre, which seems to be peculiarly designated by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity; Here, they are not only surrounded with every thing which can contribute to the completion of private and domestic enjoyment, but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by giving a fairer opportunity for political happiness, than any other Nation has ever been favored with. Nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly, than a recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our Republic assumed its rank among the Nations." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:484

"The foundation of our Empire was not laid in the gloomy age of Ignorance and Superstition, but at an Epoch when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined, than at any former period, the researches of the human mind, after social happiness, have been carried to a great extent, the Treasures of knowledge, acquired by the labours of Philosophers, Sages and Legislatures, through a long succession of years, are laid open for our use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the Establishment of our forms of Government; the free cultivation of Letters, the unbounded extension of Commerce, the progressive refinement of Manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and above all, the pure and benign light of Revelation, have had ameliorating influence on mankind and increased the blessings of Society." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:485

"At this auspicious period, the United States came into existence as a Nation, and if their Citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:485

"[N]otwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus reached out to us, notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion and make it our own; yet, it appears to me there is an option still left to the United States of America, that it is in their choice, and depends upon their conduct, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a Nation; This is the time of their political probation, this is the moment when the eyes of the whole World are turned upon them, this is the moment to establish or ruin their national Character forever, this is the favorable moment to give such a tone to our Federal Government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution, or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the Confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of Policy the States shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall, and by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the Revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse: a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn Millions be involved." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:485

"There are four things, which I humbly conceive, are essential to the well being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States as an Independent Power:

1st. An indissoluble Union of the States under one Federal Head.

2dly. A Sacred regard to Public Justice.

3dly. The adoption of a proper Peace Establishment, and

4thly. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly Disposition, among the People of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the Community. ... These are the pillars on which the glorious Fabrick of our Independency and National Character must be supported; Liberty is the Basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the Structure, under whatever specious pretexts he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration, and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured Country." – George Washington, Circular to States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:487

"[U]nless the States will suffer Congress to exercise those prerogatives, they are undoubtedly invested with by the Constitution, every thing must very rapidly tend to Anarchy and confusion, That it is indispensable to the happiness of the individual States, that there should be lodged somewhere, a Supreme Power to regulate and govern the general concerns of the Confederated Republic, without which the Union cannot be of long duration. That there must be a faithfull and pointed compliance on the part of every State, with the late proposals and demands of Congress, or the most fatal consequences will ensue, That whatever measures have a tendency to dissolve the Union, or contribute to violate or lessen the Sovereign Authority, ought to be considered as hostile to the Liberty and Independency of America, and the Authors of them treated accordingly, and lastly, that unless we can be enabled by the concurrence of the States, to participate of the fruits of the Revolution, and enjoy the essential benefits of Civil Society, under a form of Government so free and uncorrupted, so happily guarded against the danger of oppression, as has been devised and adopted by the Articles of Confederation, it will be a subject of regret, that so much blood and treasure have been lavished for no purpose, that so many sufferings have been encountered without a compensation, and that so many sacrifices have been made in vain." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:488

"It is only in our united Character as an Empire, that our Independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our Credit supported among Foreign Nations. The Treaties of the European Powers with the United States of America, will have no validity on a dissolution of the Union. We shall be left nearly in a state of Nature, or we may find by our own unhappy experience, that there is a natural and necessary progression, from the extreme of anarchy to the extreme of Tyranny; and that arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of Liberty abused to licentiousness." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:488

"The ability of the Country to discharge the debts which have been incurred in its defence, is not to be doubted, an inclination, I flatter myself, will not be wanting, the path of our duty is plain before us, honesty will be found on every experiment, to be the best and only true policy, let us then as a Nation be just, let us fulfil the public Contracts, which Congress had undoubtedly a right to make for the purpose of carrying on the War, with the same good faith we suppose ourselves bound to perform our private engagements." – George Washington, Circular to States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:489

"In Where is the Man to be found, who wishes to remain indebted, for the defence of his own person and property, to the exertions, the bravery, and the blood of others, without making one generous effort to repay the debt of honor and of gratitude? In what part of the Continent shall we find any Man, or body of Men, who would not blush to stand up and propose measures, purposely calculated to rob the Soldier of his Stipend, and the Public Creditor of his due? and were it possible that such a flagrant instance of Injustice could ever happen, would it not excite the general indignation, and tend to bring down, upon the Authors of such measures, the aggravated vengeance of Heaven?" – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:490-491

"I cannot omit to mention the obligations this Country is under, to that meritorious Class of veteran Non-commissioned Officers and Privates, who have been discharged for inability, in consequence of the Resolution of Congress of the 23d of April 1782, on an annual pension for life, their peculiar sufferings, their singular merits and claims to that provision need only be known, to interest all the feelings of humanity in their behalf: nothing but a punctual payment of their annual allowance can rescue them from the most complicated misery, and nothing could be a more melancholy and distressing sight, than to behold those who have shed their blood or lost their limbs in the service of their Country, without a shelter, without a friend, and without the means of obtaining any of the necessaries or comforts of Life; compelled to beg their daily bread from door to door! suffer me to recommend those of this description, belonging to your State, to the warmest patronage of your Excellency and your Legislature." – George Washington, Circular Letter Addressed to the Governors of all the States on the Disbanding of the Army, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick: 26:493

"As there can be little doubt but Congress will recommend a proper Peace Establishment for the United States, in which a due attention will be paid to the importance of placing the Militia of the Union upon a regular and respectable footing; If this should be the case, I would beg leave to urge the great advantage of it in the strongest terms. The Militia of this Country must be considered as the Palladium of our security, and the first effectual resort in case of hostility; It is essential therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole; that the formation and discipline of the Militia of the Continent should be absolutely uniform, and that the same species of Arms, Accoutrements and Military Apparatus, should be introduced in every part of the United States." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:494

"I could demonstrate to every mind open to conviction, that in less time and with much less expence than has been incurred, the War might have been brought to the same happy conclusion, if the resources of the Continent could have been properly drawn forth, that the distresses and disappointments which have very often occurred, have in too many instances, resulted more from a want of energy, in the Continental Government, than a deficiency of means in the particular States. That the inefficiency of measures, arising from the want of an adequate authority in the Supreme Power, from a partial compliance with the Requisitions of Congress in some of the States, and from a failure of punctuality in others, while it tended to damp the zeal of those which were more willing to exert themselves; served also to accumulate the expences of the War, and to frustrate the best concerted Plans, and that the discouragement occasioned by the complicated difficulties and embarrassments, in which our affairs were, by this means involved, would have long ago produced the dissolution of any Army, less patient, less virtuous and less persevering, than that which I have had the honor to command." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:495

"I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection, that he would incline the hearts of the Citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to Government, to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow Citizens of the United States at large, and particularly for their brethren who have served in the Field, and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all, to do Justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that Charity, humility and pacific temper of mind, which were the Characteristicks of the Divine Author of our blessed Religion, and without an humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy Nation." – George Washington, Circular to the States, Head Quarters, Newburgh, June 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 26:496

Letter to Reverend John Rodgers – June 11, 1783

"Glorious indeed has been our Contest: glorious, if we consider the Prize for which we have contended, and glorious in its Issue; but in the midst of our Joys, I hope we shall not forget that, to divine Providence is to be ascribed the Glory and the Praise." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Rodgers, Head Quarters, June 11, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:4

"Your proposition respecting Mr Aikins Bibles would have been particularly noticed by me, had it been suggested in Season; but the late Resolution of Congress for discharging Part of the Army, takg off near two thirds of our Numbers, it is now too late to make the Attempt. It would have pleased me, if Congress should have made such an important present, to the brave fellows, who have done so much for the Security of their Country's Rights and Establishment." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Rodgers, Head Quarters, June 11, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:4

"Patience is a noble Virtue, and when rightly exercised, does not fail of its Reward." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Rodgers, Head Quarters, June 11, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:4

Letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress – June 24, 1783

"[W]hen we consider that these Pennsylvania Levies who have now mutined, are Recruits and Soldiers of a day, who have not born the heat and burden of the War, and who can have in reality very few hardships to complain of, and when we at the same time

recollect, that those Soldiers who have lately been furloughed from this Army, are the Veterans who have patiently endured hunger, nakedness and cold, who have suffered and bled without a murmur, and who with perfect good order have retired to their homes, without the settlement of their Accounts or a farthing of money in their pockets, we shall be as much astonished at the virtues of the latter, as we are struck with horror and detestation at the proceedings of the former; and every candid mind, without indulging ill-grounded prejudices, will undoubtedly make the proper discrimination." – George Washington, letter to Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, Head Quarters, Newburgh, evening, June 24, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:33

Letter to Dr. William Gordon – July 8, 1783

"It now rests with the Confederated Powers, by the line of conduct they mean to adopt, to make this Country great, happy, and respectable; or to sink it into littleness; worse perhaps, into Anarchy and Confusion; for certain I am, that unless adequate Powers are given to Congress for the general purposes of the Federal Union that we shall soon moulder into dust and become contemptible in the Eyes of Europe, if we are not made the sport of their Politicks; to suppose that the general concern of this Country can be directed by thirteen heads, or one head without competent powers, is a solecism, the bad effects of which every Man who has had the practical knowledge to judge from, that I have, is fully convinced of; tho' none perhaps has felt them in so forcible, and distressing a degree. The People at large, and at a distance from the theatre of Action, who only know that the Machine was kept in motion, and that they are at last arrived at the first object of their Wishes are satisfied with the event, without investigating the causes of the slow progress to it, or of the Expences which have accrued and which they now seem unwilling to pay; great part of which has arisen from that want of energy in the Federal Constitution which I am complaining of, and which I wish to see given to it by a Convention of the People." – George Washington, letter to Dr. William Gordon, July 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:49

"We are known by no other character among Nations than as the United States; Massachusetts or Virginia is no better defined, nor any more thought of by Foreign Powers than the County of Worcester in Massachusetts is by Virginia, or Gloucester County in Virginia is by Massachusetts (respectable as they are); and yet these Counties, with as much propriety might oppose themselves to the Laws of the State in wch. they are, as an Individual State can oppose itself to the Federal Government, by which it is, or ought to be bound. Each of these Counties has, no doubt, its local polity and Interests. these should be attended to, and brought before their respective legislatures with all the force their importance merits; but when they come in contact with the general Interest of the State; when superior considerations preponderate in favor of the whole, their Voices should be heard no more; so should it be with individual States when compared to the Union. Otherwise I think it may properly be asked for what purpose do we farcically pretend to be United? Why do Congress spend Months together in deliberating upon, debating, and digesting plans, which are made as palatable, and as wholesome to the Constitution of this Country as the nature of things will admit of, when some States will pay no attention to them, and others regard them but partially; by which means all those evils which proceed from delay, are felt by the whole; while the compliant States are not only suffering by these neglects, but in many instances are injured most capitally by their own exertions; which are wasted for want of the United effort." – George Washington, letter to Dr. William Gordon, July 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:50

"A hund[re]d thousand men coming one after another cannot move a Ton weight; but the united strength of 50 would transport it with ease. so has it been with great part of the expence which has been incurred this War. In a Word, I think the blood and treasure which has been spent in it has been lavished to little purpose, unless we can be better Cemented; and that is not to be effected while so little attention is paid to the recommendations of the Sovereign Power." – George Washington, letter to Dr. William Gordon, July 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:51

"For Heavens sake who are Congress? are they not the Creatures of the People, amenable to them for their Conduct, and dependant from day to day on their breath? Where then can be the danger of giving them such Powers as are adequate to the great ends of Government, and to all the general purposes of the Confederation (I repeat the word *genl*, because I am no advocate for their having to do with the particular policy of any State, further than it concerns the Union at large). What may be the consequences if they have not these Powers I am at no loss to guess." – George Washington, letter to Dr. William Gordon, July 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:51

"[W]hen the band of Union gets once broken, every thing ruinous to our future prospects is to be apprehended; the best that can come of it, in my humble opinion is, that we shall sink into obscurity, unless our Civil broils should keep us in remembrance and fill the page of history with the direful consequences of them." – George Washington, letter to Dr. William Gordon, July 8, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:51

Letter to Major John Joiner Ellis – July 10, 1783

"I was opposed to the policy of G: B; and became an enemy to her measures; but I always distinguished between a Cause and Individuals; and while the latter supported their opinions upon liberal and generous grounds, personally, I never could be an enemy to them." – George Washington, letter to Major John Joiner Ellis, Head Quarters, in the State of New York, July 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:56

Letter to George William Fairfax – July 10, 1783

"[The American] revolution, which I can truly aver was not in the Beginning, premeditated; but the result of dire necessity brought about by the persecuting spirit of the British Government." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, State of New York, July 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:58

"I unite my prayers most fervently with yours, for Wisdom to these U States and have no doubt, after a little while all errors in the present form of their Government will be corrected and a happy temper be diffused through the whole; but like young heirs come a little prematurely perhaps to a large Inheritance it is more than probable they will riot for a while; but, in this, if it should happen, tho' it is a circumstance which is to be lamented (as I would have the National character of America be pure and immaculate) will work its own cure, as there is virtue at the bottom." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, State of New York, July 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:58

Address to the Magistrates and Supervisors of Tryon County – August 1, 1783

"In the course of my tour thro a small part of this County I have had an opportunity of observing more particularly the severe distress that has fallen on the Inhabitants by the cruel devastations of the Enemy; the patience and fortitude with which they have borne these distresses, and their very spirited conduct throughout the whole of the War have done them the highest honor, and will give the Inhabitants of Tryon Co. a distinguished place in the History of this revolution." – George Washington, address to the Magistrates and Supervisors of Tryon County, August 1, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:73

"Accept Gentlemen my thanks for your kind wishes for my welfare be assured it will be my earnest prayer that by the blessing of Providence on the fine Country you possess you may soon be enabled to recover your former ease, and to enjoy that happiness you have so well deserved." – George Washington, address to the Magistrates and Supervisors of Tryon County, August 1, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:73

Letter to John Gabriel Tegelaar – August 2, 1783

"This Country, Sir, so highly favoured of Providence, has great reason to rejoice in the good wishes and kind assistance of the Freedom-loving Sons of your Republic; to whom we feel ourselves much indebted for their patriotic interposition in our behalf. ... May the Union, so happily commenced, between their Sister States be mutually supported 'till the latest Ages! May our Interests as our sentiments be durably connected, and may that intercourse of Friendship and commerce which we mutually promise each other, be perpetuated by reciprocal Benefits. ... May Heaven, whose propitious smiles have hitherto watched over the freedom of your republic still Guard her Liberties with the most sacred protection. And while I thus regard the welfare of your Country at large, permit me to assure you, that I shall feel a very particular desire that Providence may ever smile on your private happiness and domestic pleasures." – George Washington, letter to John Gabriel Tegelaar, Head Quarters, New York State, August 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:74

Letter to Baron van der Capellen de Pol – August 2, 1783

"Your Nation, Sir, and your Character in particular, have indeed merited the confidence and regard of the confederated States of America, and they will long I trust be considered with grateful veneration. The Union so happily commenced, will I hope be cultivated by both with the utmost care and Attention, and I pray to Heaven, that it may be as durable as mutual Interests and reciprocal benefits can render it." – George Washington, letter to Baron van der Capellen de Pol, Head Quarters, State of New York, August 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:75

Letter to the Patriotic Society of Enkhuyzen – August 2, 1783

"I beg you, Gentlemen, to be persuaded that I receive this token of your Respect, with the highest gratification; and beg that you will favour me by presenting, in the warmest manner, my most respectful thanks to your right worthy and honourable Society for this mark of their Esteem and distinction, informing them, that it is the wish of my Heart, that the happy Union which has been effected between the two Sister Republic's may be perfectly cemented by the Ties of Interest and affection to the latest time although this particular Branch of business may not perhaps meet with that enlargement from this Country, which your Society may expect (our Rivers and coasts almost every where abounding with this and other kinds of valuable fish) yet other Branches of intercourse between the two Countries will undoubtedly take place, which will mutually contribute to the Interests of both. In this and in every other thing which may be useful to the benefit of your Society and Republic they may depend on my good disposition; and may Heaven, from the Stores of her Bounty, kindly shower on your Country, your City, and your persons, all those blessings which you so obligingly express for my Country and for me." – George Washington, letter to the Patriotic Society of Enkhuyzen, Head Quarters, State of New York, August 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:76-77

Letter to Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon – August 10, 1783

"Your [Ladyships] benevolent Designs toward the Indian Nations, claim my particular Attention, and to further so laudable an Undertakg will afford me much pleasure, so far as my Situation in Life, surrounded with many and arduous Cares will admit. To be

named as an Executor of your Intentions, may perhaps disappoint your [Ladyships] Views; but so far as my general Superintendence, or incidental Attention can contribute to the promotion of your Establishment, you may command my Assistance." – George Washington, letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:88

Letter to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Steward – August 10, 1783

"In a Contest, long, arduous and painful; which has brought forth the abilities of men in Military and Civil life and exposed them with Halts abt. their Necks, not only to common danger but many of them to the verge of poverty and the very brink of ruin, justice requires, and a grateful Governmt. certainly will bestow, those places of honor and profit which necessity must create upon those who have risked life fortune and Health to support its cause; but independent of these considerations I have never interfered in any Civil Appointments." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Steward, State of New York, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:89

"I only wait (and with anxious impatience) the arrival of the Definitive Treaty, that I may take leave of my Military Employments and by bidding adieu to Public life, for ever, enjoy the Shades of retirement that ease and tranquillity to which, for more than Eight years, I have been an entire stranger and for which a Mind which has been constantly on the stretch during that period and perplexed with a thousand embarrassing Circumstances, oftentimes without ray of light to guide it; stands much in need." – George Washington, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Steward, State of New York, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:89

Letter to George Martin – August 10, 1783

"I cannot but join with you in my most earnest prayers, that these States may be blessed with Wisdom equal to the arduous Task of rightly formg the Establishment of their New Empire. And while I thus express my Wishes in favor of my Native Country, I would felicitate the Kingdom of Ireland on their Emancipation from British Controul, and extend my pious Entreaties, that Heaven may establish them in a happy and perpetuated Tranquillity, enjoying a freedom of Legislation, and an unconfined Extension of Trade, that connecting Link, which binds together the remotest Countries." – George Washington, letter to George Martin, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:90-91

Letter to Reverend Jacob Duche – August 10, 1783

"[P]ersonal Enmity I bear none, to any Man." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jacob Duche, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:91

Letter to the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives – August 10, 1783

"Be assured Gentlemen, that, through the many and complicated vicissitudes of an arduous Conflict, I have ever turned my Eye, with a fixed Confidence on that superintendg. Providence which governs all Events: and the lively Gratitude I now feel, at the happy termination of our Contest, is beyond my Expression." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:93

"If, dependg on the Guidance of the same Allwise Providence, I have performed my part in this great Revolution, to the acceptance of my fellow Citizens, It is a source of high satisfaction to me; and forms an additional Motive of Praise to that Infinite Wisdom, which directs the Minds of Men. This Consideration will attend me in the Shades of retirement, and furnish one of the most pleasing Themes of my Meditation." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27, p, 93

"So great a revolution as this Country now experiences, doubtless ranks high in the Scale of human Events, and in the Eye of Omnipotence is introductive to some noble Scenes of future Grandeur to this happy fated Continent. May the States have Wisdom to discern their true Interests at this important period!" – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27, p, 94

"Impressed with sentiments of Gratitude for your benevolent Expressions for my personal Happiness and prosperity, I can make you no better return, than to pray, that Heaven, from the Stores of its Munificence, may shower its choisest blessings on you Gentlemen, and the People of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and to entreat that Our Liberties, now so happily established, may be continued in perfect Security, to the latest posterity." – George Washington, letter to the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives, Head Quarters, August 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27, p, 94

Letter to the Magistrates and Inhabitants of the Borough of Elizabeth – August 21, 1783

"On this happy occasion, suffer me, Gentlemen, to join you in grateful adoration to that divine Providence, which hath rescued our Country from the brink of destruction, which hath crowned our exertions with the fairest fruits of success, and which now (instead of

the anxiety and distress occasioned by perpetual Alarms) permits you to enjoy, without molestation, the sweets of Peace and domestic happiness. May a spirit of Wisdom and Rectitude preside over all our Councils and Actions, and dispose us as a Nation to avail ourselves of the blessings which are placed before us, then shall we be happy indeed, and as a just reward for your liberal and virtuous sentiments, may the felicity of the Magistracy and Inhabitants of this Corporation, be only limited by the duration of time, and exceeded by the fruition of a glorious immortality." – George Washington, letter to the Magistrates and Inhabitants of the Borough of Elizabeth, Elizabeth Town, August 21, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:113-114

Letter to the Inhabitants of Princeton and Neighborhood – August 25, 1783

"The prosperous situation of our public affairs, the flourishing state of this place and the revival of the Seat of Literature from the ravages of War, encrease to the highest degree, the pleasure I feel in visiting (at the return of Peace) the scene of our important military transactions, and in recollecting the period when the tide of adversity began to turn, and better fortune to smile upon us. ... If in the execution of an arduous Office I have been so happy as to discharge my duty to the Public with fidelity and success, and to obtain the good opinion of my fellow Soldiers and fellow Citizens; I attribute all the glory to that Supreme Being, who hath caused the several parts, which have been employed in the production of the wonderful Events we now contemplate, to harmonize in the most perfect manner, and who was able by the humblest instruments as well as by the most powerful means to establish and secure the liberty and happiness of these United States." – George Washington, response to the Inhabitants of Princeton and Neighborhood, with the President and Faculty of the College, Rocky Hill, August 25, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:116

"I now return you Gentlemen my thanks for your benevolent wishes, and make it my earnest prayer to Heaven, that every temporal and divine blessing may be bestowed on the Inhabitants of Princeton, on the neighbourhood, and on the President and Faculty of the College of New Jersey, and that the usefulness of this Institution in promoting the interests of Religion and Learning may be universally extended." – George Washington, response to the Inhabitants of Princeton and Neighborhood, with the President and Faculty of the College, Rocky Hill, August 25, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:116

Address to Congress – August 26, 1783

"Notwithstanding Congress appear to estimate the value of my life beyond any Services I have been able to render the U States, yet I must be permitted to consider the Wisdom and Unanimity of our National Councils, the firmness of our Citizens, and the patience and Bravery of our Troops, which have produced so happy a termination of the War, as the most conspicuous effect of the divine interposition, and the surest presage of our future happiness." – George Washington, address to Congress, Princeton, August 26, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:117

"Highly gratified by the favorable sentiments which Congress are pleased to express of my past conduct, and amply rewarded by the confidence and affection of my fellow Citizens, I cannot hesitate to contribute my best endeavours, towards the establishment of the National security, in whatever manner the Sovereign Power may think proper to direct, until the ratification of the Definitive Treaty of Peace, or the final evacuation of our Country by the British Forces; after either of which events, I shall ask permission to retire to the peaceful shade of private life." – George Washington, address to Congress, Princeton, August 26, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:117

"Perhaps, Sir, No occasion may offer more suitable than the present, to express my humble thanks to God, and my grateful acknowledgments to my Country, for the great and uniform support I have received in every vicissitude of Fortune, and for the many distinguished honors which Congress have been pleased to confer upon me in the course of the War." – George Washington, address to Congress, Princeton, August 26, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:117

Letter to Mrs. Annis Boudinot Stockton – September 2, 1783

"[W]hen once the Woman has tempted us and we have tasted the forbidden fruit, there is no such thing as checking our appetites, whatever the consequences may be." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Annis Boudinot Stockton, September 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:128

Letter to James Duane – September 7, 1783

"To suffer a wide extended Country to be over run with Land Jobbers, Speculators, and Monopolisers or even with scatter'd settlers, is, in my opinion, inconsistent with that wisdom and policy which our true interest dictates, or that an enlightened People ought to adopt and, besides, is pregnant of disputes both with the Savages, and among ourselves, the evils of which are easier, to be conceived than described; and for what? but to aggrandize a few avaricious Men to the prejudice of many, and the embarrassment of Government. for the People engaged in these pursuits without contributing in the smallest degree to the support of Government, or considering themselves as amenable to its Laws, will involve it by their unrestrained conduct, in inextricable perplexities, and more than probable in a great deal of Bloodshed." – George Washington, letter to James Duane, Rocky Hill, September 7, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:133

"I am clear in my opinion, that policy and oeconomy point very strongly to the expediency of being upon good terms with the Indians, and the propriety of purchasing their Lands in preference to attempting to drive them by force of arms out of their Country; which as

we have already experienced is like driving the Wild Beasts of the Forest which will return us soon as the pursuit is at an end and fall perhaps on those that are left there; when the gradual extension of our Settlements will as certainly cause the Savage as the Wolf to retire; both being beasts of prey tho' they differ in shape. In a word there is nothing to be obtained by an Indian War but the Soil they live on and this can be had by purchase at less expence, and without that bloodshed, and those distresses which helpless Women and Children are made partakers of in all kinds of disputes with them." – George Washington, letter to James Duane, Rocky Hill, September 7, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:140

Letter to Lund Washington – September 20, 1783

"For my own part, I never did, nor do I believe I ever shall give advice to a woman who is setting out on a matrimonial voyage; first, because I never could advise one to marry without her own consent; and secondly, because I know it is to no purpose to advise her to refrain, when she has obtained it. A woman very rarely asks an opinion or requires advice on such an occasion, 'till her resolution is formed; and then it is with the hope and expectation of obtaining a sanction, not that she means to be governed by your disapprobation, that she applies." – George Washington, letter to Lund Washington, Rocky Hill, September 20, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:157

Letter to Chevalier de Chastellux – October 12, 1783

"I have lately made a tour through the Lakes George and Champlain as far as Crown point; then returning to Schenectady, I proceeded up the Mohawk river to Fort Schuyler (formerly Fort Stanwix), and crossed over to the Wood Creek which empties into the Oneida Lake, and affords the water communication with Ontario. I then traversed the country to the head of the Eastern Branch of the Susquehanna and viewed the Lake Otsego, and the portage between that lake and the Mohawk river at Canajohario. Prompted by these actual observations, I could not help taking a more contemplative and extensive view of the vast inland navigation of these United States, from maps and the information of others; and could not but be struck with the immense diffusion and importance of it; and with the goodness of that Providence which has dealt her favors to us with so profuse a hand. Would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de Chastellux, Princeton, October 12, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:189-190

Letter to the Duc de Lauzun – October 15, 1783

"New York is not yet evacuated, nor is the Definitive Treaty arrived. Upon the happening of either of these events, I shall bid a final adieu to a military life, and in the shade of retirement ruminat on the marvellous scenes that are passed; and in contemplating the wonderful workings of that Providence which has raised up so many instruments, and such powerful Engines (among which your nation stands first) to over throw the British pride and power, by so great a revolution." – George Washington, letter to the Duc de Lauzun, Princeton, October 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:193

Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States – November 2, 1783

"The disadvantageous circumstances on our part, under which the war was undertaken, can never be forgotten. The singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such, as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving; while the unparalleled perseverance of the Armies of the U States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement for the space of eight long years, was little short of a standing miracle." – George Washington, Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, Rock Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:223

"Every American Officer and Soldier must now console himself for any unpleasant circumstances which may have occurred by a recollection of the uncommon scenes in which he has been called to Act no inglorious part, and the astonishing events of which he has been a witness, events which have seldom if ever before taken place on the stage of human action, nor can they probably ever happen again. For who has before seen a disciplined Army form'd at once from such raw materials? Who, that was not a witness, could imagine that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon, and that Men who came from the different parts of the Continent, strongly disposed, by the habits of education, to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of Brothers, or who, that was not on the spot, can trace the steps by which such a wonderful revolution has been effected, and such a glorious period put to all our warlike toils?" – George Washington, Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, Rock Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:223

"It is universally acknowledged, that the enlarged prospects of happiness, opened by the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, almost exceeds the power of description." – George Washington, Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, Rock Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:224

"[T]he private virtues of oeconomy, prudence, and industry, will not be less amiable in civil life, than the more splendid qualities of valour, perseverance, and enterprise were in the Field." – George Washington, Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, Rock Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:225

"To the various branches of the Army the General takes this last and solemn opportunity of professing his inviolable attachment and friendship. He wishes more than bare professions were in his power, that he were really able to be useful to them all in future life. He

flatters himself however, they will do him the justice to believe, that whatever could with propriety be attempted by him has been done, and being now to conclude these his last public Orders, to take his ultimate leave in a short time of the military character, and to bid a final adieu to the Armies he has so long had the honor to Command, he can only again offer in their behalf his recommendations to their grateful country, and his prayers to the God of Armies. May ample justice be done them here, and may the choicest of heaven's favours, both here and hereafter, attend those who, under the devine auspices, have secured innumerable blessings for others; with these wishes, and this benediction, the Commander in Chief is about to retire from Service. The Curtain of seperation will soon be drawn, and the military scene to him will be closed for ever." – George Washington, Farewell Orders to the Armies of the United States, Rock Hill, near Princeton, November 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:227

Letter to the Minister, Elders and Deacons of United Dutch Reformed Churches - November 10, 1783

"Having shared in common, the hardships and dangers of the War with my virtuous fellow Citizens in the field, as well as with those who on the Lines have been immediately exposed to the Arts and Arms of the Enemy, I feel the most lively sentiments of gratitude to that divine Providence which has graciously interposed for the protection of our Civil and Religious Liberties." – George Washington, letter to the Minister, Elders, and Deacons of the Two United Dutch Reformed Churches of Hackensack and Schalenburgh and the Inhabitants of Hackensack, November 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:239

"In retiring from the field of Contest to the sweets of private life, I claim no merit, but if in that retirement my most earnest wishes and prayers can be of any avail, nothing will exceed the prosperity of our common Country, and the temporal and spiritual felicity of those who are represented in your Address." – George Washington, letter to the Minister, Elders, and Deacons of the Two United Dutch Reformed Churches of Hackensack and Schalenburgh and the Inhabitants of Hackensack, November 10, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:240

Letter to Virginia Governor John Hancock – November 15, 1783

"Actuated, as we are, by the same anxious concern for the interest, the dignity and happiness of our Country, I was extremely pleased with the patriotic sentiments contained in your Excellencys Speech at the opening of the present session of your Legislature, as well as with the subsequent communication to them. Nor was I less satisfied with the happy effect of those sentiments in producing a compliance with the requisitions of Congress: a measure strongly tending to revive the expiring reputation and credit of the Nation. Would to Heaven that the Legislatures of all the States might be inspired by a similar disposition to candour in discussion and rectitude in decision, before it shall be to late!" – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor John Hancock, West Point, November 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:242

"Be persuaded, my dear Sir, that my wishes and prayers will ever be most ardent for the health and happiness of your Excellency, and for the prosperity of the Commonwealth over which you preside." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor John Hancock, West Point, November 15, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:242

Letter to the Reformed German Congregation – November 27, 1783

"Disposed, at every suitable opportunity to acknowledge publicly our infinite obligations to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe for rescuing our Country from the brink of destruction; I cannot fail at this time to ascribe all the honor of our late successes to the same glorious Being. And if my humble exertions have been made in any degree subservient to the execution of the divine purposes, a contemplation of the benediction of Heaven on our righteous Cause, the approbation of my virtuous Countrymen, and the testimony of my own Conscience, will be a sufficient reward and augment my felicity beyond anything which the world can bestow." – George Washington, letter to the Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members of the Reformed German Congregation of New York City, New York, November 27, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:249

"The establishment of Civil and Religious Liberty was the Motive which induced me to the Field; the object is attained, and it now remains to be my earnest wish and prayer, that the Citizens of the United States would make a wise and virtuous use of the blessings, placed before them; and that the reformed german Congregation in New York; may not only be conspicuous for their religious character, but as exemplary, in support of our inestimable acquisitions, as their reverend Minister has been in the attainment of them." – George Washington, letter to the Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Members of the Reformed German Congregation of New York City, New York, November 27, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:250

Letter to the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Kings County – December 1, 1783

"I cannot but rejoice sincerely that the national dignity and glory will be greatly increased, in consequence of the good order and regularity which have prevailed universally since the City of New York has been repossessed by us; this conduct exhibits to the world a noble instance of magnanimity and will doubtless convince any who from ignorance or prejudice may have been of a different sentiment; that the Laws do govern, and that the Civil Magistrates are worthy of the highest respect and confidence." – George Washington, letter to the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Kings County, New York, December 1, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:252

"For my own part, Gentlemen, in whatever situation I shall be hereafter, my supplications, will ever ascend to Heaven, for the prosperity of my Country in general; and for the individual happiness of those who are attached to the Freedom, and Independence of America." – George Washington, letter to the Freeholders and Inhabitants of Kings County, New York, December 1, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:252-253

Address to the Volunteer Association and other Inhabitants – December 2, 1783

"The bosom of America is open to receive not only the Opulent and respectable Stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations And Religions; whom we shall wellcome to a participation of all our rights and previleges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment." – George Washington, address to the Members of the Volunteer Association and Other Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Ireland Who Have Lately Arrived in the City of New York, December 2, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:254

Address to Principle Officers of the Army – December 4, 1783

"With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you; I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable." – George Washington, address to the principle officers of the Army at France's Tavern, New York, December 4, 1783; "Life And Times Of Washington," John Frederick Schroeder and Benson John Lossing, M. M. Belcher Publishing Co. (1903) Vol. II, Part IV, Chap. XXIV: Final Events of the Revolution

Reply to the Citizens of New Brunswick – December 6, 1783

"I cannot bid adieu to the Acquaintances and Connections I have formed while acting in a public character without experiencing a certain pleasing, melancholly sensation, pleasing because I leave my Country in the full possession of Liberty and Independence; Melancholly because I bid my friends a long, perhaps a last farewell." – George Washington, reply to the Citizens of New Brunswick, December 6, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:260

Response to the Legislature of New Jersey - December 6, 1783

"I am heartily disposed to join with you, Gentlemen, in adoration to that all-wise and most gracious Providence which hath so conspicuously interposed in the direction of our public affairs and the establishment of our national Independence." – George Washington, response to the Legislature of New Jersey, Trenton, December 6, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:261

"The faithful page of History, will I doubt not, record all the patriotic sufferings and meritorious Services of the gallant little Army I have had the honor to command; nor, (if my testimony and the voice of truth can avail anything), shall the efficacious exertions of the State of New Jersey, or the almost unrivalled bravery of its Militia ever be forgotten. ." – George Washington, response to the Legislature of New Jersey, Trenton, December 6, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:261

"Let the fact be made known to the whole world, let it be remembered forever as an example to succeeding Ages, that, after a large extent of Country had been overrun by a formidable Enemy, and thousands of Citizens driven from their possessions; the virtuous freedom of New Jersey, recovering from the temporary shock, stung by the remembrance of what their wives, their children and Friends had already suffered, by the thought of losing all they yet held dear and sacred, animated by an enthusiastic hope of success, and buoyed, by a reliance on the aid of Heaven, above the fear of danger and death itself then began to stem the tide of adversity; and, in concert with our other force, recoiling like an impetuous torrent on our lately victorious foes, confined them within narrow limits 'till compelled to take their final departure from the State. For me, it is enough to have seen the divine Arm visibly outstretched for our deliverance, and to have recd the approbation of my Country, and my Conscience on account of my humble instrumentality in carrying the designs of Providence into effect; but for my gallant Associates in the Field, who have so essentially contributed to the establishment of our Independence and national glory, no rewards can be too great." – George Washington, response to the Legislature of New Jersey, Trenton, December 6, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:261

Letter to Militia Officers and Liberties of Philadelphia – December 12, 1783

"It would have been a proof of the want of Patriotism and every social Virtue not to have assumed the character of a Soldier when the exigency of the Public demanded, or not to have returned to the Class of Citizens when the necessity of farther Service ceased to exist. I can therefore claim no merit beyond that of having done my duty with fidelity." – George Washington, letter to the Militia Officers and Liberties of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, December 12, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:266

"While the various Scenes of the War, in which I have experienced the timely aid of the Militia of Philadelphia, recur to my mind, my ardent prayer ascends to Heaven that they may long enjoy the blessings of that Peace which has been obtained by the divine benediction on our common exertions." – George Washington, letter to the Militia Officers and Liberties of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, December 12, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:266

Response to the Magistrates of the City and County of Philadelphia – December 13, 1783

"Nothing could have been more proper on this occasion than to attribute our glorious successes in the manner you have done, to the bravery of our Troops, the assistance of our Ally and the interposition of Providence. Having by such means acquired the inestimable blessings of Peace Liberty and Independence; the preservation of these important acquisitions must now, in a great measure, be committed to an able and faithful Magistracy." – George Washington, response to the Magistrates of the City and County of Philadelphia, Philadelphia, December 13, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:267

Address to the Learned Professions of Philadelphia – December 13, 1783

"Conscious of no impropriety in wishing to merit the esteem of my fellow Citizens in general; I cannot hesitate to acknowledge that I feel a certain pleasing sensation in obtaining the good opinion of men eminent for their virtue, knowledge and humanity; but I am sensible at the same time, it becomes me to receive with humility the warm commendations you are pleased to bestow on my conduct: for if I have been led to detest the folly and madness of unbounded ambition, if I have been induced from other motives to draw my sword and regulate my public behaviour, or if the management of the War has been conducted upon purer principles: let me not arrogate the merit to human imbecility, but rather ascribe whatever glory may result from our successful struggle to a higher and more efficient Cause. For the re-establishment of our once violated rights; for the confirmation of our Independence, for the protection of Virtue, Philosophy and Literature: for the present flourishing state of the Sciences, and for the enlarged prospect of human happiness, it is our common duty to pay the tribute of gratitude to the greatest and best of Beings." – George Washington, address to the Learned Professions of Philadelphia, December 13, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:269

Response to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of Annapolis - December 22, 1783

"If my Conduct throughout the War has merited the confidence of my fellow Citizens, and has been instrumental in obtaining for my Country the blessings of Peace and Freedom, I owe it to that Supreme being who guides the hearts of all; who has so signally interposed his aid in every Stage of the Contest and who has graciously been pleased to bestow on me the greatest of Earthly rewards: the approbation and affections of a free people." – George Washington, response to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of Annapolis, December 22, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:281

"Tho' I retire from the employments of public life I shall never cease to entertain the most anxious care for the welfare of my Country. May the Almighty dispose the heart of every Citizen of the United States to improve the great prospect of happiness before us, and may you Gentlemen, and the Inhabitants of this City long enjoy every felicity, this World can Afford." – George Washington, response to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of Annapolis, December 22, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:281

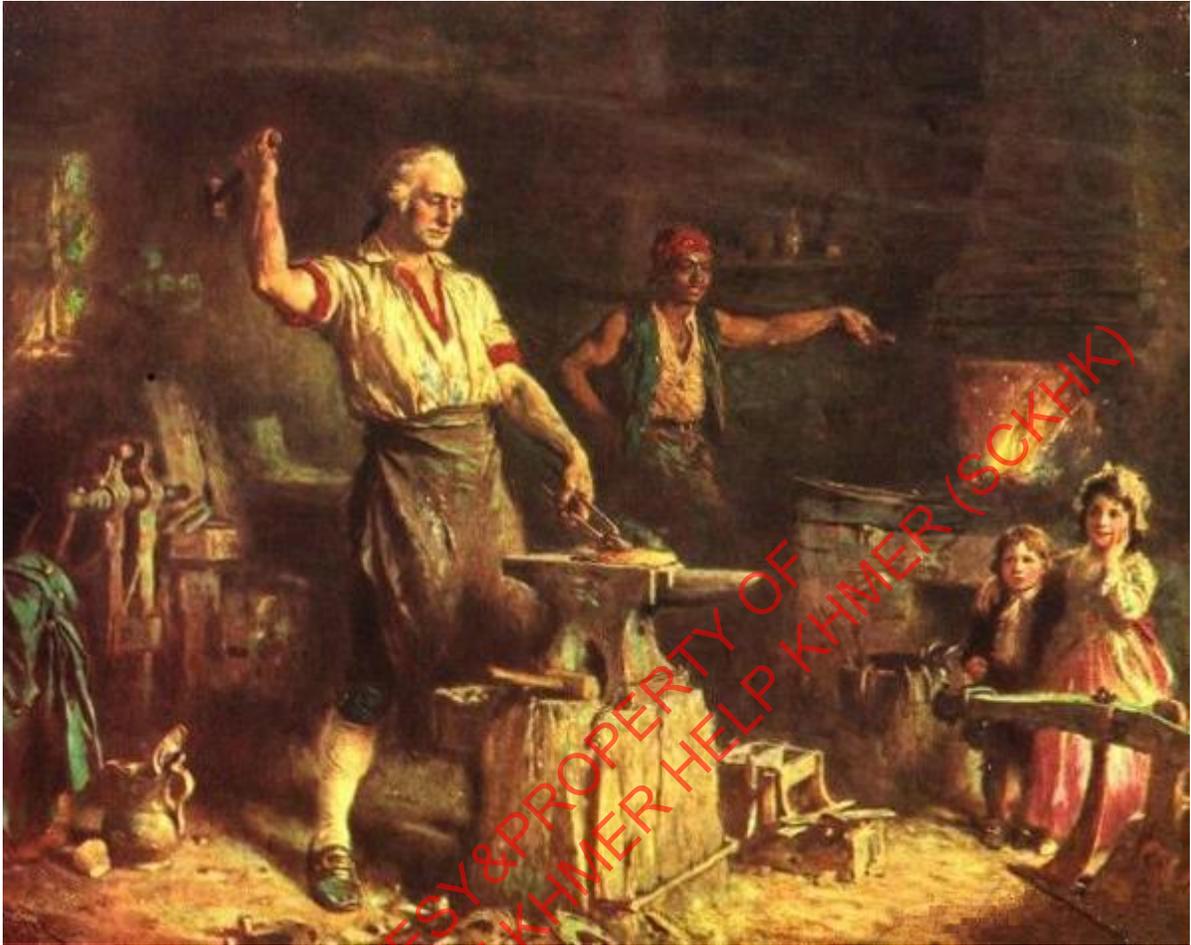
Address to Congress Resigning Commission – December 23, 1783

"I have now the honor of offering my sincere Congratulations to Congress and of presenting myself before them to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the Service of my Country. ... Happy in the confirmation of our Independence and Sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable Nation, I resign with satisfaction the Appointment I accepted with diffidence. A diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which however was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our Cause, the support of the Supreme Power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven." – George Washington, Address to Congress resigning his commission, Annapolis, December 23, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:284

"I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my Official life, by commending the Interests of our dearest Country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them, to his holy keeping." – George Washington, Address to Congress resigning his commission, Annapolis, December 23, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:285

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of Action; and bidding an Affectionate farewell to this August body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my Commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life." – George Washington, Address to Congress resigning his commission, Annapolis, December 23, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:285

SECTION III: Post-Revolutionary War



The American Cincinnatus, Jean Leon Gerome Ferris

SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)
COURTESY & PROPERTY OF

Letter to New York Governor George Clinton – December 28, 1783

"I arrived at my Seat the day before Christmas, having previously divested myself of my official character. I am now a private Citizen on the banks of the Powtownmack, where I should be happy to see you if your public business would ever permit, and where in the meantime I shall fondly cherish the remembrance of all your former friendship." – George Washington, letter to Governor New York George Clinton, Mount Vernon, December 28, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:287

"The Scene is at last closed. I feel myself eased of a load of public Care. I hope to spend the remainder of my Days in cultivating the affections of good Men, and in the practice of the domestic Virtues." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor George Clinton, Mount Vernon, December 28, 1783; Fitzpatrick 27:288

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – January 5, 1784

"I sincerely thank you for the copy of the address of Govr. Trumbull to the Genl. Assembly and free Men of your State; the sentiments contained in it are such as would do honor to a patriot of any age or Nation; at least, they are too coincident with my own, not to meet with my warmest approbation. Be so good as to present my most cordial respects to the Governor and let him know that it is my wish, the mutual friendship and esteem which have been planted and fostered in the tumult of public life, may not wither and die in the serenity of retirement: tell him we shou'd rather amuse our evening hours of Life in cultivating the tender plants, and bringing them to perfection, before they are transplanted to a happier clime." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, January 5, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:294

"Notwithstanding the jealous and contracted temper which seems to prevail in some of the States, yet I cannot but hope and believe that the good sense of the people will ultimately get the better of their prejudices; and that order and sound policy, tho' they do not come so soon as one wou'd wish, will be produced from the present unsettled and deranged state of public affairs. Indeed I am happy to observe that the political disposition is actually meliorating every day; several of the States have manifested an inclination to invest Congress with more ample powers; most of the Legislatures appear disposed to do perfect justice; and the Assembly of this Commonwealth have just complied with the requisitions of Congress, and I am informed without a dissentient voice. Every thing My Dear Trumbull will come right at last, as we have often prophesied; my only fear is that we shall lose a little reputation first." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, January 5, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:295

Letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison – January 18, 1784

"That the prospect before us is, as you justly observe, fair, none can deny; but what use we shall make of it, is exceedingly problematical; not but that I believe, all things will come right at last; but like a young heir, come a little prematurely to a large inheritance, we shall wanton and run riot until we have brought our reputation to the brink of ruin, and then like him shall have to labor with the current of opinion, when *compelled* perhaps, to do what prudence and common policy pointed out as plain as any problem in Euclid, in the first instance." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, January 18, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:305

"The disinclination of the individual States to yield competent powers to Congress for the Federal Government, their unreasonable jealousy of that body and of one another, and the disposition which seems to pervade each, of being all-wise and all-powerful within itself, will, if there is not a change in the system be our downfall as a nation. This is as clear to me as the A, B, C; and I think we have opposed Great Britain, and have arrived at the present state of peace and independency, to very little purpose, if we cannot conquer our own prejudices. The powers of Europe begin to see this, and our newly acquired friends the British, are already and professedly acting upon this ground; and wisely too, if we are determined to persevere in our folly. They know that individual opposition to their measures is futile, and boast that we are not sufficiently united as a Nation to give a general one! Is not the indignity alone, of this declaration, while we are in the very act of peacemaking and conciliation, sufficient to stimulate us to vest more extensive and adequate powers in the sovereign of these United States?" – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, January 18, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:305

"For my own part, altho' I am returned to, and am now mingled with the class of private citizens, and like them must suffer all the evils of a Tyranny, or of too great an extension of federal powers; I have no fears arising from this source, in my mind, but I have many, and powerful ones indeed which predict the worst consequences from a half-starved, limping Government, that appears to be always moving upon crutches, and tottering at every step. Men, chosen as the Delegates in Congress are, cannot officially be dangerous; they depend upon the breath, nay, they are so much the creatures of the people, under the present constitution, that they can have no views (which could possibly be carried into execution,) nor any interests, distinct from those of their constituents." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, January 18, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:305-306

"My political creed therefore is, to be wise in the choice of Delegates, support them like Gentlemen while they are our representatives, give them competent powers for all federal purposes, support them in the due exercise thereof, and lastly, to compel them to close attendance in Congress during their delegation. These things under the present mode for, and termination of elections, aided by annual instead of constant Sessions, would, or I am exceedingly mistaken, make us one of the most wealthy, happy, respectable and powerful Nations, that ever inhabited the terrestrial Globe, without them, we shall in my opinion soon be every thing which is the direct reverse of them." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, January 18, 1784; Fitzpatrick

Letter to Chevalier Jean de Heintz – January 21, 1784

"[I]t appears to be incompatible with the principles of our national constitution to admit the introduction of any kind of Nobility, Knighthood, or distinctions of a similar nature, amongst the Citizens of our republic." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier Jean de Heintz, Mount Vernon, January 21, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:310

Letter to Comte de Rochambeau – February 1, 1784

"Having resigned my public trust, and with it all my public cares into the hands of Congress, I now address you in the character of an American Citizen from the Banks of the Potomac to which I have been retired, fast locked up by frost and snow ever since Christmas. The tranquil walks of domestic life are now beginning to unfold themselves, and promise a rich harvest of pleasing contemplation, in which My Dear Count, you will make one of my most pleasing themes, as I shall recollect with pleasure, that we have been cotemporaries and fellow labourers in the cause of Liberty, and that we have lived together as brothers should do, in harmonious friendship." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, Mount Vernon, February 1, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:316-317

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – February 1, 1784

"At length...I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, and under the shadow of my own Vine and my own Fig-tree, free from the bustle of a camp and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the Soldier who is ever in pursuit of fame, the Statesman whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all, and the Courtier who is always watching the countenance of his Prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I am not only retired from all public employments, but I am retiring within myself; and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this my dear friend, being the order for my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my Fathers." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 1, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:317-318

Address to the Mayor and Commonality of Fredericksburg – February 14, 1784

"To a beneficent Providence, and to the fortitude of a brave and virtuous Army, supported by the general exertion of our common Country I stand indebted for the plaudits you now bestow; The reflection however, of having met the congratulating smiles and approbation of my fellow-Citizens for the part I have acted in the cause of liberty and Independence cannot fail of adding pleasure to the sweets of domestic life; and my sensibility of them is heightened by their coming from the respectable Inhabitants of the place of my growing Infancy and the honorable mention wch. is made of my revered Mother; by whose Maternal hand (early deprived of a Father) I was led from Childhood." – George Washington, address to the Mayor and Commonality of Fredericksburg, February 14, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:332

Letter to James Milligan, Comptroller of the Treasury of the United States – February 18, 1784

"The charge of fifty guineas paid James McCall Esqr. for the Revd. Mr. Smith, 41 is perfectly just, and ought not to have been omitted by me, for I well recollect it was the desire of Mr. Morris, that this sum might be carried to the credit of my public Accots., and I certainly meant to do it, altho' it has been omitted." – George Washington, letter to James Milligan, Comptroller of the Treasury of the United States, Mount Vernon, February 18, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:333

Letter to Major General Henry Knox – February 20, 1784

"I am just beginning to experience that ease, and freedom from public cares which, however desirable, takes some time to realize; for strange as it may tell, it is nevertheless true, that it was not 'till lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating as soon as I waked in the Morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprize, after having revolved many things in my mind, to find that I was no longer a public Man, or had any thing to do with public transactions. ... I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied Traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step, with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the Goal to which all the former were directed; and from his House top is looking back, and tracing with a grateful eye the Meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and Mires which lay in his way; and into which none but the All-powerful guide, and great disposer of human Events could have prevented his falling." – George Washington, letter to Major General Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, February 20, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:340-341

Letter to Daniel McCarty – February 22, 1784

"It is not convenient for me to be at Colchester tomorrow, and as I shall no longer act as a vestryman, the sooner my place is filled with another the better. This letter, or something more formal if required, may evidence my resignation, and authorize a new choice." – George Washington, letter to Daniel McCarty, Mount Vernon, February 22, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:341

"I shall be very sorry if your apprehensions on account of the poor should be realized, but have not the Church-Wardens power to provide for their relief? And may not those Vestry-men who do meet, supposing the number insufficient to constitute a legal Vestry, express their sentiments on this head to the Wardens? Nay go further, and from the exigency of the case, give directions for the temporary relief of the needy and distressed. As a Vestryman or as a private parishioner, I should have no scruple to do either under such circumstances as you have described." – George Washington, letter to Daniel McCarty, Mount Vernon, February 22, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:342

Letter to Dolphin Drew – February 25, 1784

"From the first I laid it down as a maxim, that no person who possessed Lands adjoining, should hold any of mine as a Lease, and for this obvious reason, that the weight of their labour, and burden of the crops, whilst it was in a condition to bear them, would fall upon my Land, and the improvement upon his own, in spite of all the covenants which could be inserted to prevent it." – George Washington, letter to Dolphin Drew, Mount Vernon, February 25, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:344

Letter to Fielding Lewis – February 27, 1784

"You very much mistake my circumstances when you suppose me in a condition to advance money. I made no money from my Estate during the nine years I was absent from it, and brought none home with me. those who owed me, for the most part, took advantage of the depreciation and paid me off with six pence in the pound. those to whom I was indebted, I have yet to pay, without other means, if they will not wait, than selling part of my Estate; or distressing those who were too honest to take advantage of the tender Laws to quit scores with me." – George Washington, letter to Fielding Lewis, Mount Vernon, February 27, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:345-346

Letter to Tench Tilghman – March 24, 1784

"If they are good workmen, they may be of Asia, Africa, or Europe. They may be Mahometans, Jews or Christian of an Sect, or they may be Athiests. I would however prefer middle aged, to young men, and those who have good countenances and good characters on ship board, to others who have neither of these to recommend them." – George Washington, letter to Tench Tilghman, Mount Vernon, March 24, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:367

Letter to Dr. James Craik – March 25, 1784

"I will frankly declare...that any memoirs of my life, distinct and unconnected with the general history of the war, would rather hurt my feelings than tickle my pride whilst I lived. I had rather glide gently down the stream of life, leaving it to posterity to think and say what they please of me, than by any act of mine to have vanity or ostentation imputed to me. ... I do not think vanity is a trait of my character." – George Washington, letter to Dr. James Craik, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:371

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – March 29, 1784

"The incertitude which prevails in Congress, and the nonattendance of its Members, is discouraging to those who are willing, and ready to discharge the trust which is reposed in them; whilst it is disgraceful, in a high degree to our Country. but I believe the case will never be otherwise, so long as that body persist in their present mode of doing business; and will hold constant, instead of annual Sessions; against the former of which, my mind furnishes me with a variety of Arguments, but not one, in times of peace, in favor of the latter. ... Annual Sessions would always produce a full representation, and alertness at business. The Delegates, after a recess of 8 or 10 Months would meet each other with glad Countenances; they would be complaisant; they would yield to each other as much as the duty they owed their constituents would permit; and they would have oppertunities of becoming better acquainted with the Sentiments of them and removing their prejudices, during the recess. Men who are always together get tired of each others Company; they throw off the proper restraint; they say and do things which are personally disgusting; this begets opposition; opposition begets faction; and so it goes on till business is impeded, often at a stand. I am sure (having the business prepared by proper Boards or a Committee) an Annual Session of two Months would dispatch more business than is now done in twelve; and this by a full representation of the Union." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, March 29, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:376

Letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette – April 4, 1784

"The charms of your person, and the beauties of your mind, have a more powerful operation. These Madam, have endeared you to me, and every thing which partakes of your nature will have a claim to my affections. George and Virginia (the offspring of your love),

whose names do honor to my Country, and to myself, have a double claim and will be the objects of my vows." – George Washington, letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 4, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:384-385

"From the clangor of arms and the bustle of a camp, freed from the cares of public employment, and the responsibility of office, I am now enjoying domestic ease under the shadow of my own Vine, and my own Fig tree; and in a small Villa, with the implements of Husbandry, and Lambkins around me, I expect to glide gently down the stream of life, 'till I am entombed in the dreary mansions of my Fathers." – George Washington, letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 4, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:385

"Mrs. Washington is highly honored by your participations, and feels very sensibly the force of your polite invitation to Paris; but she is too far advanced in life, and is too much immersed in the care of her little progeny, to cross the Atlantic. This My Dr. Marchioness (indulge me with this freedom) is not the case with you. You have youth (and if you should not incline to bring your children, can leave them with all the advantages to Education), and must have a curiosity to see the Country, young, rude and uncultivated as it is; for the liberties of which your husband has fought, bled, and acquired much glory. Where every body admires, every body loves him. Come then, let me entreat it, and call my Cottage your home; for your own doors do not open to you with more readiness, than mine wou'd. You will see the plain manner in which we live; and meet the rustic civility, and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life." – George Washington, letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 4, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:385

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull – May 15, 1784

"It is indeed a pleasure, from the walks of private life to view in retrospect, all the meanderings of our past labors, the difficulties through which we have waded, and the fortunate Haven to which the Ship has been brought! Is it possible after this that it should founder? Will not the All Wise, and all powerfull director of human events, preserve it? I think he will, he may however (for wise purposes not discoverable by finite minds) suffer our indiscretions and folly to place our national character low in the political Scale; and this, unless more wisdom and less prejudice take the lead in our governments, will most assuredly be the case." – George Washington, letter to Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Philadelphia, May 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:399

Letter to the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives – May 28, 1784

"Permit me, Gentlemen, on this occasion of general joy, to congratulate you and your State in a particular manner upon its present repose, and recovery from those scenes of accumulated distresses for which it has been remarkable, and whilst we have abundt. cause to rejoice at the fair prospect which a beneficent Provide, has Id. before us to assure you of my entire belief that the wisdom and liberality of the People of So. Carolina will leave nothing unessayed to make the revolution as beneficial to mankind as it hath been glorious in the Accomplishmt." – George Washington, letter to the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives, May 28, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:408

"For the favorable wishes you have kindly bestowed on me you have all my gratitude; and my prayers for the welfare of your State, shall never cease." – George Washington, letter to the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives, May 28, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:408

Letter to Chevalier de Chastellux – June 2, 1784

"I will only repeat to you the assurances of my friendship, and of the pleasure I shou'd feel in seeing you in the shade of those trees which my hands have planted, and which by their rapid growth, at once indicate a knowledge of my declination, and their disposition to spread their mantles over me, before I go hence to return no more, for this, their gratitude, I will nurture them while I stay. – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, June 2, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:413

Letter to James Madison – June 12, 1784

"Can nothing be done in our Assembly for poor Paine? Must the merits, and Services of Common Sense continue to glide down the stream of time, unrewarded by this Country? His writings certainly have had a powerful effect on the public mind; ought they not then to meet an adequate return? He is poor! he is chagreened! and almost, if not altogether, in despair of relief. New York it is true, not the least distressed, nor best able State in the Union, has done something for him. This kind of provision he prefers to an allowance from Congress; he has reasons for it, which to him are conclusive, and such I think as would have weight with others. His views are moderate; a decent independency is, I believe, all he aims at. Should he not obtain this?" – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, June 12, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:420

Letter to the General Assembly of Virginia – July 15, 1784

"Nothing can add more to the pleasure which arises from a conscientious discharge of public trust, than the approbation of one's Country. To have been, under a vicissitude of fortune, amidst the difficult and trying scenes of an arduous conflict, so happy as to meet this, is in my mind, to have attained the highest honor, and the consideration of it, in my present peaceful retirement will heighten all

my domestic enjoyments, and constitute my greatest felicity." – George Washington, letter to the General Assembly of Virginia, July 15, 1784: Vol. 27:446

"For those rewards and blessings which you have invoked for me in this world, and for the fruition of that happiness which you pray for in the one which is to come, you have all my thanks, and all my gratitude. I wish I could insure them to you, and the State you represent, an hundred fold." – George Washington, letter to the General Assembly of Virginia, July 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:446

Letter to Reverend Walter Magowan – July 20, 1784

"Not knowing of whom the Vestry of Pecawaxon is composed, or that I have the honor of being acquainted with a single member of it; there would be I conceive, an impropriety in my addressing them on the subject of your application, otherwise I would with great pleasure join my recommendations of you to those of Majr. [Daniel of St. Thomas] Jenifer. If my best wishes, however, can contribute to the success of your present movement, you have them very sincerely: or if my signifying, that from a long acquaintance with you, I can bear testimony to the truth of what Majr. Jenifer has advanced in your behalf, will be of any avail, I would do it with pleasure. In the meanwhile such evidence thereof as this letter affords, you are at free liberty to make use of, because I have full conviction in my own breast, that if the choice of the vestry should light on you, you would make the Parish happy." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Walter Magowan, July 20, 1784" – George Washington, letter to the General Assembly of Virginia, July 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:447-448

Letter to Thomas Freeman – September 23, 1784

"Where acts of providence interfere to disable a Tenant, I would be lenient in the exaction of rent; but when the cases are otherwise, I will not be put off; because it is on these my own expenditures depend, and because an accumulation of undischarged rents is a real injury to the Tenant." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Freeman, at the plantation of Mr. Gilbert Simpson, September 23, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:470

Letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison – October 10, 1784

"It has been long my decided opinion that the shortest, easiest, and least expensive communication with the invaluable and extensive Country back of us, would be by one, or both of the rivers of this State which have their sources in the Apalachian mountains. Nor am I singular in this opinion. Evans, in his Map and Analysis of the middle Colonies which (considering the early period at which they were given to the public) are done with amazing exactness. And Hutchins since, in his topographical description of the Western Country, (a good part of which is from actual surveys), are decidedly of the same sentiments; as indeed are all others who have had opportunities, and have been at the pains to investigate and consider the subject." – George Washington, letter to Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:472

"A people however, who are possessed of the spirit of commerce, who see and who will pursue their advantages may achieve almost anything." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:473

"Thus much with respect to rival States; let me now take a short view of our own; and being aware of the objections which are in the way, I will enumerate, in order to contrast them with the advantages. ... The first and principal one is, the unfortunate Jealousy, which ever has and it is to be feared ever will prevail, lest one part of the State should obtain an advantage over the other part (as if the benefits of trade were not diffusive and beneficial to all); then follow a train of difficulties viz: that our people are already heavily taxed; that we have no money; that the advantages of this trade are remote that the most direct rout for it is thro' other States, over whom we have no controul; that the routs over which we have controul, are as distant as either of those which lead to Philadelphia, Albany or Montreal; That a sufficient spirit of commerce does not pervade the citizens of this commonwealth; that we are in fact doing for others, what they ought to do for themselves." – George Washington, letter to Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:473-474

"This State as a part of the confederated States (all of whom have the spirit of it very strongly working within them) must adopt it, or submit to the evils arising therefrom without receiving its benefits; common policy therefore points clearly and strongly, to the propriety of our enjoying all the advantages which nature and our local situation afford us; and evinces clearly that unless this spirit could be totally eradicated in other States, as well as in this, and every man made to become either a cultivator of the Land, or a manufacturer of such articles as are prompted by necessity, such stimulus should be employed as will force this spirit; by shewing to our Countrymen the superior advantages we possess beyond others; and the importance of being upon a footing with our Neighbours." – George Washington, letter to Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:474

"These things being done, I shall be mistaken if prejudice does not yield to facts; jealousy to candour, and finally, that reason and nature thus aided, will dictate what is right and proper to be done." – George Washington, letter to Governor Benjamin Harrison, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:477

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – November 1784

"In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connection, and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I should ever have of you? And though I wished to say No! my fears answered Yes!" – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 1784; "Homes of American Statesmen," produced by Juliet Sutherland, Steven Brown and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team, November 2, 2011, Chap. 1: Washington (by Mrs. C. M. Kirkland)

Address to The Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Common Council of Richmond – November 15, 1784

"To the Smiles of Heaven, to a virtuous and gallant Army, and to the exertions of my fellow Citizens of the Union, (not to superior talents of mine) are to be ascribed the blessings of that liberty, Independence and peace, of wch. we are now in the enjoyment. Whilst these are afforded us, and while the advantages of commerce are not only offered but are soliciting our acceptance, it must be our own fault indeed if we do not make them productive of a rich and plenteous harvest, and of that National honor and glory, which should be characteristic of a young, and rising Empire." – George Washington, to The Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Richmond, November 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:495-496

Letter to Marchioness de Lafayette – November 25, 1784

"The Marquis returns to you with all the warmth and ardour of a newly inspired lover. We restore him to you in good health, crowned with wreaths of love and respect from every part of the Union. That his meeting with you, his family and friends, may be propitious, and as happy as your wishes can make it: that you may long live together revered and beloved, and that you may transmit to a numerous progeny the virtue which you both possess, is consonate with the vow and fervent wish of your devoted and most respectful Humble Servant." – George Washington, letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 25, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:497

Letter to Mademoiselle de Lafayette – November 25, 1784

"Permit me to thank you my dear little correspondent for the favor of her letter of the 18th. of June last, and to impress her with the idea of the pleasure I shall derive in a continuation of them. Her papa is restored to her with all the good health, paternal affection and honors her tender heart could wish. ... He will carry a kiss to her from me, (which might be more agreeable from a pretty boy) and give her assurances of the affectionate regard with which I have the pleasure of being her well wisher." – George Washington, letter to the Mademoiselle de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, November 25, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:497-498

Letter to New York Governor George Clinton – November 25, 1784

"It gives me great pleasure to learn from yourself, that the State over which you preside is tranquil. Would to God it may ever remain so, and that all others would follow the example. Internal dissensions, and jarrings with our Neighbours, are not only productive of mischievous consequences, as it respects ourselves, but has a tendency to lessen our national character, and importance in the eyes of European powers. If anything can, this will expose us to their intriguing politics, and may shake the Union." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor George Clinton, Mount Vernon, November 25, 1784; Fitzpatrick 27:501

Letter to Chevalier de la Luzerne – December 5, 1784

"If any thing could overcome the present difficulties which impede my desires to pay my respectful homage at your Court, it would be the wish which you say these august personages have been pleased to express to see me there, and the welcome reception I should meet from the nation at large, especially from those characters to whom I have the honor of a personal acquaintance; but I fear my vows and earnest wishes are the only tribute of respect I shall ever have it in my power to offer them in return." – George Washington, letter to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, Mount Vernon, December 5, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:1

Letter to Henry Knox – December 5, 1784

"Apologies are idle things." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, December 5, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:3

"After much time spent (charity directs us to suppose in duly considering the matter) a treaty has at length been held with the Six Nations at Fort Stanwix: much to the advantage it is said of the United States, but to the great disgust of that of New York: fruitlessly, it is added by some, who assert that the Deputies on the part of the Indians were not properly authorized to treat. How true this may be, I will not pretend to decide; but certain it is in my opinion, that there is a kind of fatality attending all our public measures, inconceivable delays, particular States counteracting the plans of the United States when submitted to them, opposing each other upon all occasions, torn by internal disputes, or supinely negligent and inattentive to everything which is not local and self interesting and very often short sighted in these, make up our system of conduct. Would to God our own Countrymen, who are entrusted with the

management of the political machine, could view things by that large and extensive scale upon which it is measured by foreigners, and by the Statesmen of Europe, who see what we might be, and predict what we shall come to. In fact, our federal Government is a name without substance: No State is longer bound by its edicts, than it suits present purposes, without looking to the consequences. How then can we fail in a little time, becoming the sport of European politics, and the victims of our own folly." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, December 5, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:4-5

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – December 8, 1784

"In the moment of our separation upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I felt all that love, respect and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connexion and your merits have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages distended, whether that was the last sight, I ever should have of you? And tho' I wished to say no, my fears answered yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found they had long since fled to return no more; that I was now descending the hill, I had been 52 years climbing, and that tho' I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the dreary mansions of my father's. These things darkened the shades and gave a gloom to the picture, consequently to my prospects of seeing you again: but I will not repine, I have had my day." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, December 8, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:7

"It is unnecessary, I persuade myself to repeat to you my Dr. Marqs. the sincerity of my regards and friendship, nor have I words which could express my affection for you, were I to attempt it. My fervent prayers are offered for your safe and pleasant passage, happy meeting with Madame la Fayette and family, and the completion of every wish of your heart, in all which Mrs. Washington joins me, as she does in compliments. to Capt. Grandchean and the Chevr. of whom little Wash:n often speaks." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, December 8, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:7

Letter to Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress – December 14, 1784

"It is easier to prevent, than to remedy an evil." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress, Mount Vernon, December 14, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:12

Letter to George Chapman – December 15, 1784

"My sentiments are perfectly in unison with yours sir, that the best means of forming a manly, virtuous and happy people, will be found in the right education of youth. Without this foundation, every other means, in my opinion, must fail; and it gives me pleasure to find that Gentlemen of your abilities are devoting their time and attention in pointing out the way. For your lucubrations on this subject which you have been so obliging as to send me, I pray you to accept my thanks, and an expression of the pleasure I felt at the declaration of your intention to devote a further portion of your time in so useful a study." – George Washington, letter to George Chapman, December 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:13

"Of the importance of education our Assemblies, happily, seem fully impressed ; they establishing new, and giving further endowments to the old Seminaries of learning, and I persuade myself will leave nothing unessayed to cultivate literature and useful knowledge, for the purpose of qualifying the rising generation for patrons of good government, virtue and happiness." – George Washington, letter to George Chapman, December 15, 1784; Fitzpatrick 28:13-14

Letter to Major General Henry Knox – January 5, 1785

"It is not the letters from my friends which give me trouble, or adds ought to my perplexity. I receive them with pleasure, and pay as much attention to them as my avocations will admit. ... It is references of old matters with which I have nothing to do. Applications, which oftentimes cannot be complied with. Enquiries, which would employ the pen of a historian to satisfy. Letters of compliment, as unmeaning perhaps as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to. And the commonplace business, which employs my pen and my time; often disagreeably. ... Indeed, these with company, deprive me of exercise, and unless I can obtain relief, may be productive of disagreeable consequences. I already begin to feel the effect. Heavy, and painful oppressions of the head, and other disagreeable sensations, often trouble me. I am determined therefore to employ some person who shall ease me of the drudgery of this business. At any rate , if the whole of it is thereby suspended, I am resolved to use exercise. My private concerns also, require infinitely more attention than I have given, or can give, under present circumstances. They can no longer be neglected without involving my ruin. This, my dear Sir, is a friendly communication; I give it in testimony of my unreservedness with you, and not for the purpose of discouraging your letters; for be assured that, to corrispond with those I love is among my highest gratifications." – George Washington, letter to Major General Henry Knox, Secretary of War, January 5, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:23

"Letters of friendship require no study, the communications are easy, and allowances are expected, and made." – George Washington, letter to Major General Henry Knox, Secretary of War, January 5, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:24

Letter to Samuel Chase – January 17, 1785

"The irregularity of the post, occasioned by the frost, prevented my hearing with certainty what the Assembly of this State had done with the Potomac Bill, until yesterday. I have now the pleasure to inform you that they have adopted the one which passed your Legislature, and come to similar resolutions respecting the road of communication with the river Cheat, and the application to the State of Pennsylvania for another to Yohioghane. They have also passed a similar act for improving and extending the navigation of James river. ... As you expressed a desire to know what the Assembly of this State had done, or were about to do respecting an establishment for the teachers of religion, I do myself the honor to enclose you a copy of their proceedings in that matter." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Chase, Mount Vernon, January 17, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:32

Letter to Sir James Jay – January 25, 1785

"I am clearly in sentiment with her Ladyship, that christianity will never make any progress among the Indians, or work any considerable reformation in their principles, until they are brought to a state of greater civilization; and the mode by which she means to attempt this, as far as I have been able to give it consideration, is as likely to succeed as any other that could have been devised, and may in time effect the great and benevolent object of her Ladyships wishes: but that love of ease, impatience under any sort of controul, and disinclination to every kind of pursuit but those of hunting and war, would discourage any person possessed of less piety, zeal and philanthropy than are characteristic of Lady Huntington." – George Washington, letter to Sir James Jay, Mount Vernon, January 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:42

"As I am well acquainted with the President of Congress, I will in the course of a few days write him a private letter on this subject giving the substance of Lady Huntington's plan and asking his opinion of the encouragement it might expect to receive from Congress if it should be brought before that honorable body. Were you to do the same with your brother Mr. John Jay now in Congress, and than whom none can judge better of the propriety of the measure, or give greater support to it if it should ultimately come before that supreme Council of the nation, it might lay the foundation which might be serviceable hereafter." – George Washington, letter to Sir James Jay, Mount Vernon, January 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:43

"Without reverberating the arguments in support of the humane and benevolent intention of Lady Huntington to christianize and reduce to a state of civilization the Savage tribes within the limits of the American States, or discanting upon the advantages which the Union may derive from the Emigration which is blended with, and becomes part of the plan, I highly approve of them, and having, tho' concisely, touched upon the material parts of your letter, it only remains for me to express my good wishes for the success of such a measure, and to assure you that wherein I can be instrumental to its execution, my best endeavours may be commanded." – George Washington, letter to Sir James Jay, Mount Vernon, January 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:43-44

Letter to David Humphreys – February 7, 1785

"If we are to credit newspaper accounts, the flames of war in Europe are again kindling: how far they may spread, neither the Statesman or soldier can determine; as the great governor of the Universe causes contingencies which baffle the wisdom of the first, and the foresight and valor of the Second. ... All I pray for, is, that you may keep them among yourselves. If a single spark should light among the inflameable matter in these States, it may set them in a combustion, altho' they may not be able to assign a good reason for it." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:66

Letter to Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress – February 8, 1795

"As the plan contemplated by Lady Huntington, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object; and may I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before you for your free and candid sentiments thereon; the communication I make of this matter to you sir, is in a private way, but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntington, to the members individually; or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these: 1st. I do not believe that any of the States to whom she has written (unless it may be New York) are in circumstances, since their cession of Territory, to comply with the requisition respecting emigration; for it has been privately hinted to me, and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety, that notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the Address respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants, which was purposely omitted to avoid giving alarms in England, the former will be great, and the useful artisans among them, many. 2d Because such emigration, if it should effect the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes which would be thereby answered, will be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her Ladyships wishes, it must nevertheless, be of considerable importance from the encrease of population by orderly and well disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier and attempt the conversion of the Indians without involving an expence to the Union." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henry Lee, President of Congress, Mount Vernon, February 8, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:69

Letter to the Countess of Huntingdon – February 27, 1785

"With respect to your humane and benevolent intentions towards the Indians, and the plan which your Ladyship has adopted to carry them into effect, they meet my highest approbation; and I should be very happy to find every possible encouragement given to them.

It has ever been my opinion, since I have had opportunities to observe, and to reflect upon the ignorance, indolence and general pursuits of the Indians, that all attempts to reclaim, and introduce any system of religion or morality among them, would prove fruitless, until they could be first brought into a state of greater civilization; at least that this attempt should accompany the other, and be enforced by example: and I am happy to find that it is made the ground work of your Ladyships plan." – George Washington, letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:87

"It will appear evident, from the date of my publication, that I could not at the time it was promulgated, have had an eye to your Ladyships plan of emigration; and I earnestly pray that my communication of the matter at this time, may receive no other interpretation than what is really meant, that is, a last (if it should be thought an eligible) resort." – George Washington, letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:88-89

Letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry – February 27, 1785

"I shall ever consider this Act as an unequivocal, and substantial testimony of the approving voice of my Country for the part I have acted in the Amn. theatre, and shall feast upon the recollection of it as often as it occurs to me; but this is all I can, or mean to do. It was my first declaration in Congress after accepting my military appointment, that I would not receive any thing for such services as I might be able to render the cause in which I had embarked. It was my fixed determination when I surrendered that appointment, never to hold any other office under Government, by which emolument might become a necessary appendage: or, in other words, which should withdraw me from the necessary attention which my own private concerns indispensably required: nor to accept of any pecuniary acknowledgment, for what had passed; from this resolution, my mind has never yet swerved. The Act therefore, which your Excellency enclosed, is embarrassing to me. On the one hand I shall be unhappy if my non-acceptance of the shares should be considered as a slight of the favor, (the magnitude of which, I think very highly of) or disrespectful to the generous intention of my Country. On the other I should be equally hurt if motives of pride, or an ostentatious display of disinterestedness should be ascribed to the action. None of these have existence in my breast, and none of them would I have imputed to me, whilst I am indulging the bent of my inclination by acting independant of rewards for occasional and accidental services. Besides, may not the plans be affected; unless some expedient can be hit upon to avoid the shock which may be sustained, by withdrawing so many shares from them?" – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, February 27, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:90

Letter to Henry Knox – February 28, 1785

"How should we, when contracted ideas, local pursuits, and absurd jealousy are continually leading us from those great and fundamental principles which are characteristic of wise and powerful Nations; and without which, we are no more than a rope of Sand, and shall as easily be broken." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, February 28, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:93

Letter to Jacob Gerhard Dinks – March 15, 1785

"It is a maxim with me Sir, to take no liberties with exalted characters to whom I am not personally known, or with whom I have had no occasion to correspond by letter." – George Washington, letter to Jacob Gerhard Diriks, Mount Vernon, March 15, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:105

Letter to Lucretia Wilhemina Van Winter – March 30, 1785

"At best I have only been an instrument in the hands of Providence, to effect, with the aid of France and many virtuous fellow Citizens of America, a revolution which is interesting to the general liberties of mankind, and to the emancipation of a country which may afford an Asylum, if we are wise enough to pursue the paths wch. lead to virtue and happiness, to the oppressed and needy of the Earth. Our region is extensive, our plains are productive, and if they are cultivated with liberallity and good sense, we may be happy ourselves, and diffuse happiness to all who wish to participate." – George Washington, letter to Lucretia Wilhemina Van Winter, Mount Vernon, March 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:120

Address to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Commonality of the City of New York – April 10, 1785

"To have had the good fortune amidst the viscissitudes of a long and arduous contest 'never to have known a moment when I did not possess the confidence and esteem of my Country.' And that my conduct should have met the approbation, and obtained the affectionate regard of the State of New York (where difficulties were numerous and complicated) may be ascribed more to the effect of divine wisdom, which has disposed the minds of the people, harrassed on all sides, to make allowances for the embarrassments of my situation, whilst with fortitude and patience they sustained the loss of their Capitol, and a valuable part of their territory, and to the liberal sentiments, and great exertion of her virtuous Citizens, than to any merit of mine." – George Washington, address to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Commonality of the City of New York, April 10, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:126

"I pray that Heaven may bestow its choicest blessings on your City. That the devastations of War, in which you found it, may soon be without a trace. That a well regulated and beneficial Commerce may enrichen your Citizens. And that, your State (at present the Seat of

the Empire) may set such examples of wisdom and liberality, as shall have a tendency to strengthen and give permanency to the Union at home, and credit and respectability to it abroad. The accomplishment whereof is a remaining wish, and the primary object of all my desires." – George Washington, address to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Commonality of the City of New York, April 10, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:127

Letter to Francis Hopkinson – May 16, 1785

"In for a penny, in for a pound is an old adage. I am so hackneyed to the touches of the Painters pencil, that I am now altogether at their beck, and sit like patience on a Monument whilst they are delineating the lines of my face. ... It is a proof among many others of what habit and custom can effect. At first I was as impatient at the request, and as restive under the operation, as a Colt is of the Saddle. The next time, I submitted very reluctantly, but with less flouncing. Now, no dray moves more readily to the Thill, than I do to the Painters Chair." – George Washington, letter to Francis Hopkinson, Mount Vernon, May 16, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:140

Letter to Nathanael Greene – May 20, 1785

"[I]f a commanding officer is amenable to private calls for the discharge of public duty, he has a dagger always at his breast, and can turn neither to the right nor to the left without meeting its point; in a word, he is no longer a free agent in office, as there are few military decisions which are not offensive to one party or the other." – George Washington, letter to Nathanael Greene, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:144

Letter to Burwell Bassett – May 23, 1785

"It has ever been a maxim with me thro' life, neither to promote, nor to prevent a matrimonial connection, unless there should be something, indispensably requiring interference in the latter; I have always considered marriage as the most interesting event of ones life, the foundation of happiness or misery." – George Washington, letter to Burwell Bassett, Mount Vernon, May 23, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:152

Letter to William Goddard – June 11, 1785

"I would willingly hope that nothing would occur tending to give me anxiety; but should any thing present itself in this or any other publication, I shall never undertake the painful task of recrimination, nor do I know that I should ever enter upon my justification." – George Washington, letter to William Goddard, Mount Vernon, June 11, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:162

Letter to William Minor – June 16, 1785

"Moral obligations, or the obligations of humanity therefore induced me to bestow a years schooling on Lawce. Posey, and to effect it I was willing to incur the expence of a years board also." – George Washington, letter to William Minor, Mount Vernon, June 16, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:165

Letter to the Countess of Huntingdon – June 30, 1785

"In the last letter which I had the honor to write to you, I informed your Ladyship of the communication I had made to the President of Congress of your wishes to obtain Lands in the Western Territory for a number of Emigrants as a means of civilizing the Savages, and propagating the Gospel among them. In answer, he informed me that Mr. Henry, Governor of this State, had laid your Ladyships letter and plan which were addressed to him, before Congress, in a full and ample manner; but his private opinion of the matter was, that under the pressure of Debt to which this fund was to be appropriated, and the diversity of sentiment respecting the mode of applying it, that no discrimination would, or indeed could be made in favor of Emigrants of any description whatsoever. I waited however a considerable time to know the result of Mr. Henry's reference, before I would give your Ladyship the trouble of another letter on this subject; but hearing nothing more of the matter, and having had the enclosed resolutions and ordinance sent to me by the President himself, as the result of their long and painful deliberation on the mode of disposing of the Western Lands, I will delay no longer to express my concern that your Ladyships humane and benevolent views are not better seconded. The resolutions and ordinance herewith enclosed (on which I shall make no comments) will give the terms and shew your Ladyship the mode by which the Lands belonging to the Union are to be obtained; in other words, how difficult it must be for foreigners to know when or where to apply for them." – George Washington, letter to the Countess of Huntingdon, Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:180-181

Letter to George William Fairfax – June 30, 1785

"I wish I could add, that as much wisdom had pervaded our councils; as reason and common policy most evidently dictated; but the truth is, the people must feel before they will see; consequently, are brought slowly into measures of public utility." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:183

"Our course of Husbandry in this Country, and more especially in this State, is not only exceedingly unprofitable, but so destructive to our Lands, that it is my earnest wish to adopt a better; and as I believe no Country has carried the improvement of Land and the benefits of Agriculture to greater perfection than England, I have asked myself frequently of late, whether a thorough bred practical english Farmer, from a part of England where Husbandry seems to be best understood and is most advantageously practised, could not be obtain'd? ... When I speak of a knowing farmer, I mean one who understands the best course of crops; how to plough, to sow, to mow, to hedge, to Ditch and above all, Midas like, one who can convert every thing he touches into manure, as the first transmutation towards Gold." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, Mount Vernon, June 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:185

Letter to David Humphreys - July 25, 1785

"My first wish is to see this plague to mankind banished from off the Earth, and the sons and Daughters of this world employed in more pleasing and innocent amusements, than in preparing implements and exercising them for the destruction of mankind; rather than quarrel about territory let the poor, the needy and oppressed of the Earth, and those who want Land, resort to the fertile plains of our western country, the second Promise, and there dwell in peace, fulfilling the first and great commandment." – George Washington, on war, in a letter to David Humphreys, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:202

"[I]f I had talents for it, I have not leisure to turn my thoughts to commentaries: a consciousness of a defective education, and a certainty of the want of time, unfit me for such an undertaking." – George Washington, on war, in a letter to David Humphreys, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:203

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – July 25, 1785

"I stand before you as a Culprit: but to repent and be forgiven are the precepts of Heaven: I do the former, do you practice the latter, and it will be participation of a divine attribute. Yet I am not barren of excuses for this seeming inattention; frequent absences from home, a round of company when at it, and the pressure of many matters, might be urged as apologies for my long silence; but I disclaim all of them, and trust to the forbearance of friendship and your wonted indulgence: indeed so few things occur, in the line on which I now move, worthy of attention, that this also might be added to the catalogue of my excuses; especially when I further add, that one of my letters, if it is to be estimated according to its length, would make three of yours." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:206

"I now congratulate you, and my heart does it more effectually than my pen, on your safe arrival at Paris, from your voyage to this Country, and on the happy meeting with Madame la Fayette and your family in good health. May the blessing of this long continue to them, and may every day add increase of happiness to yourself." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:206

"As the clouds which overspread your hemisphere are dispersing, and peace with all its concomitants is dawning upon your Land, I will banish the sound of War from my letter: I wish to see the sons and daughters of the world in Peace and busily employed in the more agreeable amusement of fulfilling the first and great commandment, Increase and Multiply : as an encouragement to which we have opened the fertile plains of the Ohio to the poor, the needy and the oppressed of the Earth; any one therefore who is heavy laden, or who wants land to cultivate, may repair thither and abound, as in the Land of promise, with milk and honey: the ways are preparing, and the roads will be made easy, thro' the channels of Potomac and James river." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:207

"It is to be regretted, I confess, that democratical States must always feel before they can see: it is this that makes their Governments slow, but the people will be right at last." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:208

Letter to James McHenry – August 22, 1785

"We are either a united people under one head, and for federal purposes; or we are thirteen independant sovereignties, eternally counteracting each other: if the former, whatever such a majority of the States as the Constitution points out, conceives to be for the benefit of the whole, should, in my humble opinion, be submitted to by the minority: let the southern States always be represented; let them act more in union; let them declare freely and boldly what is for the interest of, and what is prejudicial to their constituents; and there will, there must be an accommodating spirit." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:228

"I confess to you candidly, that I can foresee no evil greater than disunion than those unreasonable jealousies (I say unreasonable , because I would have a proper jealousy always awake, and the United States on the watch to prevent individual States from infracting the constitution with impunity) which are continually poisoning our minds and filling them with imaginary evils to the prevention of real

ones." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:228

Letter to William Grayson – August 22, 1785

"[T]he propositions respecting a coinage of Gold, Silver and Copper; a measure which in my opinion is become indispensably necessary: Mr. Jefferson's ideas upon this subject are plain and simple; well adapted, I think, to the nature of the case, as he has exemplified by the plan. Without a Coinage, or without some stop can be put to the cutting and clipping of money; our Dollars, pistareens &c. will be converted (as Teague says) into five quarters; and a man must travel with a pair of money scales in his pocket, or run the risk of receiving Gold at one fourth less by weight than it counts." – George Washington, letter to William Grayson, Mount Vernon, August 22, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:233

Letter to Chevalier de la Luzerne – September 5, 1785

"From the last European accounts we have reason to hope that the clouds which seemed to be gathering in your hemisphere, will yield to a tranquil sky; and Peace, with all its blessings will spread its mantle over the threatened Lands. My first wish is to see the sons and Daughters of the World mixing as one family, enjoying the sweets of social intercourse, and reciprocal advantages: the Earth certainly is sufficient to contain us all, and affords every thing necessary to our wants, if we would be friendly and endeavour to accommodate one another. Why then should we wrangle, and why should we attempt to infringe the Rights and properties of our Neighbours? But lest you should suppose that I am about to turn preacher, I will only add that, with the highest esteem and consideration, I have the honor, etc." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de la Luzerne, Mount Vernon, September 5, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:251-252

Letter to Richard Varick – September 26, 1785

"As you are at the source of foreign intelligence, I could only reverberate what you have before heard; and having nothing of a Domestic kind worth communicating, I shall be rather laconic in my perfect address. I enjoy, thank God, very good health, but Mrs. W - n, is scarce ever well, she joins me in best wishes for you." – George Washington, letter to Richard Varick, Mount Vernon, September 26, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:262

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull – October 1, 1785

"It has so happened, that your letter of the first of last month did not reach me until Saturdays Post. You know, too well, the sincere respect and regard I entertained for your venerable fathers public and private character, to require assurances of the concern I felt for his death; or of that sympathy in your feelings for the loss of him, which is prompted by friendship. Under this loss however, great as your pangs may have been at the first shock, you have every thing to console you. A long and well spent life in the Service of his Country, placed Govt. Trumbull amongst the first of Patriots. In the social duties he yielded to none. and his Lamp, from the common course of Nature, being nearly extinguished, worn down with age and cares, but retaining his mental faculties in perfection, are blessings which rarely attend advanced life. All these combining, have secured to his memory universal respect and love here, and no doubt immeasurable happiness hereafter." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, October 1, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:283

"I am sensible that none of these observations can have escaped you, and that I can offer nothing which your own reason has not already suggested on this occasion; and being of Sterne's opinion, that "Before an affliction is digested, consolation comes too soon; and after it is digested, it comes too late: there is but a mark between these two, as fine almost as a hair, for a comforter to take aim at." I rarely attempt it, nor shall I add more on this subject to you, as it would only be a renewal of sorrow, by recalling a fresh to your remembrance things which had better be forgotten." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, October 1, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:284

Letter to George Mason – October 3, 1785

"Altho, no man's sentiments are more opposed to any kind of restraint upon religious principles than mine are; yet I must confess, that I am not amongst the number of those who are so much alarmed at the thoughts of making people pay towards the support of that which they profess, if of the denomination of Christians; or declare themselves Jews, Mahomitans or otherwise, and thereby obtain proper relief. As the matter now stands, I wish an assessment had never been agitated, and as it has gone so far, that the Bill could die an easy death; because I think it will be productive of more quiet to the State, than by enacting it into a Law; which, in my opinion, would be impolitic, admitting there is a decided majority for it, to the disquiet of a respectable minority. In the first case the matter will soon subside; in the latter, it will rankle and perhaps convulse, the State." – George Washington, letter to George Mason, Mount Vernon, October 3, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:285

Letter to Charles Armand-Tuffin – October 7, 1785

"I never expect to draw my sword again: I can scarcely conceive the cause that would induce me to do it; but if, contrary to all expectation, such an event should take place, I should think it a fortunate circumstance, and myself highly honored, to have it supported by yours. My time is now occupied by rural amusements, in which I have great satisfaction; and my first wish is, altho' it is against the profession of arms and would clip the wings of some of you young soldiers who are soaring after glory, to see the whole world in peace, and the Inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind." – George Washington, letter to Charles Armand-Tuffin, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:289

Letter to James Warren – October 7, 1785

"The assurances of your friendship, after a silence of more than six years, are extremely pleasing to me. Friendships, formed under the circumstances that ours commenced, are not easily eradicated; and I can assure you, that mine has undergone no diminution; every occasion, therefore, of renewing it, will give me pleasure, and I shall be happy at all times to hear of your welfare." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:289

"Illiberality, Jealousy, and local policy mix too much in all our public councils for the good government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance; and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:290

"To me, it is a solecism in politics: indeed it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a Nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation, who are the creatures of our making, appointed for a limited and short duration, and who are amenable for every action, and recallable at any moment, and are subject to all the evils which they may be instrumental in producing, sufficient powers to order and direct the affairs of the same. By such policy as this the wheels of Government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:290

"That we have it in our power to become one of the most respectable Nations upon Earth, admits, in my humble opinion, of no doubt; if we would but pursue a wise, just, and liberal policy towards one another, and would keep good faith with the rest of the World: that our resources are ample and encreasing, none can deny; but while they are grudgingly applied, or not applied at all, we give a vital stab to public faith, and shall sink, in the eyes of Europe, into contempt." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:290

"It has long been a speculative question among Philosophers and wise men, whether foreign Commerce is of real advantage to any Country; that is, whether the luxury, effeminacy, and corruptions which are introduced along with it; are counter-balanced by the convenience and wealth which it brings with it." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:290

"[W]e have abundant reason to be convinced, that the spirit for Trade which pervades these States is not to be restrained; it behooves us then to establish just principles; and this, any more than other matters of national concern, cannot be done by thirteen heads differently constructed and organized. The necessity, therefore, of a controuling power is obvious; and why it should be withheld is beyond my comprehension." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:290

"The Agricultural Society, lately established in Philadelphia, promises extension usefulness if it is prosecuted with spirit. I wish most sincerely that every State in the Union would institute similar ones; and that these Societies would correspond fully and freely with each other, and communicate all useful discoveries founded on practice, with a due attention to climate, soil, and Seasons to the public." – George Washington, letter to James Warren, Mount Vernon, October 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:291

Letter to Samuel Vaughn – November 30, 1785

"[W]ith those who are disposed to cavil, or who have the itch of writing strongly upon them, nothing can be made to suit their palates: the best way therefore to disconcert and defeat them, is to take no notice of their publications; all else is but food for declamation." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Vaughn, Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:327

"There is not I conceive, an unbiassed mind, that would refuse the Officers of the late Army the right of associating for the purpose of establishing a fund for the support of the poor and distressed of their fraternity, when many of them it is well known, are reduced to their last shifts by the ungenerous conduct of their Country, in not adopting more vigorous measures to render their Certificates productive." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Vaughn, Mount Vernon, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:327

Letter to James Madison – November 30, 1785

"I hear with much pleasure that the Assembly are engaged, seriously, in the consideration of the revised Laws. A short and simple code, in my opinion, tho' I have the sentiments of some of the Gentlemen of the long robe against me, would be productive of happy

consequences, and redound to the honor of this or any Country which shall adopt such." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:335

"We are either a United people, or we are not. If the former, let us, in all matters of general concern act as a nation, which have national objects to promote, and a national character to support. If we are not, let us no longer act a farce by pretending to it." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:336

"It is much to be wished that public faith may be held inviolate. Painful is it even in thought that attempts should be made to weaken the bands of it. It is a dangerous experiment, once slacken the reins and the power is lost, and it is questionable with me whether the advocates of the measure foresee all the consequences of it." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:336

"It is an old adage that honesty is the best policy; this applies to public as well as private life, to States as well as individuals." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, November 30, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:336

Letter to Thomas Smith – December 7, 1785

"The meaning of my last Letter to you was not well expressed, if it was understood that actions of Trespass were to be brought, before the issue of the ejections was known. I had no idea of this, because if my opponents should succeed in the latter, there would be no ground for the former; and I should incur a certain expence without a chance of profit: from the statement of the cases which you have mentioned, I now leave it altogether discretionary in you, whether to bring them afterwards or not. I never should have thought of this mode of punishment, had I not viewed the Defendants as wilful and obstinate sinners; persevering after timely and repeated admonition, in a design to injure me, but I am not all tenacious of this matter and take the chance of this letter's going by way of Baltimore, and another by the way of Philada., to request that these Actions may be at least delayed, if not altogether laid aside, according to circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Smith, Mount Vernon, December 7, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:347

Letter to Alexander Hamilton (Society of the Cincinnati) – December 11, 1785

"That the jealousies of, and prejudices against this Society (of the Cincinnati) were carried to an unwarrantable length, I will readily grant. And that *less* than was done, ought to have removed the fears which had been imbibed, I am as clear in, as I am that it would not have done it; but it is a matter of little moment whether the alarm which seized the public mind was the result of foresight, envy and jealousy, or a disordered imagination." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:351

"The fears of the people are not yet removed, they only sleep, and a very little matter will set them afloat again." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, December 11, 1785; Fitzpatrick 28:352

Letter to William Drayton – March 25, 1786

"Nothing in my opinion would contribute more to the welfare of these States, than the proper management of our Lands; and nothing, in this State particularly, seems to be less understood. The present mode of cropping practised among us, is destructive to landed property; and must, if persisted in much longer, ultimately ruin the holders of it." – George Washington, letter to William Drayton, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:394

Letter to John Augustine Washington – March 27, 1786

"I had established it as a maxim to accept no Tenants that did not mean to reside on the Land; or who had land of their own adjoining to it, not expecting, in either case, much improvement on, or much justice to mine under these circumstances." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Mount Vernon, March 27, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:395

Letter to Robert Morris – April 12, 1786

"I hope it will not be conceived from these observations, that it is my wish to hold the unhappy people, who are the subject of this letter, in slavery. I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is by Legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting." – George Washington, letter to Robert Morris, Mount Vernon, April 12, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:408

Diary Entry – April 16, 1786

"Began also to sow the Siberian Wheat which I had obtained from Baltimore by means of Colo. Tilghman, at the Ferry Plantation in the ground laid apart there for experiments. This was done upon ground which, sometime ago, had been marked off by furrows 8 feet apart, in which a second furrow had been run to deepen them. 4 furrows were then plowed to these, which made the whole 5 furrow Ridges. These being done sometime ago, and by frequent rains prevented sewing at the time intended had got hard, I therefore before the seed was sowed, split these Ridges again, by running twice in the same furrow. After wch. I harrowed the ridges, and where the ground was lumpy run my piked Roller with the Harrow at the tale over it, wch. I found very efficacious in breaking the clods and pulverising the earth; and wd. have done it perfectly if there had not been too much moisture remaining of the late rains; after this harrowing and rolling where necessary, I sowed the Wheat with my drill plow on the reduced ridges in rows 8 feet apart. But I should have observed that, after the ridges were split by the furrow in the middle, and before the furrows were closed again by the harrow, I sprinkled a little dung in them. Finding the barrel discharged the Wheat too fast, I did, after sowing 9 of the shortest (for we began at the furthest corner of the field) rows, I stopped every other hole in the barrel, and in this manner sowed 5 rows more, and still thinking the seed too liberally bestowed, I stopped 2, and left one hole open, alternately, by which 4 out of 12 holes only, discharged seeds; and this, as I had taken the strap of leather off, seemed to give seed enough (though not so regular as were to be washed) to the ground." – George Washington, diary entry, April 16, 1786; "The Diaries of George Washington, 1748-1799," John C. Fitzpatrick, editor, Boston and New York, Houghton Mifflin Co. (1925) Vol. 3:38-41

Letter to Marchioness de Lafayette – April 10, 1786

"The noon-tide of life is now passed with Mrs. Washington and myself, and all we have to do is to spend the evening of our days in tranquillity, and glide gently down a stream which no human effort can ascend." – George Washington, letter to Marchioness de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:419

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – May 10, 1786

"The account given of your tour thro' Prussia and other States of Germany, to Vienna and back; and of the Troops which you saw reviewed in the pay of those Monarchs, at different places, is not less pleasing than it is interesting; and must have been as instructive as entertaining to yourself. Your reception at the Courts of Berlin, Vienna, and elsewhere must have been pleasing to you: to have been received by the King of Prussia, and Prince Henry his brother, (who as soldiers and politicians can yield the palm to none) with such marks of attention and distinction, was as indicative of their discernment, as it is of your merit, and will encrease my opinion of them. It is to be lamented however that great characters are seldom without a blot. That one man should tyrannise over millions, will always be a shade in that of the former; whilst it is pleasing to hear that a due regard to the rights of mankind, is characteristic of the latter: I shall revere and love him for this trait of his character." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:420

"To have viewed the several fields of Battle over which you passed, could not, among other sensations, have failed to excite this thought, here have fallen thousands of gallant spirits to satisfy the ambition of, or to support their sovereigns perhaps in acts of oppression or injustice! melancholy reflection! For what wise purposes does Providence permit this? Is it as a scourge for mankind, or is it to prevent them from becoming too populous? If the latter, would not the fertile plains of the Western world receive the redundancy of the old." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:421

"[Y]our late purchase of an estate in the colony of Cayenne, with a view of emancipating the slaves on it, is a generous and noble proof of your humanity. Would to God a like spirit would diffuse itself generally into the minds of the people of this country; but I despair of seeing it. Some petitions were presented to the Assembly, at its last Session, for the abolition of slavery, but they could scarcely obtain a reading. To set them afloat at once would, I really believe, be productive of much inconvenience and mischief; but by degrees it certainly might, and assuredly ought to be effected; and that too by Legislative authority." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, May 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:424

Letter to John Jay – May 18, 1786

"I coincide perfectly in sentiment with you, my Dr. Sir, that there are errors in our national Government which call for correction, loudly I would add; but I shall find myself happily mistaken if the remedies are at hand. We are certainly in a delicate situation, but my fear is that the people are not yet sufficiently misled to retract from error." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:431

"I think there is more wickedness than ignorance mixed in our councils." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:431

"That it is necessary to revise and amend the articles of confederation, I entertain *no* doubt; but what may be the consequences of such an attempt is doubtful. Yet something must be done, or the fabrick must fall, for it certainly is tottering." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:431

"[S]omething must be done, or the fabrick must fall, for it certainly is tottering." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:431

"Ignorance and design are difficult to combat. Out of these proceed illiberal sentiments, improper jealousies, and a train of evils which oftentimes in republican governments must be sorely felt before they can be removed. The former, that is ignorance, being a fit soil for the latter to work in, tools are employed by them which a generous mind would disdain to use; and which nothing but time, and their own puerile or wicked productions, can show the inefficacy and dangerous tendency of. I think often of our situation, and view it with concern. From the high ground we stood upon, to be so fallen! So lost! It is really mortifying." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:431-432

"[B]ut virtue, I fear has, in a great degree, taken its departure from us; and the want of disposition to do justice is the source of the national embarrassments; for whatever guise or colorings are given to them, this I apprehend is the origin of the evils we now feel, and probably shall labour under for some time yet." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, May 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:432

Letter to South Carolina Governor William Moultrie – May 25, 1786

"It gives me pleasure to find a spirit for inland navigation prevailing so generally. No country is more capable of improvements in this way than our own, none which will be more benefited by them; and to begin well, as you justly observe, is all in all: error in the commencement will not only be productive of unnecessary expence, but, what is still worse, of discouragements." – George Washington, letter to South Carolina Governor William Moultrie, Mount Vernon, May 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:439

Letter to James Tilghman – June 5, 1786

"Of all the numerous acquaintances of your lately deceased son [Colonel Tench Tilghman passed away April 18, 1786], and amidst all the sorrowings that are mingled on that melancholy occasion, I may venture to assert (that excepting those of his nearest relatives) none could have felt his death with more regret than I did because no one entertained a higher opinion of his worth, or had imbibed sentiments of greater friendship for him than I had done. ... That you, Sir, should have felt the keenest anguish for this loss, I can readily conceive, the ties of parental affection united with those of friendship, could not fail to have produced this effect. It is however a dispensation the wisdom of which is inscrutable, and amidst all your grief there is this consolation to be drawn, that while living, no man could be more esteemed, and since dead, none more lamented than Col. Tilghman." – George Washington, letter to James Tilghman, Mount Vernon, June 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:450

Letter to Nicholas Pike – June 20, 1786

"It gives me the highest satisfaction to find the Arts and sciences making a progress in any Country; but when I see them advancing in the rising States of America, I feel a peculiar pleasure, and in my opinion, every effort of genius and all attempts towards improving useful knowledge ought to meet with encouragement in this Country." – George Washington, letter to Nicholas Pike, Mount Vernon, June 20, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:463

Letter to George William Fairfax – June 26, 1786

"Tho' envy is no part of my composition, yet the picture you have drawn of your present habitation and mode of living is enough to create strong desires in me to be a participator of the tranquillity and rural amusements you have described. I am getting into the latter as fast as I can, being determined to make the remainder of my life easy, let the world or the affairs of it go as they may." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, June 26, 1786 Fitzpatrick 28:468

"My manner of living is plain. I do not mean to be put out of it, a glass of wine and a bit of mutton are always ready, and such as will be content to partake of them are welcome those who expect more will be disappointed, but no change will be affected by it." – George Washington, letter to George William Fairfax, June 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:470

Letter to Henry Lee – July 26, 1786

"If I stopped short of your ideas respecting the navigation of the Mississippi, or of what may be the opinions of Congress on this subject, it was not for want of coincidence of sentiment, but because I was ignorant at that time of the rubs which are in the way of your commercial treaty with Spain, and because I thought some address might be necessary to temporize with, and keep the settlement of Kentucky in state of quietness. At this moment that settlement is formidable, population is rapidly increasing there. There are many ambitious and turbulent spirits among its inhabitants, who from the present difficulties in their intercourse with the Atlantic States, have turned their eyes to New Orleans, and may become riotous and ungovernable, if the hope of traffick with it is cut off by treaty. Notwithstanding if this cession is counterpoized, it may be a more favourable time for Congress to speak decisively to them, than when they have got stronger, but not sufficiently matured to force the passage of the Mississippi themselves; whilst the plans which are in agitation for opening communications with that territory, may, if successful, unfold to them new prospects, mutually beneficial to the old and new States." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, July 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:482-483

"It was with very sincere regret I received the news of Genl. [Nathanael] Greene's death [June 19, 1786 at age 44]. Life and the concerns of this world one would think are so uncertain, and so full of disappointments, that nothing is to be counted upon from human actions." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, July 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:483

Letter to William Grayson – July 26, 1786

"I wish very sincerely that the Land Ordinance may answer the expectations of Congress. I had, and still have my doubts of the utility of the plan, but pray devoutly, that they may never be realized, as I am desirous of seeing it a productive branch of the Revenue." – George Washington, letter to William Grayson, Mount Vernon, July 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:484

"It is good policy at all times, to place one's adversary in the wrong. Had we observed good faith, and the western Posts had then been withheld from us by G: Britain, we might have appealed to god and man for justice, and if there are any guarantees to the treaty, we might have called upon them to see it fulfilled. 26 But now we cannot do this; tho' clear I am, that the reasons assigned by the British Ministry are only ostensible, and that the Posts, under one pretence or another, were intended to have been detained, tho' no such Acts had ever passed: but how different would our Fitzpatrick 28:487

Letter to Chevalier de La Luzerne – August 1, 1786

"It is not the part of a good citizen to despair of the republic: nor ought we to have calculated, that our young Governments would have acquired, in so short a period, all the consistency and solidity, which it has been the work of ages to give to other nations." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de La Luzerne, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:499

"[O]ur internal Governments are daily acquiring strength. The laws have their fullest energy; justice is well administered; robbery, violence or murder is not heard of from Nw. Hampshire to Georgia. The people at large (as far as I can learn) are more industrious than they were before the war. (Economy begins, partly from necessity and partly from choice and habit, to prevail. The seeds of population are scattered over an immense tract of western country. In the old States, wch. were the theatres of hostility, it is wonderful to see how soon the ravages of war are repaired. Houses are rebuilt, fields enclosed, stocks of cattle which were destroyed are replaced, and many a desolated territory assumes again the cheerful appearance of cultivation. In many places the vestiges of conflagration and ruin are hardly to be traced. The arts of peace, such as clearing rivers, building bridges, and establishing conveniences for travelling &c. are assiduously promoted. In short, the foundation of a great Empire is laid, and I please myself with a persuasion, that Providence will not leave its work imperfect." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de La Luzerne, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:500

"[T]he foundation of a great Empire is laid, and I please myself with a persuasion, that Providence will not leave its work imperfect." – George Washington, letter to Chevalier de La Luzerne, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:501

Letter to John Jay – August 1, 1786

"We have errors to correct; we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us, that men will not adopt and carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of a coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation without having lodged some where a power, which will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner, as the authority of the State Governments extends over the several States." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:502

"We must take human nature as we find it: perfection falls not to the share of mortals." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:502-503

"If you tell the Legislatures they have violated the Treaty of Peace, and invaded the prerogatives of the confederacy, they will laugh in your face. What then is to be done? Things cannot go on in the same train forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with the circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme into another. To anticipate and prevent disastrous contingencies, would be the part of wisdom and patriotism." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:503

"What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing. I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of Government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! what a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! what a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious!" – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:503

"Retired as I am from the world I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the Ship into Port, and having been fairly discharged; it is not my business to embark again on a sea of troubles. Nor could it be expected, that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight on the minds of my Countrymen; they have been neglected,

tho' given as a last legacy in the most solemn manner. I had then perhaps some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:503-504

Letter to Arthur Young – August 6, 1786

"Agriculture has ever been amongst the most favourite amusements of my life, though I never possessed much skill in the art, and nine years total inattention to it, has added nothing to a knowledge which is best understood from practice." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Mount Vernon, August 6, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:510

Letter to Charles Armand-Tuffin – August 10, 1786

"For in my estimation more permanent and genuine happiness is to be found in the sequestered walks of connubial life, than in the giddy rounds of promiscuous pleasure, or the more tumultuous and imposing scenes of successful ambition." – George Washington, letter to Charles Armand-Tuffin, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:514

Letter to Theodorick Bland – August 15, 1786

"[I]t is assuredly better to go laughing than crying thro' the rough journey of life." – George Washington, letter to Theodorick Bland, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:516

"I shall always be happy to give and receive communications on improvements in farming, and the various branches of agriculture. This is in my opinion, an object of infinite importance to the country; I consider it to be the proper source of American wealth and happiness." – George Washington, letter to Theodorick Bland, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:517

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – August 15, 1786

"There are many articles of manufacture which we stand absolutely in need of and shall continue to have occasion for so long as we remain an agricultural people, which will be while lands are so cheap and plenty, that is to say, for ages to come." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:519

"However unimportant America may be considered at present, and however Britain may affect to despise her trade, there will assuredly come a day, when this country will have some weight in the scale of empires." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:520

Altho' I pretend to no peculiar information respecting commercial affairs, nor any foresight into the scenes of futurity; yet as the member of an infant empire, as a Philanthropist by character, and (if I may be allowed the expression) as a Citizen of the great republic of humanity at large; I cannot help turning my attention sometimes to this subject. I would be understood to mean, I cannot avoid reflecting with pleasure on the probable influence that commerce may hereafter have on human manners and society in general. On these occasions I consider how mankind may be connected like one great family in fraternal ties. I indulge a fond, perhaps an enthusiastic idea, that as the world is evidently much less barbarous than it has been, its melioration must still be progressive; that nations are becoming more humanized in their policy, that the subjects of ambition and causes for hostility are daily diminishing, and, in fine, that the period is not very remote, when the benefits of a liberal and free commerce will, pretty generally, succeed to the devastations and horrors of war." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:520

"Some of the late treaties which have been entered into, and particularly that between the King of Prussia and the Ud. States, seem to constitute a new era in negotiation, and to promise the happy consequences I have just now been mentioning. But let me ask you my Dr. Marquis, in such an enlightened, in such a liberal age, how is it possible the great maritime powers of Europe should submit to pay an annual tribute to the little piratical States of Barbary? Would to Heaven we had a navy able to reform those enemies to mankind, or crush them into non-existence." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:521

Letter to Marquis de Chastellux – August 18, 1786

"For characters and habits are not easily taken up, or suddenly laid aside. Nor does that mild species of philosophy which aims at promoting human happiness, ever belye itself by deviating from the generous and godlike pursuit." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, August 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:522

"I may perhaps be allowed to doubt whether your friendship and partiality have not, in this one instance, acquired an ascendancy over your cooler judgment." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, August 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:522

"[O]n the one hand, I consider it an indubitable mark of mean-spiritedness and pitiful vanity to court applause from the pen or tongue of man; so on the other, I believe it to be a proof of false modesty or an unworthy affectation of humility to appear altogether insensible to the commendations of the virtuous and enlightened part of our species. Perhaps nothing can excite more perfect harmony in the soul than to have this string vibrate in unison with the internal consciousness of rectitude in our intentions and an humble hope of approbation from the supreme disposer of all things." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, August 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:522-523

"We have no news on this side the Atlantic worth the pains of sending across it. The country is recovering rapidly from the ravages of the war: the seeds of population are scattered far in the Wilderness: agriculture is prosecuted with industry: the works of Peace, such as opening rivers, building bridges &c., are carried on with spirit. Trade is not so successful as we could wish, our State Governments are well administered. Some objects in our foederal system might probably be altered for the better. I rely much on the good sense of my countrymen, and trust that a superintending Providence will disappoint the hopes of our Enemies." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, August 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 28:523-524

Letter to John Francis Mercer – September 9, 1786

"I never mean (unless some particular circumstance should compel me to it) to possess another slave by purchase; it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted, by which slavery in this country may be abolished by slow, sure, and imperceptible degrees." – George Washington, letter to John Francis Mercer, Mount Vernon, September 9, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:5

Letter to William Triplet – September 25, 1786

"I do not recollect that in the course of my life I ever forfeited my word, or broke a promise made to any one." – George Washington, letter to William Triplet, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:18

Letter to Bushrod Washington – September 30, 1786

"I am no friend to institutions except in local matters which are wholly or in a great measure confined to the County of the Delegates. To me it appears much wiser and more politic, to choose able and honest representatives, and leave them in all national questions to determine from the evidence of reason, and the facts which shall be adduced, when internal and external information is given to them in a collective state." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, September 30, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:22

Letter to David Humphreys – October 22, 1786

"[W]hat is the cause of all these commotions: do they proceed from licentiousness, British-influence disseminated by the Tories, or real grievances which admit of redress? If the latter, why were they delayed 'till the public mind had become so much agitated? If the former why are not the powers of Government tried at once? It is as well to be without, as not to live under their exercise. Commotions of this sort, like snow-balls, gather strength as they roll, if there is no opposition in the way to divide and crumble them." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, October 22, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:27

Letter to John Augustine Washington – October 25, 1786

"It is natural for young married persons (who are launching into life) to look forward to a permanent establishment. If they are prudent, they will be reasonably solicitous to provide for those who come after, and have a right to look to them for support." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Mount Vernon, October 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:28

"[I]f Mrs. Washington should survive me there is a moral certainty of my dying without issue, and should I be the longest liver, the matter in my opinion is almost as certain; for whilst I retain the reasoning faculties I shall never marry a girl; and it is not probable that I should have children by a woman of an age suitable to my own, should I be disposed to enter into a second marriage." – George Washington, letter to John Augustine Washington, Mount Vernon, October 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:29

Circular Letter to the State Societies of the Cincinnati – October 31, 1786

"Highly approving as I do, the principles on which the Society is now constituted; and pleased to find, so far as I have been able to learn from reiterated enquiries, that it is acceptable to the good people of the United States in general; it only remains for me to express the sense I entertain of the honor conferred by the last General Meeting in electing me their President, and too implore in future the benediction of Heaven on the virtuous Associates in this illustrious Institution." – George Washington, Circular Letter to the State Societies of the Cincinnati, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:32

Letter to Henry Lee – October 31, 1786

"The picture which you have exhibited, and the accounts which are published of the commotions, and temper of numerous bodies in the Eastern States, are equally to be lamented and deprecated. They exhibit a melancholy proof of what our trans-Atlantic foe has predicted; and of another thing perhaps, which is still more to be regretted, and is yet more unaccountable, that mankind when left to themselves are unfit for their own Government. I am mortified beyond expression when I view the clouds that have spread over the brightest morn that ever dawned upon any Country. In a word, I am lost in amazement when I behold what intrigue, the interested views of desperate characters, ignorance and jealousy of the minor part, are capable of effecting, as a scourge on the major part of our fellow Citizens of the Union; for it is hardly to be supposed that the great body of the people, tho' they will not act, can be so shortsighted, or enveloped in darkness, as not to see rays of a distant sun thro' all this mist of intoxication and folly." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:34

"You talk, my good Sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found; and if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for the disorders. Influence is no Government. Let us have one by which our lives, liberties and properties will be secured; or let us know the worst at once. Under these impressions, my humble opinion is, that there is a call for decision." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:34

"Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have real grievances, redress them if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it in the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If they have real grievances, redress them if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it in the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, all will be convinced that the superstructure is bad, or wants support. To be more exposed in the eyes of the world, and more contemptible than we already are, is hardly possible." – George Washington, Letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:34

"Precedents are dangerous things." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:34

"[L]et the reins of government then be braced and held with a steady hand, and every violation of the constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended, but not suffered to be trampled upon whilst it has an existence." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, October 31, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:34

Biographical Memoranda to David Humphreys – 1786

"[General Edward Braddock's] good and bad qualities were intimately blended. He was brave even to a fault and in regular Service would have done honor to his profession. His attachments were warm, his enmities were strong, and having no disguise about him, both appeared in full force. He was generous and disinterested, but plain and blunt in his manner even to rudeness." – George Washington, Biographical Memoranda to David Humphreys, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:45

Letter to James Madison – November 5, 1786

"Fain would I hope, that the great, and most important of all objects, the foederal governmt., may be considered with that calm and deliberate attention which the magnitude of it so loudly calls for at this critical moment. Let prejudices, unreasonable jealousies, and local interest yield to reason and liberality. Let us look to our National character, and to things beyond the present period." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:51

"Let prejudices, unreasonable jealousies, and local interest yield to reason and liberality. Let us look to our National character, and to things beyond the present period. No morn ever dawned more favourably than ours did; and no day was ever more clouded than the present! Wisdom, and good examples are necessary at this time to rescue the political machine from the impending storm." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:51

"Without some alteration in our political creed, the superstructure we have been seven years raising at the expence of so much blood and treasure, must fall. We are fast verging to anarchy and confusion!" – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:51

"How melancholy is the reflection, that in so short a space, we should have made such large strides towards fulfilling the prediction of our transatlantic foe! 'leave them to themselves, and their government will soon dissolve.' Will not the wise and good strive hard to avert this evil? Or will their supineness suffer ignorance, and the arts of self-interested designing disaffected and desperate characters, to involve this rising empire in wretchedness and contempt? What stronger evidence can be given of the want of energy in our governments than these disorders? If there exists not a power to check them, what security has a man for life, liberty, or property? To you, I am sure I need not add aught on this subject, the consequences of a lax, or inefficient government, are too obvious to be dwelt on." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:52

"Thirteen Sovereignties pulling against each other, and all tugging at the foederal head will soon bring ruin on the whole; whereas a liberal, and energetic Constitution, well guarded and closely watched, to prevent incroachments, might restore us to that degree of

respectability and consequence, to which we had a fair claim, and the brightest prospect of attaining." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:52

Letter to Bushrod Washington – November 15, 1786

"That representatives ought to be the mouth of their Constituents, I do not deny, nor do I mean to call in question the right of the latter to instruct them. It is to the embarrassment, into which they may be thrown by these instructions in national matters that my objections lie. In speaking of national matters I look to the foederal Government, which in my opinion it is the interest of every State to support; and to do this, as there are a variety of interests in the union, there must be a yielding of the parts to coalesce the whole." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:67

Letter to James Madison – November 18, 1786

"Altho' I had bid adieu to the public walks of life in a public manner, and had resolved never more to tread that theatre; yet, if upon an occasion so interesting to the well-being of the Confederacy it should have been the wish of the Assembly that I should have been an associate in the business of revising the foederal System; I should, from a sense of the obligation I am under for repeated proofs of confidence in me, more than from any opinion I should have entertained of my usefulness, have obeyed its call; but it is now out of my power to do this with any degree of consistency." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, November 18, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:71

Letter to Philip Marsteller – December 15, 1786

"[I]t is not the lowest priced goods that are always the cheapest; the quality is, or ought to be as much an object with the purchaser, as the price." – George Washington, letter to Philip Marsteller, Mount Vernon, December 15, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:112

Letter to James Madison – December 16, 1786

"When this Society [of the Cincinnati] was first formed, I am persuaded not a member of it conceived that it would give birth to those Jealousies, or be chargeable with those dangers (real or imaginary) with which the minds of many, and some of respectable characters, were filled. The motives which induced the Officers to enter into it were, I am confident, truly and frankly recited in the Institution: one of which, indeed the principal, was to establish a charitable fund for the relief of such of their compatriots, the Widows, and descendants of them, as were fit objects for their support; and for whom no public provision had been made. But the trumpet being sounded, the alarm was spreading far and wide, I readily perceived therefore that unless a modification of the plan could be effected (to anihilate the Society altogether was impracticable on acct. of the foreign officers who had been admitted), that irritations wd. arise which would soon draw a line betwn. the Society, and their fellow Citizens." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 16, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:113

"My Sentiments are decidedly against Commutables; for sure I am it will be found a tax without a revenue. That the people will be burthened. The public expectation deceived, and a few Speculators only, enriched. Thus the matter will end, after the morals of some, are more corrupted than they now are; and the minds of all, filled with more leaven, by finding themselves taxed, and the public demands in full force." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 16, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:115-116

Letter to Governor Edmund Randolph – December 21, 1786

"Sensible as I am of the honor conferred on me by the General Assembly, in appointing me one of the Deputies to a Convention proposed to be held in the City of Philadelphia in May next, for the purpose of revising the Foederal Constitution; and desirous as I am on all occasions, of testifying a ready obedience to the calls of my Country; yet, Sir, there exists at this moment, circumstances, which I am persuaded will render my acceptance of this fresh mark of confidence incompatible with other measures which I had previously adopted; and from which, seeing little prospect of disengaging myself, it would be disengenuous not to express a wish that some other character, on whom greater reliance can be had, may be substituted in my place; the probability of my non-attendance being too great to continue my appointment." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, December 21, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:119-120

"As no mind can be more deeply impressed than mine is with the awful situation of our affairs; resulting in a great measure from the want of efficient powers in the foederal head, and due respect to its Ordinances, so, consequently, those who do engage in the important business of removing these defects, will carry with them every good wish of mine which the best dispositions towards the attainment can bestow." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, December 21, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:120

Letter to Governor Edmund Randolph – December 25, 1786

"To promote industry and oeconomy, and to encourage manufactures, is certainly consistent with that sound policy which ought to actuate every State. There are times too, which call loudly for the exercise of these virtues; and the present, in my humble opinion, may be accounted a fit one for the adoption of them in this Commonwealth." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, December 25, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:120

Letter to Henry Knox – December 26, 1786

"Lamentable as the conduct of the Insurgents of Massachusetts [Shay's Rebellion] is, I am exceedingly obliged to you for the advices respecting them; and pray you, most ardently, to continue the acct. of their proceedings; because I can depend upon them from you without having my mind bewildered with those vague and contradictory reports which are handed to us in Newspapers, and which please one hour, only to make the moments of the next more bitter. I feel, my dear Genl. Knox, infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who besides a tory could have foreseen, or a Briton predicted them! were these people wiser than others, or did they judge of us from the corruption, and depravity of their own hearts? The latter I am persuaded was the case, and that notwithstanding the boasted virtue of America, we are far gone in every thing ignoble and bad." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:122

"I do assure you, that even at this moment, when I reflect on the present posture of our affairs, it seems to me to be like the vision of a dream. My mind does not know how to realize it, as a thing in actual existence, so strange, so wonderful does it appear to me! In this, as in most other matter, we are too slow. When this spirit first dawned, probably it might easily have been checked; but it is scarcely within the reach of human ken, at this moment, to say when, where, or how it will end." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:122

"Vigilance in watching, and vigour in acting, is, in my opinion, become indispensably necessary. If the powers are inadequate amend or alter them, but do not let us sink into the lowest state of humiliation and contempt, and become a byword in all the earth. I think with you that the Spring will unfold important and distressing Scenes, unless much wisdom and good management is displayed in the interim." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:124

Letter to David Humphreys – December 26, 1786

"It is with the deepest and most heartfelt concern, I perceive by some late paragraphs extracted from the Boston papers, that the Insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress offered by their general Court, are still acting in open violation of law and government, and have obliged the chief Magistrate in a decided tone to call upon the Militia of the State to support the Constitution. What, gracious God, is man! that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct? It is but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the Constitutions under which we now live; Constitutions of our own choice and making; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realize it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:125-126

"Let me entreat you, my dr. Sir, to keep me advised of the situation of affairs in your quarter. I can depend upon your accounts. Newspaper paragraphs unsupported by other testimony, are often contradictory and bewildering. At one time these insurgents are spoken of as a mere mob; at other times as systematic in all their proceedings. If the first, I would fain hope that like other Mobs it will, however formidable, be of short duration. If the latter there are surely men of consequence and abilities behind the curtain who move the puppets; the designs of whom may be deep and dangerous. They may be instigated by British counsel; actuated by ambitious motives, or being influenced by dishonest principles, had rather see the Country in the horror of civil discord, than do what justice would dictate to an honest mind." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29, p, 126

"I must candidly confess, as we could not remain quiet more than three or four years in time of peace, under the Constitutions of our own choosing; which it was believed, in many States at least, were formed with deliberation and wisdom, I see little prospect either of our agreeing upon any other, or that we should remain long satisfied under it if we could. Yet I would wish any thing, and every thing essayed to prevent the effusion of blood, and to avert the humiliating and contemptible figure we are about to make in the annals of mankind." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, December 26, 1786; Fitzpatrick 29:128

Letter to Jabez Bowen – January 9, 1787

"It is surprising to me that a due punctuality cannot be observed in meetings of this nature, the time is fixed and known, and every Gentleman when he accepts the appointment should consider the business of the meeting as depending upon him, and should determine not to retard its proceedings by a want of punctuality in his Attendance; it is a public duty to which every private consideration should give way." – George Washington, letter to Jabez Bowen, Mount Vernon, January 9, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:138

"Paper money has had the effect in your State that it ever will have, to ruin commerce, oppress the honest, and open a door to every species of fraud and injustice." – George Washington, letter to Jabez Bowen, Mount Vernon, January 9, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:139

Letter to Mary Washington – February 15, 1787

"In consequence of your communication to George [Augustine] Washington, of your want of money, I take the (first safe) conveyance by Mr. John Dandridge to send you 15 Guineas, which believe me is all I have, and which indeed ought to have been paid many days ago to another, agreeable to my own assurances. I have now demands upon me for more than 500 £, three hundred and forty odd of which is due for the tax of 1786; and I know not where or when, I shall receive one shilling with which to pay it." – George Washington, letter to Mary Washington, Mount Vernon, February 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:158

"My house is at your service, and [I] would press you most sincerely and most devoutly to accept it, but I am sure, and candor requires me to say, it will never answer your purposes in any shape whatsoever. For in truth it may be compared to a well resorted tavern, as scarcely any strangers who are going from north to south, or from south to north, do not spend a day or two at it." – George Washington, letter to Mary Washington, Mount Vernon, February 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:160

"The cares of a family, without any body to assist you; the charge of an estate the profits of which depend upon wind, weather, a good overseer, and honest man, and a thousand other circumstances, cannot be right or proper at your advanced age, and for me, who am absolutely prevented from attending to my own plantations, which are almost within call of me, to attempt the care of yours, would be folly in the extreme; but [by] the mode I have pointed out, you may reduce your income to a certainty, be eased of all trouble, and if you are so disposed, may be perfectly happy; for happiness depends more upon the internal frame of a person's own mind, than on the externals in the world. Of the last, if you will pursue the plan here recommended, I am sure you can want nothing that is essential. The other depends wholly upon yourself, for the riches of the Indies cannot purchase it." – George Washington, letter to Mary Washington, Mount Vernon, February 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:162

Letter to Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College – February 23, 1787

"I have the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th. instant and likewise one of the 9th. of November handed to me by the Revd. Mr. [Jedidiah] Morse together with your election Sermon for which I beg you will accept of my best thanks. ... I am much obliged to you for the accounts which you gave me of the situation of affairs in Massachusetts, sincerely rejoice to find by that and other late advices, that the tumults in that State are likely to be soon suppressed that Government will again be established and peace and tranquility prevail. It must afford the greatest pleasure and satisfaction to every humane and feeling mind that there has been so little blood spilt in a contest which a few weeks ago threatened to drench the State of Massachusetts." – George Washington, letter to Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, Mount Vernon, February 23, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:167

Letter to Henry Knox – February 25, 1787

"On prospect of the happy termination of this insurrection I sincerely congratulate you; hoping that good may result from the cloud of evils which threatned, not only the hemisphere of Massachusetts but by spreading its baneful influence, the tranquillity of the Union. Surely Shays must be either a weak man, the dupe of some characters who are yet behind the curtain, or has been deceived by his followers. Or which may be more likely, he did not conceive that there was energy enough in the Government to bring matters to the crisis to which they have been pushed. It is to be hoped the General Court of that State concurred in the report of the Committee, that a rebellion did actually exist. This would be decisive, and the most likely means of putting the finishing stroke to the business." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, February 25, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:169

"We have nothing new in this quarter except the dissensions which prevailed in, and occasioned the adjournment of, the Assembly of Maryland; that an appeal might be made to the people for their sentiments on the conduct of their representative in the Senate and Delegates respecting a paper omission; which was warmly advocated by the latter and opposed by the former, and which may be productive of great, and perhaps dangerous divisions. Our Affairs, generally, seem really, to be approaching to some awful crisis. God only knows what the result will be. It shall be my part to hope for the best; as to see this Country happy whilst I am gliding down the stream of life in tranquil retirement is so much the wish of my Soul, that nothing on this side Elysium can be placed in competition with it." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, February 25, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:170

Letter to Henry Knox – March 8, 1787

"It is among the evils, and perhaps is not the smallest, of democratical governments, that the people must feel, before they will see. When this happens, they are roused to action; hence it is that this form of governments is so slow." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, March 8, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:171

Letter to James Madison – March 15, 1787

"However desirous I am, and always shall be, to comply with any commands of my Country, I do not conceive that I can, with consistent conduct, attend the proposed Convention to be holden in Philadelphia in May next. For besides the declaration which I made in a very solemn manner when I was about to retire, of bidding adieu to all public employment; I had just before the appointment of delegates to this Convention, written and dispatched circular letters to the several State Societies of the Cincinnati informing them of my intention not to attend the General Meeting which was to take place about the same time and at the same City. and assigned reasons which apply as forcibly in the one case as the other. Under these circumstances, to attend the Convention might be considered disrespectful to a worthy set of men for whose attachment and support on many trying occasions, I shall ever feel the highest gratitude and affection." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:180-181

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – March 25, 1787

"You will long ere this have heard of the Insurrection in the State of Massachusetts; to trace the causes would be difficult, and to detail their progress would be unnecessary as the steps taken by that government and the proceedings generally are very minutely related in the public gazettes with which I am informed you are regularly supplied. I shall therefore proceed to the more pleasing part of the business and inform you that the tumults are at an end and the principals fled to Canada. It is apprehended however that an act of the Legislature disfranchising those who were aiding or abetting, is pregnant with as much evil as good, as the operation is too extensive. ... These disorders are evident marks of a defective government." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:184

"General Greenes death is an event which has given so much general concern and is so much regretted by his numerous friends that I can scarce persuade myself to touch upon it even so far as to say that in him you lost a man who affectionately regarded and was a sincere admirer of you." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:185

"I have lately lost a Brother (Colo. John Augt. Washington which I mention to account for the black Seal of this letter) the rest of my friends, and every individual in the Family axe tolerably well and join most cordially in every vow that can contribute to the health and happiness of Madam La Fayette yourself and family." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:186

Letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph – March 28, 1787

"[I]nasmuch as it is not only inconvenient for me to leave home, but because there will be, I apprehend, too much cause to charge my conduct with inconsistency, in again appearing on a public theatre after a public declaration to the contrary; and because it will, I fear, have a tendency to sweep me back into the tide of public affairs, when retirement and ease is so essentially necessary for, and is so much desired by me." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, March 28, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:187

Letter to James Madison – March 31, 1787

"It is idle in my opinion to suppose that the Sovereign can be insensible of the inadequacy of the powers under which it acts." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:189

"We seem to have forgotten, or never to have learnt, the policy of placing ones enemy in the wrong. Had we observed good faith on our part, we might have told our tale to the world with a good grace; but compl[ain]ts illy become those who are found to be the first aggressors." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:190

"I am fully of opinion that those who lean to a Monarchical governmt. have either not consulted the public mind, or that they live in a region where the levelling principles in which they were bred, being entirely irradiated, is much more productive of Monarchical ideas than are to be found in the Southern States, where, from the habitual distinctions which have always existed among the people, one would have expected the first generation, and the most rapid growth of them." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:190

"That a thorough reform of the present system is indispensable, none who have capacities to judge will deny; and with hand (and heart) I hope the business will be essayed in a full Convention." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:190

"I confess...that my opinion of public virtue is so far changed that I have my doubts whether any system without the means of coercion in the Sovereign, will enforce Obedience to the Ordinances of a Genl. Government; without which, every thing else fails." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:190

"Laws or Ordinances unobserved, or partially attended to, had better never have been made; because the first is a mere nihil, and the 2d. is productive of much jealousy and discontent." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:191

"I am anxious to know how this matter really is, as my wish is, that the Convention may adopt no temporizing expedient, but probe the defects of the Constitution to the bottom, and provide radical cures; whether they are agreed to or not; a conduct like this, will stamp wisdom and dignity on the proceedings, and be looked to as a luminary, which sooner or later will shed its influence." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, March 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:191

Letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph – April 9, 1787

"If the case had been otherwise I would in emphatical terms have urged again that, rather than depend upon my going, another might be chosen in my place; for as a friend, and in confidence, I declare to you that my assent is given contrary to my judgment, because the act will, I apprehend, be considered as inconsistent with my public declaration delivered in a solemn manner at an interesting æra of my life, never more to intermeddle in public matters. This declaration not only stands on the files of Congress, but is I believe registered in almost all the Gazettes and magazines that are published, and what adds to the embarrassment is, I had previous to my appointment, informed by circular letter the several State Societies of the Cincinnati of my intention to decline the Presidency of that order and excuse myself from attending the next General meeting at Philadelphia on the first Monday in May, assigning reasons for so doing which apply as well in the one case as the other. Add to these, I very much fear that all the States will not appear in Convention, and that some of them will come fettered so as to impede rather than accelerate the great object of their convening which, under the peculiar circumstances of my case, would place me in a more disagreeable Situation than any other Member would stand in. As I have yielded however to what appeared to be the earnest wishes of my friends, I will hope for the best." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, April 9, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:198

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – April 20, 1787

"[I]t is certainly among the most rational avocations of life; for what can be more pleasing, than to see the work of ones own hands, fostered by care and attention, rising to maturity in a beautiful display of those advantages and ornaments which by the Combination of Nature and taste of the projector in the disposal of them is always regaling to the eye at the sametime in their seasons they are a grateful [*sic*] to the palate." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Mount Vernon, April 20, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:205

Letter to Henry Knox – April 27, 1787

"In my present state of mind I can hardly form an opinion whether it will be best to lay the matter before the Society as coming from Mr. Jefferson or as from a person of as good information as any in France I must therefore leave it wholly with you to do as you may think most proper." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox accompanying "Encyclopédie" account of the Society of the Cincinnati from Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, April 27, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:208

Letter to Henry Knox – April 27, 1787

"After every consideration my judgment was able to give the subject, I had determined to yield to the wishes of many of my friends who seemed anxious for my attending the Convention which is proposed to be holden in Philadelphia the 2d Monday of May, and though so much afflicted with a Rheumatick complaint (of which I have not been entirely free for six months) as to be under the necessity of carrying my arm in a sling for the last ten days, I had fixed on Monday next for my departure, and had made every necessary arrangement for the purpose when (within this hour) I am called by an express, who assures me not a moment is to be lost, to see a mother and only sister (who are supposed to be in the agonies of Death) expire; and I am hastening to obey this melancholy call after having just buried a Brother [John Augustine Washington] who was the intimate companion of my youth, and the friend of my ripened age." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, April 27, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:208-209

"This journey of mine then, too miles in the disordered frame of my body, will, I am persuaded, unfit me for the intended trip to Philadelphia, and assuredly prevent my offering that tribute of respect to my compatriots in Arms which results from affection and gratitude for their attachment to, and support of me, upon so many trying occasions." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, April 27, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:209

"For this purpose it was, as I had (tho' with a good deal of Reluctance) consented, from a conviction that our affairs were verging fast to ruin, to depart from the resolution I had taken of never more stepping out of the walks of private life, that I determined to shew my respect to the General meeting of the Society by coming there the week before. ." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, April 27, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:209

Letter to Robert Morris – May 5, 1787

"Mrs. Washington is become too domestick, and too attentive to two little Grand Children to leave home, and I can assure you, Sir, that it was not until after a long struggle I could obtain my own consent to appear again in a public theatre. My first remaining wish being, to glide gently down the stream of life in tranquil retirement till I shall arrive at the world of Spirits." – George Washington, letter to

Remarks at first Continental Congress – May 14, 1787

"It is too probable that no plan we propose will be adopted. Perhaps another dreadful conflict is to be sustained. If to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterwards defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and the honest can repair. The event is in the hand of God." – George Washington, remarks at the first Continental Congress, May 14, 1787; "The Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787," by James Madison; see also, "The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787," ed. Max Farrand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911) Vol. 3:382; "An Oration upon the Death of General Washington," Gouverneur Morris, delivered in New York, December 31, 1799; pp. 20-21

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – May 30, 1787

"The business of this Convention is as yet too much in embryo to form any opinion of the result. Much is expected from it by some; but little by others; and nothing by a few. That something is necessary, all will agree; for the situation of the General Governmt. (if it can be called a governmt.) is shaken to its foundation, and liable to be overset by every blast. In a word, it is at an end, and unless a remedy is soon applied, anarchy and confusion will inevitably ensue." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, May 30, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:224

Letter to Henry Knox – May 31, 1787

"I was, much against my wish, unanimously placed in the chair." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Philadelphia, May 31, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:225

Letter to George Augustine Washington – June 3, 1787

"As there is not the smallest prospect of my returning before harvest, and God knows how long it may be after it, I enclose you the observations I made at last harvest, to be practiced on the ensuing one; because I think it will be found better than the old, at any rate it may be tried." – George Washington, letter to George Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, June 3, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:226

"As the proceedings of the Convention are not intended to be made known till the business is finished I can give you no information on this score except that the sentiments of the different members seem to accord more than I expected they would, as far as we have yet gone. There are now 11 States represented and not much hope of another as Rhode Island refused to send and New Hampshire seems unable by some means or another to come on. ; Fitzpatrick 29:228

Letter to David Stuart – July 1, 1787

"Happy indeed would it be, if the convention shall be able to recommend such a firm and permanent government for this Union, that all who live under it may be secure in their lives, liberty, and property; and thrice happy would it be, if such a recommendation should obtain. Every body wishes, every body expects something from the convention; but what will be the final result of its deliberation, the book of fate must disclose. Persuaded I am, that the primary cause of all our disorders lies in the different State governments, and in the tenacity of that power, which pervades the whole of their systems. Whilst independent sovereignty is so ardently contended for, whilst the local views of each State, and separate interests, by which they are too much governed, will not yield to a more enlarged scale of politics, incompatibility in the laws of different States, and disrespect to those of the general government, must render the situation of this great country weak, inefficient, and disgraceful. It has already done so, almost to the final dissolution of it. Weak at home and disregarded abroad is our present condition, and contemptible enough it is." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Philadelphia, July 1, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:238

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – July 10, 1787

"I almost despair of seeing a favourable issue to the proceedings of our Convention, and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, July 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:245

"The Men who oppose a strong and energetic government are, in my opinion, narrow minded politicians, or are under the influence of local views. The apprehension expressed by them that the people will not accede to the form proposed is the ostensible, not the real cause of the opposition; but admitting that the present sentiment is as they prognosticate, the question ought nevertheless to be, is it, or is it not, the best form? If the former, recommended it, and it will assuredly obtain mauger opposition." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, July 10, 1787 Fitzpatrick 29:245-246

"The crisis is equally important and alarming, and no opposition under such circumstances should discourage exertions till the signature is fixed." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, July 10, 1787 Fitzpatrick 29:246

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – August 15, 1787

"I am not less ardent in my wish that you may succeed in your plan of toleration in religious matters. Being no bigot myself to any mode of worship, I am disposed to indulge the professors of Christianity in the church, that road to Heaven, which to them shall seem the most direct plainest easiest and least liable to exception." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, August 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:259

"The disturbances in Massachusetts have subsided; but there are seeds of discontent in every part of this Union; ready to produce other disorders if the wisdom of the present Convention should not be able to devise, and the good sense of the people be found ready to adopt a more vigorous and energetic government, than the one under which we now live; for the present, from experience, has been found too feeble and inadequate to give that security, which our liberties and property render absolutely essential, and which the fulfilment of public faith loudly requires." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, August 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:259-260

"Vain is it to look for respect from abroad, or tranquillity at home; vain is it to murmur at the detention of our Western Posts, or complain of the restriction of our commerce; vain are all the attempts to remedy the evils complained of by Mr Dumas to discharge the interest due on foreign loans, or satisfy the claims of foreign Officers, the neglect of doing which is a high impeachment of our National character, and is hurtful to the feelings of every well wisher to this Country in and out of it; vain is it to talk of chastising the Algerines, or doing ourselves Justice in any other respect, till the wisdom and force of the Union can be more concentrated and better applied." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, August 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:260

Letter to Henry Knox – August 19, 1787

"By slow, I wish I could add and sure, movements, the business of the Convention progresses; but to say when it will end, or what will be the result, is more than I can venture to do; and therefore I shall hazard no opinion thereon. If however, some good does not proceed from the Session, the defects cannot, with propriety, be charged to the hurry with which the business has been conducted: Yet, many things may be forgot, some of them not well digested, and others become a mere nullity. Notwithstanding which I wish a disposition may be found in Congress, the several States Legislatures, and the community at large to adopt the Government which may be agreed on in Convention; because I am fully persuaded it is the best that can be obtained at the present moment, under such diversity of ideas as prevail." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, August 19, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:261

"I condole very sincerely with Mrs. Knox and yourself on your late misfortune [death of their 11-month old daughter, Caroline]; but am sure, however severe the trial, each of you have fortitude enough to meet it. Nature, no doubt, must feel severely before calm resignation will over come it." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, August 19, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:261

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 1787

"It is the nature of man to be displeased with everything that disappoints a favorite hope or flattering project; and it is the folly of too many of them to condemn without investigating circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, White Plains, NY, September 1787; "Memoirs, Correspondence and Manuscripts of General Lafayette," by Lafayette (published by his family, 1837) Part 4 out of 9

Letter to George Augustine Washington – September 9, 1787

"This, in acknowledgment of your letter of the 2d of this Month, is probably the last letter I shall write you from this place; as the probability is, that the [Constitutional] Convention will have compleated [sic] the business which brought the delegates together, in the course of this Week. God grant I may not be disappointed in this expectation, as I am quite homesick." – George Washington, letter to George Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, September 9, 1787; Papers, Confederation Series: 5:321

Letter to Arthur St. Clair, President of Congress – September 12, 1787

"That it is liable to as few Exceptions as could reasonably have been expected we hope and believe That it may promote the lasting Welfare of that Country so dear to us all and secure her Freedom and Happiness is our most ardent Wish." – George Washington, letter to Arthur St. Clair, President of Congress from the Federal Convention, Philadelphia, September 12, 1787; "The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787," ed. Max Farrand (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1911) Vol. 2:667

Address to the Constitutional Convention – September 17, 1787

"When the President rose, for the purpose of putting the question [on representation], he said, that although his situation had hitherto restrained him from offering his sentiments on questions depending in the House, and, it might be thought, ought now to impose silence on him, yet he could not forbear expressing his wish that the change proposed might take place. It was much to be desired that the objections to the plan recommended might be made as few as possible. The smallness of the proportion of Representatives had been considered by many members of the Convention an insufficient security for the rights and interests of the people. He acknowledged that it had always appeared to himself among the exceptionable parts of the plan; and late as the present moment was for admitting amendments, he thought this of so much consequence, that it would give him much satisfaction to see it adopted." – George Washington, his only address to the Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, September 17, 1787; "The Debates in the Federal Convention of 1787," by James Madison

Warning to the Constitutional Convention – September 17, 1787

"Should the States reject this excellent Constitution, the probability is, an opportunity will never again offer to cancel another in peace - the next will be drawn in blood." – George Washington, warning to the Constitutional Convention after signing, Philadelphia, September 17, 1787; Printed in the Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser, November 14, 1787; "Cyclopædia of Political Science, Political Economy, and the Political History of the United States," edited by John A. Lalor (1881) New York: Maynard, Merrill, and Co., Vol. III, Sec. 218, p. 14

Letter Transmitting the Constitution – September 17, 1787

"[B]ut the impropriety of delegating such extensive trust to one body of men is evident—Hence results the necessity of a different organization." – George Washington, President of Congress, letter from the Federal Convention President to the President of Congress, Transmitting the Constitution, September 17, 1787; "The Constitution of 1787: A Commentary," George Anastaplo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) p. 283

"In all our deliberations on this subject we kept steadily in our view, that which appears to us the greatest interest of every true American, the consolidation of our Union, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence." – George Washington, President of Congress, letter from the Federal Convention President to the President of Congress, Transmitting the Constitution, September 17, 1787; "The Constitution of 1787: A Commentary," George Anastaplo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) p. 284

"[T]hus the Constitution, which we now present, is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable." – George Washington, President of Congress, letter from the Federal Convention President to the President of Congress, Transmitting the Constitution, September 17, 1787; "The Constitution of 1787: A Commentary," George Anastaplo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) p. 284

"[W]e hope and believe; that it may promote the lasting welfare of that country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish." – George Washington, President of Congress, letter from the Federal Convention President to the President of Congress, Transmitting the Constitution, September 17, 1787; "The Constitution of 1787: A Commentary," George Anastaplo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) p. 284

Diary during the Constitutional Convention – September 17, 1787

"The business being thus closed, the Members adjourned to the City Tavern, dined together and took a cordial leave of each other—after which I returned to my lodgings—did some business with, and received the papers from the secretary of the Convention, and retired to meditate on the momentous wk. which had been executed, after not less than five, for a large part of the time Six, sometimes 7 hours sitting every day, sundays & the ten days adjournment to give a Comee. opportunity & time to arrange the business for more than four Months." – George Washington, Diary during the Constitutional Convention May-September 1787, September 17, 1787; Ford 9:154

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 18, 1787

"It is the production of four months deliberation. It is now a Child of fortune, to be fostered by some and buffeted by others. what will be the General opinion on, or the reception of it, is not for me to decide, nor shall I say any thing for or against it: if it be good I suppose it will work its way good; if bad, it will recoil on the Framers." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, September 18, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:277

Letter to Patrick Henry – September 24, 1787

"I wish the Constitution which is offered had been made more perfect, but I sincerely believe it is the best that could be obtained at this time; and, as a Constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter, the adoption of it under the present circumstances of the Union is in my opinion desirable." – George Washington, letter to Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, September 24, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:278

"From a variety of concurring accounts it appears to me that the political concerns of this Country are, in a manner, suspended by a thread. That the Convention has been looked up to by the reflecting part of the community with a solicitude which is hardly to be conceived, and that if nothing had been agreed on by that body, anarchy would soon have ensued, the seeds being richly [sic] sown in every soil." – George Washington, letter to Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, September 24, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:278

Letter to David Humphreys – October 10, 1787

"The only stipulations I shall contend for are, that in all things you shall do as you please: I will do the same; and that no ceremony may be used or any restraint be imposed on any one." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:287

"The Constitution that is submitted is not free from imperfections. but there are as few radical defects in it as could well be expected considering the heterogenous mass of which the Convention was composed and the diversity of interests that are to be attended to. As a Constitutional door is opened for future amendments and alterations, I think it would be wise in the People to accept what is offered to them and I wish it may be by as great a majority of them as it was by that of the Convention; but this is hardly to be expected because the importance and sinister views of too many characters, will be affected by the change. Much will depend however upon literary abilities, and the recommendation of it by good pens should be openly, I mean, publicly afforded in the Gazettes." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, October 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:287

Letter to Henry Knox – October 15, 1787

"The Constitution is now before the Judgment Seat. It has, as was expected, its adversaries and supporters. Which will preponderate is yet to be decided: the former, more than probably will be most active, as the major part of them will, it is to be feared, be governed by sinister and self important motives, to which every thing in their breasts must yield. The opposition from another class of them may perhaps, (if they should be men of reflection, candour, and information) subside in the solution of the following simple questions. 1. Is the Constitution which is submitted by the Convention preferable to the Government (if it can be called one) under which we now live? 2. Is it probable that more confidence would at the time be placed in another Convention, provided the experiment should be tried, than was placed in the last one, and is it likely that a better agreement would take place therein? 3. What would be the consequences if these should not happen, or even from the delay, which must inevitably follow such an experiment? Is there not a Constitutional door open for alterations or amendments? and is it not likely that real defects will be as readily discovered after as before trial; and will not our successors be as ready to apply the remedy as ourselves if occasion should require it?" – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:288

"Is there not a Constitutional door open for alterations or amendments? and is it not likely that real defects will be as readily discovered after as before trial; and will not our successors be as ready to apply the remedy as ourselves if occasion should require it? To think otherwise will, in my Judgment, be ascribing more of the amor patria, more wisdom and more virtue, to ourselves, than I think we deserve." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:289

Letter to David Stuart – October 17, 1787

"There must be reciprocity or no Union, which is preferable will not become a question in the Mind of any true patriot." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, October 17, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:290

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – October 18, 1787

"It is with unfeigned concern I perceive that a political dispute has arisen between Governor Clinton and yourself. For both of you I have the highest esteem and regard. But as you say it is insinuated by some of your political adversaries, and may obtain credit, "that you palmed yourself upon me, and was dismissed from my family;" and call upon me to do you justice by a recital of the facts. I do therefore, explicitly declare, that both charges are entirely unfounded. With respect to the first, I have no cause to believe that you took a single step to accomplish, or had the most distant idea of receiving, an appointment in my family 'till you were invited thereto. And, with respect to the second, that your quitting it was altogether the effect of your own choice." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 18, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:290-291

"When the situation of this Country calls loudly for unanimity and vigor, it is to be lamented that Gentlemen of talents and character should disagree in their sentiments for promoting the public weal; but unfortunately, this ever has been, and most probably ever will be the case, in the affairs of man." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 18, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:291

Letter to David Stuart – November 5, 1787

"Honesty in States, as well as Individuals will ever be found the soundest policy." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, November 5, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:302

Letter to Bushrod Washington – November 10, 1787

"The opponents I expected, (for it ever has been that the adversaries to a measure are more active than its Friends) would endeavor to stamp it with unfavourable impressions, in order to bias the Judgment that is ultimately to decide on it, this is evidently the case with the writers in opposition, whose objections are better calculated to alarm the fears, than to convince the Judgment, of their readers. They build their objections upon principles that do not exist, which the Constitution does not support them in, and the existence of which has been, by an appeal to the Constitution itself flatly denied; and then, as if they were unanswerable, draw all the dreadful consequences that are necessary to alarm the apprehensions of the ignorant or unthinking. It is not the interest of the major part of those characters to be convinced; nor will their local views yield to arguments, which do not accord with their present, or future prospects." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:309

"A Candid solution of a single question to which the plainest understanding is competent does, in my opinion, decide the dispute: namely is it best for the States to unite, or not to unite? If there are men who prefer the latter, then unquestionably the Constitution which is offered must, in their estimation, be wrong from the words, we the People to the signature inclusively; but those who think differently and yet object to parts of it, would do well to consider that it does not lye with any one State, or the minority of the States to superstruct a Constitution for the whole." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:310

"The separate interests, as far as it is practicable, must be consolidated; and local views must be attended to, as far as the nature of the case will admit. Hence it is that every State has some objection to the present form and these objections are directed to different points. that which is most pleasing to one is obnoxious to another, and so vice versa. If then the Union of the whole is a desirable object, the component parts must yield a little in order to accomplish it." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:310

"The warmest friends and the best supporters the Constitution has, do not contend that it is free from imperfections; but they found them unavoidable and are sensible, if evil is likely to arise there from, the remedy must come hereafter; for in the present moment, it is not to be obtained; and, as there is a Constitutional door open for it, I think the People (for it is with them to Judge) can as they will have the advantage of experience on their Side, decide with as much propriety on the alterations and amendments which are necessary [as] ourselves. I do not think we are more inspired, have more wisdom, or possess more virtue, than those who will come after us." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:311

"The power under the Constitution will always be in the People. It is entrusted for certain defined purposes, and for a certain limited period, to representatives of their own chusing; and whenever it is executed contrary to their Interest, or not agreeable to their wishes, their Servants can, and undoubtedly will be, recalled." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:311

"It is agreed on all hands that no government can be well administered without powers; yet the instant these are delegated, altho' those who are entrusted with the administration are no more than the creatures of the people, act as it were but for a day, and are amenable for every false step they take, they are, from the moment they receive it, set down as tyrants; their natures, one would conceive from this, immediately changed, and that they could have no other disposition but to oppress." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:311-312

"No man is a warmer advocate for proper restraints and wholesome checks in every department of government than I am; but I have never yet been able to discover the propriety of placing it absolutely out of the power of men to render essential Services, because a possibility remains of their doing ill." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:312

"If we cannot learn wisdom from experience, it is hard to say where it is to be found." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:312

"[T]he only advice I will offer to you on the occasion (if you have a mind to command the attention of the House) is to speak seldom, but to important Subjects, except such as particularly relate to your Constituents, and, in the former case make yourself perfectly master of the Subject. Never exceed a decent warmth, and submit your sentiments with diffidence. A dictatorial Stile, though it may carry conviction, is always accompanied with disgust." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, Mount Vernon, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:313

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – November 10, 1787

"The new Constitution has, as the public prints will have informed you, been handed to the people of this state by a unanimous vote of the Assembly; but it is not to be inferred from hence that its opponants are silenced; on the contrary, there are many, and some powerful ones. Some of whom, it is said by overshooting the mark, have lessened their weight: be this as it may, their assiduity stands unrivalled, whilst the friends to the Constitution content themselves with barely avowing their approbation of it. Thus stands the matter with us, at present; yet, my opinion is, that the Major voice is favourable." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, November 10, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:308-309

Letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham – November 16, 1787

"The various and opposite interests which were to be conciliated; the local prejudices which were to be subdued, the diversity of opinions and sentiments which were to be reconciled; and in fine, the sacrifices which were necessary to be made on all sides for the General welfare, combined to make it a work of so intricate and difficult a nature, that I think it is much to be wondered at, that any thing could have been produced with such unanimity as the Constitution proposed." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, Mount Vernon, November 16, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:316

Letter to David Stuart – November 30, 1787

"The adversaries to a measure are generally, if not always, more active and violent than the advocates; and frequently employ means which the others do not, to accomplish their ends." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, November 30, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:323

"I have seen no publication yet, that ought, in my judgment, to shake the proposed Government in the mind of an impartial public. In a word, I have hardly seen any that is not addressed to the passions of the people; and obviously calculated to rouse their fears. Every attempt to amend the Constitution at this time, is, in my opinion, idly vain. If there are characters who prefer disunion, or seperate Confederacies to the general Government which is offered to them, their opposition may, for ought I know, proceed from principle; but as nothing in my conception is more to be deprecated than a disunion, or these seperate Confederacies, my voice, as far as it will extend, shall be offered in favor of the latter." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, November 30, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:323

"That there are some writers (and others perhaps who may not have written) who wish to see these States divided into several confederacies is pretty evident. As an antidote to these opinions, and in order to investigate the ground of objections to the Constitution which is submitted to the People, the Foederalist, under the signature of Publius, is written. The numbers which have been published I send you. If there is a Printer in Richmond who is really well disposed to support the New Constitution he would do well to give them a place in his Paper. They are (I think I may venture to say) written by able men; and before they are finished, will, if I am mistaken not, place matters in a true point of light." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, November 30, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:323-324

Letter to James Madison – December 7, 1787

"Since my last to you, I have been favored with your letters of the 28th. of October and 18th. of November. With the last came 7 numbers of the Federalist, under the signature of Publius, for which I thank you. They are forwarded to a Gentleman in Richmond for republication; the doing of which in this State will I am persuaded, have a good effect as there are certainly characters in it who are no friends to a general government; perhaps I should not go too far was I to add, who have no great objection to the introduction of anarchy and confusion." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 7, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:331

"A paragraph in the Baltimore Paper has announced a change in the Sentiments of Mr. Jay on this subject [proposed Constitution]; and adds that, from being an admirer of the new form, he has become a bitter enemy to it. This relation (without knowing Mr. Jay's opinion) I disbelieve, from a Conviction that he would consider the matter well before he would pass any Judgment. It is very unlikely therefore that a man of his knowledge and foresight should turn on both sides of a question in so short a space. I am anxious however to know the foundation (if any) for this." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 7, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:332

"The enemies to the Constitution leave no stone unturned to encrease the opposition to it." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 7, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:334

Letter to Charles Carter – December 14, 1787

"My decided opinion of the matter [proposed Constitution] is that there is no alternative between the adoption of it and anarchy. If one State however important it may conceive itself to be should suppose, or a minority of the States, that they can dictate a Constitution to the Majority unless they have the power of administering to good effect, administering the Ultema ratio they will find themselves deceived. All the opposition to it, that I have yet seen, is I must confess addressed more to the passions than to the reason, and clear I am if another Foederal Convention is attempted the sentiments of the members will be more discordent or less Conciliatory than the

last, in fine, that they will agree upon no genl. plan." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, December 7, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:339- 340

"General Government is now suspended by a thread I might go farther and say it is really at an end, and what will be the consequence of a fruitless attempt to amend the one which is offered, before it is tried, or of the delay from the attempt, does not in my Judgment need the gift of prophecy to predict. I am not a blind admirer (for I saw the imperfections) of the Constitution to which I have assisted to give birth, but I am fully persuaded it is the best that can be obtained at this day and that it or disunion is before us; if the first is our choice when the defects of it are experienced Constitutional door is open for amendments and may be adopted in a peaceable manner without tumult or disorder." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carter, Mount Vernon, December 14, 1787; Fitzpatrick 29:340

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – January 1, 1788

"From the public papers it appears that the Parliaments of the several Provinces, and particularly that of Paris, have acted with great spirit and resolution. Indeed the rights of Mankind, the privileges of the people, and the true principles of liberty, seem to have been more generally discussed and better understood throughout Europe since the American revolution than they were at any former period." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, January 1, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:350

"I perfectly agree with you, that an extensive speculation, a spirit of gambling, or the introduction of any thing which will divert our attention from Agriculture, must be extremely prejudicial, if not ruinous to us. but I conceive under an energetic general Government such regulations might be made, and such measures taken, as would render this Country the asylum of pacific and industrious characters from all parts of Europe, would encourage the cultivation of the Earth by the high price which its products would command, and would draw the wealth, and wealthy men of other Nations, into our bosom, by giving security to property, and liberty to its holders." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, January 1, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:351

Letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph – January 8, 1788

"The diversity of Sentiments upon the important matter which has been submitted to the People, was as much expected as it is regretted, by me. The various passions and motives, by which men are influenced are concomitants of fallibility, engrafted into our nature for the purposes of [the] unerring wisdom." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, January 8, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:357

"There are some things in the new form, I will readily acknowledge, wch. never did, and I am persuaded never will, obtain my CORDial approbation; but I then did conceive, and do now most firmly believe, that, in the aggregate, it is the best Constitution that can be obtained at this Epocha, and that this, or a dissolution of the Union awaits our choice, and are the only alternatives before us. Thus believing, I had not, nor have I now any hesitation in deciding, on which to lean." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, January 8, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:358

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – January 10, 1788

"To know the affinity of tongues seems to be one step towards promoting the affinity of nations. Would to god, the harmony of nations was an object that lay nearest to the hearts of Sovereigns; and that the incentives to peace (of which commerce and facility of understanding each other are not the most inconsiderable) might be daily encreased! Should the present or any other efforts of mine to procure information respecting the different dialects of the Aborigines in America, serve to reflect a ray of light on the obscure subject of language in general, I shall be highly gratified. For I love to indulge the contemplation of human nature in a progressive state of improvement and melioration." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 10, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:374

"You will doubtless have seen, in the public papers, in what manner the new Constitution has been attacked and defended. There have been some compositions published in its defence, which I think will, at least, do credit to American genius. I dare say its principles and tendencies have, also, before this time been amply discussed in Europe." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 10, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:375-376

"New England (with the exception of Rhode Island, which seems itself, politically speaking, to be an exception from all that is good) it is believed will chearfully and fully accept it [U.S. Constitution]: and there is little doubt but that the Southern States will do the same." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 10, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:376

Letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox – January 10, 1788

"Mrs. Washington joins me in offering compliments of congratulations to Mrs. Knox and yourself on the increase of yr. family by the birth of a son, and I pray you to accept the acknowledgment of my sense of the honor you have conferred on me by giving him my name. I hope he will live to enjoy it long after I have taken my departure for the world of spirits and that he may prove a blessing and

comfort to you both in your declining years." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, January 10, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:378

Letter to Charles Carter – January 12, 1788

"Could I have supposed, that the contents of a private letter (marked with evident haste) would have composed a newspaper paragraph, I certainly should have taken some pains to dress the Sentiments (to whom known is indifferent to me) in less exceptionable language, and would have assigned some reasons in support of my opinion, and the charges against others. I am persuaded your intentions were good, but I am not less persuaded, that you have provided food for strictures and criticisms be this however as it may, it shall pass off unnoticed by me, as I have no inclination and still less abilities for scribbling." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carter, Mount Vernon, January 12, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:380

Letter to Charles Carter – January 20, 1788

"You give me some reason to hope for the result of your thoughts, or experiments, on a more eligible system of agriculture. To receive it would afford me pleasure. That the one which is now in general practice (if it can be called a system) is beyond description ruinous to our lands, need no other proof of the fact than the gullied, and exhausted state of them, which is every where to be met with; but what chance is most likely to restore the land with such means as is in our power to apply which will at the same time be productive to the Proprietor, is the question, and an important one. a question too which admits of no other satisfactory solution than such as is derived from a course of experiments by intelligent and observant farmers, who will combine things and circumstances together. Theoretical opinions should have no share in the determination and what is good, and profitable husbandry in one Country, may not be so in another. Articles which are very saleable in Europe might find no market in America and if produced abundantly would answer no other end than to encumber our Barns, or Graneries. Consequently two things must be engrafted into our plan: 1st. Crops which are useful on our farms, or saleable in our markets, and 2d. the intermixing these crops by such relations and with such dressings as will improve, instead of exhausting of our lands. To effect these is the great desiderata of Farming, and ought to be the pursuit of every farmer. on this ground every experiment is a treasure, and the authors of them valuable members of Society. Hence also the Societies which are formed for the encouragement, and promulgation, of these experiments in other Country's have rendered such essential services to the improved and improving States of agriculture in the old world and are so worthy of imitation in the new." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carter, January 20, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:388-389

Letter to Henry Knox – February 5, 1788

"Pray, if it is not a secret, who is the author, or authors of Publius?" – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, February 5, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:401

Letter to Marquis Chevalier de Luzerne – February 7, 1788

"Separated as we are by a world of water from other Nations, if we are wise we shall surely avoid being drawn into the labyrinth of their politics and involved in their destructive wars." – George Washington, letter to Marquis Chevalier de Luzerne, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:406

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – February 7, 1788

"I shall myself be happy in forming an acquaintance and cultivating a friendship with the new Minister Plenipotentiary of France, whom you have commended as a "sensible and honest man;" these are qualities too rare and too precious not to merit one's particular esteem." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:409

"It appears to me, then, little short of a miracle, that the Delegates from so many different States (which States you know are also different from each other in their manners, circumstances and prejudices) should unite in forming a system of national Government, so little liable to well founded objections. Nor am I yet such an enthusiastic, partial or indiscriminating admirer of it, as not to perceive it is tinctured with some real (though not radical) defects." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:409

"[T]he general Government is not invested with more Powers than are indispensably necessary to perform the functions of a good Government; and, consequently, that no objection ought to be made against the quantity of Power delegated to it." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:410

"[T]hese Powers (as the appointment of all Rulers will for ever arise from, and, at short stated intervals, recur to the free suffrage of the People) are so distributed among the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches, into which the general Government is arranged, that it can never be in danger of degenerating into a monarchy, an Oligarchy, an Aristocracy, or any other despotic or oppressive form,

so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the People." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:410

"It will at least be a recommendation to the proposed Constitution that it is provided with more checks and barriers against the introduction of Tyranny, and those of a nature less liable to be surmounted, than any Government hitherto instituted among mortals, hath possessed." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:410

"We are not to expect perfection in this world; but mankind, in modern times, have apparently made some progress in the science of government. Should that which is now offered to the People of America, be found on experiment less perfect than it can be made, a Constitutional door is left open for its amelioration." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:411

"I would not be understood my dear Marquis to speak of consequences which may be produced, in the revolution of ages, by corruption of morals, profligacy of manners, and listlessness for the preservation of the natural and unalienable rights of mankind; nor of the successful usurpations that may be established at such an unpropitious juncture, upon the ruins of liberty, however providently guarded and secured, as these are contingencies against which no human prudence can effectually provide." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:411

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"I will only add, as a further opinion founded on the maturest deliberation, that there is no alternative, no hope of alteration, no intermediate resting place, between the adoption of this, and a recurrence to an unqualified state of Anarchy, with all its deplorable consequences." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, February 7, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:411

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln – February 11, 1788

"As you must be convinced that whatever affects your happiness or welfare cannot be indifferent to me I need not tell you, that I was most sensibly affected by your letter of the 20th of January. Yes, my dear Sir, I sincerely condole with you the loss of a worthy, amiable, and valuable Son! Altho' I had not the happiness of a personal acquaintance with him, yet the character which he sustained, and his near connexion with you, are, to me, sufficient reasons, to lament his death. It is unnecessary for me to offer any consolation on the present occasion; for to a mind like yours it can only be drawn from that source which never fails to give a bountiful supply to those who reflect justly. Time alone can blunt the keen edge of afflictions; Philosophy and our Religion holds out to us such hopes as will, upon proper reflection, enable us to bear with fortitude the most calamitous incidents of life and these are all that can be expected from the feelings of humanity; is all which they will yield." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, February 11, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:412-413

"[T]he life of a Husbandman of all others is the most delectable. It is honorable. It is amusing, and, with judicious management, it is profitable. To see plants rise from the Earth and flourish by the superior skill, and bounty of the laborer fills a contemplative mind with ideas which are more easy to be conceived than expressed." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Spotswood, Mount Vernon, February 13, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:414

Letter to James Madison – March 2, 1788

"[T]he consciousness of having discharged that duty which we owe to our Country, is superior to all other considerations, will place small matters in a secondary point of view." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 2, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:431

"Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth. The checks he endeavors to give it, however warrantable by ancient usage, will, more than probably, kindle a flame, which may not be easily extinguished; tho' for a while it may be smothered by the Armies at his command, and the Nobility in his interest. When the people are oppressed with Taxes, and have cause to suspect that there has been a misapplication of their money, the language of despotism is but illy brooked." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, March 2, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:431

Letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier – March 26 1788

"Treaties which are not built upon reciprocal benefits, are not likely to be of long duration." – George Washington, letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier, Mount Vernon, March 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:448

"For my own part I could wish as I have just observed, to see the time when no credit should be given." – George Washington, letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier, Mount Vernon, March 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:448-449

Letter to John Armstrong – April 25, 1788

"Your remarks on the impressions which will be made on the manners and sentiments of the people by the example of those who are first called to act under the proposed Government are very just; and I have no doubt but (if the proposed Constitution obtains) those persons who are chosen to administer it will have wisdom enough to discern the influence which their example as rulers and legislators may have on the body of the people, and will have virtue enough to pursue that line of conduct which will most conduce to the happiness of their Country; as the first transactions of a nation, like those of an individual upon his first entrance into life, make the deepest impression, and are to form the leading traits in its character, they will undoubtedly pursue those measures which will best tend to the restoration of public and private faith and of consequence promote our national respectability and individual welfare." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, April 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:465

"[T]he truth is, men are too apt to be swayed by local prejudices and those who are so fond of amendments which have the particular interest of their own States in view cannot extend their ideas to the general welfare of the Union; they do not consider that for every sacrifice which they make they receive an ample compensation by the sacrifices which are made by other States for their benefit; and that those very things, which they give up operate to their advantage through the medium of the general interest." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, April 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:465

"I am very glad to find, that the opposition in your State, however formidable it has been represented, is, generally speaking, composed of such characters, as cannot have an extensive influence; their fort, as well as that of those in the same class in other States seems to lie in misrepresentation, and a desire to inflame the passions and to alarm the fears by noisy declamation rather than to convince the understanding by sound arguments or fair and impartial statements. Baffled in their attacks upon the constitution they have attempted to vilify and debase the Characters, who formed it, but even here I trust they will not succeed. Upon the whole I doubt whether the opposition to the Constitution will not ultimately be productive of more good than evil." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, April 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:466

"[I]t has called forth, in its defence, abilities which would not perhaps have been otherwise exerted that have thrown new light upon the science of Government, they have given the rights of man a full and fair discussion, and explained them in so clear and forcible a manner, as cannot fail to make a lasting impression upon those who read the best publications on the subject, and particularly the pieces under the signature of Publius." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, April 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:466

"I am sorry to hear, that the College in your neighbourhood [Dickinson College at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania.] is in so declining a state as you represent it, and that it is likely to suffer a further injury by the loss of Dr. Nisbet whom you are afraid you shall not be able to support in a proper manner on account of the scarcity of Cash which prevents parents from sending their Children thither. This is one of the numerous evils which arise from the want of a general regulating power, for in a Country like this where equal liberty is enjoyed, where every man may reap his own harvest, which by proper attention will afford him much more than is necessary for his own consumption, and where there is so ample a field for every mercantile and mechanical exertion, if there cannot be money found to answer the common purposes of education, not to mention the necessary commercial circulation, it is evident that there is something amiss in the ruling political power which requires a steady, regulating and energetic hand to correct and control. That money is not to be had, every mans experience tells him, and the great fall in the price of property is an unequivocal and melancholy proof of it, when, if that property was well secured, faith and justice well preserved, a stable government well administered, and confidence restored, the tide of population and wealth would flow to us, from every part of the Globe, and, with a due sense of the blessings, make us the happiest people upon earth." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, April 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:467

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – April 28, 1788

"Now, although it is not to be expected that every individual, in Society, will or can ever be brought to agree upon what is, exactly, the best form of government; yet, there are many things in the Constitution which only need to be explained, in order to prove equally satisfactory to all parties. For example: there was not a member of the convention, I believe, who had the least objection to what is contended for by the Advocates for a Bill of Rights and Tryal by Jury." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:479

"There cannot, in my judgment, be the least danger that the President will by any practicable intrigue ever be able to continue himself one moment in office, much less perpetuate himself in it; but in the last stage of corrupted morals and political depravity: and even then there is as much danger that any other species of domination would prevail." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:479

"[W]hen a people shall have become incapable of governing themselves and fit for a master, it is of little consequence from what quarter he comes. Under an extended view of this part of the subject, I can see no propriety in precluding ourselves from the services

of any man, who on some great emergency shall be deemed universally, most capable of serving the Public." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:479

"In answer to the observations you make on the probability of my election to the Presidency (knowing me as you do) I need only say, that it has no enticing charms, and no fascinating allurements for me. However, it might not be decent for me to say I would refuse to accept or even to speak much about an appointment, which may never take place: for in so doing, one might possibly incur the application of the moral resulting from that Fable, in which the Fox is represented as inveighing against the sourness of the grapes, because he could not reach them." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:479

"All that it will be necessary to add, my dear Marquis, in order to show my decided predilection, is, that, (at my time of life and under my circumstances) the encreasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement do not permit me to entertain a wish beyond that of living and dying an honest man on my own farm. Let those follow the pursuits of ambition and fame, who have a keener relish for them, or who may have more years, in store, for the enjoyment." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:480

Letter to Pierre Charles L'Enfant – April 28, 1788

"While I sincerely condole with you on the loss of your good father; you will permit me to remind you, as an inexhaustible subject of consolation, that there is a good Providence which will never fail to take care of his Children: and be assured, Sir, it will always give me real satisfaction to find that prosperity and felicity have been attendant on all your steps." – George Washington, letter to Pierre Charles L'Enfant, Mount Vernon, April 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:481

Letter to Samuel Griffin – April 30, 1788

"Influenced by a heart-felt desire to promote the cause of Science in general, and the prosperity of the College of William and Mary in particular, I accept the office of Chancellor in the same; and request you will be pleased to give official notice thereof to the learned Body, who have thought proper to honor me with the appointment. I confide fully in their strenuous endeavours for placing the system of Education on such a basis, as will render it most beneficial to the State and the Republic of letters, as well as to the more extensive interests of humanity and religion. In return, they will do me the justice to believe, that I shall not be tardy in giving my cheerful concurrence to such measures, as may be best calculated for the attainment of those desirable and important objects. For the expressions of politeness and friendship blended with your communications, you are desired to receive my best acknowledgments." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Griffin, Mount Vernon, April 30, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:481-482

Letter to Marquis de Chastellux – April 25 [-May 1], 1788

"A wife! well my dear Marquis, I can hardly refrain from smiling to find you are caught at last. I saw, by the eulogium you often made on the happiness of domestic life in America, that you had swallowed the bait and that you would as surely be taken (one day or another) as you was a Philosopher and a Soldier. So your day has, at length, come. I am glad of it with all my heart and soul. It is quite good enough for you. Now you are well served for coming to fight in favor of the American Rebels, all the way across the Atlantic Ocean, by catching that terrible Contagion, domestic felicity, which time like the small pox or the plague, a man can have only once in his life: because it commonly lasts him (at least with us in America, I dont know how you manage these matters in France) for his whole life time. And yet after all the male-dictions you so richly merit on the subject, the worst wish which I can find in my heart to make against Madame de Chastellux and yourself is, that you may neither of you ever get the better of this same domestic felicity during the entire course of your mortal existence." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, April 25 [-May 1], 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:483

"For certainly it is more consonant to all the principles of reason and religion (natural and revealed) to replenish the earth with inhabitants, rather than to depopulate it by killing those already in existence, besides it is time for the age of Knight-Errantry and mad-heroism to be at an end. Your young military men, who want to reap the harvest of laurels, don't care (I suppose) how many seeds of war are sown; but for the sake of humanity it is devoutly to be wished, that the manly employment of agriculture and the humanizing benefits of commerce, would supersede the waste of war and the rage of conquest; that the swords might be turned into plough-shares, the spears into pruning hooks, and, as the Scripture expresses it, 'the nations learn war no more.'" – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, April 25 [-May 1], 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:484

"[T]here has been much greater unanimity in favour of the proposed government than could have reasonably been expected. Should it be adopted (and I think it will be) America will lift up her head again and in a few years become respectable among the nations." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, April 25 [-May 1], 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:485

"It is a flattering and consolatory reflection, that our rising Republics have the good wishes of all the Philosophers, Patriots, and virtuous men in all nations: and that they look upon them as a kind of Asylum for mankind. God grant that we may not disappoint their honest expectations, by our folly or perverseness." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Chastellux, Mount Vernon, April 25 [-May 1], 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:486

Letter to Reverend John Ettwein – May 2, 1788

"So far as I am capable of judging, the principles upon which the society is founded and the rules laid down for its government, appear to be well calculated to promote so laudable and arduous an undertaking, and you will permit me to add that if an event so long and so earnestly desired as that of converting the Indians to Christianity and consequently to civilization, can be effected, the Society of Bethlehem bids fair to bear a very considerable part in it." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Ettwein, Mount Vernon, May 2, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:489

Letter to John Jay – May 15, 1788

"The good sense, forcible observations, temper and moderation with which it is written cannot fail, I should think of making a serious impression, even upon the antifoederal mind where it is not under the influence of such local views as will yield to no argument, no proofs." – George Washington, letter to John Jay about pamphlet "An address to the People of the State of New York, on the subject of the Constitution," Mount Vernon, May 15, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:499

Letter to Rev. Francis Adrian Vanderkemp – May 28, 1788

"I had always hoped that this land might become a safe and agreeable asylum to the virtuous and persecuted part of mankind, to whatever nation they might belong." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Francis Adrian Vanderkemp, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:504

"You may rest assured, Sir, of my best and most friendly sentiments of your suffering compatriots, and that, while I deplore the calamities to which many of the most worthy members of your Community have been reduced by the late foreign interposition in the interior affairs of the United Netherlands; I shall flatter myself that many of them will be able with the wrecks of their fortunes which may have escaped the extensive devastation, to settle themselves in comfort, freedom and ease in some corner of the vast regions of America. The spirit of the Religions and the genius of the political Institutions of this Country must be an inducement." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Francis Adrian Vanderkemp, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:505

"Under a good government (which I have no doubt we shall establish) this Country certainly promises greater advantages, than almost any other, to persons of moderate property, who are determined to be sober, industrious and virtuous members of Society. And it must not be concealed, that a knowledge that these are the general characteristics of your compatriots would be a principal reason to consider their advent as a valuable acquisition to our infant settlements." – George Washington, letter to Rev. Francis Adrian Vanderkemp, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:505

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – May 28, 1788

"Men of real talents in Arms have commonly approved themselves patrons of the liberal arts and friends to the poets of their own as well as former times. In some instances by acting reciprocally, heroes have made poets, and poets heroes." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:506

"The plot thickens fast. A few short weeks will determine the political fate of America for the present generation and probably produce no small influence on the happiness of society through a long succession of ages to come. Should every thing proceed with harmony and consent according to our actual wishes and expectations; I will confess to you sincerely, my dear Marquis; it will be so much beyond any thing we had a right to imagine or expect eighteen months ago, that it will demonstrate as visibly the finger of Providence, as any possible event in the course of human affairs can ever designate it." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, May 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:507

Letter to James Madison – June 8, 1788

"What I have mostly apprehended is that the insidious arts of its opposers to alarm the fears and inflame the passions of the Multitude, may have produced instructions to the Delegates that would shut the door against argument and be a bar to the exercise of judgment. If this is not the case I have no doubt but that the good sense of this Country will prevail against the local views of designing characters and the arrogant opinions of chagreened and disappointed men." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, June 8, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:510

"I do not mean that numbers alone is sufficient to produce conviction in the Mind, but I think it is enough to produce some change in the conduct of any man who entertains a doubt of his infallibility." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, June 8, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:511

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives – June 8, 1788

"Mr. Henry and Colo. Mason are at the head of the opposition; in favour of the Constitution are many very able men: among these we count Messrs. Pendleton, Wythe, Blair, Madison, Nicholas, Innis, Marshall and a long train of other worthies. Governor Randolph, (in answer to a speech in which Mr. Henry had insinuated that the federal Convention had exceeded their Powers and that nothing forbade us to live happy under the old Confederation with some alterations) described pathetically our perilous situation as a full Justification of the proceedings of the federal Convention and declared since so many of the States have adopted the Constitution without alterations, that he should vote for it in its present form. Upon the whole (though great and unwearied artifices have been practiced to prejudice the people in many parts of the State against the new government) I cant avoid hoping and believing, to use the fashionable phrase, that Virginia will make the ninth Column in the federal Temple. May all things turn out for the best; in respect to this highly favored Continent, is the constant and unfeigned prayer of Yours." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives, Mount Vernon, June 8, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:512

Letter to Richard Henderson – June 19, 1788

"[I]t is a point conceded, that America, under an efficient government, will be the most favorable Country of any in the world for persons of industry and frugality, possessed of a moderate capital, to inhabit. It is also believed, that it will not be less advantageous to the happiness of the lowest class of people because of the equal distribution of property the great plenty of unoccupied lands, and the facility of procuring the means of subsistence." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henderson, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:520

"If I was a young man, just preparing to begin the world or if advanced in life, and had a family to make a provision for, I know of no country where I should rather fix my habitation than in some part of that region." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henderson, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:521

"As to the European Publications respecting the United States, they are commonly very defective. The Abbe Raynal is quite erroneous. Guthrie, though somewhat better informed, is not absolutely correct. There is now 'an American Geography preparing for the press by a Mr. Morse of New Haven in Connecticut' which, from the pains the Author has taken in travelling through the States and acquiring information from the principal characters in each, will probably be much more exact and useful, of books at present existing, Mr. Jefferson's 'Notes on Virginia' will give the best idea of this part of the Continent to a Foreigner: and the 'American Farmer's Letters,' written by Mr. Crevecoeur (commonly called Mr. St. John) the French Consul in New York (who actually resided twenty years as a farmer in that State) will afford a great deal of profitable and amusing information, respecting the private Life of the Americans; as well as the progress of agriculture, manufactures, and arts in their Country. Perhaps the picture he gives, though founded on fact, is in some instances embellished with rather too flattering circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Richard Henderson, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:522

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – June 19, 1788

"I like not much the situation of affairs in France. The bold demands of the parliaments, and the decisive tone of the King, shew that but little more irritation would be necessary to blow up the spark of discontent into a flame, that might not easily be quenched. If I were to advise, I would say that great moderation should be used on both sides. Let it not, my dear Marquis, be considered as a derogation from the good opinion, that I entertain of your prudence, when I caution you, as an individual desirous of signaling yourself in the cause of your country and freedom, against running into extremes and prejudicing your cause. The King, though, I think from every thing I have been able to learn, he is really a good-hearted tho' a warm-spirited man, if thwarted injudiciously in the execution of prerogatives that belonged to the Crown, and in plans which he conceives calculated to promote the national good, may disclose qualities he has been little thought to possess. On the other hand, such a spirit seems to be awakened in the Kingdom, as, if managed with extreme prudence, may produce a gradual and tacit Revolution much in favor of the subjects, by abolishing Lettres de Cachet and defining more accurately the powers of government." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:524

"It is a wonder to me, there should be found a single monarch, who does not realize that his own glory and felicity must depend on the prosperity and happiness of his People. How easy is it for a sovereign to do that which shall not only immortalize his name, but attract the blessings of millions." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:524

"I really believe, that there never was so much labour and economy to be found before in the country as at the present moment. If they persist in the habits they are acquiring, the good effects will soon be distinguishable." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:525

"When the people shall find themselves secure under an energetic government, when foreign nations shall be disposed to give us equal advantages in commerce from dread of retaliation, when the burdens of war shall be in a manner done away by the sale of western lands, when the seeds of happiness which are sown here shall begin to expand themselves, and when every one (under his own vine and fig-tree) shall begin to taste the fruits of freedom, then all these blessings (for all these blessings will come) will be referred to the

fostering influence of the new government." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:525

"I expect, that many blessings will be attributed to our new government, which are now taking their rise from that industry and frugality into the practice of which the people have been forced from necessity. I really believe, that there never was so much labour and economy to be found before in the country as at the present moment. If they persist in the habits they are acquiring, the good effects will soon be distinguishable. When the people shall find themselves secure under an energetic government, when foreign nations shall be disposed to give us equal advantages in commerce from dread of retaliation, when the burdens of war shall be in a manner done away by the sale of western lands, when the seeds of happiness which are sown here shall begin to expand themselves, and when every one (under his own vine and fig-tree) shall begin to taste the fruits of freedom, then all these blessings (for all these blessings will come) will be referred to the fostering influence of the new government. Whereas many causes will have conspired to produce them. You see I am not less enthusiastic than ever I have been, if a belief that peculiar scenes of felicity are reserved for this country, is to be denominated enthusiasm. Indeed, I do not believe, that Providence has done so much for nothing. It has always been my creed that we should not be left as an awful monument to prove, 'that Mankind, under the most favourable circumstances for civil liberty and happiness, are unequal to the task of Governing themselves, and therefore made for a Master.'" – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:526

"I hope, some day or another, we shall become a storehouse and granary for the world." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, June 19, 1788; Fitzpatrick 29:526

Letter to Edward Pemberton – June 20, 1788

"You may be assured...that the good opinion of honest men, friends to freedom and well-wishers to mankind, wherever they may be born or happen to reside, is the only kind of reputation a wise man would ever desire." – George Washington, letter to Edward Pemberton, Mount Vernon, June 20, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:1

Letter to Reverend John Lathrop – June 22, 1788

"I observe, with singular satisfaction, the cases in which your benevolent Institution has been instrumental in recalling some of our Fellow creatures (as it were) from beyond the gates of Eternity, and has given occasion for the hearts of parents and friends to leap for joy. The provision made for the preservation of ship-wrecked Mariners is also highly estimable in the view of every philanthropic mind and greatly consolatory to that suffering part of the Community. These things will draw upon you the blessings of those, who were nigh to perish. These works of charity and good-will towards men reflect, in my estimation, great lustre upon the authors and presage an æra of still father improvements." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Lathrop, Mount Vernon, June 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:4

"How pitiful, in the eye of reason and religion, is that false ambition which desolates the world with fire and sword for the purposes of conquest and fame; when compared to the milder virtues of making our neighbours and our fellow men as happy as their frail conditions and perishable natures will permit them to be!" – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Lathrop, Mount Vernon, June 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:5

Letter to Mathew Cary – June 25, 1788

"I entertain an high idea of the utility of periodical Publications: insomuch that I could heartily desire, copies of the Museum and Magazines, as well as common Gazettes, might be spread through every city, town and village in America. I consider such easy vehicles of knowledge, more happily calculated than any other, to preserve the liberty, stimulate the industry and meliorate the morals of an enlightened and free People." – George Washington, letter to Mathew Cary, Mount Vernon, June 25, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:7

Letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney – June 28, 1788

"I think we may rationally indulge the pleasing hope that the Union will now be established upon a durable basis, and that Providence seems still disposed to favour the members of it, with unequalled opportunities for political happiness." – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, June 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30, p, 9

"After New York shall have acted, then only one little State will remain; suffice it to say, it is universally believed, that the scales are ready to drop from the eyes and the infatuation to be removed from the heart, of Rhode Island . May this be the case, before that inconsiderate People shall have filled up the measure of iniquity before it shall be too late!" – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, June 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:10

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln – June 29, 1788

"No one can rejoice more than I do at every step the people of this great Country take to preserve the Union, establish good order and government, and to render the Nation happy at home and respectable abroad. No Country upon Earth ever had it more in its power to attain these blessings than United America. Wondrously strange then, and much to be regretted indeed would it be, were we to neglect the means, and to depart from the road which Providence has pointed us to, so plainly; I cannot believe it will ever come to pass. The great Governor of the Universe has led us too long and too far on the road to happiness and glory, to forsake us in the midst of it. By folly and improper conduct, proceeding from a variety of causes, we may now and then get bewildered; but I hope and trust that there is good sense and virtue enough left to recover the right path before we shall be entirely lost." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, June 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:11

"Our Accounts from Richmond are, that the debates, through all the different Stages of the business, though [brisk] and animated, have been conducted with great dignity and temper; that the final decision exhibited an awful and solemn scene, and that there is every reason to expect a perfect acquiescence therein by the minority; not only from the declaration of Mr. Henry, the great leader of it, who has signified that though he can never be reconciled to the Constitution in its present form, and shall give it every constitutional opposition in his power yet that he will submit to it peaceably, as he thinks every good Citizen ought to do when it is in exercise and that he will both by precept and example inculcate this doctrine to all around him." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, June 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:12

Letter to John Jay – July 18, 1788

"It is extremely to be lamented, that a new arrangement in the Post Office, unfavorable to the circulation of intelligence, should have taken place at the instant when the momentous question of a general Government was to come before the People. I have seen no good apology, not even in Mr. Hazard's publication, for deviating from the old custom, of permitting Printers to exchange their Papers by the Mail. That practice was a great public convenience and gratification. If the privilege was not from convention an original right, it had from prescription strong pretensions for continuance, especially at so interesting a period. The interruption in that mode of conveyance, has not only given great concern to the friends of the Constitution, who wished the Public to be possessed of every thing, that might be printed on both sides of the question; but it has afforded its enemies very plausible pretexts for dealing out their scandals, and exciting jealousies by inducing a belief that the suppression of intelligence, at that critical juncture, was a wicked trick of policy, contrived by an Aristocratic Junto." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Mount Vernon, July 18, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:16

"Now, if the Post Master General (with whose character I am unacquainted and therefore would not be understood to form an unfavorable opinion of his motives) has any candid Advisers who conceive that he merits the public employment they ought to counsel him to wipe away the aspersion he has incautiously brought upon a good cause; if he is unworthy of the Office he holds, it would be well that the ground of a complaint, apparently so general, should be inquired into, and, if [well] founded, redressed through the medium of a better appointment." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Mount Vernon, July 18, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:16-17

"I trust we are not too old, or too proud to profit by the experience of others." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Mount Vernon, July 18, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:17

"I am taught to imagine that the horses, the vehicles, and the accommodations in America (with very little encouragement,) might in a short period become as good as the same articles are to be found in any Country of Europe, and at the same time, I am sorry to learn that the line of Stages is at present interrupted in some parts of New England and totally discontinued at the Southward." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Mount Vernon, July 18, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:17

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives – July 20, 1788

"Your friend Colo. Humphreys informs me, from the wonderful revolution of sentiment in favour of federal measures, and the marvellous change for the better in the elections of your State, that he shall begin to suspect that miracles have not ceased; indeed, for myself, since so much liberality has been displayed in the construction and adoption of the proposed General Government, I am almost disposed to be of the same opinion." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, July 20, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:21

"[W]e may, with a kind of grateful and pious exultation, trace the finger of Providence through those dark and mysterious events, which first induced the States to appoint a general Convention and then led them one after another (by such steps as were best calculated to effect the object) into an adoption of the system recommended by that general Convention; thereby, in all human probability, laying a lasting foundation for tranquillity and happiness; when we had but too much reason to fear that confusion and misery were coming rapidly upon us. That the same good Providence may still continue to protect us and prevent us from dashing the cup of national felicity just as it has been lifted to our lips, is the earnest prayer." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., Speaker of the Connecticut House of Representatives, Mount Vernon, July 20, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:22

Letter to Nathaniel Gorham – July 21, 1788

"Although I am passing rapidly into the Vale of Years, where the genial warmth of youth that fires its votary with a generous enthusiasm becomes extinct and where the cheerlessness²⁴ of the prospect often infects the animal spirits with a similar contagion;

yet I trust there are few who rejoice more fervently in the expectation that the beams of prosperity will break in upon a Country, which has ever engaged my most disinterested wishes and fondest hopes. And although I shall not live to see but a small portion of the happy effects, which I am confident this system will produce for my Country; yet the precious idea of its prosperity will not only be a consolation amidst the encreasing infirmities of nature and the growing love of retirement, but it will tend to sooth the mind in the inevitable hour of seperation from terrestrial objects." – George Washington, letter to Nathaniel Gorham, Mount Vernon, July 21, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:23-24

"With earnest prayers that you and all the worthy Patriots of America may long enjoy uninterrupted felicity under the New Government, I have the honor." – George Washington, letter to Nathaniel Gorham, Mount Vernon, July 21, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:24

Letter to James McHenry – July 31, 1788

"That some of the leading characters among the Opponents of the proposed government have not laid aside their ideas of obtaining great and essential changes, through a constitutional opposition (as they term it) may be collected from their public speeches. That others will use more secret and perhaps insidious means to prevent its organization, may be presumed from their previous conduct on the subject. In addition to this probability, the casual information received from Visitants at my house, would lead me to expect that a considerable effort will be made to procure the election of Antifederalists to the first Congress; in order to bring the subject immediately before the State legislatures, to open an extensive correspondence between the minorities for obtaining alterations, and in short to undo all that has been done." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:28-29

"I hope and trust that the same liberal disposition prevails with a large proportion of the same description of men in this State. Still, I think there will be great reason, for those who are well-affected to the government, to use their utmost exertions that the worthiest Citizens may be appointed to the two houses of the first Congress and where State Elections take place previous to this choice that the same principle [may] govern in these also. For much will doubtless depend on their prudence in conducting business at the beginning; and reconciling discordant dispositions to a reasonable acquiescence with candid and honest measures." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick:Vol. 30:29

"I earnestly pray that the Omnipotent Being who has not deserted the cause of America in the hour of its extremest hazard, will never yield so fair a heritage of freedom a prey to Anarchy or Despotism." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:30

Letter to Charles Petit – August 16, 1788

"I am truly pleased to learn that those who have been considered as its most violent opposers will not only acquiesce peaceably, but cooperate in its organization and content themselves with asking amendments in the manner prescribed by the Constitution." – George Washington, letter to Charles Petit, Mount Vernon, August 16, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:41

"Every real patriot must have lamented that private feuds and local politics should have unhappily insinuated themselves into, and in some measure obstructed the discussion of a great national question." – George Washington, letter to Charles Petit, Mount Vernon, August 16, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:41

"A just opinion, that the People when rightly informed will decide in a proper manner, ought certainly to have prevented all intemperate or precipitate proceedings on a subject of so much magnitude; nor should a regard to common decency have suffered the zealots in the minority to stigmatize the authors of the Constitution as Conspirators and Traitors." – George Washington, letter to Charles Petit, Mount Vernon, August 16, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:41

"For myself, I expected not to be exempted from obloquy any more than others. It is the lot of humanity. But if the shafts of malice had been aimed at me in ever so pointed a manner on this occasion, shielded as I was by a consciousness of having acted in conformity to what I believed my duty, they would have fallen blunted from their mark. It is known to some of my countrymen, and can be demonstrated to the conviction of all, that I was in a manner constrained to attend the general Convention in compliance with the earnest and pressing desires of many of the most respectable characters in different parts of the Continent." – George Washington, letter to Charles Petit, Mount Vernon, August 16, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:42

"At my age, and in my circumstances, what sinister object, or personal emolument had I to seek after, in this life? The growing infirmities of age and the increasing love of retirement, daily confirm my decided predilection for domestic life: and the great Searcher of human hearts is my witness, that I have no wish, which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm." – George Washington, letter to Charles Petit, Mount Vernon, August 16, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:42

Letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier – August 17, 1788

"The Maritime Genius of this Country is now steering our Vessels in every ocean; to the East Indies, the North-west Coasts of America and the extremities of the Globe." – George Washington, letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier, Mount Vernon, August

Letter to John Beale Bordley – August 17, 1788

"By the usual mode (it is scarcely necessary to observe) we have three fields -- viz -- one in Corn, one in wheat, and one in hay. By my plan these three fields are divided into Six. In 1788 for instance, one of them (say No. 1) is planted with Corn 8 feet by 2, single stalks; with Irish Potatoes or Carrots, or partly both between. That Corn planted in this manner will yield as much to the Acre as in any other. That the quantity of Potatoes will at least quadruple the quantity of Corn, and that the Potatoes do not exhaust the Soil, are facts well established in my mind. In April 1789 it is sown with Buck wheat for manure, which is plowed in before Harvest when the Seed begins to ripen and there is a sufficiency of it to seed the ground a second time. In July it is again plowed; which gives two dressings to the land at the expence of a bushl. of B. Wheat and the plowings which would otherwise be essential for a summer fallow. In August, after the putrefaction and fermentation is over, wheat is sown, and in 1790 harvested. In 1791 the best, and earliest kind of Indian Pease are sown broadcast, to be mowed when generally ripe. Since the adoptn. of this course, and progress that has been made to carry it into effect, I have had too much cause to be convinced, that Pease harvested in this manr. is a considerable exhaustion of the Soil. I have some thoughts therefore of substituting a medley, of Pease, Buck Wheat for seed, Turnips, Pompions &ca. in such parts of the field as best suit them, they will be useful, and serve as preparatives. In 1792 Spring Barley or Oats, or equal quantities of each, will be sown with red clover; the latter to be fed with light Stock the first year after harvest. In 1793, the field remains in Clover for Hay, or grazing according to circumstances, and in 1794 comes into Corn again, and goes on as before." – George Washington, letter to John Beale Bordley, Mount Vernon, August 17, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:49

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln – August 28, 1788

"I wish I may be mistaken in imagining, that there are persons, who, upon finding they could not carry their point by an open attack against the Constitution, have some sinister designs to be silently effected, if possible. But I trust in that Providence, which has saved us in six troubles yea in seven, to rescue us again from any imminent, though unseen, dangers. Nothing, however, on our part ought to be left undone. I conceive it to be of unspeakable importance, that whatever there be of wisdom, and prudence, and patriotism on the Continent, should be concentrated in the public Councils, at the first outset." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, August 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:63

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – August 28, 1788

"As the perusal of the political papers under the signature of Publius has afforded me great satisfaction, I shall certainly consider them as claiming a most distinguished place in my Library. I have read every performance which has been printed on one side and the other of the great question lately agitated (so far as I have been able to obtain them) and, without an unmeaning compliment, I will say, that I have seen no other so well calculated (in my judgment) to produce conviction on an unbiased Mind, as the Production of your triumvirate. When the transient circumstances and fugitive performances which attended this Crisis shall have disappeared, That Work will merit the Notice of Posterity; because in it are candidly and ably discussed the principles of freedom and the topics of government, which will be always interesting to mankind so long as they shall be connected in Civil Society." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:66

"I would not wish to conceal my prevailing sentiment from you. For you know me well enough, my good Sir, to be persuaded, that I am not guilty of affectation, when I tell you, that it is my great and sole desire to live and die, in peace and retirement on my own farm. Were it even indispensable a different line of conduct should be adopted; while you and some others who are acquainted with my heart would acquit, the world and Posterity might probably accuse me [of] inconsistency and ambition." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:67

"Still I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of an honest man, as well as prove (what I desire to be considered in reality)." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 28, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:67

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – August 29, 1788

"I hope the United States of America will be able to keep disengaged from the labyrinth of European politics and Wars; and that before long they will, by the adoption of a good national government, have become respectable in the eyes of the world so that none of the maritime Powers, especially none of those who hold possessions in the New World or the West Indies shall presume to treat them with insult or contempt. It should be the policy of United America to administer to their wants, without being engaged in their quarrels. And it is not in the ability of the proudest and most potent people on earth to prevent us from becoming a great, a respectable and a commercial Nation, if we shall continue United and faithful to ourselves." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, August 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:71

"I begin to look forward, with a kind of political faith, to scenes of National happiness, which have not heretofore been offered for the fruition of the most favoured Nations. The natural political, and moral circumstances of our Nascent empire justify the anticipation. We

have an almost unbounded territory whose natural advantages for agriculture and Commerce equal those of any on the globe In a civil point of view we have unequalled privilege of choosing our own political Institutions and of improving upon the experience of Mankind in the formation of a confederated government, where due energy will not be incompatible with unalienable rights of freemen. To complete the picture, I may observe, that the information and morals of our Citizens appear to be peculiarly favourable for the introduction of such a plan of government as I have just now described." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, August 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:72

"Although there were some few things in the Constitution recommended by the Foederal Convention to the determination of the People, which did not full accord with my wishes; yet, having taken every circumstance seriously into consideration, I was convinced it approached nearer to perfection than any government hitherto instituted among Men." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, August 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:73

"[A] greater Drama is now acting on this Theatre than has heretofore been brought on the American Stage, or any other in the World. We exhibit at present the Novel and astonishing Spectacle of a whole People deliberating calmly on what form of government will be most conducive to their happiness; and deciding with an unexpected degree of unanimity in favour of a System which they conceive calculated to answer the purpose." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, August 29, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:73

Letter to Annis Boudinot Stockton – August 31, 1788

"The felicitations you offer on the present prospect of our public affairs are highly acceptable to me, and I entreat you to receive a reciprocation from my part. I can never trace the concatenation of causes, which led to these events, without acknowledging the mystery and admiring the goodness of Providence. To that superintending Power alone is our retraction from the brink of ruin to be attributed. A spirit of accomodation was happily infused into the leading characters of the Continent, and the minds of men were gradually prepared, by disappointment, for the reception of a good government. Nor would I rob the fairer sex of their share in the glory of a revolution so honorable to human nature, for, indeed, I think you Ladies are in the number of the best Patriots America can boast." – George Washington, letter to Annis Boudinot Stockton, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:76

"A good general government, without good morals and good habits, will not make us a happy People; and we shall deceive ourselves if we think it will. A good government will, unquestionably, tend to foster and confirm those qualities, on which public happiness must be engrafted." – George Washington, letter to Annis Boudinot Stockton, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:76

"Nor would I rob the fairer sex of their share in the glory of a revolution so honorable to human nature, for, indeed, I think you Ladies are in the number of the best Patriots America can boast." – George Washington, letter to Annis Boudinot Stockton, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:76

"I hope that you and yours may have the enjoyment of your health, as well as Mrs. Washington and myself: that enjoyment, by the divine benediction, adds much to our temporal felicity." – George Washington, letter to Annis Boudinot Stockton, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:76

Letter to Dr. Thomas Ruston – August 31, 1788

"I have been regularly favored with your letter of the 17th. instant, and am much obliged by your polite congratulations on the ratification of the Constitution by eleven States. Your remark seems to be well founded, that it is much more wonderful so many States should have adopted, than that two only should not as yet have accepted the government. It remains for us to hope [for] the best; and I would fain persuade myself that the same Power, which hath hitherto kept us from Disunion and Anarchy, will not suffer us to be disappointed." – George Washington, letter to Dr. Thomas Ruston, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:79

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – August 31, 1788

"You have my best thanks for the political information contained in it, as well as for the satisfactory account of the Canal of Languedoc. It gives me pleasure to be made acquainted with the particulars of that stupendous Work, tho' I do not expect to derive any but speculative advantages from it. ... When America will be able to embark in projects of such pecuniary extent, I know not; probably not for very many years to come; but it will be a good example and not without its use, if we can carry our present undertakings happily into effect. Of this we have now the fairest prospect." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:79-80

"In whatever manner the Nations of Europe shall endeavor to keep up their prowess in war and their ballance of power in peace, it will be obviously our policy to cultivate tranquility at home and abroad; and extend our agriculture and commerce as far as possible." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:82

"I am strongly impressed with the expediency of establishing our National faith beyond imputation, and of having recourse to loans only on critical occasions." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:82

"I feel mortified that there should have been any just grd. for the clamour of the foreign Officers who served with us; but, after having received a quarter of their whole debt in specie and their interest in the same for sometime, they have infinitely less reason for complaint than our native Officers, of whom the suffering and neglect have only been equalled by their patience and patriotism. A great proportion of the Officers and Soldiers of the American Army have been compelled by indigence to part with their securities for one eighth of the nominal value. Yet their conduct is very different from what you represented that of the French Officers to have been." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:82

"The merits and defects of the proposed Constitution have been largely and ably discussed. For myself, I was ready to have embraced any tolerable compromise that was competent to save us from impending ruin ; and I can say, there are scarcely any of the amendments which have been suggested, to which I have much objection, except that which goes to the prevention of direct taxation; and that, I presume, will be more strenuously advocated and insisted upon hereafter, than any other. I had indulged the expectation, that the New Government would enable those entrusted with its Administration to do justice to the public creditors and retrieve the National character." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:82-83

"I will just touch on the bright side of our national State, before I conclude: and we may perhaps rejoice that the People have been ripened by misfortune for the reception of a good government. They are emerging from the gulf of dissipation and debt into which they had precipitated themselves at the close of the war." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:83

Letter to Henry Lee – September 22, 1788

"I am glad Congress have at last decided upon an Ordinance for carrying the new government into execution. In my mind the place for the meeting of the new Congress was not an object of such very important consequence; but I greatly fear that the question entailed upon that body, respecting their permanent residence, will be pregnant with difficulty and danger. God grant that true patriotism and a spirit of moderation may exclude a narrow locality, and all ideas unfriendly to the Union, from every quarter." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:95

"It was for a long time doubtful whether we were to survive as an independent Republic, or decline from our foederal dignity into insignificant and wretched Fragments of Empire." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:96

"Probably, prudence, wisdom, and patriotism were never more essentially necessary than at the present moment; and so far as it can be done in an irreproachably direct manner, no effort ought to be left unessayed to procure the election of the best possible characters to the new Congress. On their harmony, deliberation and decision every thing will depend." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:96

"Should the contingency you suggest take place, and (for argument sake alone let me say it) should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends; might I not, after the Declarations I have made (and Heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart) in the judgment of the impartial World and of Posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency; if not with rashness and ambition? Nay farther would there not even be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now justice to myself and tranquillity of conscience require that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize, as I ought, the good opinion of my fellow citizens; yet, if I know myself, I would not seek Or retain popularity at the expense of one social duty or moral virtue." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:97

"While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my Country and myself, I could despise all the party clamor and unjust censure, which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious, that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risque; regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:98

"Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my encreasing fondness for agricultural amusements and my growing love of retirement augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen: yet it would be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, or the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief that some other person, who had less pretence and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:98

Letter to James Madison – September 23, 1788

"[I]t behoves all the advocates of the Constitution, forgetting partial and smaller considerations, to combine their exertions for collecting the wisdom and virtue of the Continent to one centre; in order that the Republic may avail itself of the opportunity for escaping from Anarchy, Division, and the other great national calamities that impended. To be shipwrecked in sight of the Port would

be the severest of all possible aggravations to our Misery." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:100-101

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – October 3, 1788

"[L]ittle more is incumbent upon me, than to thank you sincerely for the frankness with which you communicated your sentiments, and to assure you that the same manly tone of intercourse will always be more than barely welcome, indeed it will be highly acceptable to me. I am particularly glad in the present instance, that you have dealt thus freely and like a friend." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 3, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:109

"Although I could not help observing, from several publications and letters that my name had been sometimes spoken of, and that it was possible the Contingency which is the subject of your letter might happen; yet I thought it best to maintain a guarded silence and to seek the counsel of my best friends (which I certainly hold in the highest estimation) rather than to hazard an imputation unfriendly to the delicacy of my feelings. For, situated as I am, I could hardly bring the question into the slightest discussion, or ask an opinion even in the most confidential manner, without betraying, in my judgment, some impropriety of conduct, or without feeling an apprehension, that a premature display of anxiety might be construed into a vain-glorious desire of pushing myself into notice as a candidate." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 3, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:110

"Now, if I am not grossly deceived in myself, I should unfeignedly rejoice, in case the Electors, by giving their votes in favor of some other person, would save me from the dreaded Dilemma of being forced to accept or refuse. ... If that may not be, I am, in the next place, earnestly desirous of searching out the truth, and of knowing whether there does not exist a probability that the government would be just as happily and effectually carried into execution without my aid, as with it." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 3, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:110-111

"Their plan of opposition is systematized, and a regular intercourse, I have much reason to believe between the Leaders of it in the several States is formed to render it more effectual." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, October 3, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:112

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln – October 26, 1788

"Motives of delicacy have prevented me hitherto from conversing or writing on this subject, whenever I could avoid it with decency. I may, however with great sincerity and I believe without offending against modesty or propriety say to you, that I most heartily wish the choice to which you allude may not fall upon me: and that, if it should, I must reserve to myself the right of making up my final decision, at the last moment when it can be brought into one view, and when the expediency in expediency of a refusal can be more judiciously determined than at present." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:119

Every personal consideration conspires to rivet me (if I may use the expression) to retirement. At my time of life, and under my circumstances, nothing in this world can ever draw me from it, unless it be a conviction that the partiality of my Countrymen had made my services absolutely necessary, joined to a fear that my refusal might induce a belief that I preferred the conservation of my own reputation and private ease, to the good of my Country. After all, if I should conceive myself in a manner constrained to accept, I call Heaven to witness, that this very act would be the greatest sacrifice of my personal feelings and wishes that ever I have been called upon to make. It would be to forego repose and domestic enjoyment, for trouble, perhaps for public obloquy: for I should consider myself as entering upon an unexplored field, enveloped on every side with clouds and darkness." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:119

"From this embarrassing situation I had naturally supposed that my declarations at the close of the war would have saved me; and that my sincere intentions, then publicly made known, would have effectually precluded me for ever afterwards from being looked upon as a Candidate for any office. This hope, as a last anchor of worldly happiness in old age, I had still carefully preserved; until the public papers and private letters from my Correspondents in almost every quarter, taught me to apprehend that I might soon be obliged to answer the question, whether I would go again into public life or not." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:119-120

"So much have I been otherwise occupied, and so little agency did I wish to have in electioneering, that I have never entered into a single discussion with any person nor to the best of my recollection expressed a single sentiment orally or in writing respecting the appointment of a Vice President. From the extent and respectability of Massachusetts it might reasonably be expected, that he would be chosen from that State. But having taken it for granted, that the person selected for that important place would be a true Foederalist; in that case, I was altogether disposed to acquiesce in the prevailing sentiments of the Electors, without giving any unbecoming preference or incurring any unnecessary ill-will." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:120

"[S]upposing myself to be connected in office with any gentleman of character, I would most certainly treat him with perfect sincerity and the greatest candour in every respect. I would give him my full confidence, and use my utmost endeavours to co-operate with him, in promoting and rendering permanent the national prosperity; this should be my great, my only aim, under the fixed and irrevocable

resolution of leaving to other hands the helm of the State, as soon as my services could possibly with propriety be dispensed with." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:121

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull – December 4, 1788

"I believe you know me sufficiently well, my dear Trumbull, to conceive that I am very much perplexed and distressed in my own mind, respecting the subject to which you allude. If I should (unluckily for me) be reduced to the necessity of giving an answer to the question, which you suppose will certainly be put to me, I would fain do what is in all respects best. But how can I know what is best, or on what I shall determine? May Heaven assist me in forming a judgment: for at present I see nothing but clouds and darkness before me. Thus much I may safely say to you in confidence; if ever I should, from any apparent necessity, be induced to go from home in a public character again, it will certainly be the greatest sacrifice of feeling and happiness that ever was or ever can be made by him, who will have, in all situations, the pleasure to profess himself yours." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:149

Letter to Arthur Young – December 4, 1788

"The more I am acquainted with agricultural affairs the better I am pleased with them. Insomuch that I can nowhere find so great satisfaction, as in those innocent and useful pursuits. In indulging these feelings, I am led to reflect how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth, than all the vain glory which can be acquired from ravaging it, by the most uninterrupted career of conquests." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30, 150

"I can only say for myself, that I have endeavoured in a state of tranquil retirement to keep myself as much from the eye of the world as I possibly could. I have studiously avoided, as much as was in my power, to give any cause for ill-natured or impertinent comments on my conduct: and I should be very unhappy to have anything done on my behalf (however distant in itself from impropriety) which should give occasion for one officious tongue to use my name with indelicacy. For I wish most devoutly to glide silently and unnoticed through the remainder of life" – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:153-154

Letter to William Gordon – December 23, 1788

"I flatter myself my countrymen are so fully persuaded of my desire to remain in private life; that I am not without hopes and expectations of being left quietly to enjoy the repose, in which I am at present. Or, in all events, should it be their wish (as you suppose it will be) for me to come again on the Stage of public affairs, I certainly will decline it, if the refusal can be made consistently with what I conceive to be the dictates of propriety and duty. For the great Searcher of human hearts knows there is no wish in mine, beyond that of living and dying an honest man, on my own farm." – George Washington, letter to William Gordon, Mount Vernon, December 23, 1788; Fitzpatrick 30:168-169

Letter to William Gordon – January 29, 1789

"Did it not savour so much of partiality for my Countrymen I might add, that I cannot help flattering myself the new Congress on account of the self-created respectability and various talents of its Members, will not be inferior to any Assembly in the world." – George Washington, letter to William Gordon, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:185

"[I]n such a fickle state of existence I would not be too sanguine in indulging myself with the contemplation of scenes of uninterrupted prosperity; lest some unforeseen mischance or perverseness should occasion the greater mortification, by blasting the enjoyment in the very bud." – George Washington, letter to William Gordon, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:185

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – January 29, 1789

"If I know my own heart, nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs; and, in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavours shall be unremittingly exerted (even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity) to extricate my country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled, through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which if pursued will ensure permanent felicity to the Commonwealth. I think I see a path, as clear and as direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but harmony, honesty, industry and frugality are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily the present posture of affairs and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen promise to co-operate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:185-186

"Though I would not force the introduction of manufactures, by extravagant encouragements, and to the prejudice of agriculture; yet, I conceive much might be done in that way by women, children and others; without taking one really necessary hand from tilling the earth. Certain it is, great savings are already made in many articles of apparel, furniture and consumption. Equally certain it is, that no diminution in agriculture has taken place, at the time when greater and more substantial improvements in manufactures were making,

than were ever before known in America." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:186

"I have been writing to our friend Genl. Knox this day, to procure me homespun broad cloth, of the Hartford fabric, to make a suit of cloaths for myself. I hope it will not be a great while, before it will be unfashionable for a gentleman to appear in any other dress. Indeed we have already been too long subject to British prejudices. I use no porter or cheese in my family, but such as is made in America: both those articles may now be purchased of an excellent quality." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:187

"While you are quarrelling among yourselves in Europe; while one King is running mad, and others acting as if they were already so, by cutting the throats of the subjects of their neighbours, I think you need not doubt, my dear Marquis, we shall continue in tranquility here. And that population will be progressive so long as there shall continue to be so many easy means for obtaining a subsistence, and so ample a field for the exertion of talents and industry." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, January 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:187

Letter to Benjamin Lincoln – January 31, 1789

"Though facts will ultimately become known; yet much mischief to the federal cause may be done, by suffering misrepresentation to pass unnoticed or unrefuted." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, January 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:190

"By the best information I can obtain, federal sentiments are spreading perhaps, faster than ever in this Commonwealth. It is generally supposed that six, if not seven, of the Representatives from it to Congress, will be decided friends to the Constitution. I will only add, that, in Maryland and this State, it is probable Mr. John Adams will have a considerable number of the votes of the Electors. Some of those gentlemen will have been advised that this measure would be entirely agreeable to me, and that I considered it to be the only certain way to prevent the election of an Antifederalist." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Lincoln, Mount Vernon, January 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:190

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – February 13, 1789

"[T]he greatest and most important objects of internal concern, which at present occupy the attention of the public mind, are manufactures and inland navigation. Many successful efforts in fabrics of different kinds are every day made. Those composed of Cotton, I think, will be of the most immediate and extensive utility." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, February 13, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:199

"A desire of encouraging whatever is useful and oeconomical seems now generally to prevail. Several capitol artists, in different branches, have lately arrived in this Country." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, February 13, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:199

Letter to Richard Conway – March 4, 1789

"Never 'till within these two yrs. have I experienced the want of money. Short Crops, and other causes not entirely within my Controul, make me feel it now, very sensibly. ... To collect money without the intervention of Suits (and these are tedious) seems impracticable. And Land, which I have offered for Sale, will not command cash at an under value. ... Under this statement I am inclined to do what I never expected to be reduced to the necessity of doing, that is, to borrow money upon interest." – George Washington, letter to Richard Conway, Mount Vernon, March 4, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:220

Letter to Samuel Vaughn – March 21, 1789

"The event which I have long dreaded, I am at last constrained to believe, is now likely to happen. For that I have, during many months, been oppressed with an apprehension it might be deemed unavoidably expedient for me to go again into public life, is known to all, who know me. But from the moment, when the necessity had become more apparent, and as it were inevitable, I anticipated, in a heart filled with distress, the ten thousand embarrassments, perplexities and troubles to which I must again be exposed in the evening of a life, already nearly consumed in public cares." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Vaughn, Mount Vernon, March 21, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:237

"Scarcely a day passes in which applications of one kind or another do not arrive. Insomuch, that had I not early adopted some general principles, I should before this time have been wholly occupied in this business. As it is, I have found the number of answers, which I have been necessitated to give in my own hand, an almost insupportable burden to me. The points in which all these answers have agreed in substance are: that should it be my lot to go again into public office, I would go into it, without being under any possible engagements of any nature whatsoever: that, so far as I know my own heart, I would not be in the remotest degree influenced, in making nominations, by motives arising from the ties of amity or blood: and that, on the other hand, three things, in my opinion, ought principally to be regarded, viz, the fitness of characters to fill offices, the comparative claims from the former merits and sufferings in

service of the different candidates, and the distribution of appointments in as equal a proportion as might be to persons belonging to the different States in the Union; for without precautions of this kind, I clearly foresaw the endless jealousies, and, possibly, the fatal consequences, to which a government, depending altogether on the good will of the people for its establishment, would certainly be exposed in its early stages." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Vaughan, Mount Vernon, March 21, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:238

Letter to George Steptoe Washington – March 23, 1789

"One thing...I would strongly impress upon you, vizt. that when you have leisure to go into company that it should always be of the best kind that the place you are in will afford; by this means you will be constantly improving your manners and cultivating your mind while you are relaxing from your books." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:246

"[G]ood company will always be found much less expensive than bad." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:246

"Decency and cleanliness will always be the first object in the dress of a judicious and sensible man; a conformity to the prevailing fashion in a certain degree is necessary; but it does not from thence follow that a man should always get a new Coat, or other clothes, upon every trifling change in the mode, when perhaps he has two or three very good ones by him." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:247

"I cannot enjoin too strongly upon you a due observance of oeconomy and frugality, as you well know yourself, the present state of your property and finances will not admit of any unnecessary expense. The article of clothing is now one of the chief expences, you will incur, and in this, I fear, you are not so oeconomical as you should be. Decency and cleanliness will always be the first object in the dress of a judicious and sensible man; a conformity to the prevailing fashion in a certain degree is necessary; but it does not from thence follow that a man should always get a new Coat, or other clothes, upon every trifling change in the mode, when perhaps he has two or three very good ones by him." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:247

"A person who is anxious to be a leader of the fashion, or one of the first to follow it will certainly appear in the eyes of judicious men, to have nothing better than a frequent change of dress to recommend him to notice. I would always wish you to appear sufficiently decent to entitle you to admission into any company where you may be; but I cannot too strongly enjoin it upon you, and your own knowledge must convince you of the truth of it, that you should be as little expensive in this respect as you properly can." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:247

"You should always keep some clothes to wear to Church, or on particular occasions, which should not be worn everyday; this can be done without any additional expence; for whenever it is necessary to get new clothes, those which have been kept for particular occasions will then come in as every-day ones, unless they should be of a superior quality to the new." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, Mount Vernon, March 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:247-248

Letter to Thomas Green – March 31, 1789

"Bargains are intended, for the Mutual benefit of and are equally binding on both the Parties, and are either binding in all their parts or are of no use at all. If then a man receives [pay] for his labour and he withholds that labour or if he trifles away that time for which he is paid, it is a robbery; and a robbery of the worst kind, because it is not only a fraud but a dishonorable, unmanly and a deceitful fraud." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Green, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:262

"Having said thus much by way of exhortation I shall inform you in the most serious and positive terms that I have left strict orders with the Major my Nephew, who is vested with full powers to transact all my business, that if he should find you unfaithful to your engagements, either from the love of liquor from a disposition to be running about, or from proneness to idle when at your work to discard you immediately and to remove your family from their present abode. The sure means to avoid this evil is, first to refrain from drink which is the source of all evil, and the ruin of half the workmen in this Country; and next to avoid bad Company which is the bane of good morals, economy and industry. You have every inducement to do this." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Green, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:263

"An aching head and trembling limbs which are the inevitable effects of drinking discline the hands from work; hence begins sloth and that Listlessness which end in idleness; but which are no reasons for withholding that labour for which money is paid." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Green, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:264

"I have no other inducement for giving you this advice (in this my hour of hurry) but your own good." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Green, Mount Vernon, March 31, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:264

Letter to General Henry Knox – April 1, 1789

"For myself, the delay may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I assure you, with the world it would obtain little credit, that my movements to the chair of Government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution: so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an Ocean of difficulties, without that competency of political skill, abilities and inclination which is necessary to manage the helm." – George Washington, letter to General Henry Knox, Acting Secretary of War, on the delay in assuming office, Mount Vernon, April 1, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:268

"I am sensible, that I am embarking the voice of my Countrymen and a good name of my own, on this voyage, but what returns will be made for them, Heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness is all I can promise; these, be the voyage long or short, never shall forsake me although I may be deserted by all men. For of the consolations which are to be derived from these (under any circumstances) the world cannot deprive me." – George Washington, letter to General Henry Knox, Acting Secretary of War, on the delay in assuming office, Mount Vernon, April 1, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:268

Letter to Hector St. John de Crevecoeur – April 10, 1789

"[I]ndeed the American Revolution, or the peculiar light of the age seems to have opened the eyes of almost every nation in Europe, and a spirit of equal liberty appears fast to be gaining ground everywhere, which must afford satisfaction to every friend of mankind." – George Washington, letter to Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, Mount Vernon, April 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:281

Letter to Charles Thomson – April 14, 1789

"I have been accustomed to pay so much respect to the opinion of my fellow-citizens, that the knowledge of their having given their unanimous suffrages in my favor, scarcely leaves me the alternative for an option. I can not, I believe, give a greater evidence of my sensibility of the honor which they have done me than by accepting the appointment. ... I am so much affected by this fresh proof of my Country's Esteem and Confidence that silence can best explain my gratitude. While I realize the arduous nature of the Task which is imposed upon me, and feel my own inability to perform it, I wish however that there may not be reason for regretting the Choice, for indeed all I can promise is only to accomplish that which can be done by an honest zeal." – George Washington, response to Charles Thomson, Mount Vernon, April 14, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:285

Diary Entry – April 16, 1789

"About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York in company with Mr. Thomson and Colonel Humphreys, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations." – George Washington, diary entry, April 16, 1789; "The Life of George Washington," Special Edition for Schools, ed. Robert Faulkner and Paul Carrese (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000) Chap. 27

Address to the Mayor, Corporation, and Citizens of Alexandria – April 16, 1789

"All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the protection of that beneficent Being, who, on a former occasion has happily brought us together, after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge us with the same heartfelt felicity. But words, my fellow-citizens, fail me: Unutterable sensations must then be left to more expressive silence: while, from an aching heart, I bid you all, my affectionate friends and kind neighbours, farewell!" – George Washington, address to the Mayor, Corporation, and Citizens of Alexandria, April 16, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:287

Address to the Citizens of Baltimore – April 17, 1789

"It appears to me, that little more than common sense and common honesty, in the transactions of the community at large, would be necessary to make us a great and a happy Nation. For if the general Government, lately adopted, shall be arranged and administered in such a manner as to acquire the full confidence of the American People, I sincerely believe, they will have greater advantages, from their Natural, moral and political circumstances, for public felicity, than any other People ever possessed." – George Washington, address to the Citizens of Baltimore, April 17, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:288

"In the contemplation of those advantages, now soon to be realized, I have reconciled myself to the sacrifice of my fondest wishes, so far as to enter again upon the stage of Public life. I know the delicate nature of the duties incident to the part which I am called to perform; and I feel my incompetence, without the singular assistance of Providence to discharge them in a satisfactory manner." – George Washington, address to the Citizens of Baltimore, April 17, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:288

Reply to the Delaware Society for Promotion Domestic Manufactures – April 19, 1789

"The promotion of domestic manufactures will, in my conception, be among the first consequences which may naturally be expected to flow from an energetic government. For myself, having an equal regard for the prosperity of the farming, trading, and manufacturing interests, I will only observe, that I cannot conceive the extension of the latter (so far as it may afford employment to a great number of hands, which would be otherwise in a manner idle,) can be detrimental to the former." – George Washington, reply to the Delaware Society for Promotion Domestic Manufactures, Wilmington, April 19, 1789; Sparks 12:141

Address to Common Council of Philadelphia – April 20, 1789

"When I contemplate the interposition of Providence, as it was manifested in guiding us through the revolution, in preparing us for the reception of a general government, and in conciliating the good will of the people of America towards one another after its adoption, I feel myself oppressed and almost overwhelmed with a sense of the divine munificence." – George Washington, address to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, April 20, 1789; Sparks 12:145

"If I have distressing apprehensions, that I shall not be able to justify the too exalted expectations of my countrymen, I am supported under the pressure of such uneasy reflections by a confidence, that the most gracious Being, who has hitherto watched over the interests and averted the perils of the United States, will never suffer so fair an inheritance to become a prey to anarchy, despotism, or any other species of oppression." – George Washington, address to the Mayor, Recorder, Aldermen, and Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, April 20, 1789; Sparks 12:145

Address to University of Pennsylvania – April 21, 1789

"I am not a little flattered by being considered by the patrons of literature as one in their number. Fully apprized of the influence, which sound learning has on religion and manners, on government, liberty, and laws, I shall only lament my want of abilities to make it still more extensive." – George Washington, address to the President and Faculty of the University of the State of Pennsylvania, April 21, 1789; Sparks 12:146

"I conceive hopes, however, that we are at the eve of a very enlightened era. The same unremitting exertions, which, under all the blasting storms of war, caused the arts and sciences to flourish in America, will doubtless bring them nearer to maturity, when they shall have been sufficiently invigorated by the milder rays of peace." – George Washington, address to the President and Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, April 20, 1789; Sparks 12:146-147

"I return you my hearty thanks for your devout intercession at the throne of grace for my felicity both here and hereafter. May you also, Gentlemen, after having been the happy instruments of diffusing the blessings of literature and the comforts of religion, receive the just compensation for your virtuous deeds." – George Washington, address to the President and Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, April 20, 1789; Sparks 12:147

SUPREME COUNCIL OF PHILADELPHIA (SCHOOL)
COURTESY OF KEMER HELP KEMER (SCHOOL)

SECTION IV: The Presidency



George Washington's inauguration as the first president of the United States took place on April 30, 1789. The inauguration, held at Federal Hall in New York City, is portrayed in an oil painting by Ramon de Elorriaga from about 1899.

The Granger Collection, New York

Oath of Office – April 30, 1789

"So help me God." – George Washington, Oath of the President of the United States, April 30, 1789; Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, January 20, 2009

First Inaugural Address - April 30, 1789

"I was summoned by my Country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years..." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:291

"[T]he magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my Country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualification, could not but overwhelm with dispondence, one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:291

"[A]ll I dare aver, is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance, by which it might be affected. All I dare hope, is, that, in executing this task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof, of the confidence of my fellow-citizens; and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me; my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my Country, with some share of the partiality in which they originated." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:291

"Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station; it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official Act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the Universe, who presides in the Councils of Nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States, a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes: and may enable every instrument employed in its administration to execute with success, the functions allotted to his charge." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:292

"In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow-citizens at large, less than either. No People can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the Affairs of men more than the People of the United States. Every step, by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their United Government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most Governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me I trust in thinking, that there are none under the influence of which, the proceedings of a new and free Government can more auspiciously commence." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:292-293

"It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges, that as on one side, no local prejudices, or attachments; no separate views, nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests: so, on another, that the foundations of our National policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality; and the pre-eminence of a free Government, be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its Citizens, and command the respect of the world." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:294

"[T]here is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the oeconomy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity: Since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:294

"[T]he preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:294

"I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my Country can inspire: since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the oeconomy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity: Since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: And since the preservation of the sacred

fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:295

"I assure myself that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an United and effective Government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience; a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question how far the former can be more impregnably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:295

"When I was first honoured with a call into the Service of my Country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the Executive Department; and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the Station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:295-296

"Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave; but not without resorting once more to the benign parent of the human race, in humble supplication that since he has been pleased to favour the American people, with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquility, and dispositions for deciding with unparelled unanimity on a form of Government, for the security of their Union, and the advancement of their happiness; so his divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures on which the success of this Government must depend." – George Washington, First Inaugural Address, New York, April 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:296

Drafts and Fragments of First Inaugural Address – April 1789

"At the beginning of the late War with Great Britain, when we thought ourselves justifiable in resisting to blood, is was known to those best acquainted with the different condition of the combatants and the probable cost of the prize in dispute, that the expence in comparison with our circumstances as Colonists must be enormous, the struggle protracted, dubious and severe. It was known that the resources of Britain were, in a manner, inexhaustible, that her fleets covered the Ocean, and that her troops had harvested laurels in every quarter of the globe. Not then organised as a nation, or known as a people upon the earth, we had no preparation. Money, the nerve of War, was wanting. The Sword was to be forged on the Anvil of necessity." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:297

"If we had a secret resource of a nature unknown to our enemy, it was in the unconquerable resolution of our Citizens, the conscious rectitude of our cause, and a confident trust that we should not be forsaken by Heaven." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:297

"I rejoice in a belief that intellectual light will spring up in the dark corners of the earth; that freedom of enquiry will produce liberality of conduct; that mankind will reverse the absurd position that the many were, made for the few; and that they will not continue slaves in one part of the globe, when they can become freemen in another." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Allen: Chap. 11

"...set up my judgment as the standard of perfection? And shall I arrogantly pronounce that whosoever differs from me, must discern the subject through a distorting medium, or be influenced by some nefarious design? The mind is so formed in different persons as to contemplate the same object in different points of view. Hence originates the difference on questions of the greatest import, both human and divine. In all Institutions of the former kind, great allowances are doubtless to be made for the fallibility and imperfection of their authors." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:299

"This long and laborious investigation, in which I endeavoured as far as the frailty of nature would permit to act with candour has resulted in a fixed belief that this Constitution, is really in its formation a government of the people; that is to say, a government in which all power is derived from, and at stated periods reverts to them, and that, in its operation, it is purely, a government of Laws made and executed by the fair substitutes of the people alone. The election of the differt. branches of Congress by the Freemen, either directly or indirectly is the pivot on which turns the first Wheel of the government; a Wheel which communicates motion to all the rest. At the sametime the exercise of this right of election seems to be so regulated as to afford less opportunity for corruption and influence; and more for stability and system than has usually been incident to popular governments." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:299-300

"I pretend to no unusual foresight into futurity, and therefore cannot undertake to decide, with certainty, what may be its ultimate fate. If a promised good should terminate in an unexpected evil, it would not be a solitary example of disappointment in this mutable state of existence. If the blessings of Heaven showered thick around us should be spilled on the ground or converted to curses, through the fault of those for whom they were intended, it would not be the first instance of folly or perverseness in short-sighted mortals." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:301

"The blessed Religion revealed in the word of God will remain an eternal and awful monument to prove that the best Institutions may be abused by human depravity; and that they may even, in some instances be made subservient to the vilest of purposes. Should, hereafter, those who are intrusted with the management of this government, incited by the lust of power and prompted by the Supineness or venality of their Constituents, overleap the known barriers of this Constitution and violate the unalienable rights of humanity: it will only serve to shew, that no compact among men (however provident in its construction and sacred in its ratification) can be pronounced everlasting and inviolable, and if I may so express myself, that no Wall of words, that no mound of parchmt. can be so formed as to stand against the sweeping torrent of boundless ambition on the one side, aided by the sapping current of corrupted morals on the other." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:301 -302

"No compact among men (however provident in its construction and sacred in its ratification) can be pronounced everlasting and inviolable, and if I may so express myself, that no Wall of words, that no mound of parchment can be so formed as to stand against the sweeping torrent of boundless ambition on the one side, aided by the sapping current of corrupted morals on the other." – George Washington, fragments of the discarded draft of First Inaugural Address, April 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:302

Letter to Bishops of the Methodist, Episcopal Church – May 1789

"After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, you will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial Patron of genuine, vital religion; I must assure you in particular that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the Throne of Grace for me, and that I likewise implore the divine benedictions on yourselves and your religious community." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops of the Methodist, Episcopal Church in the United States, May 1789; "History of Methodists in the United States," (J. M. Buckley) pp. 266-267

Reply to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States – May 1789

"Although it will be my endeavour to avoid being elated by the too favorable opinion, which your kindness for me may have induced you to express of the importance of my former conduct and the effect of my future services, yet, conscious of the disinterestedness of my motives, it is not necessary for me to conceal the satisfaction I have felt upon finding, that my compliance with the call of my country, and my dependence on the assistance of Heaven to support me in my arduous undertakings, have, so far as I can learn, met the universal approbation of, my countrymen." – George Washington, reply to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, May 1789; Sparks 12:152

"While I reiterate the professions of my dependence upon Heaven, as the source of all public and private blessings, I will observe, that the general prevalence of piety, philanthropy, honesty, industry, and economy seems, in the ordinary course of human affairs, particularly necessary for advancing and confirming the happiness of our country. While all men within our territories are protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of their consciences, it is rationally to be expected from them in return, that they will all be emulous of evincing the sanctity of their professions by the innocence of their lives and the beneficence of their actions ; for no man, who is profligate in his morals, or a bad member of the civil community, can possibly be a true Christian, or a credit to his own religious society. " – George Washington, reply to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, May 1789; Sparks 12:152-153

"I desire you to accept my acknowledgments for your laudable endeavours to render men sober, honest, and good citizens, and the obedient subjects of a lawful government, as well as for your prayers to Almighty God for his blessing on our common country, and the humble instrument, which he has been pleased to make use of in the administration of its government." – George Washington, reply to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, May 1789; Sparks 12:153

Letter to Edward Rutledge – May 5, 1789

"My dear Sir: I cannot fail of being much pleased with the friendly part you take in every thing which concerns me; and particularly with the just scale on which you estimate this last great sacrifice which I consider myself as having made for the good of my Country. When I had judged, upon the best appreciation I was able to form of the circumstances which related to myself, that it was my duty to embark again on the tempestuous and uncertain Ocean of public life, I gave up all expectations of private happiness in this world. You know, my dear Sir, I had concentrated all my schemes, all my views, all my wishes, within the narrow circle of domestic enjoyment. Though I flatter myself the world will do me the justice to believe, that, at my time of life and in my circumstances, nothing but a conviction of duty could have induced me to depart from my resolution of remaining in retirement; yet I greatly apprehend that my Countrymen will expect too much from me. I fear, if the issue of public measures should not correspond with their sanguine expectations, they will turn the extravagant (and I may say undue) praises which they are heaping upon me at this moment, into equally extravagant (though I will fondly hope unmerited) censures. So much is expected, so many untoward circumstances may intervene, in such a new and critical situation, that I feel an insuperable diffidence in my own abilities. I feel, in the execution of the duties of my arduous Office, how much I shall stand in need of the countenance and aid of every friend to myself, of every friend to the Revolution, and of every lover of good Government." – George Washington, letter to Edward Rutledge, New York, May 5, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:308-309

Letter to James Madison – May 5, 1789

"As the first of every thing, in our situation will serve to establish a Precedent, it is devoutly wished on my part, that these precedent may be fixed on true principles." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, New York, May 5, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:310

Letter to Philip Schuyler – May 9, 1789

"It is only from the assurances of support which, I have received from the respectable and worthy characters in every part of the Union, that I am enabled to overcome the diffidence which I have in my own abilities to execute my great and important trust to the best interest of your country. An honest zeal, and an unremitting attention to the interest of United America is all that I dare promise." – George Washington, letter to Philip Schuyler, May 9, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:317

"The good dispositions which seem at present to pervade every class of people afford reason for your observation that the clouds which have long darkened our political hemisphere are now dispersing, and that America will soon feel the effects of her natural advantages. That invisible hand which has so often interposed to save our Country from impending destruction, seems in no instance to have been more remarkably excited than in that of disposing the people of this extensive Continent to adopt, in a peaceable manner, a Constitution, which if well administered, bids fair to make America a happy nation." – George Washington, letter to Philip Schuyler, May 9, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:317

Letter to the General Committee of the United Baptist Churches in Virginia – May 10, 1789

"If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution framed in the Convention, where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny, and every species of religious persecution." – George Washington, letter to the General Committee of the United Baptists Churches in Virginia, May 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:321 Note

"I have often expressed my sentiments, that every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience." – George Washington, letter to the General Committee of the United Baptist Churches in Virginia, May 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:321 Note

Queries on a Line of Conduct to be Pursued by the President – May 10, 1789

"Whether, when it shall have been understood that the President is not to give general entertainments in the manner the Presidents of Congress have formerly done, it will be practicable to draw such a line of discrimination in regard to persons, as that Six, eight or ten official characters (including in the rotation the members of both Houses of Congress) may be invited informally or otherwise to dine with him on the days fixed for receiving Company, without exciting clamours in the rest of the Community?" – George Washington, Queries on a Line of Conduct to be Pursued by the President, May 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:319

"Whether it would be satisfactory to the Public for the President to make about four great entertainments. in a year on such great occasions as...the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence...the Alliance with France...the Peace with Great Britain...the Organization of the general Government: and whether arrangements of these two last kinds could be in danger of diverting too much of the Presidents time from business, or of producing the evils which it was intended to avoid by his living more recluse than the Presidents. of Congress have heretofore lived." – George Washington, Queries on a Line of Conduct to be Pursued by the President, May 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:319-320

"Many things which appear of little importance in themselves and at the beginning, may have great and durable consequences from their having been established at the commencement of a new general government. It will be much easier to commence the administration, upon a well adjusted system, built on tenable grounds, than to correct errors or alter inconveniences after they shall have been confirmed by habit. The President in all matters of business and etiquette, can have no object but to demean himself in his public character, in such a manner as to maintain the dignity of Office, without subjecting himself to the imputation of superciliousness or unnecessary reserve." – George Washington, Queries on a Line of Conduct to be Pursued by the President, May 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:321

Letter to Mary Wooster – May 21, 1789

"I must be permitted, with the best lights I can obtain, and upon a general view of characters and circumstances, to nominate such persons alone to offices, as, in my judgment, shall be the best qualified to discharge the functions of the departments to which they shall be appointed." – George Washington, letter to Mary Wooster, New York, May 21, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:327

Letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier – May 25, 1789

"Every one who has any knowledge of my manner of acting in public life, will be persuaded that I am not accustomed to impede the despatch or frustrate the success of business, by a ceremonious attention to idle forms." – George Washington, letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier, New York, May 25, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:334

Letter to Caleb Gibbs – May 26, 1789

"Whatever may be my private inclinations and feelings, it will then be my endeavour to find out and nominate such men as shall seem to be best calculated and best entitled in every respect to fill those offices, according to the clearest information I can obtain, and the most unbiassed judgment I can exercise on the subject." – George Washington, letter to Caleb Gibbs, New York, May 26, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:336

Letter to the Bishops of the Methodist, Episcopal Church in the United States – May 29, 1789

"After mentioning that I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, you will have occasion to be convinced that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial Patron of genuine, vital religion; I must assure you in particular that I take in the kindest part the promise you make of presenting your prayers at the Throne of Grace for me, and that I likewise implore the divine benedictions on yourselves and your religious community." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops of the Methodist, Episcopal Church in the United States, May 29, 1789; "History of Methodists in the United States," (J. M. Buckley) pp. 266-267

"I trust the people of every denomination, who demean themselves as good citizens, will have occasion to be convinced, that I shall always strive to prove a faithful and impartial Patron of genuine, vital religion." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops of the Methodist, Episcopal Church in the United States, May 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:339 Note

Response to the Governor and Council of North Carolina – June 19, 1789

"A difference of opinion on political points is not to be imputed to Freemen as a fault since it is to be presumed that they are all actuated by an equally laudable and sacred regard for the liberties of their Country. If the mind is so formed in different persons as to consider the same object to be somewhat different in its nature and consequences as it happens to be placed in different points of view; and if the oldest, the ablest, and the most virtuous Statesmen have often differed in judgment, as to the best forms of Government, we ought, indeed rather to rejoice that so much has been effected, than to regret that more could not all at once be accomplished." – George Washington, response to address from the Governor and Council of North Carolina, New York, June 19, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:347 Note

Reply to the Corporation of Visitors and Governors and faculty of Washington College – June 24, 1789

"As in civilized Societies the welfare of the State and happiness of the People are advanced or retarded in proportion as the morals and good education of the youth are attended to...It affords me peculiar pleasure etc." – George Washington, reply to the Corporation of Visitors and Governors and the principle and faculty of professors of Washington College in Maryland, June 24, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:349 Note

Message to Massachusetts Legislature – July 9, 1789

"In executing the duties of my present important station, I can promise nothing but purity of intentions, and, in carrying these into effect, fidelity and diligence." – George Washington, Message to the Massachusetts Legislature, July 9, 1789; Sparks 12:159

Letter to the Society of United Brethren – July 10, 1789

"In proportion as the general Government of the United States shall acquire strength by duration, it is probable they may have it in their power to extend a salutary influence to the Aborigines in the extremities of their Territory. In the meantime, it will be a desirable thing for the protection of the Union to co-operate, as far as circumstances may conveniently admit, with the disinterested endeavours of your Society to civilize and Christianize the Savages of the Wilderness." – George Washington, letter to the directors of the Society of United Brethren for Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen from Bethlehem, Pa., New York, July 10, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:355 Note

Letter to the Officials of Washington College – July 11, 1789

"A recollection of past events and the happy termination of our glorious struggle for the establishment of the rights of man cannot fail to inspire every feeling heart with veneration and gratitude towards the great Ruler of events, who has so manifestly interposed in our behalf. ... Among the numerous blessings which are attendant on Peace—and as One whose consequences are of the most important and extensive kind, may be reckoned the prosperity of Colleges and Seminaries of learning." – George Washington, letter to the Officials of Washington College, July 11, 1789; Papers, Presidential Series: Vol. 3:177

"As in civilized Societies the welfare of the State and happiness of the People are advanced or retarded in proportion as the morals and good education of the youth are attended to, I cannot forbear, on this occasion, to express the satisfaction which I feel in seeing the encrease [sic] of our Seminaries of Learning through this extensive country—And the general wish which seems to prevail for establishing and maintaining these valuable institutions. ... It affords me peculiar pleasure to know that the seat of learning under your direction hath attained to such proficiency in the sciences since the peace—and I sincerely pray the great Author of the Universe may smile upon the Institution and make it an extensive blessing to this country." – George Washington, letter to the Officials of Washington College, July 11, 1789; Papers, Presidential Series: Vol. 3:178

Letter to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress – July 24, 1789

"I have contemplated your Note, wherein, after mentioning your having served in quality of Secretary of Congress from the first meeting of that Body in 1774 to the present time, through an eventful period of almost fifteen years, you announce your wish to retire to private life: and I have to regret that the period of my coming again into public life, should be exactly that, in which you are about to retire from it. ... The present age does so much justice to the unsullied reputation with which you have always conducted yourself in the execution of the duties of your Office, and Posterity will find your Name so honorably connected with the verification of such a multitude of astonishing facts, that my single suffrage would add little to the illustration of your merits. Yet I cannot withhold any just testimonial, in favor of so old, so faithful and so able a public officer, which might tend to soothe his mind in the shade of retirement. Accept, then, this serious Declaration, that your Services have been important, as your patriotism was distinguished; and enjoy that best of all rewards, the consciousness of having done your duty well." – George Washington, letter to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress, New York, July 24, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:358-359

Letter to David Stuart – July 26, 1789

"The Man who means to commit no wrong, will never be guilty of enormities; consequently can never be unwilling to learn what is ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such the knowledge of them in a well disposed mind will go half way towards a reform. If they are not errors he can explain and justify the motives of his actions." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, July 26, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:360

"At a distance from the theatre of action truth is not always related without embellishment, and sometimes is entirely perverted from a misconception of the causes which produce the effects that are the subjects of censure." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, July 26, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:360

"So strongly had the citizens of this place imbibed an idea of the impropriety of my accepting invitations to dinner that I have not received one from any family (though they are remarkable for hospitality, and though I have received every civility and attention possible from them) since I came to the city except dining with the Governor on the day of my arrival, so that, if this should be adduced as an article of impeachment there can be at least one good reason adduced for my not dining out; to wit never having been asked to do so." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, July 26, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:362

Letter to Bushrod Washington – July 27, 1789

"My political conduct in nominations, even if I was uninfluenced by principle, must be exceedingly circumspect and proof against just criticism, for the eyes of Argus are upon me, and no slip will pass unnoticed that can be improved into a supposed partiality for friends or relatives." – George Washington, letter to Bushrod Washington, New York, July 27, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:366

Letter to the Senate and House of Representatives – August 7, 1789

"While the measures of Government ought to be calculated to protect its Citizens from all injury and violence, a due regard should be extended to those Indians whose happiness in the course of events so materially depends on the national justice and humanity of the United States." – George Washington, letter to the Senate and the House of Representatives, August 7, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:372

Letter to the Protestant Episcopal Church – August 19, 1789

"The satisfaction arising from the indulgent opinion entertained by the American people of my conduct will, I trust, be some security for preventing me from doing any thing, which might justly incur the forfeiture of that opinion. And the consideration, that human

happiness and moral duty are inseparably connected, will always continue to prompt me to promote the progress of the former by inculcating the practice of the latter." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, August 19, 1789; Sparks 12:162

"It affords edifying prospects, indeed, to see Christians of different denominations dwell together in more charity, and conduct themselves in respect to each other with a more Christian-like spirit, than ever they have done in any former age, or in any other nation." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, August 19, 1789; Sparks 12:162-163

"I receive with the greater satisfaction your congratulations on the establishment of the new constitution of government, because I believe its mild yet efficient operations will tend to remove every remaining apprehension of those, with whose opinions it may not entirely coincide, as well as to confirm the hopes of its numerous friends ; and because the moderation, patriotism, and wisdom of the present federal legislature seem to promise the restoration of order and our ancient virtues, the extension of genuine religion, and the consequent advancement of our respectability abroad, and of our substantial happiness at home." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, August 19, 1789; Sparks 12:163

"I request, most reverend and respected Gentlemen, that you will accept my cordial thanks for your devout supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe in behalf of me. May you, and the people whom you represent, be the happy subjects of the divine benedictions both here and hereafter." – George Washington, letter to the Bishops, Clergy, and Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church, August 19, 1789; Sparks 12:163

Letter to James Madison – August 1789

"Should the sense of the Senate be taken on the propriety of sending public characters abroad, say, to England, Holland and Portugal; and of a day for thanksgiving? ... Would it be well to advise with them before the adjournment, on the expediency and justice of demanding a surrender of our Posts [western posts still held by Great Britain]?" – George Washington, letter to James Madison, (Confidential) August 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:394

Statement on Economy in Office – September 1789

"I keep an account of my expenses; I cannot affirm that I lose nothing, but I can tell you what I lose, and why, and in what manner." – George Washington, statement on economy in office, September 1789; "The Life of George Washington," Jared Sparks, editor (Boston: Ferdinand Andrews, 1839) Vol. II, p. 271

Reply to the Legislature of Pennsylvania – September 5, 1789

"The virtue, moderation, and patriotism which marked the steps of the American people in framing, adopting, and thus far carrying into effect our present system of government has excited the admiration of nations; and it only now remains for us to act up to those principles which should characterize a free and enlightened people, that we may gain respect abroad and ensure happiness to ourselves and our prosperity." – George Washington, reply to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, September 5, 1789; Sparks 12:165

"It should be the highest ambition of every American to extend his views beyond himself, and to bear in mind that his conduct will not only affect himself, his country, and his immediate posterity; but that its influence may be co-extensive with the world, and stamp political happiness or misery on ages yet unborn. To establish this desirable end; and to establish the government of laws , the union of these States is absolutely necessary; therefore in every proceeding, this great, this important object should ever be kept in view; and, so long as our measures tend to this; and are marked with the wisdom of a well-informed and enlightened people, we may reasonably hope, under the smiles of Heaven, to convince the world that the happiness of nations can be accomplished by pacific revolutions in their political systems, without the destructive intervention of the sword." – George Washington, reply to the Legislature of Pennsylvania, September 5, 1789; Sparks 12:165-166

Letter to Dr. James Craik – September 8, 1789

"The want of regular exercise, with the cares of office, will, I have no doubt hasten my departure for that country from whence no Traveller returns; but a faithful discharge of whatsoever trust I accept, as it ever has, so it always will be the primary consideration in every transaction of my life be the consequences what they may." – George Washington, letter to Dr. James Craik, New York, September 8, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:396

Letter to Elizabeth Washington Lewis – September 13, 1789

"Awful, and affecting as the death of a Parent is, there is consolation in knowing, that Heaven has spared ours to an age, beyond which few attain, and favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot

of fourscore. Under these considerations and a hope that she is translated to a happier place, it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator." – George Washington, letter to his sister, Elizabeth Washington Lewis, New York, September 13, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:399

Letter to the Senate – September 17, 1789

"It doubtless is important that all treaties and compacts formed by the United States with other nations, whether civilized or not, should be made with caution and executed with fidelity." – George Washington, letter to The Senate, September 17, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:406

"It is said to be the general understanding and practice of nations, as a check on the mistakes and indiscretions of ministers or commissioners, not to consider any treaty negotiated and signed by such officers as final and conclusive until ratified by the sovereign or government from whom they derive their powers." – George Washington, letter to The Senate, September 17, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:406

Letter to Benjamin Franklin – September 23, 1789

"Would to God, my dear Sir, that I could congratulate you upon the removal of that excruciating pain under which you labour! and that your existence might close with as much ease to yourself, as its continuance has been beneficial to our Country and useful to mankind! Or, if the United wishes of a free people, joined with the earnest prayers of every friend to Science and humanity could relieve the body from pains or Infirmities, you could claim an exemption on this score. But this cannot be, and you have within yourself the only resource to which we can confidently apply for relief: a Philosophic mind." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Franklin, New York, September 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:409

"If to be venerated for benevolence: If to be admired for talents: If to be esteemed for patriotism: if to be beloved for philanthropy, can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know that you have not lived in vain; And I flatter myself that it will not be ranked among the least grateful occurrences of your life to be assured that so long as I retain my memory, you will be thought on with respect, veneration and Affection by Your sincere friend." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Franklin, New York, September 23, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:409

Letter to Samuel Langdon – September 28, 1789

"The man must be bad indeed who can look upon the events of the American Revolution without feeling the warmest gratitude towards the great Author of the Universe whose divine interposition was so frequently manifested in our behalf. And it is my earnest prayer that we may so conduct ourselves as to merit a continuance of those blessings with which we have hitherto been favored." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Langdon, New York, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:416

Letter to Annual Meeting of Quakers – September 28, 1789

"We have reason to rejoice in the prospect, that the present national government, which, by the favor of Divine Providence, was formed by the common counsels and peaceably established with the common consent of the people, will prove a blessing to every denomination of them. To render it such, my best endeavours shall not be wanting." – George Washington, letter to the Annual Meeting of Quakers, September 28, 1789; Sparks 12:168

"Government being, among other purposes, instituted to protect the persons and consciences of men from oppression, it certainly is the duty of rulers, not only to abstain from it themselves, but, according to their stations, to prevent it in others." – George Washington, letter to the Annual Meeting of Quakers, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:416 Note

"The liberty enjoyed by the people of these States, of worshipping Almighty God agreeably to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights. While men perform their social duties faithfully, they do all that society or the state can with propriety demand or expect; and remain responsible only to their Maker for the religion, or modes of faith, which they may prefer or profess." – George Washington, letter to the Annual Meeting of Quakers, September 28, 1789; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 30:416 Note

"Your principles and conduct are well known to me; and it is doing the people railed Quakers no more than justice to say, that (except their declining to share with others the burthen of the common defence) there is no denomination among us, who are more exemplary and useful citizens." – George Washington, letter to the Annual Meeting of Quakers, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:416 Note

"I assure you very explicitly, that in my opinion the conscientious scruples of all men should be treated with great delicacy and tenderness; and it is my wish and desire, that the laws may always be as extensively accommodated to them, as a due regard to the protection and essential interests of the nation may justify and permit." – George Washington, letter to the Annual Meeting of Quakers,

Letter to Robert Hanson – September 28, 1789

"It would be unnecessary to remark to you, that the administration of Justice is the strongest cement of good Government, did it not follow as a consequence that the first organization of the federal judiciary is essential to the happiness of our Country, and to the stability of our political system." – George Washington, letter to Robert Hanson Harrison, New York, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:417

"[I]t has been the invariable object of my anxious solicitude to select the fittest characters to expound the Laws and dispense justice." – George Washington, letter to Robert Hanson Harrison, New York, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:417

Letter to U.S. Attorney General Edmund Randolph – September 28, 1789

"Impressed with a conviction that the due administration of justice is the firmest pillar of good Government, I have considered the first arrangement of the Judicial department as essential to the happiness of our Country, and to the stability of its political system; hence the selection of the fittest characters to expound the law, and dispense justice, has been an invariable object of my anxious concern." – George Washington, letter to U.S. Attorney General Edmund Randolph concerning the selection and qualification of U.S. attorneys and judges, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:418-419

Letter to Edmund Pendleton – September 28, 1789

"Regarding the due administration of Justice as the cornerstone of good Government, I have considered the first arrangement of the judicial department as essential to the happiness of our Country, and to the stability of its political system. Under this impression it has been an invariable object of anxious solicitude with me to select the fittest Characters to expound the Laws and dispense justice." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, New York, September 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:420

Letter to Justice John Rutledge – September 29, 1789

"Regarding the due administration of Justice as the strongest cement of good government, I have considered the first organization of the Judicial Department as essential to the happiness of our Citizens, and to the stability of our political system. Under this impression it has been an invariable object of anxious solicitude with me to select the fittest Characters to expound the laws and dispense justice." – George Washington, letter to Justice John Rutledge, New York, September 29, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:421

Letter to the Marshalls and Attorneys of the Several Districts of the United States – September 30, 1789

"The high importance of the Judicial System in our National Government, made it an indispensable duty to select such Characters to fill the several offices in it as would discharge their respective trusts with honor to themselves and advantage to their Country." – George Washington, letter to the Marshalls and Attorneys of the Several Districts of the United States, September 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:424

Address to the Synod of the Dutch Reform Church in North America - October 9, 1789

"I fear, Gentlemen, your goodness has led you to form too exalted an opinion of my virtues and merits, If such talents as I possess have been called into action by great events, and those events have terminated happily for our country, the glory should be ascribed to the manifest interposition of an overruling Providence. My military services have been abundantly recompensed by the flattering approbation of a grateful people; and if a faithful discharge of my civil duties can insure a like reward, I shall feel myself richly compensated for any personal sacrifice I may have made by engaging again in public life." – George Washington, address to the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in North America, October 9, 1789; Sparks 12:167

"The citizens of the United States of America have given as signal a proof of their wisdom and virtue, in framing and adopting a constitution of government without bloodshed or the intervention of force, as they, upon a former occasion, exhibited to the world, of their valor, fortitude, and perseverance; and it must be a pleasing circumstance to every friend of good order and social happiness to find, that our new government is gaining strength and respectability among the citizens of this country, in proportion as its operations are known and its effects felt." – George Washington, address to the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in North America, October 9, 1789; Sparks 12:167

"While I readily join with you, that, 'while just government protects all in their religious rights, true religion affords to government its surest support.'" – George Washington, address to the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church in North America, October 9, 1789; Sparks 12:167

Letter to the Religious Society called Quakers – October 1789

"Government being, among other purposes, instituted to protect the persons and consciences of men from oppression, it certainly is the duty of rulers, not only to abstain from it themselves, but, according to their stations, to prevent it in others." – George Washington, letter to the Religious Society called Quakers, October 1789; Sparks 12:168

"The liberty enjoyed by the people of these States, of worshipping Almighty God agreeably to their consciences, is not only among the choicest of their blessings, but also of their rights. While men perform their social duties faithfully, they do all that society or the state can with propriety demand or expect; and remain responsible only to their Maker for the religion, or modes of faith, which they may prefer or profess." – George Washington, letter to the Religious Society called Quakers, October 1789; Sparks 12:168

Letter to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut – October 1789

"I was but the humble agent of favoring Heaven, whose benign interference was so often manifested in our behalf, and to whom the praise of victory alone is due." – George Washington, letter to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut, October 1789; Sparks 12:169

Circular to the Governors of the States – October 3, 1789

"I do myself the honor to enclose to your Excellency a Proclamation for a general Thanksgiving which I must request the favor of you to have published and made known in your State in the way and manner that shall be most agreeable to yourself. I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient Servant." – George Washington, Circular to the Governors of the States, October 3, 1789; Papers, Presidential Series: Vol. 4:129

Thanksgiving Proclamation – October 3, 1789

"[I]t is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor." – George Washington, Thanksgiving Proclamation, New York, October 3, 1789; published in The Massachusetts Centinel, Wednesday, October 14, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:427

"Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th. day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be." – George Washington, Thanksgiving Proclamation, New York, October 3, 1789; published in The Massachusetts Centinel, Wednesday, October 14, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:427

"And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the People, by constantly being a government of wise, just and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best." – George Washington, Thanksgiving Proclamation, City of New York, October 3, 1789; published in The Massachusetts Centinel, Wednesday, October 14, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:428

Letter to John Jay – October 5, 1789

"In nominating you for the important station which you now fill, I not only acted in conformity to my best judgment; but I trust I did a grateful thing to the good Citizens of these United States; and I have a full confidence that the love which you bear to our Country, and a desire to promote the general happiness, will not suffer you to hesitate a moment to bring into action the talents, knowledge and integrity which are so necessary to be exercised at the head of that department which must be considered as the key-stone of our political fabric." – George Washington, letter to John Jay with nomination as Chief Justice, October 5, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:428-429

Letter to the King of France – October 9, 1789

"Permit me to assure your Majesty of the unceasing gratitude and attachment of the United States and of our prayers, that the Almighty will be pleased to keep you, our great and beloved Friend and Ally under his constant guidance and protection." – George Washington, letter to the King of France, New York, October 9, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:432

Letter to Comte de Rochambeau – October 13, 1789

"The Revolution, announced by the intelligence from France, must be interesting to the nations of the world in general, and is certainly of the greatest importance to the country in which it has happened. I am persuaded I express the sentiments of my fellow-citizens, when I offer an earnest prayer, that it may terminate in the permanent honor and happiness of your government and people." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, New York, October 13, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:437

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – October 14, 1789

"The revolution, which has taken place with you, is of such magnitude and of so momentous a nature that we hardly yet dare to form a conjecture about it. We however trust, and fervently pray that its consequences may prove happy to a nation, in whose fate we have so much cause to be interested and that its influence may be felt with pleasure by future generations." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, New York, October 14, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:448

Address to the Congregational Ministers of New Haven – October 17, 1789

"The Kind congratulations, contained in your address, claim and receive my grateful and affectionate thanks—respecting, as I do, the favorable opinions of Men distinguished for science and piety, it would be false delicacy to disavow the satisfaction, which I derive from their approbation of my public services, and private conduct." – George Washington, address to the Congregational Ministers of New Haven, October 17, 1789; Papers: 4:198

"Regarding that department, which consists with true religion, as the best security of temporal peace, and the sure mean of attaining eternal felicity, it will be my earnest endeavor (as far as human frailty can resolve) to inculcate the belief and practice of opinions, which lead to the consummation of those desirable objects...." – George Washington, address to the Congregational Ministers of New Haven, October 17, 1789; Papers: 4:198

"If it shall please the Great Disposer of events to listen to the pious supplication, which you have preferred in my behalf, I trust that the remainder of my days will evince the gratitude of a heart devoted to the advancement of those objects, which receive the approbation of Heaven, and promote the happiness of our fellow men." – George Washington, address to the Congregational Ministers of New Haven, October 17, 1789; Papers: 4:198

Address to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut – October 17, 1789

"If the prosperity of our common country has, in any degree, been promoted by my military exertions, the toils which attend them have been amply rewarded by the approving voice of my fellow-citizens. I was but the humble agent of favoring Heaven, whose benign interference was so often manifested in our behalf, and to whom the praise of victory alone is due." – George Washington, address to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut, October 17, 1789; Sparks 12:169-170

"In launching again on the ocean of events, I have obeyed a summons, to which I can never be insensible. When my country demands the sacrifice, personal ease must always be a secondary consideration. I cannot forego this opportunity to felicitate the legislature of Connecticut on the pleasing prospect, which an abundant harvest presents to its citizens. May industry like theirs ever receive its reward, and may the smile of Heaven crown all endeavours, which are prompted by virtue, among which it is but justice to estimate your assurance of supporting our equal government." – George Washington, address to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut, October 17, 1789; Sparks 12:170

Address to the Governor and Council of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts – October 27, 1789

"It is your happiness, Gentlemen, to preside in the councils of a commonwealth, where the pride of independence is well assimilated with the duties of society, and where the industry of the citizens gives the fullest assurance of public respect and private prosperity." – George Washington, address to the Governor and Council of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, October 27, 1789; Sparks 12:171

Letter to the Residents of Boston – October 27, 1789

"Your love of liberty, your respect for the laws, your habits of industry, and your practice of the moral and religious obligations, are the strongest claims to national and individual happiness, and they will, I trust, be firmly and lastingly established." – George Washington, letter to the Residents of Boston, October 27, 1789; Sparks 12:172

Response to Ministers and Elders – October 27, 1789

"I am persuaded, you will permit me to observe that the path of true piety is so plain as to require but little political direction. To this consideration we ought to ascribe the absence of any regulation, respecting religion, from the Magna-Charta of our country. To the

guidance of the ministers of the gospel this important object is, perhaps, more properly committed. It will be your care to instruct the ignorant, and to reclaim the devious, and, in the progress of morality and science, to which our government will give every furtherance, we may confidently expect the advancement of true religion, and the completion of our happiness." – George Washington, response to the Ministers and Elders representing the Massachusetts and New Hampshire Churches which compose the First Presbyter of Eastward, Newport, October 28, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:453 Note

Letter to the Executive of New Hampshire – November 3, 1789

"The success, which has hitherto attended our united efforts, we owe to the gracious interposition of Heaven, and to that interposition let us gratefully ascribe the praise of victory, and the blessings of peace." – George Washington, letter to John Sullivan, the Executive of New Hampshire, November 3, 1789; Sparks 12:175

Letter to Joseph Jones – November 30, 1789

"In every nomination to office I have endeavored, as far as my own knowledge extended, or information could be obtained, to make fitness of character my primary object." – George Washington, letter to Joseph Jones, New York, November 30, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:469

Letter to Roman Catholics in the United States – December 1789

"The prospect of national prosperity now before us is truly animating, and ought to excite the exertions of all good men to establish and secure the happiness of their country, in the permanent duration of its freedom and independence. America, under the smiles of divine Providence, the protection of a good government, the cultivation of manners, morals, and piety, can hardly fail of attaining an uncommon degree of eminence in literature, commerce, agriculture, improvements at home, and respectability abroad." – George Washington, letter to Roman Catholics in the United States, December 1789; Sparks 12:178

"As mankind become more liberal, they will be more apt to allow, that all those, who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community, are equally entitled to the protection of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations in examples of justice and liberality." – George Washington, letter to Roman Catholics in the United States, December 1789; Sparks 12:178

Letter to the Emperor of Morocco – December 1, 1789

"Within our Territories there are no Mines, either of Gold, or Silver, and this young Nation, just recovering from the Waste and Desolation of a long War, have not, as yet, had Time to acquire Riches by Agriculture and Commerce. But our Soil is boundtiful, and our People industrious; and we have Reason to flatter ourselves, that we shall gradually become useful to our Friends." – George Washington, letter to the Emperor of Morocco, City of New York, December 1, 1789; Fitzpatrick 30:475

Address to the General Assembly of Georgia – after December 22, 1789

"From the observation, that, 'in the great concerns of mankind, success has not always been attendant on the performance of duty, and that, where it has, the sanction of public approbation has frequently been withheld,' I am naturally led to reflect on the unlimited gratitude, which we owe as a nation to the Supreme Arbiter of human events for his interposition in our favor; as well as on the singular obligations, which are due from me as an individual for the indulgent sentiments, which my fellow-citizens have always had the goodness to entertain of my conduct." – George Washington, address to the General Assembly of Georgia, some time after December 22, 1789; Sparks 12:179

"Raised, as I am, to the head of a government pervading so vast a territory, and possessing, as I flatter myself I do, the confidence of the people in regard to my dispositions, I assure you, Gentlemen, that nothing could be more consonant to my wishes, than to be favored with such facts and opinions respecting the condition of the States, as may appear proper and necessary; for I am deeply sensible, that many errors, which would result from want of information, may be obviated by timely and just representations." – George Washington, address to the General Assembly of Georgia, some time after December 22, 1789; Sparks 12:179-180

"I am not ignorant how much the local situation of your State exposed its inhabitants to suffer the distresses of the late war in a severe manner; nor how manfully they exerted themselves in the common cause during the struggle, which established our independence. Wasted as your country was at the return of peace, and exposed as your frontiers have since been to the ravages of the Indians, I cannot but flatter myself, that you will ere long realize the blessings, which were to be expected from your natural resources, and find a compensation for your sufferings in the benefits of an efficient general government." – George Washington, address to the General Assembly of Georgia, some time after December 22, 1789; Sparks 12:180

First Annual Message to Congress – January 8, 1790

"In resuming your consultations for the general good, you cannot but derive encouragement from the reflection that the measures of the last Session have been as satisfactory to your Constituents, as the novelty and difficulty of the work allowed you to hope. Still further to realize their expectations and to secure the blessings which a Gracious Providence has placed within our reach, will in the course of the present important Session, call for the cool and deliberate exertion of your patriotism, firmness and wisdom." – George Washington, First Annual Address to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:491

"To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace." – George Washington, First Annual Address to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:491

"A free people ought not only to be armed but disciplined; to which end a uniform and well digested plan is requisite: And their safety and interest require, that they should promote such manufactories, as tend to render them independent on others for essential, particularly for military supplies." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:491

"Various considerations...render it expedient, that the terms on which foreigners may be admitted to the rights of Citizens should be speedily ascertained by a uniform rule of naturalization." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:492

"Uniformity in the Currency, Weights and Measures of the United States is an object of great importance, and will I am persuaded be duly attended to." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:493

"I cannot forbear intimating to you the expediency of giving effectual encouragement as well to the introduction of new and useful inventions from abroad, as to the exertions of skill and genius in producing them at home, and of facilitating the intercourse between the distant parts of our Country by a due attention to the Post-Office and Post-Roads." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:493

"[T]here is nothing which can better deserve your patronage than the promotion of Science and Literature." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:493

"Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of Government receive their impression so immediately from the sense of the Community as in ours it is proportionably essential. To the security of a free Constitution it contributes in various ways: By convincing those who are intrusted with the public administration, that every valuable end of Government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people: and by teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights; to discern and provide against invasions of them; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority; between burthens proceeding from a disregard to their convenience and those resulting from the inevitable exigencies of Society; to discriminate the spirit of Liberty from that of licentiousness, cherishing the first, avoiding the last, and uniting a speedy, but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the Laws." – George Washington, First Annual Message to Congress, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:493-494

Message to the Senate and House of Representatives – January 8, 1790

"The welfare of our Country is the great object to which our Cares and efforts ought to be directed. And I shall derive great satisfaction from a co-operation with you, in the pleasing though arduous task of ensuring to our fellow-citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient and equal Government." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen of the Senate and the House of Representatives, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:494

"[A]n adequate provision for the support of the public credit is a matter of high importance to the national honor and prosperity." – George Washington, To The House of Representatives, January 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:494

Letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham – January 9, 1790

"The establishment of our new Government seemed to be the last great experiment for promoting human happiness by reasonable compact in civil Society. It was to be, in the first instance, in a considerable degree a government of accommodation as well as a government of Laws. Much was to be done by prudence, much by conciliation, much by firmness." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, New York, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:496

"All see, and most admire, the glare which hovers round the external trappings of elevated office. To me there is nothing in it, beyond the lustre which may be reflected from its connection with a power of promoting human felicity." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, New York, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:496

"In our progress towards political happiness my station is new; and, if I may use the expression, I walk on untrodden ground. There is scarcely any part of my conduct wch. may not hereafter be drawn into precedent. Under such a view of the duties inherent to my arduous office, I could not but feel a diffidence in myself on the one hand; and an anxiety for the Community that every new

arrangement should be made in the best possible manner on the other. If after all my humble but faithful endeavours to advance the felicity of my Country and mankind, I may indulge a hope that my labours have not been altogether without success, it will be the only real compensation I can receive in the closing of life." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:496

"That the Government, though not absolutely perfect, is one of the best in the world, I have little doubt. I always believed that an unequivocally free and equal Representation of the People in the Legislature, together with an efficient and responsible Executive, were the great Pillars on which the preservation of American Freedom must depend. It was indeed next to a Miracle that there should have been so much unanimity, in points of such importance, among such a number of Citizens, so widely scattered, and so different in their habits in many respects as the Americans were." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:496

"My greatest fear has been, that the nation [France] would not be sufficiently cool and moderate in making arrangements for the security of that liberty, of which it seems to be fully possessed." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:498

"Mrs. Washington is well and desires her compliments may be presented to you. We wish the happiness of your fireside, as we also long to enjoy that of our own at Mount Vernon. Our wishes, you know, were limited; and I think that our plans of living will now be deemed reasonable by the considerate part of our species. Her wishes coincide with my own as to simplicity of dress, and everything which can tend to support propriety of character without partaking of the follies of luxury and ostentation." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, January 9, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:498

Letter to New York Governor Charles Pinckney – January 11, 1790

"As to the subject of indian affairs, I can only say in general, that your sentiments on the expediency of entering into Treaties with those Nations, upon just terms, perfectly co-incide with my own. ... For my own part, I am entirely persuaded, that the present general Government will endeavor to lay the foundation for its proceedings in national justice, faith and honor. But should the Government, after having attempted in vain every reasonable pacific measure, be obliged to have recourse to arms for the defence of its Citizens, I am also of opinion, that sound policy and good oeconomy will point to a prompt and decisive effort, rather than to defensive and lingering operations." – George Washington, letter to New York Governor Charles Pinckney, New York, January 11, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:501-502

Letter to Burges Ball – January 18, 1790

"I hope you have got through your difficulties on account of your surety-ship for Major Willis, and without loss. When you engaged in this business you neglected the advice of the Wise man, than which no better I believe is to be found in his whole book, or among all his sayings, 'Beware of surety-ship.'" – George Washington, letter to Burges Ball, New York, January 18, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:508

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – January 21, 1790

"I consider the successful Administration of the general Government as an object of almost infinite consequence to the present and future happiness of the Citizens of the United States." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, January 21, 1790; Fitzpatrick 30:510

Diary Entry – January 22, 1790

"Called in my ride on the Baron de Polnitz, to see the operation of his (Winlaw's) threshing machine. The effect was, the heads of the wheat being seperated from the straw, as much of the first was run through the mill in 15 minutes as made half a bushel of clean wheat — allowing 8 working hours in the 24, this would yield 16 bushels pr. day. Two boys are sufficient to turn the wheel, feed the mill, and remove the threshed grain after it has passed through it. Two men were unable, by winnowing, to clean the wheat as it passed through the mill, but a common Dutch fan, with the usual attendance, would be more than sufficient to do it. The grain passes through without bruising and is well separated from the chaff. Women, or boys of 12 or 14 years of age, are fully adequate to the management of the mill or threshing machine. Upon the whole, it appears to be an easier, more expeditious, and much cleaner way of getting out grain than by the usual mode of threshing ; and vastly to be preferred to treading, which is hurtful to horses, filthy to the wheat, and not more expeditious, considering the numbers that are employed in the process from the time the head is begun to be formed until the grain has passed finally through the fan." – George Washington, diary entry, January 22, 1790; "The Diary of George Washington, from 1789 to 1791," Benjamin J. Lossing, editor, New York:71

Letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph – February 11, 1790

"[A]s the Constitution of the United States, and the Laws made under it, must mark the line of my official conduct, I could not justify my taking a single step in any matter, which appeared to me to require their agency, without its being first obtained; and, so far as I

have been able to form a judgment upon the objects held up to view in your letter, they cannot be effected without the operation of a Law." – George Washington, letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph, New York, February 11, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:9

Letter to the Society of Free Quakers – after March 4, 1790

"Having always considered the conscientious scruples of religious belief as resting entirely with the sects that profess, or the individuals who entertain them, I cannot, consistent with this uniform sentiment, otherwise notice the circumstances referred to in your address, than by adding the tribute of my acknowledgment to that of our country, for those services which the members of your particular community rendered to the common cause in the course of our revolution. And by assuring you that, as our present government was instituted with an express view to general happiness, it will be my earnest endeavor, in discharging the duties confided to me with faithful impartiality, to raise the hope of common protection which you expect from the measures of that government." – George Washington, letter to the Society of Free Quakers, some time after March 4, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:16 Note

Reply to the Roman Catholics in the United States – March 15, 1790

(Fitzpatrick gives the date of reply as March 15, 1790; Sparks gives December 1789.)

"I feel, that my conduct in war and in peace has met with more general approbation, than could reasonably have been expected ; and I find myself disposed to consider that fortunate circumstance, in a great degree, resulting from the able support and extraordinary candor of my fellow-citizens of all denominations." – George Washington, reply to the Roman Catholics in the United States, March 15, 1790; Sparks 12:178

"The prospect of national prosperity now before us is truly animating, and ought to excite the exertions of all good men to establish and secure the happiness of their country, in the permanent duration of its freedom and independence. America, under the smiles of divine Providence, the protection of a good government, the cultivation of manners, morals, and piety, can hardly fail of attaining an uncommon degree of eminence in literature, commerce, agriculture, improvements at home, and respectability abroad." – George Washington, reply to the Roman Catholics in the United States, March 15, 1790; Sparks 12:178

As mankind become more liberal, they will be more apt to allow, that all those, who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community, are equally entitled to the protection of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations in examples of justice and liberality. And I presume, that your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part, which you took in the accomplishment of their revolution and the establishment of their government, or the important assistance, which they received from a nation * in which the Roman Catholic religion is professed." – George Washington, reply to the Roman Catholics in the United States, March 15, 1790; Sparks 12:178

Letter to David Stuart – March 28, 1790

"To constitute a dispute there must be two parties. To understand it well both parties and all the circumstances must be fully heard, and to accommodate differences, temper and mutual forbearance are requisite." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, March 28, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:29

"Common danger brought the States into confederacy, and on their union our safety and importance depend. A spirit of accommodation was the basis of the present constitution." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, March 28, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:29

Letter to the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court – April 3, 1790

"I have always been persuaded that the stability and success of the national Government, and consequently the happiness of the People of the United States, would depend in a considerable degree on the Interpretation and Execution of its Laws. In my opinion, therefore, it is important, that the Judiciary System should not only be independent in its operations, but as perfect as possible in its formation." – George Washington, letter to the Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, New York, April 3, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:31

Letter to the King of France – April 6, 1790

"As the time limited for the duration of Mr. Jefferson's residence in quality of our Minister Plenipotentiary near your Majesty will shortly expire, and the public interests require that he should undertake other functions, we have directed him to take leave of your Majesty, and to assure you of our friendship and sincere desire to preserve and strengthen the harmony and confidence which so happily subsists between the two nations." – George Washington, letter to the King of France, New York, April 6, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31: 31

Reply to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia – April 27, 1790

"If I have been enabled to make use of whatever abilities Heaven has been pleased to confer upon me, with any advantage to our common country, I consider it no less owing to the fostering encouragement I received in early life from the citizens of the commonwealth in which I was born, than to the persevering support I have since experienced from my fellow-citizens collectively, in the course of their exertions, which, under divine Providence, saved their liberties and established their independence." – George Washington, reply to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, April 27, 1790; Sparks 12:182

"In looking forward to that awful moment, when I must bid adieu to sublunary scenes, I anticipate the consolation of leaving our country in a prosperous condition; and, while the curtain of separation shall be drawing, my last breath will, I trust, expire in a prayer for the temporal and eternal felicity of those, who have not only endeavoured to gild the evening of my days with unclouded serenity, but extended their desires to my happiness hereafter in a brighter world." – George Washington, reply to the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, April 27, 1790; Sparks 12:183

Letter to Marquis de Luzerne – April 29, 1790

"A spirit for political improvements seems to be rapidly and extensively spreading through the European Countries. I shall rejoice in seeing the condition of the Human Race happier than ever it has hitherto been. But I should be sorry to see, that those who are for prematurely accelerating those improvements, were making more haste than good speed, in their innovations. So much prudence, so much perseverance, so much disinterestedness and so much patriotism are necessary among the Leaders of a Nation, in order to promote the national felicity, that sometimes my fears nearly preponderate over my expectations." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de la Luzerne, New York, April 29, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:40

Letter to the Hebrew Congregations of the City of Savannah – May 1790

"I rejoice, that a spirit of liberality and philanthropy is much more prevalent than it formerly was among the enlightened nations of the earth, and that your brethren will benefit thereby in proportion as it shall become still more extensive. Happily, the people of the United States of America have, in many instances, exhibited examples worthy of imitation, the salutary influence of which will doubtless extend much farther, if, gratefully enjoying those blessings of peace, which, under the favor of Heaven, have been obtained by fortitude in war, they shall conduct themselves with reverence to the Deity, and charity towards their fellow-creatures." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregations of the City of Savannah, Georgia, May, 1790; Sparks 12:185-186

"May the same wonder-working Deity, who long since delivered the Hebrews from their Egyptian oppressors, planted them in a promised land, whose providential agency has lately been conspicuous in establishing these United States as an independent nation, still continue to water them with the dews of heaven and make the inhabitants of every denomination participate in the temporal and spiritual blessings of that people whose God is Jehovah." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregations of the City of Savannah, Georgia, May, 1790; Sparks 12:186

Letter to Rhode Island Governor Arthur Fenner – June 4, 1790

"Having now attained the desirable object of uniting under one general Government all those States which were originally confederated, we have a right to expect, with the blessing of a divine providence, that our Country will afford us all those domestic enjoyments of which a free people only can boast; and at the same time secure that respectability abroad which she is entitled to by nature and from circumstances." – George Washington, letter to Rhode Island Governor Arthur Fenner, New York, June 4, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:48

"Since the bond of Union is now complete, and we once more consider ourselves as one family, it is much to be hoped that reproaches will cease and prejudices be clone away; for we should all remember that we are members of that community upon whose general success depends our particular and individual welfare; and, therefore, if we mean to support the Liberty and Independence which it has cost us so much blood and treasure to establish, we must drive far away the dæmon of party spirit and local reproach." – George Washington, letter to Rhode Island Governor Arthur Fenner, New York, June 4, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:48

Letter to David Stuart – June 15, 1790

"That Congress does not proceed with all that dispatch which people at a distance expect; and which, were they to hurry business, they possibly might; is not to be denied. That measures have been agitated wch. a re not pleasing to Virginia; and others, pleasing perhaps to her, but not so to some other States; is equally unquestionable. Can it well be otherwise in a Country so extensive, so diversified in its interests? And will not these different interests naturally produce in an Assembly of Representatives who are to Legislate for, and to assimilate and reconcile them to the general welfare, long, warm and animated debates? Most undoubtedly; and if there was the same propensity in Mankind to investigate the motives, as there is for censuring the conduct of public characters, it would be found that the censure so freely bestowed is oftentimes unmerited and uncharitable." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:50-51

"The misfortune is the enemies to the Government, always more active than its friends anti always upon the watch to give it a stroke, neglect no opportunity to aim one. If they tell truth, it is not the whole truth; by which means one side only of the picture appears; whereas if both sides were exhibited it might, and probably would assume a different form in the opinion of just and candid men who are disposed to measure matters on a Continental Scale." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:51

"[O]ur reputation has risen in every part of the Globe; and our credit, especially in Holland, has got higher than that of *any* Nation in Europe (and where our funds are above par) as appears by *Official* advices just received. But the conduct we seem to be pursuing will soon bring us back to our late disreputable condition." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:52

"In a letter of last year to the best of my recollection, I informed you of the motives, which compelled me to allot a day for the reception of idle and ceremonies visits (for it never has prevented those of sociability and friendship in the afternoon, or at any other time) but if I am mistaken in this, the history of this business is simply and shortly as follows. Before the custom was established, which now accommodates foreign characters, Strangers, and others who from motives of curiosity, respect to the Chief Magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatsoever ; for Gentlemen, consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast, often before, until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives, either to refuse them altogether, or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew, be disgusting to many. The latter, I expected, would undergo an imadversion, and blazoning from those who would find fault, with, or without cause. To please everybody was impossible; I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:53-54

"I can truly say I had rather be at Mount Vernon with a friend or two about me, than to be attended at the Seat of Government by the Officers of State and the Representatives of every Power in Europe." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, New York, June 15, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:54

Reply to the People of South Carolina – July 5, 1790

(Sparks has date May 1790; Papers, Presidential Series gives date as circa July 5, 1790.)

"Flattering as it may be to find the extraordinary unanimity of the people of the United States in placing me at the head of their federal republic, I am still more pleased with a recollection of the manly conduct on their part, which, in the issue of an arduous struggle, put them into a condition to enjoy the blessings of a free government. It was owing to their steady and strenuous support, with the smiles of a gracious Providence, that I did not sink under the oppression I felt from a diffidence in my abilities to conduct their military operations." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:186-187

"The value of liberty was thus enhanced in our estimation by the difficulty of its attainment, and the worth of characters appreciated by the trial of adversity. The tempest of war having at length been succeeded by the sunshine of peace, our citizen-soldiers impressed a useful lesson of patriotism on mankind, by nobly returning with impaired constitutions and unsatisfied claims, after such long sufferings and severe disappointments, to their former occupations." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:187

"Posterity, as well as the present age, will doubtless regard with admiration and gratitude the patience, perseverance, and valor, which achieved our revolution. They will cherish the remembrance of virtues, which had but few parallels in former times, and which will add new lustre to the most splendid page of history." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:188

"If there be for me any peculiarly just subject of exultation, and with an honest pride I avow the fact, it is hi being the citizen of a country, whose inhabitants were so enlightened and disinterested, as to sacrifice local prejudices and temporary systems for the sake of rendering secure and permanent that independence, which had been the price of so much treasure and blood." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:188

"For myself, notwithstanding my former intentions and declarations, I could not hesitate to return to public life, when, from all the circumstances within my knowledge, I had collected it to be my duty, because it was apparently the wish of a whole nation. Nor shall I regret the loss of that tranquillity in retirement, which my time of life and state of health seemed in some measure to authorize and require, if I may still be an instrument of any good to that country, which has continued to assist my administration with such generous and unlimited confidence." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:188

"I pray you to be persuaded, that, while I receive with great sensibility such repeated proofs of the partiality of my fellow-citizens in my favor, I feel increasing obligations to devote my labors unremittingly to the public service, and, with the benediction of the great Father of the Universe on our councils, to use my best endeavours, that the American people, who have of right assumed an independent station amongst the nations of the earth, should for ever remain a great, respectable, and happy nation." – George Washington, reply to the People of South Carolina, July 5, 1790; Sparks 12:188-189

Letter to Comte de Rochambeau – August 10, 1790

"The little anecdote which you recall to mind, My dear Count, of your Countrymen at Rhode Island who burnt their mouths with the hot soup, while mine waited leisurely for it to cool, perhaps, when politically applied in the manner you have done, has not less truth than pleasantry in its resemblance of national characters. But if there shall be no worse consequence resulting from too great eagerness in swallowing something so delightful as liberty, than that of suffering a momentary pain or making a ridiculous figure with a scalded mouth; upon the whole it may be said you Frenchmen have come off well, considering how immoderately you thirsted for the cup of liberty. And no wonder as you drank it to the bottom, that some licentiousness should have been mingled with the dregs." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, New York, August 10, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:82

"To view your Revolution in another and more serious point of light. It was impossible, in such a Country, and during such a struggle, but that disagreeable things, and even great enormities in some instances must have happened. Too many doubtless have occurred. Not so many, however, have existed as the English News-Papers have attempted to make us believe. For had we credited all the evil stories we have seen in them, we should almost have set it down for granted that the race of Frenchmen were about becoming extinct, and their Country a desert. So many of you, on different occasions, have they killed. Happily for you, we remembered how our own armies, after having been all slain to a man in the English News Papers, came to life again and even performed prodigies of valour against that very Nation whose News-papers had so unmercifully destroyed them. Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Trumbull and some others have taught us to believe more cautiously and more correctly on these points." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, New York, August 10, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:83

"We have a good government in Theory, and are carrying it pretty happily into practice. In a government which depends so much in its first stages on public opinion, much circumspection is still necessary for those who are engaged in its administration. Fortunately the current of public sentiment runs with us, and all things hitherto seem to succeed according to our wishes. In the meantime population increases, land is cleared, commerce extended, manufactories, and Heaven smiles upon us with favorable seasons and abundant crops." – George Washington, letter to Comte de Rochambeau, New York, August 10, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:83-84

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – August 11, 1790

"[T]he basis of our proceedings with the Indian Nations has been, and shall be justice, during the period in which I may have any thing to do in the administration of this government." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, New York, August 11, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:87

Letter to King David's Lodge of Masons in Newport, Rhode Island – August 17, 1790

"Being persuaded, that a just application of the principles, on which the masonic fraternity is founded, must be promotive of private virtue and public prosperity. I shall always be happy to advance the interests of the society, and be considered by them a deserving brother." – George Washington, letter to the master, wardens, and brethren of King David's Lodge of Masons in Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 31:94 Note

Letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport – August 17, 1790

"The reflection on the days of difficulty and danger which are past is rendered the more sweet, from a consciousness that they are succeeded by days of uncommon prosperity and security. If we have wisdom to make the best use of the advantages with which we are now favored, we cannot fail, under the just administration of a good Government, to become a great and a happy people." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Allen: Chap. 12

"The Citizens of the United States of America have a right to applaud themselves for giving to Mankind examples of an enlarged and liberal policy: a policy worthy of imitation. All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Allen: Chap. 12

"It is now no more that toleration is spoken of as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights, for, happily the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:94 note

"May the Children of the Stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the good will of the other Inhabitants; while every one shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, and there shall be none to make him afraid." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:94 note

"May the father of all mercies scatter light, and not darkness, upon our paths, and make us in all our several vocations useful here, and in His own due time and way everlastingly happy." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island,

Letter to the Clergy of Newport – August 17, 1790

"I am inexpressibly happy that by the smiles of divine Providence, my weak but honest endeavors to serve my country have hitherto been crowned with so much success, and apparently given such satisfaction to those in whose cause they were exerted. The same benignant influence, together with the concurrent support of all real friends to their country will still be necessary to enable me to be in any degree useful to this numerous and free People over whom I am called to preside." – George Washington, letter to the Clergy of Newport, August 17, 1790; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745—1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 31:94 Note

Response to the Inhabitants of Providence, Rhode Island – August 17, 1790

"As, under the smiles of Heaven, America is indebted for freedom and independence rather to the joint exertions of the citizens of the several States, in which it may be your boast to have borne no inconsiderable share, than to the conduct of the Commander-in-chief, so is she indebted for their support rather to a continuation of those exertions, than to the prudence and ability manifested in the exercise of the powers delegated to the President of the United States." – George Washington, response to the Inhabitants of Providence, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Sparks 12:192

"Your hopes for the extension of commerce, the encouragement of agriculture and manufactures, and the establishment of public faith, as reared upon our constitution, are well founded ; and it is my earnest wish, that you may extensively enjoy the benefit arising from them." – George Washington, response to the Inhabitants of Providence, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Sparks 12:192

Response to the Convention of the Universal Church – August 1790

"It gives me the most sensible pleasure to find, that, in our nation, however different are the sentiments of citizens on religious doctrines, they generally concur in one thing; for their political professions and practices are almost universally friendly to the order and happiness of our civil institutions. I am also happy in finding this disposition particularly evinced by your society. It is, moreover, my earnest desire, that all the members of every association or community, throughout the United States, may make such use of the auspicious years of peace, liberty, and free inquiry, with which they are now favored, as they shall hereafter find occasion to rejoice for having done." – George Washington, response to the Convention of the Universal Church, Philadelphia, August 1790; Sparks 12:193

"With great satisfaction I embrace this opportunity to express my acknowledgments for the interest my affectionate fellow-citizens have taken in my recovery from a late dangerous indisposition ; and I assure you, Gentlemen, that, in mentioning my obligations for the effusions of your benevolent wishes in my behalf, I feel animated with new zeal, that my conduct may ever be worthy of your favorable opinion, as well as such as shall, in every respect, best comport with the character of an intelligent and accountable being." – George Washington, response to the Convention of the Universal Church, Philadelphia, August 1790; Sparks 12:193-194

Letter to the Masons in Newport, Rhode Island – August 17, 1790

"I am inexpressibly happy that by the smiles of divine Providence, my weak but honest endeavors to serve my country have hitherto been crowned with so much success, and apparently given such satisfaction to those in whose cause they were exerted. The same benignant influence, together with the concurrent support of all real friends to their country will still be necessary to enable me to be in any degree useful to this numerous and free People over whom I am called to preside." – George Washington, letter to the master, wardens, and brethren of King David's Lodge of Masons in Newport, Rhode Island, August 17, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:94 Note

Response to the Rhode Island Legislature – August 18, 1790

"A change in the national constitution. conformed to experience and the circumstances of our country, has been most happily effected by the influence of reason alone; in this change the liberty of the citizen continues unimpaired, while the energy of government is so increased as to promise full protection to all the pursuits of science and industry; together with the firm establishment of public credit, and the vindication of our national character." – George Washington, response to the Rhode Island Legislature, August 18, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:94 Note

"It remains with the people themselves to preserve and promote the great advantages of their political and natural situation; nor ought a doubt to be entertained that men, who so well understand the value of social happiness, will ever cease to appreciate the blessings of a free, equal, and efficient government." – George Washington, response to the Rhode Island Legislature, August 18, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:94 Note

Response to the Governor and Council of North Carolina – August 26, 1790

"It will ever be my first wish, and most strenuous endeavour, to justify, so far as may be in my power, the confidence, which my fellow-citizens have thought proper to repose in me, by exerting every power, vested in the President of the United States by the constitution, for the happiness and prosperity of our country, and by giving efficacy to such a system, as will ensure the general welfare and conciliate the public mind." – George Washington, response to the Governor and Council of North Carolina, August 26, 1790; Sparks 12:195-196

"I desire, Gentlemen, to make acceptable to you my acknowledgments for the kind concern you take in the restoration of my health and preservation of my life, and in the retribution I may receive after the conclusion of this mortal existence. May you, and the State, in whose government you have the principal agency, be also the peculiar care of Divine Providence." – George Washington, response to the Governor and Council of North Carolina, August 26, 1790; Sparks 12:196

Letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier – November 1, 1790

"The aggregate happiness of the society, which is best promoted by the practice of a virtuous policy, is, or ought to be, the end of all government." – George Washington, letter to Eleonor Francois Élie, Comte de Moustier, Mount Vernon, November 1, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:142

Letter to James Tilghman – November 6, 1790

"It is far from my wish, Sir, to throw obstacles in the way of Miss Anderson receiving her legacy. But as Colonel Colvill (after directing his debts and legacies to be paid) did leave the residue of his estate to; the Lord knows who, by description, which has stirred up a number of vexations and impertinent claims, and, as the legacy to Miss Anderson is also by description, not by name, I am informed that it is necessary for my own security that there should be proof of her being the person meant. When this is done, and I hope there will be no difficulty in the way, I will pay the above sum in Georgetown, Potowmac, to her attorney properly authorized to receive the same provided the demand is made before the 22nd. instant. If not I will take the money with me to Philadelphia, and shall be ready to pay it there as above." – George Washington, letter to James Tilghman, Mount Vernon, November 6, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:145-146

Letter to Tobias Lear – November 7, 1790

"I lay it down as a maxim, that if the number of the pupils is too great for the tutors, justice cannot be done, be the abilities of the latter what they will. What the due proportion, beyond which it ought not to go, is in some measure matter of opinion, but an extreme must be obvious to all." – George Washington, letter to Tobias Lear, November 7, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:147

Letter to George Steptoe Washington - December 5, 1790

"[A] good moral character is the first essential in a man, and that the habits contracted at your age are generally indelible, and your conduct here may stamp your character through life. It is therefore highly important that you should endeavor not only to be learned but virtuous." – George Washington, letter to George Steptoe Washington, December 5, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:163

Message to the House of Representatives – December 8, 1790

"The abundant fruits of another year have blessed our Country with plenty, and with the means of a flourishing commerce. The progress of public credit is witnessed by a considerable rise of American Stock abroad as well as at home. And the revenues allotted for this and other national purposes, have been productive beyond the calculations by which they were regulated." – George Washington, Second Annual Message to Congress, December 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:164

"I have received communications by which it appears, that the District of Kentucky, at present a part of Virginia, has concurred in certain propositions contained in a law of that State; in consequence of which the District is to become a distinct member of the Union, in case the requisite sanction of Congress be added. For this sanction application is now made." – George Washington, Second Annual Message to Congress, December 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:165

"The disturbed situation of Europe, and particularly the critical posture of the great maritime powers, whilst it ought to make us more thankful for the general peace and security enjoyed by the United States, reminds us at the same time of the circumspection with which it becomes us to preserve these blessings. It requires also that we should not overlook the tendency of a war and even of preparations for a war, among the Nations most concerned in active Commerce with this Country, to abridge the means, and thereby at least enhance the price of transporting its valuable productions to their proper markets. I recommend it to your serious reflexion how far and in what mode, it may be expedient to guard against embarrassments from these contingencies, by such encouragements to our own Navigation as will render our commerce and agriculture less dependent on foreign bottoms, which may fail us in the very moments most interesting to both of these great objects. Our fisheries, and the transportation of our own produce offer us abundant

means for guarding ourselves against this evil." – George Washington, Second Annual Message to Congress, December 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:166-167

"Allow me, moreover, to hope that it will be a favorite policy with you not merely to secure a payment of the Interest of the debt funded, but, as far and as fast as [the] growing resources of the Country will permit, to exonerate it of the principal itself." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House Of Representatives, December 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:168

"In pursuing the various and weighty business of the present Session I indulge the fullest persuasion that your consultations will be equally marked with wisdom, and animated by the love of your Country. In whatever belongs to my duty, you shall have all the co-operation which an undiminished zeal for its welfare can inspire. It will be happy for us both, and our best reward, if by a successful administration of our respective trusts we can make the established Government more and more instrumental in promoting the good of our fellow Citizens, and more and more the object of their attachment and confidence." – George Washington, to the Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives, December 8, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:168-169

Letter to the Hebrew Congregations – December 13, 1790

"The liberality of sentiment toward each other which marks every political and religious denomination of men in this Country, stands unparalleled in the history of Nations. The affection of such people is a treasure beyond the reach of calculation; and the repeated proofs which my fellow Citizens have given of their attachment to me, and approbation of my doings form the purest source of my temporal felicity. The affectionate expressions of your address again excite my gratitude, and receive my warmest acknowledgments." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond, December 13, 1790; Papers 7:61

"The Power and Goodness of the Almighty were strongly Manifested in the events of our late glorious revolution; and his kind interposition in our behalf has been no less visible in the establishment of our present equal government. In war he directed the Sword; and in peace he has ruled in our Councils. My agency in both has been guided by the best intentions, and a sense of the duty which I owe my Country: and as my exertions have hitherto been amply rewarded by the Approbation of my fellow Citizens, I shall endeavour to deserve a continuance of it by my future conduct." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond, December 13, 1790; Papers, Presidential Series: 7:62

Letter to Battalie Muse – December 27, 1790

"A letter which will be shewn to you by my Nephew (if the facts be true as I presume they are) is from a near relation of mine. Feeling for her situation I am desirous of affording relief, and therefore, request if there is any vacant tenement of mine in Berkeley, Frederick, Fauquier, or Loudoun, under your care that you will give her a lease, for it, rent free, for the natural lives of herself and Daughter, Sally Ball Haynie, and, moreover, by pecuniary aids (to be drawn from your collection of my rents) to enable her to put the place in a little repair. If there are more than one lot vacant, She may take her choice of them." – George Washington, letter to Battalie Muse, Philadelphia, December 27, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:178

Letter to Elizabeth Haynie – December 27, 1790

"I am very sorry to hear of the distressed situation in which you are, and have written to Mr. Muse, to whom the management of my Tenements in Berkeley, Frederick, Loudoun and Fauquier is committed to let you have any one of them, that may be unoccupied, rent free during your own and the life of your Daughter Sally Ball Haynie and moreover over to afford you some aid towards putting the place in order. ... It is incumbent on me however to observe to you that if there are not in either of those Counties above mentioned any vacant lots belonging to me, it is out of my power to assist you in this way, first because I have no lands in either of the Counties above mentioned except such as have been laid off into Tenements and offered on leases, and secondly because the lands, round about my dwelling house in Fairfax County, are occupied by Negroes for my own support." – George Washington, letter to Elizabeth Haynie, Philadelphia, December, 27, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:178-179

Letter to the Chiefs and Counselors of the Seneca Nation – December 29, 1790

"The general Government only has the power, to treat with the Indian Nations, and any treaty formed and held without its authority will not be binding. ... Here then is the security for the remainder of your lands. No State nor person can purchase your lands, unless at some public treaty held under the authority of the United States. The general government will never consent to your being defrauded. But it will protect you in all your just rights. ... Hear well, and let it be heard by every person in your Nation, That the President of the United States declares, that the general government considers itself bound to protect you in all the lands secured you by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix..." – George Washington, letter to the Chiefs and Counselors of the Seneca Nation, Philadelphia, December 29, 1790; Fitzpatrick 31:180

Letter to the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond – December 1790

"The power and goodness of the Almighty were strongly manifested in the events of our late glorious revolution, and his kind interposition in our behalf has been no less visible in the establishment of our present equal government. In war he directed the sword and in peace he has ruled in our councils, my agency in both has been guided by the best intentions, and a sense of the duty which I owe my country." – George Washington, letter to the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, and Richmond, December 1790; "The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799," edited by John C. Fitzpatrick, 39 vols. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (1931-44) Vol. 31:185-186

Letter to Timothy Pickering – January 20, 1791

"Humanity and good policy must make it the wish of every good citizen of the United States, that Husbandry, and consequently civilization should be introduced among the Indians. So strongly am I impressed with the beneficial effects which our Country would receive from such a thing, that I shall always take a singular pleasure in promoting, as far as may be in my power, every measure which may tend to ensure it." – George Washington, letter to Timothy Pickering, Philadelphia, January 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:199

Letter to the President of the National Assembly of France – January 27, 1791

"The impressions naturally produced by similarity of political sentiment are justly to be regarded as causes of national sympathy; calculated to confirm the amicable ties which may otherwise subsist between nations. This reflection, independent of its more particular reference, must dispose every benevolent mind to unite in the wish, that a general diffusion of true principles of liberty, assimilating as well as ameliorating the condition of Mankind and fostering the maxims of an ingenuous and virtuous policy, may tend to strengthen the fraternity of the human race, to assuage the jealousies and animosities of its various subdivisions, and to convince them more and more, that their true interest and felicity will best be promoted by mutual good will and universal harmony." – George Washington, letter to the President of the National Assembly of France, Philadelphia, January 27, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:206

Letter to Queen Maria I of Portugal – February 21, 1791

"Desirous to promote a friendly and useful Intercourse between the Subjects of your Majesty and the Citizens of these States, and to give Proofs of our good Will and Consideration towards your Majesty, I have named David Humphreys, one of our distinguished Citizens, Minister resident for the United States of America near your Majesty. He knows the Interest we take, and shall even take, in your Prosperity and Happiness; and I beseech your Majesty to give entire Credence to whatever he shall deliver on our Part, and most of all when he shall assure you of the Sincerity of our Friendship. ... I pray God to keep you, Great and good Friend, under his holy Protection." – George Washington, letter to Queen Maria I of Portugal, Philadelphia, February 21, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:223

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – February 25, 1791

"I presume, therefore, it will hardly be necessary to offer an apology to you for the want of punctuality in acknowledging the receipt of your letters. I should, however, be deficient in civility and gratitude was I not to return my best thanks for the elegantly bound volumes of your history, which you have been so polite as to send to me, and for the ardent prayers for my health and happiness which are expressed in your letters. I beg you to be assured that my good wishes attend you, and that I shall always be glad to hear of your prosperity." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Philadelphia, February 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:224

Letter to the Representatives and Citizens of Charleston – May 2, 1791

"It is the peculiar boast of our country, that her happiness is alone dependent on the collective wisdom and virtue of her citizens, and rests not on the exertions of any individual. While a just sense is entertained of our natural and political advantages, we cannot fail to improve them, and with the progress of our national importance to combine the freedom and felicity of individuals." – George Washington, address to the Intendant and Wardens, Representatives of the Citizens of Charleston, May 2, 1791; Sparks 12:196-197

Address to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah – May 13, 1791

"While the virtuous conduct of your citizens, whose patriotism braved all the hardships of the late war, engaged my esteem, the distresses peculiar to the State of Georgia, after the peace, excited my deepest regret. It was with singular satisfaction I perceived, that the efficacy of the general government could interpose effectual relief, and restore tranquillity to so deserving a member of the Union. Your sentiments on this event are worthy of citizens, who, placing a due value on the blessings of peace, desire to maintain it on the immutable principles of justice and good faith." – George Washington, address to the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, May 13, 1791; Sparks 12:197-198

Address to the Congregational Church and Society of Medway, Georgia – May 1791

"You overrate my best exertions, when you ascribe to them the blessings, which our country so eminently enjoys. From the gallantry and fortitude of her citizens, under the auspices of Heaven, America has derived her independence. To their industry, and the natural advantages of the country, she is indebted for her prosperous situation. From their virtue she may expect long to share the protection of a free and equal government, which their wisdom has established, and which experience justifies, as admirably adapted to our social wants and individual felicity." – George Washington, address to the Congregational Church and Society of Medway, Georgia, May 1791; Sparks 12:198

Reply to the United Brethren of Wachovia, North Carolina – June 1, 1791

"Thanking you with grateful sincerity for your prayers in my behalf, I desire to assure you of my best wishes for your social and individual happiness." – George Washington, reply to the United Brethren of Wachovia, North Carolina, June 1, 1791; Papers, Presidential Series: 8:226

Letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham – July 19, 1791

"[T]he United States enjoy a scene of prosperity and tranquillity under the new government that could hardly have been hoped for under the old." – George Washington, letter to Catherine Macaulay Graham, Philadelphia, July 19, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:316-317

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – July 19, 1791

"As it has ever been a rule with me to make my private concerns give way to my public duties, when both cannot be accomplished, I now find myself under the necessity, from the weight of public business, which is at this time much increased by an absence of more than three months, or a tour thro' the southern States, of refraining to enter so fully into my private correspondencies as my inclination would lead me to do." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Philadelphia, July 19, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:317

Letter to David Humphreys – July 20, 1791

"In this age of free inquiry and enlightened reason it is to be hoped that the condition of the people in every Country will be bettered, and the happiness of mankind promoted. Spain appears to be so much behind the other Nations of Europe in liberal policy that a long time will undoubtedly elapse before the people of that kingdom can taste the sweets of liberty, and enjoy the natural advantages of their Country." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, July 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:318

"Tranquillity reigns among the people, with that disposition towards the general government which is likely to preserve it. They begin to feel the good effects of equal laws and equal protection. The farmer finds a ready market for his produce, and the merchant calculates with more certainty on his payments. Manufacturers have as yet made but little progress in that part of the country, and it will probably be a long time before they are brought to that state to which they have already arrived in the middle and eastern parts of the Union." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, July 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:318

"Each days experience of the Government of the United States seems to confirm its establishment, and to render it more popular. A ready acquiescence in the laws made under it shews in a strong light the confidence which the people have in their representatives, and in the upright views of those who administer the government." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, July 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:318

"Our public credit stands on that ground which three years ago it would have been considered as a species of madness to have foretold. The astonishing rapidity, with which the newly instituted Bank was filled gives an unexampled proof (here) of the resources of our Countrymen and their confidence in public measures." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, July 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:319

"I must confess I cannot see much prospect of living in tranquillity with them so long as a spirit of land jobbing prevails, and our frontier Settlers entertain the opinion that there is not the same crime (or indeed no crime at all) in killing an Indian as in killing a white man." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, July 20, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:320

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – July 28, 1791

"I assure you I have often contemplated, with great anxiety, the danger to which you are personally exposed by your peculiar and delicate situation in the tumult of the times, and your letters are far from quieting that friendly concern. But to one, who engages in hazardous enterprises for the good of his country, and who is guided by pure and upright views, (as I am sure is the case with you) life is but a secondary consideration." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31, 324

"To a philanthropic mind the happiness of 24 millions of people cannot be indifferent; and by an American, whose country in the hour of distress received such liberal aid from the french, the disorders and incertitude of that Nation are to be peculiarly lamented. We must, however, place a confidence in that Providence who rules great events, trusting that out of confusion he will produce order, and, notwithstanding the dark clouds, which may threaten at present, that right will ultimately be established." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:324

"The tumultuous populace of large cities are ever to be dreaded. Their indiscriminate violence prostrates for the time all public authority, and its consequences are sometimes extensive and terrible. In Paris we may suppose these tumults are peculiarly disastrous at this time, when the public mind is in a ferment, and when (as is always the case on such occasions) there are not wanting wicked and designing men, whose element is confusion, and who will not hesitate in destroying the public tranquillity to gain a favorite point." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:324

"On the 6 of this month I returned from a tour through the southern States, which had employed me for more than three months. In the course of this journey I have been highly gratified in observing the flourishing state of the Country, and the good dispositions of the people. Industry and economy have become very fashionable in these parts, which were formerly noted for the opposite qualities, and the labours of man are assisted by the blessings of Providence. The attachment of all Classes of citizens to the general Government seems to be a pleasing presage of their future happiness and respectability." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:325

"The complete establishment of our public credit is a strong mark of the confidence of the people in the virtue of their Representatives, and the wisdom of their measures; and, while in Europe, wars or commotions seem to agitate almost every nation, peace and tranquillity prevail among us, except on some parts of our western frontiers, where the Indians have been troublesome, to reclaim or chastise whom proper measures are now pursuing. This contrast between the situation of the people of the United States, and those of Europe is too striking to be passed over, even by the most superficial observer, and may, I believe, be considered as one great cause of leading the people here to reflect more attentively on their own prosperous state, and to examine more minutely, and consequently approve more fully of the government under which they live, than they otherwise would have done." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:326

"[W]e do not wish to be the only people who may taste the sweets of an equal and good government; we look with an anxious eye to the time, when happiness and tranquillity shall prevail in your country, and when all Europe shall be freed from commotions, tumults, and alarms." – George Washington, letter to the Marquis de Lafayette, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:326

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – July 28, 1791

"I believe it is among nations as with individuals, the party taking advantage of the distresses of another will lose infinitely more in the opinion of mankind and in subsequent events than he will gain by the stroke of the moment." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:328

"In my late tour through the southern States I experienced great satisfaction in seeing the good effects of the general Government in that part of the Union. The people at large have felt the security which it gives and the equal justice which it administers to them. The Farmer, the Merchant, and the Mechanic have seen their several interests attended to, and from thence they unite in placing a confidence in their representatives, as well as in those in whose hands the execution of the laws is placed. Industry has there taken place of idleness, and economy of dissipation. Two or three years of good crops, and a ready market for the produce of their lands, has put every one in good humour; and, in some instances they even impute to the Government what is due only to the goodness of Providence." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:328

"The establishment of public credit is an immense point gained in our national concerns. This I believe exceeds the expectation of the most sanguine among us; and a late instance, unparalleled in this Country, has been given of the confidence reposed in our measures by the rapidity with which the subscriptions to the Bank of the United States were filled. In two hours after the books were opened by the Commissioners the whole number of shares were taken up, and 4000 more applied for than were allowed by the Institution. This circumstance was not only pleasing as it related to the confidence in government; but as it exhibited an unexpected proof of the resources of our Citizens." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:329

"In one of my letters to you the account which I gave of the number of inhabitants which would probably be found in the United States on enumeration, was too large. The estimate was then founded on the ideas held out by the Gentlemen in Congress of the population of their several States, each of whom (as was very natural) looking thro' a magnifying glass would speak of the greatest extent, to which there was any probability of their numbers reaching. Returns of the Census have already been made from several of the States and a tolerably just estimate has been formed now in others, by which it appears that we shall hardly reach four millions; but one thing is certain our real numbers will exceed, greatly, the official returns of them; because the religious scruples of some, would not allow them to give in their lists; the fears of others that it was intended as the foundation of a tax induced them to conceal or diminished theirs, and thro' the indolence of the people, and the negligence of many of the Officers numbers are omitted. The authenticated number however is far greater, I believe, than has ever been allowed in Europe, and will have no small influence in enabling them to form a more just opinion of our present and growing importance than has yet been entertained there." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, July 28, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:329

Letter to Colonel William Darke – August 9, 1791

"Let it in the first place be remembered, that one common cause engages your service, and requires all your exertions. It is the interest of your country. To that interest all inferior considerations must yield." – George Washington, letter to Colonel William Darke, Philadelphia, August 9, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:335

Letter to Samuel Vaughn – August 25, 1791

"It is with peculiar satisfaction I can inform you that our public affairs are still in a prosperous train, unclouded by any gloomy prospects of interruption. The convulsed state of Europe at the present moment cannot fail of attaching every American more strongly to his own country, and government; while every heart must be impressed with lively gratitude towards the supreme Ruler of events upon a recollection of the circumstances which have brought us to our present political situation." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Vaughn, Philadelphia, August, 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:346

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – September 5, 1791

"The interest which you are so good as to take in the welfare of the United States makes the communication of their prosperity to you, a most agreeable duty. You will learn with pleasure that events have justified the most sanguine expectations entertained of the influence of the general government on the political and social happiness of America. Public credit established, Justice promptly and impartially administered, Industry encouraged and protected, Science progressing, Liberty, civil and religious, secured on the liberal basis of reason and virtue, are the rich rewards of the past exertions of our citizens, and the strong incentives to future patriotism." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Philadelphia, September 5, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:357

Letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox – September 8, 1791

"I have heard of the death of your promising Son with great concern, and sincerely condole with you and Mrs. Knox on the melancholy occasion. ... Parental feelings are too much alive in the moment of these misfortunes to admit the consolations of religion or philosophy; but I am persuaded reason will call one or both of them to your aid as soon as the keenness of your anguish is abated. ... He that gave you know has a right to take away, his ways are wise, they are inscrutable, and irresistible." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Philadelphia, September 8, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:360

Letter to Marquis de la Luzerne – September 10, 1791

"The complete restoration of our public credit holds us up in a high light abroad. Thus it appears that the United States are making great progress towards national happiness, and if it is not attained here in as high a degree as human nature will admit of its going, I think we may then conclude that political happiness is unattainable. But at the same time we wish it not to be confined to this Country alone; and, as it expands through the world, our enjoyments will expand with it." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de la Luzerne, Philadelphia, September 10, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:361

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – September 10, 1791

"I sincerely wish, my dear Sir, that the affairs of your country were in such a train as would permit you to relax a little from the excessive fatigues to which you have of late been exposed; and I cannot help looking forward with an anxious wish, and a lively hope to the time when peace and tranquillity will reign in your borders, under the sanction of a respectable government founded on the broad basis of liberality and the rights of man. It must be so; the great Ruler of events will not permit the happiness of so many millions to be destroyed, and to his keeping I resign you, my dear Sir, with all that friendship, and affectionate attachment, with which you know me to be." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, September 10, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:363

Letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton – October 14, 1791

"How far, in addition to the several matters mentioned in that letter would there be propriety, do you think, in suggesting the policy of encouraging the growth of cotton and hemp in such parts of the United States as are adapted to the culture of them? The advantages, which would result to this country from the encouragement of these articles for home manufacture, I have no doubt of; but how far bounties on them come within the powers of the general government, or it might comport with the temper of the times to expend money for such purposes, is necessary to be considered, and without a bounty I know of no means by which they can be effectually encouraged. The establishment of arsenals in convenient and proper places is, in my opinion, a measure of high national importance, meriting the serious attention of Congress; and is one of those measures, which ought to be brought to their view." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, Philadelphia, October 14, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:389

Letter to Robert Lewis – October 15, 1791

"From long experience I have laid it down as an unerring maxim that to exact rents with punctuality is not only the right of the Landlord, but that it is also for the benefit of the Tenant, that it should be so; unless by uncontrollable events, and providential strokes the latter is rendered unable to pay them; in such cases he should not only meet with indulgence, but, in some instances with a remittal of the rent. But, in the ordinary course of these transactions, the rents ought to be collected with the most rigid exactness." – George Washington, letter to Robert Lewis, October 15, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:392

Third Annual Address to Congress – October 25, 1791

"It is sincerely to be desired that all need of coercion, in future, may cease; and that an intimate intercourse may succeed; calculated to advance the happiness of the Indians, and to attach them firmly to the United States. ... In order to this it seems necessary: That they should experience the benefits of an impartial administration of justice. That the mode of alienating their lands the main source of discontent and war, should be so defined and regulated, as to obviate imposition, and, as far as may be practicable, controversy concerning the reality, and extent of the alienations which are made. That commerce with them should be promoted under regulations tending to secure an equitable deportment towards them, and that such rational experiments should be made, for imparting to them the blessings of civilization, as may, from time to time suit their condition. That the Executive of the United States should be enabled to employ the means to which the Indians have been long accustomed for uniting their immediate Interests with the preservation of Peace. And that efficacious provision should be made for inflicting adequate penalties upon all those who, by violating their rights, shall infringe the Treaties, and endanger the peace of the Union." – George Washington, Third Annual Address to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:398-399

"A System corresponding with the mild principles of Religion and Philanthropy towards an unenlightened race of Men, whose happiness materially depends on the conduct of the United States, would be as honorable to the national character as conformable to the dictates of sound policy." – George Washington, Third Annual Address to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:399

"It is desirable on all occasions, to unite with a steady and firm adherence to constitutional and necessary Acts of Government, the fullest evidence of a disposition, as far as may be practicable, to consult the wishes of every part of the Community, and to lay the foundations of the public administration in the affection of the people." – George Washington, Third Annual Address to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:400

Pursuant to the authority contained in the several Acts on that subject, a district of ten miles square for the permanent seat of the Government of the United States has been fixed, and announced by proclamation; which district will comprehend lands on both sides of the River Potomack, and the towns of Alexandria and George Town. A City has also been laid out agreeably to a plan which will be placed before Congress: And as there is a prospect, favoured by the rate of sales which have already taken place, of ample funds for carrying on the necessary public buildings, there is every expectation of their due progress." – George Washington, Third Annual Address to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:400

"The completion of the Census of the Inhabitants, for which provision was made by law, has been duly notified (excepting in one instance in which the return has been informal, and another in which it has been omitted or miscarried) and the returns of the Officers, who were charged with this duty, which will be laid before you, will give you the pleasing assurance that the present population of the United States borders on four Millions of persons." – George Washington, Third Annual Message to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:400

"The first [militia] is certainly an object of primary importance, whether viewed in reference to the national security, to the satisfaction of the community, or to the preservation of order." – George Washington, Third Annual Message to Congress, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:402

Message to the Senate and House of Representatives – October 25, 1791

"The safety of the United States, under Divine protection, ought to rest on the basis of systematic and solid arrangements; exposed as little as possible to the hazard of fortuitous circumstances." – George Washington, Third Annual Message to Congress, To the Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:403

"The importance of the Post-Office and Post-Roads, on a plan sufficiently liberal and comprehensive, as they respect the expedition, safety and facility of communication, is increased by the instrumentality in diffusing a knowledge of the laws and proceedings of the government; which, while it contributes to the security of the people, serves also to guard them against the effects of misrepresentation and misconception." – George Washington, Third Annual Message to Congress, To the Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, October 25, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:403

"A provision for the sale of the vacant lands of the United States is particularly urged, among other reasons, by the important considerations that they are pledged as a fund for reimbursing the public debt; that if timely and judiciously applied, they may save the necessity of burthening our citizens with new taxes for the extinguishment of the principal." – George Washington, Third Annual

Letter to Harriet Washington – October 30, 1791

"[I]t is better to offer no excuse than a bad one, if at any time you should happen to fall into an error." – George Washington, letter to his niece, Harriet Washington, Philadelphia, October 30, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:408

"To be under but little or no controul may be pleasing to a mind that does not reflect, but this pleasure cannot be of long duration, and reason, too late perhaps, may convince you of the folly of mis-spending time." – George Washington, letter to his niece, Harriet Washington, October 30, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:408

"You are not to learn, I am certain, that your fortune is small; supply the want of it then with a well cultivated mind; with dispositions to industry and frugality; with gentleness of manners, obliging temper, and such qualifications as will attract notice, and recommend you to a happy establishment for life." – George Washington, letter to his niece, Harriet Washington, October 30, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:408

"You might instead of associating with those from whom you can derive nothing that is good, but may have observed every thing that is deceitful, lying, and bad, become the intimate companion of and aid to your Cousin in the domestic concerns of the family. Many Girls before they have arrived at your age have been found so trustworthy as to take the whole trouble of a family from their Mothers; but it is by a steady and rigid attention to the rules of propriety that such confidence is obtained, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to hear that you had acquired it." – George Washington, letter to his niece, Harriet Washington, October 30, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:409

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – November 22, 1791

"I cannot conclude this letter without congratulating you most sincerely on the Kings acceptance of the Constitution presented to him by National Assembly, and upon the happy consequences which promise to flow upon your Country, as well as to mankind in general, from that event. The prayers and wishes of the friends to the human race have attended the exertions of your Nation, and when your affairs are completely settled under an energetic and equal government the hearts of good men will be gratified, and no one will rejoice in your felicity, and for the noble and disinterested part you have acted more than your sincere friend and truly Affectionate &c." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, November 22, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:426

Letter to Arthur Young – December 5, 1791

"[T]he aim of the farmers in this Country (if they can be called farmers) is not to make the most they can from the land, which is, or has been cheap, but the most of the labour, which is dear, the consequence of which has been, much ground has been scratched over and none cultivated or improved as it ought to have been; Whereas a farmer in England, where land is dear and labour cheap, finds it his interest to improve and cultivate highly, that he may reap large crops from a small quantity of ground. That the last is the true, and the first an erroneous policy, I will readily grant, but it requires time to conquer bad habits, and hardly anything short of necessity is able to accomplish it. That necessity is approaching by pretty rapid strides." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Philadelphia, December 5, 1791; Fitzpatrick 31:440

Letter to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania – January 3, 1792

"I request you will be assured of my best wishes and earnest prayers for your happiness while you remain in this terrestrial Mansion, and that we may hereafter meet as brethren in the Eternal Temple of the Supreme Architect." – George Washington, letter to the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, January 3, 1792; Papers, Presidential Series: 9:371

Letter to Mary Butler – January 6, 1792

"Permit me to assure you that, in a public view, I consider the recent misfortune [St. Clair's defeat] greatly enhanced by the loss of the truly gallant General [Richard] Butler; and that I deeply participate in the grief which affects you on this distressing event. ... A small detachment of troops had been ordered to be stationed at Pittsburg, previously to the receipt of your letter; these since he [sic] reinforced by a more considerable detachment now on their march to that place. ... I sincerely hope, that you will render the present pressure of your afflicted experience all the powerful consolations of Religion and Philosophy." – George Washington, letter to Mary Butler, Philadelphia, January 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:453-454

Letter to Brown & Francis – January 7, 1792

"I have taken this matter, Gentlemen, into serious consideration, and am sorry to inform you that with every disposition and wish to promote the commercial interests of our Country, and to countenance the laudable undertakings of its enterprising citizens, yet I can not think it wou'd be proper for me, situated as I am, to comply with your request. In my public capacity you will readily see that such a thing could not be done; and abroad, it would be almost impossible to separate my private from my official character, in a case of this kind. Moreover, should I, from the disposition I might have to oblige you, open this door, it is easy to foresee the many applications of a similar nature which it wou'd produce, and which I should find impracticable to avoid. I am therefore persuaded, Gentlemen, you will do that justice to my motives for declining this matter which they really merit, and will in no wise impute it to the want of inclination to promote your interest, or through you, the interest of commerce." – George Washington, letter to Brown & Francis, Philadelphia, January 7, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:454-455

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – January 28, 1792

"Whilst your abilities, knowledge in the affairs of this Country, and disposition to serve it, were adduced and asserted on one hand; you were charged on the other hand, with levity and imprudence of conversation and conduct. It was urged that your habits 58 of expression indicated a hauteur disgusting to those, who happen to differ from you in sentiment; and among a people, who study civility and politeness more than any other nation, it must be displeasing; that in France you were considered as a favorer of Aristocracy, and unfriendly to its Revolution (I suppose they meant constitution). That under this impression, you could not be an acceptable public character, of consequence would not be able, however willing, to promote the interest of this Country in an essential degree. That in England you indiscreetly communicated the purport of your Mission in the first instance, to the Minister of France, at that Court, who availing himself in the same moment of the occasion, gave it the appearance of a movement through his Court. This, and other circumstances of a similar nature, added to a close intercourse with the opposition Members, occasioned distrust, and gave displeasure to the Ministry; which was the cause, it is said, of that reserve which you experienced in negotiating the business which had been intrusted to you. ... But not to go further into detail, I will place the ideas of your political adversaries, in the light which their arguments have presented them to me: vizt. That the promptitude, with which your lively and brilliant imagination is displayed, allows too little time for deliberation and correction; and is the primary cause of those sallies, which too often offend, and of that ridicule of characters, which begets enmity not easy to be forgotten, but which might easily be avoided, if it was under the control of more caution and prudence. In a word, that it is indispensably necessary, that more circumspection should be observed by our representatives abroad, than they conceive you are inclined to adopt." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, January 28, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:468

"[A] mind conscious of its own rectitude fears not what is said of it, but will bid defiance to and despise shafts that are not barbed with accusations against honor or integrity." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, January 28, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:469-470

Letter to David Stuart – March 8, 1792

"That Mr. [Thomas] Johnsons health did not permit him to come to this City [Philadelphia] as he proposed and was expected, is matter of exceeding great regret, as many things relative to the Federal district, the City, and the public buildings might have been more satisfactorily arranged; and delays avoided; but as there is no contending against acts of Providence we must submit, as it becomes us so to do and endeavor to recover the time lost, in the best manner we can." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Philadelphia, March 8, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:503

"That the Commissioners have had more than a little trouble and vexation with Majr. L'Enfant, I can readily conceive (if your representation of the fact had been wanting) from the specimens he has given of his untoward temper since his arrival in this City. And I can as easily conceive that in proportion to the yieldings of the Commissioners his claims would extend. Such upon a nearer view, appears to be the nature of the Man!" – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Philadelphia, March 8, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:503

"The doubts, and opinion of others with respect to the permanent seat have occasioned no change in my sentiments on the subject. They have always been, that the plan ought to be prosecuted with all the despatch the nature of the case will admit; and that the public buildings in size, form, and elegance, shou'd look beyond the present day. I would not have it understood from hence that I lean to extravagance. A chaste plan sufficiently capacious and convenient for a period not too remote, but one to which we may reasonably look forward, would meet my idea in the Capitol." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Philadelphia, March 8, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:505

Opinion of the General Officers – March 9, 1792

"Majr. Genl. Baron de Steuben - Sensible, Sober and brave; well acquainted with Tactics and with the arrangement and discipline of an Army. High in his ideas of Subordination; impetuous in his temper; ambitious, and a foreigner." – George Washington, Opinion of the General Officers, March 9, 1792; Fitzpatrick 31:509

"Majr. General (by Brevet) Wayne. ... More active and enterprising than Judicious and cautious. No oeconomist it is feared. Open to flattery; vain; easily imposed upon; and liable to be drawn into scrapes. Too indulgent (the effect perhaps of some of the causes just mentioned) to his Officers and men. Whether sober, or a little addicted to the bottle, I know not." – George Washington, Opinion of the

Letter to John Armstrong – March 11, 1792

"The loss of the brave Officers and men, who fell in the late unfortunate affair at the westward, 3 is, I hope, the only one which the Public sustain on the occasion, that cannot be readily repaired. The loss of these is not only painful to their friends; but is a subject of serious regret to the Public. It is not, however, our part to despond; we must pursue such measures as appear best calculated to retrieve our misfortune, and give a happy issue to the business." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, Philadelphia, March 11, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:2

"I am sure there never was a people, who had more reason to acknowledge a interposition in their affairs, than those of the United States; and I should be pained to believe that they have forgotten that agency, which was so often manifested during our Revolution, or that they failed to consider the omnipotence of that God who is alone able to protect them." – George Washington, letter to John Armstrong, Philadelphia, March 11, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:2

Letter to Louis XVI – March 14, 1792

"I receive as a new proof of friendship to the United States, the letter wherein you inform me that you have accepted the Constitution presented to you in the name of your nation, and according to which it is henceforth to be governed.... That yourself, your family and people, under the edifice which you have now completed, may repose at length in freedom, happiness and safety, shall be our constant prayer; and that God may ever have you, great and dear friend and Ally in his safe and holy keeping." – George Washington, letter to Louis XVI, March 14, 1792; Papers, Presidential Series: 10:108

Letter to Reverend John Carroll – April 10, 1792

"The war now existing between the United States and some tribes of the western Indians prevents, for the present, any interference of this nature with them. The Indians of the five nations are, in their religious concerns, under the immediate superintendance of the Revd. Mr. Kirkland; and those who dwell in the eastern extremity of the United States are, according to the best information that I can obtain, so situated as to be rather considered as a part of the inhabitants of the State of massachusetts than otherwise, and that State has always considered them as under its immediate care and protection. Any application therefore relative to these Indians, for the purposes mentioned in your memorial, would seem most proper to be made to the Government of massachusetts." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Carroll, Philadelphia, April 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:19

"Impressed as I am with an opinion, that the most effectual means of securing the permanent attachment of our savage neighbors, is to convince them that we are just, and to shew them that a proper and friendly intercourse with us would be for our mutual advantage: I cannot conclude without giving you my thanks for your pious and benevolent wishes to effect this desirable end, upon the mild principles of Religion and Philanthropy. And when a proper occasion shall offer, I have no doubt but such measures will be pursued as may seem best calculated to communicate liberal instruction, and the blessings of society, to their untutored minds." – George Washington, letter to Reverend John Carroll, Philadelphia, April 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:20

Message to the Five Nations – April 25, 1792

"My Children of the Five Nations... I partake of your sorrow on account that it has pleased the great Spirit, to take from you two of your number by death, since your residence in this City. I have ordered that your tears should be wiped away according to your custom and that presents should be sent to the relations of the deceased. ... Our Lives are all in the hands of our Maker, and we must part with them whenever he shall demand them, and the survivors must submit to events they cannot prevent...." – George Washington, message to the Five Nations, Philadelphia, April 25, 1792; Papers, Presidential Series: 10:316

Letter to Thomas Paine – May 6, 1792

"[N]o one can feel a greater interest in the happiness of mankind than I do, that it is the first wish of my heart, that the enlightened policy of the present age may diffuse to all men those blessings, to which they are entitled, and lay the foundation of happiness for future generations." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Paine, Philadelphia, May 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:39

Letter to Hannah Fairfax Washington – May 20, 1792

"Mrs. Washington received with much pleasure your kind remembrance and affectionate regards, and would, were she here, where I am come for a few days only, return the same with much sincerity to which permit me to add the best wishes and ardent prayers for your happiness." – George Washington, letter to Hannah Fairfax Washington, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:45

Letter to James Madison – May 20, 1792

"I have not been unmindful of the sentiments expressed by you in the conversations just alluded to: on the contrary I have again, and again revolved them, with thoughtful anxiety; but without being able to dispose my mind to a longer continuation in the Office I have now the honor to hold. I therefore still look forward to the fulfilment of my fondest and most ardent wishes to spend the remainder of my days (which I can not expect will be many) in ease and tranquility. ... Nothing short of conviction that my dereliction of the Chair of Government (if it should be the desire of the people to continue me in it) would involve the Country in serious disputes respecting the chief Magistrate, and the disagreeable consequences which might result therefrom in the floating, and divided opinions which seem to prevail at present, could, in any wise, induce me to relinquish the determination I have formed: and of this I do not see how any evidence can be obtained previous to the Election. My vanity, I am sure, is not of that cast as to allow me to view the subject in this light." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:45-46

"[A] previous declaration to retire, not only carries with it the appearance of vanity and self importance, but it may be construed into a manoeuvre to be invited to remain. And on the other hand, to say nothing, implies consent; or, at any rate, would leave the matter in doubt, and to decline afterwards might be deemed as bad, and uncandid." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:46

"I am sensible that your compliance with it must add to your trouble; but as the recess may afford you leisure, and I flatter myself you have dispositions to oblige me, I will, without apology desire (if the measure in itself should strike you as proper, and likely to produce public good, or private honor) that you would turn your thoughts to a Valadictory address from me to the public" – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:46

"I take the liberty at my departure from civil, as I formerly did at my military exit, to invoke a continuation of the blessings of Providence upon it; and upon all those who are the supporters of its interests, and the promoters of harmony, order and good government." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:47

"[T]hat we are all the Children of the same country; a Country great and rich in itself; capable, and promising to be, as prosperous and as happy as any the Annals of history have ever brought to our view. That our interest, however, deversified in local and smaller matters, is the same in all the great and essential concerns of the Nation. That the extent of our Country, the diversity of our climate and soil, and the various productions of the States consequent to both, are such as to make one part not only convenient, but perhaps indispensably necessary to the other part; and may render the whole (at no distant period) one of the most independant in the world. That the established government being the work of our own hands, with the seeds of amendment engrafted in the Constitution, may by wisdom, good dispositions, and mutual allowances; aided by experience, bring it as near to perfection as any human institution ever approximated; and therefore, the only strife among us ought to be, who should be foremost in facilitating and finally accomplishing such great and desirable objects; by giving every possible support, and cement to the Union." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:47-48

"However necessary it may be to keep a watchful eye over public servants, and public measures, yet there ought to be limits to it; for suspicions unfounded, and jealousies too lively, are irritating to honest feeling; and oftentimes are productive of more evil than good." – George Washington, letter to James Madison, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:48

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – June 10, 1792

"We are...anxious that the horrors of war may be avoided, if possible, and the rights of man so well understood and so permanently fixed, as while despotic oppression is avoided on the one hand, licentiousness may not be substituted for liberty nor confusion take place of order on the other." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, June 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:54

"The just medium cannot be expected to be found in a moment, the first vibrations always go to the extremes, and cool reason, which can alone establish a permanent and equal government, is as little to be expected in the tumults of popular commotion, as an attention to the liberties of the people is to be found in the clark Divan of a despotic tyrant." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, June 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:54

"I assure you, my dear Sir, I have not been a little anxious for your personal safety, and I have yet no grounds for removing that anxiety; but I have the consolation of believing that, if you should fall it will be in defence of that cause which your heart tells you is just. And to the care of that Providence, whose interposition and protection we have so often experienced, do I cheerfully commit you and your nation, trusting that he will bring order out of confusion, and finally place things upon the ground on which they ought to stand." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, June 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:55

"Your friends in this Country are interested in your welfare, and frequently enquire about you with an anxiety that bespeaks a warm affection. I am afraid my Nephew George, your old Aid, will never have his health perfectly re-established, he has lately been attacked with the alarming symptom of spitting large quantities of blood, and the Physicians give no hopes of a restoration unless it can be effected by a change of air, and a total dereliction of business, to which he is too anxiously attentive. [He will, if he should be taken from his family and friends leave three fine childn. viz. two Sons and a daughter, the eldest of the boys he has given the name of Fayette to and a fine looking child he is.] ... Hamilton Knox Jay and Jefferson are well and remember you with affection. Mrs.

Washington desires to be presented to you in terms of friendship and warm regard, to which I add my most affectionate wishes and sincere prayers for your health and happiness, and request you to make the same acceptable to Madm. le Fayette and your children." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Philadelphia, June 10, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:55

Letter to the Earl of Buchan – June 20, 1792

"With sincere prayers for the health and happiness of your Lordship; and gratefully impressed with the many marks of attention which I have received from you." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Philadelphia, June 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:58

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – June 22, 1792

"I regret exceedingly that the disputes between the protestants and Roman Catholics should be carried to the serious alarming height mentioned in your letters. Religious controversies are always productive of more acrimony and irreconcilable hatreds than those which spring from any other cause; and I was not without hopes that the enlightened and liberal policy of the present age would have put an effectual stop to contentions of this kind." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Philadelphia, June 22, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:73

"Notwithstanding our local situation and political circumstances guard us against an interference in the contests between the European powers; yet we cannot be indifferent as to the issue of a business in which the happiness of so many millions of our fellow citizens is involved." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Philadelphia, June 22, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:74

Letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox – August 1, 1792

"The tranquillity, which (by your last accts. handed to me) prevails on our No. Western frontiers gives me much satisfaction and affords a pleasing prospect that the exertions of government to bring the hostile Indian tribes into a pacific mood will not have been exercised in vain. This, however, is not to relax any preparation for a contrary event. Proceed as if war was inevitable: but do it, I entreat you, with all the oeconomy which can result from system and good regulations. Our finances call for it, and if these did not, our reputation does." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:105

"So long as the vice of drunkenness exists in the Army so long I hope, Ejections of those Officers who are found guilty of it will continue; for that and gaming will debilitate and render unfit for active service any Army whatsoever." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:105

Letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox – August 13, 1792

"Illiterate people are not easily made sensible of the propriety, or policy of giving a power, and rejecting what is done under it." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, August 13, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:114

"General [Rufus] Putnam merits thanks, in my opinion, for his plan, and the sentiments he has delivered on what he conceives to be a proper mode of carrying on the War against the hostile Nations of Indians, and I wish he would continue to furnish them, without reserve in future. But in the present instance, two reasons are so strongly opposed to the measure recommended by him as to render it unadvisable and dangerous one of which, the collision it might occasion, and the consequences thereof, in the pending negotiation with G. Britain he could not be acquainted with; the other, the inadequacy of our force to admit a division, and thereby running the hazard of being beaten in detail by encountering the enemies whole strength with part of our own are such as not to be overcome. The other reasons assigned by you are not without weight, but less in degree; for Peace and War are now in balance which will preponderate remains to be known; if the latter (which heaven avert) we must expect to encounter a powerful confederacy, and ought not to put any thing to hazard which can be avoided by military foresight." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, August 13, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:114

Letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson – August 23, 1792

"How unfortunate, and how much is it to be regretted then, that whilst we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, that internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The last, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two. And without more charity for the opinions and acts of one another in Governmental matters, or some more infalible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the Reins of Government or to keep the parts of it together: for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine after measures are decided on, one pulls this way and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must, inevitably, be torn asunder. And, in my opinion the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost, perhaps for ever!" – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 23, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:130

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"My earnest wish and my fondest hope...is, that instead of wounding suspicions and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances and temporizing yielding on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, everything must rub; the wheels of government will clog; our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, August 23, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:131

Letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton – August 26, 1792

"Differences in political opinions are as unavoidable as, to a certain point, they may perhaps be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted that subjects cannot be discussed with temper on the one hand, or decisions submitted to without having the motives, which led to them, improperly implicated on the other; and this regret borders on chagrin when we find that men of abilities, zealous patriots, having the same general objects in view, and the same upright intentions to prosecute them, will not exercise more charity in deciding on the opinions and actions of one another." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:132

"Having premised these things, I would fain hope that liberal allowances will be made for the political opinions of each other; and, instead of these wounding suspicions and irritating charges, with which some of our gazettes are so strongly impregnated, and which cannot fail, if persevered in, of pushing matters to the extremity, and thereby tearing the machine asunder, that there may be mutual forbearance and temporizing yielding on all sides. Without these I do not see how the reins of Government are to be managed, or how the Union of the States can be much longer preserved." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:132-133

"How unfortunate would it be if a fabric so goodly, erected under so many Providential circumstances, and in its first stages, having acquired such respectability, should from diversity of sentiments or internal obstructions to some of the acts of Government (for I cannot prevail on myself to believe that these measures are as yet the deliberate acts of a determined party) should be harrowing our vitals in such a manner as to have brought us to the verge of dissolution. Melancholy thought! But one at the same time that it shows the consequences of diversified opinions, when pushed with too much tenacity, it exhibits evidence also of the necessity of accommodation, and of the propriety of adopting such healing measures as may restore harmony to the discordant members of the Union, and the Governing powers of it." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:133

Letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph – August 26, 1792

"But as the allwise disposer of events has hitherto watched over my steps, I trust that in the important one I may soon be called upon to take, he will mark the course so plainly, as that I cannot mistake the way." – George Washington, letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:136

"I shall be happy... to see a cessation of the abuses of public officers, and of those attacks upon almost every measure of government, with which some of the gazettes are so strongly impregnated; and which cannot fail, if persevered in with the malignancy with which they now teem, of rending the Union asunder. The seeds of discontent, distrust, and irritation, which are so plentifully sown, can scarcely fail to produce this effect, and to mar that prospect of happiness, which perhaps never beamed with more effulgence upon any people under the sun." – George Washington, letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:136

"[I]f the Government and the Officers of it are to be the constant theme for News-paper abuse, and this too without condescending to investigate the motives or the facts, it will be impossible, I conceive, for any man living to manage the helm, or to keep the machine together." – George Washington, letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:137

"In a word, if the government and the officers of it are to be the constant theme for newspaper abuse, and this too without condescending to investigate the motives or the facts, it will be impossible, I conceive, for any man living to manage the helm or to keep the machine together." – George Washington, letter to Attorney General Edmund Randolph, August 26, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:137

Letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox – September 24, 1792

"My observation on every employment in life is, that, wherever and whenever one person is found adequate to the discharge of a duty by close application thereto, it is worse executed by two persons, and scarcely done at all if three or more are employed therein." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, September 24, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:160

Letter to Anthony Whiting – October 14, 1792

"[I]t is foremost in my thoughts, to desire you will be particularly attentive to my Negroes in their sickness; and to order every Overseer positively to be so likewise; for I am sorry to observe that the generality of them, view these poor creatures in scarcely any other light than they do a draught horse or Ox; neglecting them as much when they are unable to work; instead of comforting and nursing them when they lye on a sick bed." – George Washington, letter to Anthony Whiting, Mount Vernon [Philadelphia], October 14, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:184

Letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson – October 18, 1792

"I did not require the evidence of the extracts, which you enclosed to me, to convince me of your attachment to the constitution of the United States, or of your disposition to promote the general welfare of this country; but I regret, deeply regret, the difference in opinions, which have arisen and divided you and another principal officer of the government; and wish devoutly there could be an accommodation of them by mutual yieldings. ... A measure of this sort would produce harmony and consequent good in our public councils. The contrary will inevitably introduce confusion and serious mischiefs; and for what? Because mankind cannot think alike, but would adopt different means to attain the same ends. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both of you to be pure and well-meant, and that experience only will decide, with respect to the salubrity of the measures, which are the subjects of dispute." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, October 18, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:185

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – October 20, 1792

"I was sorry to see the gloomy picture which you drew of the affairs of your Country in your letter of December; but I hope events have not turned out so badly as you then apprehended. Of all the animosities which have existed among mankind, those which are caused by a difference of sentiments in religion appear to be the most inveterate and distressing, and ought most to be deprecated. I was in hopes, that the enlightened and liberal policy, which has marked the present age, would at least have reconciled Christians of every denomination so far, that we should never again see their religious disputes carried to such a pitch as to endanger the peace of Society." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Philadelphia, October 20, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32, p.190

Fourth Annual Message to Congress – November 6, 1792

"To enable, by competent rewards, the employment of qualified and trusty persons to reside among them, as agents, would also contribute to the preservation of peace and good neighbourhood. If, in addition to these expedients, an eligible plan could be devised for promoting civilization among the friendly tribes, and for carrying on trade with them, upon a scale equal to their wants, and under regulations calculated to protect them from imposition and extortion, its influence in cementing their interests with our's could not but be considerable." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House Of Representatives, Fourth Annual Message to Congress, November 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:208

"Observations on the value of peace with other Nations are unnecessary. It would be wise, however, by timely provisions, to guard against those acts of our own Citizens, which might tend to disturb it, and to put ourselves in a condition to give that satisfaction to foreign Nations which we may sometimes have occasion to require from them. I particularly recommend to your consideration the means of preventing those aggressions by our Citizens on the territory of other nations, and other infractions of the law of Nations, which, furnishing just subject of complaint, might endanger our peace with them." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House Of Representatives, Fourth Annual Message to Congress, November 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:209

"I entertain a strong hope that the state of the national finances is now sufficiently matured to enable you to enter upon a systematic and effectual arrangement for the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt, according to the right which has been reserved to the government. No measure can be more desirable, whether viewed with an eye to its intrinsic importance, or to the general sentiment and wish of the nation." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House Of Representatives, Fourth Annual Message to Congress, November 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:210

"Provision is...requisite for the reimbursement of the loan, which has been made for the Bank of the United States, pursuant to the eleventh section of the act by which it is incorporated. In fulfilling the public stipulations in this particular, it is expected a valuable saving will be made." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House Of Representatives, Fourth Annual Message to Congress, November 6, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:210

Letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia – December 18, 1792

"[T]hey are known to be a steady, laborious people." – George Washington, letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, Philadelphia, December 18, 1792; Fitzpatrick 32:271

Letter to the Masons of Massachusetts – January 1793

"To enlarge the sphere of social happiness is worthy of the benevolent design of a Masonic institution; and it is most fervently to be wished, that the conduct of every member of the fraternity, as well as those publications, that discover the principles which actuate them, may tend to convince mankind that the grand object of Masonry is to promote the happiness of the human race." – George Washington, letter to the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, January 1793; Sparks 12:201

Letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee – January 20, 1793

"A mind must be insensible indeed, not to be gratefully impressed by so distinguished, and honorable a testimony of public approbation and confidence: and, as I suffered my name to be contemplated on this occasion, it is more than probable that I should, for a moment, have experienced chagreen if my re-election had not been by a pretty respectable vote. But to say I feel pleasure from the prospect of commencing another tour of duty, would be a departure from truth; for however it might savour of affectation in the opinion of the world (who by the bye can only guess at my sentiments. as it never has been troubled with them) my particular, and confidential friends well know, that it was after a long and painful conflict in my own breast, that I was withheld (by considerations which are not necessary to mention) from requesting, in time, that no vote might be thrown away upon me; it being my fixed determination to return to the walks of private life, at the end of my term." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, January 20, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:310

"I am sorry to be informed by your letter, that death has snatched from us my old acquaintance and friend Colo. [Burwell] Bassett. The manner of it, adds to the regret. We shall all follow, some sooner and some later; and, from accounts, my poor Nephew [George Augustine Washington] is likely to be amongst the first." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, January 20, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:310

Letter to the New Church in Baltimore – January 27, 1793

"It has ever been my pride to merit the approbation of my fellow Citizens by a faithful and honest discharge of the duties annexed to those stations in which they have been pleased to place me; and the dearest rewards of my services have been those testimonies of esteem and confidence with which they have honored me. But to the manifest interposition of an over-ruling Providence, and to the patriotic exertions of united America, are to be ascribed those events, which have given us a respectable rank among the nations of the Earth." – George Washington, reply to the members of The New Church in Baltimore, Philadelphia, January 27, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32, 314

"We have abundant reason to rejoice, that, in this land, the light of truth and reason has triumphed over the power of bigotry and superstition, and that every person may here worship God according to the dictates of his own heart. In this enlightened age, & in this land of equal liberty, it is our boast, that a man's religious tenets will not forfeit the protection of the laws, nor deprive him of the right of attaining & holding the highest offices that are known in the United States. ... Your prayers for my present and future felicity are received with gratitude; and I sincerely wish, Gentlemen, that you may in your social and individual capacities taste those blessings, which a gracious God bestows upon the righteous." – George Washington, letter to the members of The New Church in Baltimore, Philadelphia, January 27, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:315

Letter to John Augustine Washington – January 27, 1793

"It has given your friends much pain to find that change of Air has not been productive of that favorable change in your health, which was the wishes of them all. But the will of Heaven is not to be controverted or scrutinized by the children of this world. It therefore becomes the Creatures of it to submit with patience and resignation to the will of the Creator whether it be to prolong, or to shorten the number of our days. To bless them with health, or afflict them with pain." – George Washington, letter to George Augustine Washington, Philadelphia, January 27, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:315

Letter to Anthony Whiting – February 10, 1793

"It is established as a maxim in my mind, that, a man who will do wrong to another in one instance, knowingly, will have no scruple in doing it in every instance where it can be done without being liable to discovery." – George Washington, letter to Anthony Whiting, Philadelphia, February 10, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:338

Letter to Reverend William McWhir – February 17, 1793

"Until I received your Letter of the 5 inst: it had not occurred to me that the absence of my Nephew would cause an infringement on the punctuality which has heretofore been observed in making my annual payment for the support of the poor-School in the Alexandria Academy, and I thank you for reminding me of it. As it has been usual to make this payment to the President or Treasurer of the Board of Trustees for the Academy, I shall be obliged by your requesting one or the other of these Officers to draw upon Mr. Lear, at sight, for the fifty pounds (specifying in the Draft, the purpose for which it is made), as this mode will be safer and perhaps more convenient, than to transmit the amount in Bank Bills, and especially as I should not know to whom to make the remittance, which is the reason for giving you this trouble." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William McWhir, Philadelphia, February 17, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:344-345

Letter to Frances Bassett Washington – February 24, 1793

"To you, who so well know the affectionate regard I had for our departed friend [his nephew, George Augustine Washington], it is unnecessary to describe the sorrow with which I was afflicted at the news of his death, although it was an event I had expected many weeks before it happened. To express this sorrow with the force I feel it, would answer no other purpose than to revive, in your breast, that poignancy of anguish, which, by this time, I hope is abated. Reason and resignation to the divine will, which is just, and wise in all its dispensations, cannot, in such a mind as yours, fail to produce this effect." – George Washington, letter to Frances Bassett Washington, Philadelphia, February 24, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:354

Second Inaugural Address – March 4, 1793

"Fellow Citizens: I am again called upon by the voice of my country to execute the functions of its Chief Magistrate - When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of united America. ... Previous to the execution of any official act of the President the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the Government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony." – George Washington, Second Inaugural Address, Philadelphia, March 4, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:374-375

Letter to Reverend Bryan Fairfax – March 6, 1793

"I thank you for your kind condolence on the Death of my Nephew. It is a loss I sincerely regret, but as it is the will of Heaven, whose decrees are always just and wise, I submit to it without a murmur." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Bryan Fairfax, Philadelphia, March 6, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:376

Letter to David Humphreys, U.S. Minister to Portugal – March 23, 1793

"If it can be esteemed a happiness to live in an age productive of great and interesting events, we of the present age are very highly favored." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, U.S. Minister to Portugal, Philadelphia, March 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:398

"The rapidity of national revolutions appear no less astonishing, than their magnitude. In what they will terminate, is known only to the great ruler of events; and confiding in his wisdom and goodness, we may safely trust the issue to him, without perplexing ourselves to seek for that, which is beyond human ken; only taking care to perform the parts assigned us, in a way that reason and our own consciences approve of." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, U.S. Minister to Portugal, Philadelphia, March 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:398

Letter to the Earl of Buchan – April 22, 1793

"I believe it is the sincere wish of United America to have nothing to do with the political intrigues, or the squabbles of European Nations; but on the contrary, to exchange commodities and live in peace and amity with all the inhabitants of the Earth." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Philadelphia, April 22, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:428

Letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee – May 6, 1793

"It gives me inexpressible pain to receive such frequent, and distressing accounts from the Western frontiers of this Union (occasioned by Indian hostilities); more especially as our hands are tied to defensive measures..." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, May 6, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:449

"As a public character, I can say nothing on the subject of it. As a private man, I am unwilling to say much. To give advice I shall not."
– George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, May 6, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32, p.449

Message to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Wabash and Illinois Indians – May 7, 1793

"My Children...From what you experienced and seen [sic] among us, you must be convinced that we wish to live in peace with the Red people; but that we do not wish for peace, because we are not able to Carry on war—We wish for peace because it is for the happiness of all Men and pleasing to the great Spirit...I bid you farewell. I hope the great Spirit will preserve you through your Journey, and restore you in Safety to your families and friends." – George Washington, message to the Chiefs and Warriors of the Wabash and Illinois Indians, Philadelphia, May 7, 1793; Papers, Presidential Series: 12:551-552

Address to Merchants and Traders of Philadelphia – May 17, 1793

"The friends of humanity will deprecate War, wheresoever it may appear; and we have experience enough of its evils, in this country, to know, that it should not be wantonly or unnecessarily entered upon. I trust, that the good citizens of the United States will show to the world, that they have as much wisdom in preserving peace at this critical juncture, as they have hitherto displayed valor in defending their just rights." – George Washington, Address to the merchants and traders of Philadelphia, May 17, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32; Fitzpatrick 32:460

Letter to the Provisory Executive Council of France – May 24, 1793

"I assure you, with a sincere participation, of the great and constant friendship, which these U.S. bear to the French nation. of the interest they feel in whatever concerns their happiness and prosperity, and of their wishes for a perpetual fraternity with them, and I pray god to have them and you, very great and good friends and allies, in his holy keeping." – George Washington, letter to the Provisory Executive Council of France, Philadelphia, May 24, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:468

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – June 13, 1793

"While I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13 of March, I can, with the greatest truth, assure you, that I feel a sincere sympathy in your afflictions on account of M. de la Fayette. And to shew you that I have not been unmindful of your condition; and how earnestly I have been disposed to alleviate your sufferings, as far as is in my power, I enclose you duplicates of two letters which I had the honor of writing to you on the 31st. of January and 16. of March. To these I can only add my most ardent prayers, that you may be again united to M. de la Fayette, under circumstances that may be joyful to you both; and that the evening of that life, whose morning has been devoted to the cause of liberty and humanity, may be crowned with the best of heaven's blessings." – George Washington, letter to Marquise de Lafayette, Philadelphia, June 13, 1793; Fitzpatrick 32:501

Address to the Residents of Alexandria – July 4, 1793

"To complete the American character, it mains for the citizens of the United States to shew to the world, that the reproach heretofore cast on republican Governments for their want of stability, is without foundation, when that government is the deliberate choice of an enlightened people: and I am fully persuaded, that every well-wisher to the happiness and prosperity of this Country will evince by his conduct, that we live under a government of laws; and that, while we preserve inviolate our national faith, we are desirous to live in amity with all mankind." – George Washington, Address to the residents of Alexandria, July 4, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:3

Letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee – July 21, 1793

"I have no wish superior to that of promoting the happiness and welfare of this Country." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, July 21, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:23

"But in what will this abuse terminate? The result, as it respects myself, I care not; for I have a consolation within, that no earthly efforts can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambitious nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, never can reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am up as a mark, they will be continually aimed." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, Philadelphia, July 21, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:23

"The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well pointed, never can reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am up as a mark, they will be continually aimed." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Philadelphia, July 21, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:24

"Time may unfold more, than prudence ought to disclose at present." – George Washington, letter to Henry Lee, Philadelphia, July 21, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:24

Letter to Robert Lewis – July 26, 1793

"[N]othing should be put off until the morrow that can be done today." – George Washington, letter to Robert Lewis, Philadelphia, July 26, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:31

Letter to the Overseers at Mount Vernon – July 14, 1793

"Tho' last mentioned, it is not of the least importance; because the peace and good government of the negroes depend upon it, and not less so my interest and your own reputation. I do therefore in explicit terms enjoin it upon you to remain constantly at home (unless called off by unavoidable business or to attend Divine Worship) and to be constantly with your people when there." – George Washington, letter to William Stuart, Hyland Crow, and Henry McKoy, the Overseers at Mount Vernon, Philadelphia, July 24, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:11-12

Reply to the Inhabitants of Richmond – August 28, 1793

"In recollecting the anticipations wch. were entertained of a pacific policy, as most consonant with the situation of the United States and the genius of our Government, it is a pleasing reflection, that when the occasion for exemplifying it occurs, sentiments corresponding with it appear to pervade every part of the community. This steadiness of views, highly honorable to the national character is well calculated to support, in the administration of our affairs, a spirit constantly favorable to the great object of peace." – George Washington, reply to the Inhabitants of Richmond, August 28, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:72

"And tho' the best and sincerest endeavours to this end, may sometimes prove ineffectual; yet it will always be a source of consolation and encouragement, that the calamities of war, if at any time they shall be experienced, have been unsought and unprovoked. Every good citizen will then meet events with that firmness and perseverance which naturally accompany the consciousness of a good cause, the conviction that there is no ground for self-reproach." – George Washington, reply to the Inhabitants of Richmond, August 28, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:72

"True to our duties and interests as Americans, firm to our purpose as lovers of peace, let us unite our fervent prayers to the great ruler of the Universe, that the justice and moderation of all concerned may permit us to continue in the uninterrupted enjoyment of a blessing, which we so greatly prize, and of which we ardently wish them a speedy and permanent participation." – George Washington, reply to the Inhabitants of Richmond, August 28, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:72

Letter to South Carolina Governor William Moultrie – August 28, 1793

"The Constitution vests the power of declaring war with Congress; therefore no offensive expedition of importance can be undertaken until after they shall have deliberated upon the subject, and authorized such a measure." – George Washington, letter to South Carolina Governor William Moultrie, Philadelphia, August 28, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:73

Letter to Reverend Samuel Miller – August 29, 1793

"It is but a few days since that I had the pleasure to receive your polite letter of the 4 instant, which accompanied the Sermon delivered by you on the 4 of July, and I beg you will accept my best thanks for the attention shewn in forwarding the same to me." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Samuel Miller, Philadelphia, August 29, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:75

Letter to the Inhabitants of the City of New London – September 2, 1793

"Experienced as we have lately been in the calamities of war, it must be the prayer of every good Citizen that it may long be averted from our land, and that the blessings which a kind providence has bestowed upon us, may continue uninterrupted." – George Washington, address to the Inhabitants of the City of New London, September 2, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:81

Letter to John Doughty – September 23, 1793

"Your Letter, conveying to me the resolutions, agreed to by the Inhabitants of Morris County [New Jersey], the 10 inst: has reached my hands. ... Their firm and manly sentiments, declared in the resolutions, and united determination to protect and defend the honor and dignity of our Country, are such as become the freemen and Citizens of the United States; and evince their firm and commendable resolution to preserve their liberty and independence inviolate. With such aid and support, under direction of Divine Providence, I trust

the flourishing condition and inestimable blessings now enjoyed, will be long continued to our Country." – George Washington, letter to John Doughty, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:93

Letter to Edmund Pendleton – September 23, 1793

"I have no object in view incompatible with the Constitution, and the obvious interests of this Country, nor no earthly desire half as strong as that of returning to the walks of private life, so, of consequence I only wish whilst I am a Servant of the public, to know the Will of my masters, that I may govern myself accordingly." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:96

"You do me no more than Justice when you suppose that from motives of respect to the Legislature (and I might add from my interpretation of the Constitution) I give my signature to many Bills with which my Judgment is at variance. ... From the Nature of the Constitution, I must approve all parts of a Bill, or reject it in total. To do the latter can only be Justified upon the clear and obvious grounds of propriety; and I never had such confidence in my own faculty of judging as to be over tenacious of the opinions I may have imbibed in doubtful cases." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:96

Letter to Reverend James Madison – September 23, 1793

"Every well-wisher of the U. States must derive pleasure from the disposition which has been shewn generally, by the citizens thereof, to repel with firmness any attempts tending to disturb their present repose. It was with much satisfaction therefore that I received the Resolutions of the Inhabitants of James City County, enclosed in your Letter of the 16 instant, containing sentiments which accord with those which have been expressed by so many respectable Citizens in every part of the Union. ... While such a disposition and such sentiments are retained by my Fellow Citizens, on whose aid and support, in the discharge of the trust which they have confided to me, I place entire confidence, we may expect, under the protection of a kind providence a continuation of those blessings which these States enjoy in a superior degree." – George Washington, letter to Reverend James Madison, Chairman of the meeting of inhabitants of James City County, Virginia, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:96-97

Agreement with William Pearce – September 23, 1793

"[I]t may not be amiss to repeat that one of the most effectual steps to accomplish all these ends, is to see that the Overseers of the Farms and the Superintendants of other business, are constantly at their posts; for it may be received as a maxim that if they are away or entertaining company at home, that the concerns entrusted to them will be neglected, and certainly go wrong: and it is not less certain that relaxation on his part will serve only to beget liberties on their's; therefore strictness with justice is the sure means of having the business well conducted." – George Washington, agreement with William Pearce, Mount Vernon, September 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:99-100

Letter to William W. Brewen – September 29, 1793

"A letter from you of the 20th. instant has been received, Stating the distressed and truly affecting situation in which you are. Could my ability to do it, keep pace with my sincere desire to relieve the wants of the distressed, the request made in your letter to me would be cheerfully complied with; but the numerous and pressing calls upon me for pecuniary aid from real objects of charity, and from those who are more immediately within my own knowledge are such that I am under the necessity, however repugnant to my feelings, of declining to comply with your request but I can have no doubt however that all those who are acquainted with your merits and knowing to the circumstances as stated in your letter would readily contribute to make up such a sum as you require to commence business with. Sincerely wishing that you may find means to extricate yourself from your present embarrassments, as represented in your letter." – George Washington, letter to William W. Brewen, Mount Vernon, September 29, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:107

Letter to William Pearce – October 6, 1793

"I shall begrudge no reasonable expence that will contribute to the improvement and neatness of my Farms; for nothing pleases me better than to see them in good order, and every thing trim, handsome, and thriving about them; nor nothing hurts me more than to find them otherwise." – George Washington, letter to William Pearce, Mount Vernon, October 6, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:111

Letter to the Trustees of the Public School at Germantown – November 6, 1793

"Where it will be best for Congress to remain will depend on circumstances which are daily unfolding themselves, and for the issue of which, we can but offer up our prayers to the Sovereign Dispenser of life and health. His favor too on our oft, the good sense and firmness of our fellow Citizens, and fidelity in those they employ, will secure to us a permanence of good government." – George Washington, address to the Trustees of the Public School at Germantown, November 6, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:149

Letter to Mary Atlee – November 14, 1793

"The President wishes Mrs. Atlee to be assured that, his disposition to prevent tears of distress from flowing, is far beyond his means to accomplish; and that he should be extremely happy if the latter were adequate to the numerous calls that are made upon the former. Mrs. Atlee's case being entirely unknown to the President, Her application of course, is not well understood by him." – George Washington, address to Mary Atlee, November 14, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:153

Fifth Annual Message to Congress – December 3, 1793

"Since the commencement of the term, for which I have been again called into office, no fit occasion has arisen for expressing to my fellow Citizens at large, the deep and respectful sense, which I feel, of the renewed testimony of public approbation. While on the one hand, it awakened my gratitude for all those instances of affectionate partiality, with which I have been honored by my Country; on the other, it could not prevent an earnest wish for that retirement, from which no private consideration should ever have torn me. But influenced by the belief, that my conduct would be estimated according to its real motives; and that the people, and the authorities derived from them, would support exertions, having nothing personal for their object, I have obeyed the suffrage which commanded me to resume the Executive power; and I humbly implore that Being, on whose Will the fate of Nations depends, to crown with success our mutual endeavours for the general happiness." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:164

"I cannot recommend to your notice measures for the fulfilment of our duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing ourselves in a condition of complete defence, and of exacting from them the fulfilment of their duties towards us." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:165

"The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion, that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms, with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among Nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known, that we are at all times ready for War." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:165

"There is a rank due to the United States, among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known, that we are at all times ready for war." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:166

"[T]he militia...ought to possess a pride in being the depository of the force of the Republic, and may be trained to a degree of energy, equal to every military exigency of the United States." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:166

"Next to a rigorous execution of justice on the violators of peace, the establishment of commerce with the Indian nations in behalf of the United States, is most likely to conciliate their attachment. But it ought to be conducted without fraud, without extortion, with constant and plentiful supplies; with a ready market for the commodities of the Indians, and a stated price for what they give in payment, and receive in exchange. Individuals will not pursue such a traffic, unless they be allured by the hope of profit." – George Washington, Fifth Annual Message to Congress, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:167

"No pecuniary consideration is more urgent, than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt: on none can delay be more injurious, or an economy of time more valuable. The productiveness of the public revenues hitherto, has continued to equal the anticipations which were formed of it; but it is not expected to prove commensurate with all the objects, which have been suggested. Some auxiliary provisions will, therefore, it is presumed, be requisite; and it is hoped that these may be made, consistently with a due regard to the convenience of our Citizens, who cannot but be sensible of the true wisdom of encountering a small present addition to their contributions, to obviate a future accumulation of burthens." – George Washington, to the Gentlemen Of The House of Representatives, Fifth Annual Message, speaking to the House of Representatives, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:168

"There is no resource so firm for the Government of the United States, as the affections of the people guided by an enlightened policy; and to this primary good, nothing can conduce more, than a faithful representation of public proceedings, diffused, without restraint, throughout the United States." – George Washington, to the Gentlemen Of The House of Representatives, Fifth Annual Message, speaking to the House of Representatives, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:168

"The several subjects, to which I have now referred, open a wide range to your deliberations; and involve some of the choicest interests of our common Country. Permit me to bring to your remembrance the magnitude of your task. Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the Government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of Sentiment, its dignity may be lost. But, as the Legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper or candour; so shall not the public happiness languish, from the want of my strenuous and warmest cooperations." – George Washington, to the Gentlemen of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives, Fifth Annual Message, speaking to the House of Representatives, December 3, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:169

Letter to Arthur Young – December 12, 1793

"All my landed property, east of the Apalachian mountains, is under rent, except the estate called Mount Vernon. This, hitherto, I have kept in my own hands; but, from my present situation, from my advanced time of life, from a wish to live free from care, and as much at my ease as possible, during the remainder of it, and from other causes, which are not necessary to detail, I have, latterly, entertained serious thoughts of letting this estate also, reserving the mansion house farm for my own residence, occupation and amusement in agriculture; provided I can obtain what is, in my own judgment, and in the opinions of others whom I have consulted, the low rent which I shall mention hereafter; and provided also I can settle it with good farmers." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Philadelphia, December 12, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:175

"No estate in United America, is more pleasantly situated than this." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Philadelphia, December 12, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:175

"My motives for letting this estate having been avowed, I will add that the whole (except the mansion-house farm), or none, will be parted with, and that upon unequivocal terms; because my object is to fix my income (be it what it may) upon a solid basis, in the hands of *good* farmers; because I am not inclined to make a medley of it; and, above all, because I could not relinquish my present course, without a moral certainty of the substitute which is contemplated; for to break up these farms, remove my negroes, and to dispose of the property on them, upon terms short of this, would be ruinous." – George Washington, letter to Arthur Young, Philadelphia, December 12, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:180

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – December 18, 1793

"I have already said that the insufferable conduct of my Overseers may be one mean of frustrating my plan for the next year." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, December 18, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:189

"I am the more particular on this head for two reasons, first to let you see how little dependence there is on such men when left to themselves (for under Mr. Lewis it was very little better), and 2dly. to shew you the necessity of keeping these Overseers strictly to then-duty, that is, to keep them from running about, and to oblige them to remain constantly with their people; and moreover, to see at what time they turn out of a morning, for I have strong suspicions that this, with some of them is at a late hour, the consequence of which to the Negroes is not difficult to foretell. All these Overseers as you will perceive by their agreements, which I herewith send are on standing wages; and this with men who are not actuated by the principles of honor or honesty, and not very regardful of their characters, leads naturally to indulgences, as their profits, whatever may be mine are the same whether they are at a horse race or on the farm, whether they are entertaining company (which I believe is too much the case) in their own houses or are in the field with the Negroes." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, December 18, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:190

Letter to farm overseer Henry McKoy – December 23, 1793

"You may well conceive how disappointed and vexed I have been at the manner in which your plowing has been carried on... What excuse can you have for this neglect?" – George Washington, letter to farm overseer Henry McKoy, Philadelphia, December 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:210-211

Letter to John Christian Ehler – December 23, 1793

"I shall not close this letter with out exhorting you to refrain from Spirituous liquors, they will prove your ruin if you do not. Consider how little a drunken Man differs from a beast; the latter is not endowed with reason, the former deprives himself of it; and when that is the case acts like a brute; annoying, and disturbing everyone around him. But this is not all, nor as it respects himself the worst of it; By degrees it renders a person feeble and not only unable to serve others but to help himself, and being an act of his own he fall[s] from a state of usefulness into contempt and at length suffers, if not perishes in penury and want. ... Don't let this be your case. Shew yourself more of a man, and a Christian, than to yield to so intolerable a vice; which cannot, I am certain (to the greatest lover of liquor) give more pleasure to sip in the poison (for it is no better) than the consequences of it in bad behaviour, at the moment, and the more serious evils produced by it afterward, must give pain." – George Washington, letter to John Christian Ehler, Philadelphia, December 23, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:215

Letter to Chief Justice George Read of Delaware – December 26, 1793

"Two of the unhappy female fugitives from St. Domingo have (as you will see by the enclosed letters) laid their distresses before me; which, if true in the degree they have stated, merits much commiseration. But I have received so many applications of a similar nature and some of them from Imposters, that I find it necessary to guard what little relief I am able to afford, against imposition. For this reason, and because I am not well acquainted with any other Gentleman in Newcastle (from whence the letters came) I have taken the liberty of putting my answer to them, under cover to you, open, that if upon enquiry the authors are found to merit relief it may be sealed and handed to them, if on the other hand it should prove a fictitious tale it may be returned to me. ... I will make no apology for

giving you this trouble because, to be employed in acts of humanity cannot, I am sure, be disagreeable to such a mind as yours." – George Washington, letter to Chief Justice George Read of Delaware, Philadelphia, December 26, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:217

Letter to Madames Laurent de Saxij and Laurent de Verneuil – December 26, 1793

"I wish my resources were equal to the relief of the distresses which you, and many others under like circumstances have described. But the truth is, my private purse is inadequate, and there is no public money at my disposal. ... Such as the first was competent to, I placed early in the hands of a Committee in this City, to be disposed of for the benefit of the unfortunate Sufferers from St. Domingo whose necessities were greatest and means least. ... I preferred this mode of contributing my mite, 1st. because it was not in my power to enquire into the degree of individual wants; 2dly. because I did not possess the means of administering to them in the extent which might be required. and 3dly. to guard against impositions, several of which had been attempted with success. ... In almost every City and large Town in the United States, Committees similar to the one I have already mentioned, are established. To the one nearest you, I should conceive it might be well to make your case known. In the meanwhile to supply your momentary wants I send you Twenty five dollars in Bank notes." – George Washington, letter to Madames Laurent de Saxij and Laurent de Verneuil, Philadelphia, December 26, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:217-218

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – December 28, 1793

"Acts of Providence no human foresight can guard against, and it is our duty to submit to them. In the situation you describe your daughter to be, I certainly should not have desired you to leave her; however inconvenient, and injurious your not doing it, is to me." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, December 28, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:218

Letter to Reverend William White – December 31, 1793

"It has been my intention ever since my return to the City, to contribute my mite towards the relief of the most needy Inhabitants of it. The pressure of public business hitherto, has suspended, but not altered my resolution. I am at a loss, however, for whose benefit to apply the little I can give, and into whose hands to place it; whether for the use of the fatherless children and widows (made so by the late calamity) who may find it difficult, whilst Provisions, Wood and other necessities are so dear, to support themselves; or to other and better purpose (if any) I know not and therefore have taken the liberty of asking your advice. ... I persuade myself justice will be done my motives for giving you this trouble." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William White, Philadelphia, December 31, 1793; Fitzpatrick 33:220-221

Letter to Reverend William White – January 1, 1794

"I have been favoured with two notes from you of this date; the last, in time to prevent the mistake which the first would have led me into. ... The mode which you have suggested for imparting the small pittance my resources will enable me to contribute towards the comfort of the needy in this City appears to be a very eligible one, and as you have been so obliging as to offer to place it in proper hands, for this purpose, I take the liberty of enclosing 250 dollars. ... I have no desire that my name should be mentioned; if so small a sum can effect any good purpose my object will be answered, and all my wishes respecting it gratified." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William White, Philadelphia, January 1, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:230-231

Letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson – January 1, 1794

"I yesterday received, with sincere regret your resignation of the office of Secretary of State. Since it has been impossible to prevail upon you, to forego any longer the indulgence of your desire for private life; the event, however anxious I am to avert it, must be submitted to. ... But I cannot suffer you to leave your Station, without assuring you, that the opinion, which I had formed, of your integrity and talents, and which dictated your original nomination, has been confirmed by the fullest experience; and that both have been eminently displayed in the discharge of your duties. ... Let a conviction of my most earnest prayers for your happiness accompany you in your retirement." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, January 1, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:231

Letter to Reverend James Muir – February 24, 1794

"I have received your letter of the 12 inst.; and will direct my manager Mr. Pearce to pay my annual donation for the education of Orphan Children, or the children of indigent parents, who are unable to be at the expence themselves. ... I had pleasure in appropriating this money to such uses, as I always shall in that of paying it." – George Washington, letter to Reverend James Muir, Philadelphia, February 24, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:281

Address to the Artillery Company of the Town of Newport, Rhode Island – February 1794

"For your kind congratulations on the anniversary of my birthday, and the other obliging expressions of your Address I pray you to accept my grateful thanks. ... To cherish those principles which effected the revolution, and laid the foundation of our free and happy Government, does honor to your patriotism; as do the sentiments of commiseration for the sufferings of the unfortunate, and the good wishes for the happiness of the great family of mankind, to your philanthropy. ... Your prayer for me, is reciprocated by the best vows I can offer for your welfare." – George Washington, address to the Artillery Company of the Town of Newport, Rhode Island, February 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:283

Letter to Charles Thomson – March 5, 1794

"Weeks have passed since I finished reading the first part of your translation of the Septuagint; but having neglected (when I had the pleasure to see you last) to ascertain the medium through which I was to return it, and being unwilling to hazard the production to an uncertain conveyance, I give this letter to the Post Office in hopes of its reaching you, and of my receiving the information above." – George Washington, letter to Charles Thomson, Philadelphia, March 5, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:286-287

Letter to James McHenry – April 8, 1794

"I have experienced the necessity in a variety of instances, of hardening my heart against indulgences of my warmest inclination and friendship; and from a combination of causes, as well as more fitness of character, to depart from first impressions and first intentions with regard to nominations; which has proved most unequivocally, the propriety of the maxim I had adopted, of never committing myself, until the moment the appointment is to be made; when from the best information I can obtain, and a full view of circumstances, my judgment is formed." – George Washington, letter to James McHenry, Philadelphia, April 8, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:319

Letter to William Pearce – May 25, 1794

"I learn with concern from your letter of the 18th. instant, that your crops were still labouring under a drought, and most of them very much injured. At disappointments and losses which are the effects of Providential acts, I never repine; because I am sure the alwise disposer of events knows better than we do, what is best for us, or what we deserve." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, May 25, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:375

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – June 25, 1794

"My primary objects, and to which I have steadily adhered, have been to preserve the country in peace if I can, and to be prepared for war if I cannot. To effect the first upon terms consistent with the respect which is due to ourselves, and with honor, justice and good faith to all the world." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Mount Vernon, June 25, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:414

Letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton – July 2, 1794

"The powers of the Executive of the U. States are more definite, and better understood perhaps than those of almost any other Country; and my aim has been, and will continue to be, neither to stretch, nor relax from them in any instance whatever, unless imperious circumstances shd. render the measure indispensable." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, July 2, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:422

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – July 13, 1794

"I hear with concern, but not unexpectedly, of the illness of your eldest daughter. That she could not without a change for the better survive the indisposition with which she has been afflicted, long, was the opinion of all who saw her; and, in a degree, I presume must have been your own. So far then you must be prepared for the unfortunate event; and tho' nature, at so awful a trial, must shrink for a time, reason and reflection will produce resignation to a decree against which there is no controul." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, July 13, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:429

"It is but justice to acknowledge to you, that so far as I was able, from the hurt which confined me whilst I was at Mount Vernon, to look into my business, I was well satisfied with your conduct and I am persuaded I shall have no cause to complain of it in future. Good judgment and experimental knowledge properly exerted never can when accompanied with integrity and zeal go wrong. These qualifications you have the character of possessing, and I place confidence therein." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, July 13, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:429

Letter to Mrs. Matthew Anderson – July 20, 1794

"Contrary as it is to an established maxim of mine, not to accept a Present from any one, yet, considering this as a mark of your peculiar attention to me and as an evidence of what our climate, aided by industry, is capable of yielding, I receive, and thank you for this effort of your skill." – George Washington, letter to Mrs. Matthew Anderson, Philadelphia, July 20, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:433-434

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – July 20, 1794

"I am glad to hear your daughter is better. 'Tis possible her disorder may have come to a crisis, and taken a favorable turn; but it will be best, notwithstanding, to make up your mind for the worst, unless the appearances are unequivocal, lest they should prove delusive, which is not uncommon in a case like hers." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, July 20, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:435

Letter to Sir John Sinclair – July 20, 1794

"Smaller societies must prepare the way for greater, but with the lights before us, I hope we shall not be so slow in maturation as older nations have been." – George Washington, letter to Sir John Sinclair, Philadelphia, July 20, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33

"I know of no pursuit in which more real and important service can be rendered to any Country, than by improving its agriculture, its breed of useful animals, and other branches of a husbandmans cares." – George Washington, letter to Sir John Sinclair, July 20, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:437

Letter to Burges Ball – July 27, 1794

"[I]f you can keep him always with your people he will make you a good Overseer; and without it, neither he or any other man will. With me, it is an established maxim, that an Overseer shall never be absent from his people but at night, and at his meals." – George Washington, letter to Burges Ball, Philadelphia, July 27, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:444

Letter to Charles Mynn Thurston – August 10, 1794

"What may be the consequences of such violent and outrageous proceedings is painful in a high degree even in contemplation. But if the Laws are to be so trampled upon, with impunity, and a minority (a small one too) is to dictate to the majority there is an end put, at one stroke, to republican government; and nothing but anarchy and confusion is to be expected thereafter; for Some other man, or society may dislike another Law and oppose it with equal propriety until all Laws are prostrate, and every one (the strongest I presume) will carve for himself." – George Washington, letter to Charles Mynn Thurston, August 10, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:465

"[T]his we know, that it is not difficult by concealment of some facts, and the exaggeration of others, (where there is an influence) to bias a well-meaning mind, at least for a time, truth will ultimately prevail where there is pains taken to bring it to light." – George Washington, letter to Charles Mynn Thurston, August 10, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:465

Letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee – August 26, 1794

"I consider this insurrection as the first formidable fruit of the Democratic Societies; brought forth I believe too prematurely for their own views, which may contribute to the annihilation of them. ... That these societies were instituted by the artful and designing members (many of their body I have no doubt mean well, but know little of the real plan,) primarily to sow the seeds of jealousy and distrust among the people, of the government, by destroying all confidence in the Administration of it; and that these doctrines have been budding and blowing ever since, is not new to any one, who is acquainted with the characters of their leaders, and has been attentive to their manoeuvres. I early gave it as my opinion to the confidential characters around me, that, if these Societies were not counteracted (not by prosecutions, the ready way to make them grow stronger) or did not fall into disesteem from the knowledge of their origin, and the views with which they had been instituted by their father, Genet, for purposes well known to the Government; that they would shake the government to its foundation. Time and circumstances have confirmed me in this opinion, and I deeply regret the probable consequences, not as they will affect me personally, (for I have not long to act on this theatre, and sure I am that not a man amongst them can be more anxious to put me aside, than I am to sink into the profoundest retirement) but because I see, under a display of popular and fascinating guises, the most diabolical attempts to destroy the best fabric of human government and happiness, that has ever been presented for the acceptance of mankind." – George Washington, letter to Virginia Governor Henry Lee, German Town, August 26, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:475

"Having determined, as far as lay within the power of the Executive, to keep this country in a state of neutrality, I have made my public conduct accord with the system; and whilst so acting as a public character, consistency, and propriety as a private man, forbid those intemperate expressions in favor of one Nation, or to the prejudice of another, wch. many have indulged themselves in, and I will venture to add, to the embarrassment of government, without producing any good to the Country." – George Washington, letter to Governor Henry Lee, German Town, August 26, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:479

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – September 14, 1794

"I am sorry to hear of the heavy rains you have had, on many accounts; but on none more than throwing you backward in the Mill swamps, and the hard and unfit condition it will put them [sic] grounds for the reception of the grass seeds even if it should not have gullied and washed the soil off in places. I know too, that besides stopping your ploughs on Acct. of the wetness of the land, that such rains are apt to gully the fields already sown with Wheat and to render those which have not received in the Seed in a much worse condition for this purpose but as these are the effects of Providential dispensations resignation is our duty. I am persuaded you will render the disadvantage as light as possible and that is all I can expect." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, German Town, September 14, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:499

Letter to Elizabeth Parke Custis – September 14, 1794

"Do not then in your contemplation of the marriage state, look for perfect felicity before you consent to wed. Nor conceive, from the fine tales the Poets and lovers of old have told us, of the transports of mutual love, that heaven has taken its abode on earth: Nor do not deceive yourself in supposing, that the only mean by which these are to be obtained, is to drink deep of the cup, and revel in an ocean of love. Love is a mighty pretty thing; but like all other delicious things, it is cloying; and when the first transports of the passion begins to subside, which it assuredly will do, and yield, oftentimes too late, to more sober reflections, it serves to evince, that love is too dainty a food to live upon alone, and ought not to be considered farther than as a necessary ingredient for that matrimonial happiness which results from a combination of causes; none of which are of greater importance, than that the object on whom it is placed, should possess good sense, good dispositions, and the means of supporting you in the way you have been brought up. Such qualifications cannot fail to attract (after marriage) your esteem and regard, into wch. or into disgust, sooner or later, love naturally resolves itself; and who at the sametime, has a claim to the respect, and esteem of the circle he moves in. Without these, whatever may be your first impressions of the man, they will end in disappointment; for be assured, and experience will convince you, that there is no truth more certain, than that all our enjoyments fall short of our expectations; and to none does it apply with more force, than to the gratification of the passions." – George Washington, letter to Elizabeth Parke Custis, German Town, September 14, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:501

Letter to John Clark – October 6, 1794

"Nothing short of imperious necessity can justify my being absent from the Seat of Government while Congress is in Session." – George Washington, letter to John Clark, Carlisle, October 6, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:520

Letter to Major General Daniel Morgan – October 8, 1794

"If the minority, and a small one too, is suffered to dictate to the majority, after measures have undergone the most solemn discussions by the representatives of the people, and their will through this medium is enacted into a law, there can be no security for life, liberty, or property; nor, if the laws are not to govern, can any man know how to conduct himself in safety." – George Washington, letter to Major General Daniel Morgan, Carlisle, October 8, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33, p.522

"There never was a law yet made, I conceive, that hit the taste exactly of every man, or every part of the community; of course, if this be a reason for opposition, no law can be executed at all without force, and every man or set of men will in that case cut and carve for themselves; the consequences of which must be deprecated by all classes of men, who are friends to order, and to the peace and happiness of the country." – George Washington, letter to Major General Daniel Morgan, Carlisle, October 8, 1794; Fitzpatrick 33:523

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – November 2, 1794

"I am very sorry to hear of the loss of your daughter, but as it was an event long expected you must have been prepared for the stroke." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, November 2, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:12

"[W]hat have you done with him, if Greens family still occupy the house? By my agreement with him, he is entitled to the use of that house, and Garden, and may consider it as a breach of contract to be deprived of it. What then is to be done with the other family. I cannot bear the thought of adding to the distress I know they must be in by turning them a drift; and it would be as disagreeable to let them come into that part of the Green house adjoining the Shoemakers room; their habits are not good; and to mix them among the Negroes would be attended with many evils as it respected themselves; and no good as it respected me. It would be better therefore on all accounts if they were removed to some other place even if [I] was to pay the Rent provided it was low, or make some allowance towards it." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, November 2, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:13

Letter to John Jay – November 1 [-5], 1794

"Against the malignancy of the discontented, the turbulent, and the vicious, no abilities; no exertions; nor the most unshaken integrity, are any safeguard." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Philadelphia, November 1 [-5], 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:16

"The Spirit which blazed out on this occasion, as soon as the object was fully understood, and the lenient measures of the government were made known to the people, deserved to be communicated: for there are instances of General Officers going at the head of a single Troop, and of light companies; of field Officers, when they came to the places of rendezvous and found no command for them in that grade, turning into the ranks and proceeding as private Soldiers, under their own Captains. and of numbers, possessing the first fortunes in the Country, standing in the ranks as private men and marching day by day with their knapsacks and haversacks at their backs; sleeping on straw, with a single blanket, in a Soldiers tent, during the frosty nights which we have had; by way of example to others. nay more, many young Quakers (not discouraged by the Elders) of the first families, charactrs. and property having turned into the Ranks and are marchg. with the Troops." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Philadelphia, November 1 [-5], 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:17

"I have established it as a maxim, neither to envite, nor to discourage emigrants. My opinion is, that they will come hither as fast as the true interest and policy of the United States will be benefited by foreign population." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Philadelphia, November 1 [-5], 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:18-19

"I know of no prevention but caution, nor any remedy except the Laws. Nor is military, or other employment so easily obtained as foreigners conceive, in a country where offices bear no proportion to the seekers of them." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Philadelphia, November 1 [-5], 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:19

Letter to Vice President John Adams – November 15, 1794

"That a National University in *this* country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion; and the appropriation of ground and funds for it in the Federal City, have long been contemplated and talked of." – George Washington, letter to Vice-President John Adams, November 15, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:23

"My opinion, with respect to emigration, is, that except of useful Mechanics and some particular descriptions of men or professions, there is no need of encouragement: while the policy or advantage of its taking place in a body (I mean the settling of them in a body) may be much questioned; for, by so doing, they retain the Language, habits and principles (good or bad) which they bring with them. Whereas by an intermixture with our people, they, or their descendants, get assimilated to our customs, measures and laws: in a word, soon become one people." – George Washington, letter to Vice-President John Adams, November 15, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:23

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – November 16, 1794

"The letter from Sally Green to me is enclosed. I have no doubt of her being in very distressed circumstances and am at a loss as to the best mode of affording her relief. That of going to Alexandria, is, I fear, a bad plan; altho', if she was able and in earnest, to take in washing and sowing it would be the best stand for them. What she means by keeping a shop, I am at a loss to understand, it is to be feared her shop wd. be no more than a receptacle for stolen produce, by the Negroes: Examine into this matter, and you may aid her in any thing that appears to you leasable, to the amount of twenty pounds in the purchase of things or on credit but not by an advance in money lest it should be fooled away for unessential things which she can do without instead of being applied to her real wants or in the purchase of such things as may be turned to advantage. If she goes to town you may give her a boat load of Wood, a little flour, and some meat at killing time; besides what is usually allowed her father. If she goes there her eldest son may derive some benefit from the charity school which is established there at my expence." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, November 16, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:24-25

Sixth Annual Message to Congress – November 19, 1794

"[To] yield to the treasonable fury of so small a portion of the United States, would be to violate the fundamental principle of our constitution, which enjoins that the will of the majority shall prevail." – George Washington, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, Whiskey Rebellion, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:30

"While there is cause to lament, that occurrences of this nature should have disgraced the name, or interrupted the tranquillity, of any part of our community, or should have diverted to a new application any portion of the public resources, there are not wanting real and substantial consolations for the misfortune. It has demonstrated, that our prosperity rests on solid foundations; by furnishing an additional proof, that my fellow-citizens understand the true principles of government and liberty; that they feel their inseparable union; that, notwithstanding all the devices, which have been used to sway them from their interest and duty, they are now as ready to maintain the authority of the laws against licentious invasions, as they were to defend their rights against usurpation." – George Washington, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, Whiskey Rebellion, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:34

"To every description, indeed, of citizens, let praise be given; but let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the constitution of the United States. Let them cherish it, too, for the sake of those, who, from every clime, are daily seeking a dwelling in our land." – George Washington, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, Whiskey Rebellion, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:34

Message to the House of Representatives – November 19, 1794

"The time, which has elapsed since the commencement of our fiscal measures, has developed our pecuniary resources, so as to open a way for a definitive plan for the redemption of the public debt. It is believed, that the result is such as to encourage Congress to consummate this work without delay. Nothing can more promote the permanent welfare of the nation, and nothing would be more grateful to our constituents. Indeed, whatsoever is unfinished of our system of public credit, cannot be benefited by procrastination; and, as far as may be practicable, we ought to place that credit on grounds which cannot be disturbed, and to prevent that progressive accumulation of debt, which must ultimately endanger all governments." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The House of Representatives, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:36

Message to the Senate and House of Representatives – November 19, 1794

"[M]y policy in our foreign transactions has been, to cultivate peace with all the world; to observe treaties with pure and absolute faith; to check every deviation from the line of impartiality; to explain what may have been misapprehended, and correct what may have been injurious to any nation; and having thus acquired the right, to lose no time in acquiring the ability, to insist upon justice being done to ourselves." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The Senate And The House Of The House of Representatives, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:37

"Let us unite...in imploring the Supreme Ruler of nations, to spread his holy protection over these United States; to turn the machinations of the wicked to the confirming of our constitution; to enable us at all times to root out internal sedition, and put invasion to flight; to perpetuate to our country that prosperity, which his goodness has already conferred; and to verify the anticipations of this government being a safeguard to human rights." – George Washington, To The Gentlemen Of The Senate And The House Of The House of Representatives, Sixth Annual Message to Congress, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:37

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – November 19, 1794

"Out of the above sum you will also pay to the Trustees of Alexandria or their agent or Treasurer, the sum of fifty pounds; being my annual donation to the charity school at the Academy in that place; due sometime in this month. And I request moreover, that you will pay my annual subscription of ten pounds to the Revd. Mr. Davis (incumbent of the Episcopal Church in Alexandria). When it became due I am unable to inform you; but you may know this from the paper itself, or you may do so from Mr. Herbert, who interested himself to obtain the subscription." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, November 19, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:38 Note

Letter to Alexander Spotswood – November 23, 1794

"With respect to the other species of property, concerning which you ask my opinion, I shall frankly declare to you that I do not like to even think, much less talk of it. However, as you have put the question I shall, in a few words, give you my ideas of it. Were it not then, that I am principled agt. selling negros, as you would do cattle in the market, I would not, in twelve months from this date, be possessed of one, as a slave. I shall be happily mistaken, if they are not found to be a very troublesome species of property 'ere many years pass over our heads; (but this by the bye). For this reason, and because there is but little sale for what is raised in the western country, it remains for you to consider whether, their value would not be more productive in lands, reserving enough for necessary purposes than to carry many there." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Spotswood, Philadelphia, November 23, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:47-48

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – November 30, 1794

"Caution Sally Green against dealing with my negros after she is fixed in Alexandria. If she deals with them at all she will be unable to distinguish between stolen, or not stolen things; and if her conduct should lay her open to suspicion she need expect no further countenance or support from me." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, November 30, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:48

Letter to Tobias Lear – December 14, 1794

"It is to be regretted, exceedingly, that delegated powers are, oftentimes, so little regarded; and that trusts of an important nature, the neglect of which may be attended with serious consequences, should be suffered to sleep in the hands of those who ought to carry them into activity." – George Washington, letter to Tobias Lear, Philadelphia, December 14, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:55

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – December 28, 1794

"The enclosed letter from old Butler shews his distress. I think you were perfectly right in detaining part of his wages for lost time; yet, as I can better afford to be without the money than he can, you may pay him for the full time he was at Mount Vernon." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, December 28, 1794; Fitzpatrick 34:75

Letter to Eleanor Parke Custis – January 16, 1795

"A hint here; men and women feel the same inclinations to each other now that they always have done, and which they will continue to do until there is a new order of things, and you, as others have done, may find, perhaps, that the passions of your sex are easier raised than allayed. Do not therefore boast too soon or too strongly of your insensibility to, or resistance of, its powers." – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:91

"In the composition of the human frame there is a good deal of inflammable matter, however dormant it may lie for a time, and like an intimate acquaintance of yours, when the torch is put to it, that which is within you may burst into a blaze." – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:92

"Love is said to be an involuntary passion, and it is, therefore, contended that it cannot be resisted. This is true in part only, for like all things else, when nourishes and supplied plentifully with ailment, it is rapid in its progress; but let these be withdrawn and it may be stifled in its birth or much stunted in its growth." – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:92

"[A] woman (the same may be said of the other sex) all beautiful and accomplished will, while her hand and heart are undisposed of, turn the heads and set the circle in which she moves on fire. Let her marry, and what is the consequence? The madness ceases and all is quiet again. Why? Not because there is any diminution in the charms of the lady, but because there is an end of hope." – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:92

"When the fire is beginning to kindle, and your heart growing warm, propound these questions to it. Who is this invader? Have I a competent knowledge of him? Is he a man of good character; a man of sense? For, be assured, a sensible woman can never be happy with a fool?" – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:92-93

"It rarely happens otherwise than that a thorough-faced coquette dies in celibacy, as a punishment for her attempts to mislead others, by encouraging looks, words, or actions, given for no other purpose than to draw men on to make overtures that they may be rejected." – George Washington, letter to Eleanor Parke Custis, Philadelphia, January 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:93

Letter to Edmund Pendleton – January 22, 1795

"I can religiously aver that no man was ever more tired of public life, or more devoutly wished. for retirement, than I do." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, January 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:98

"[R]epublicanism is not the phantom of a deluded imagination: on the contrary, that under no form of government, will laws be better supported, liberty and property better secured, or happiness be more effectually dispensed to mankind." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, January 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:99

"I accord fully in my opinion with you, that the plan of annual presents in an abstract view, unaccompanied with other measures, is not the best mode of treating ignorant Savages, from whose hostile conduct we experience much distress; but it is not to be overlooked, that they, in turn, are not without serious causes of complaint, from the encroachments which are made on their lands by our people; who are not to be restrained by any law now in being, or likely to be enacted. They, poor wretches, have no Press thro' which their grievances are related; and it is well known, that when one side only of a Story is heard, and often repeated, the human mind becomes impressed with it, insensibly. The annual presents however, which you allude to, are not given so much with a view to purchase peace, as by way of retribution for injuries, not otherwise to be redressed. These people are very much irritated by the continual pressure of land speculators and settlers on one hand; and by the impositions of unauthorised, and unprincipled traders (who rob them in a manner of their hunting) on the other. Nothing but the strong arm of the Union, or in other words, energetic laws, can correct these abuses; but here! jealousies, and prejudices (from which I apprehend more fatal consequences to this government than from any other source) aided by local situations, and perhaps by interested considerations, always oppose themselves to efficient measures. ... My communications to Congress at the last and present Session, have proceeded upon similar ideas with those expressed in your letter, namely, to make fair treaties with the Savage tribes, (by this I mean, that they shall perfectly understand every article and clause of them, from correct and repeated interpretations); that these treaties shall be held sacred, and the infractors on either side punished exemplarily; and to furnish them plentifully with goods under wholesome regulations, without aiming at higher prices than is adequate to cover the cost, and charges. If measures like these were adopted, we might hope to live in peace and amity with these borderers; but not whilst our citizens, in violation of law and justice, are guilty of the offences I have mentioned, and are carrying on unauthorised expeditions against them; and when, for the most atrocious murders, even of those of whom we have the least cause of complaint, a Jury on the frontiers, can hardly be got to listen to a charge, much less to convict a culprit." – George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, January 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:99-100

"The madness of the European powers, and the calamitous situation into which all of them are thrown by the present ruinous war, ought to be a serious warning to us, to avoid a similar catastrophe, as long as we can with honor and justice to our national character."
– George Washington, letter to Edmund Pendleton, January 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:100

Letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia – January 28, 1795

"A plan for the establishment of an University in the federal City, has frequently been the subject of conversation; but in what manner it is proposed to commence this important institution; on how extensive a scale, the means by which it is to be effected; how it is to be supported; or what progress is made in it; are matters altogether unknown to me. It has always been a source of serious reflection and sincere regret with me, that the youth of the United States should be sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education. Altho' there are doubtless many under these circumstances who escape the danger of contracting principles, unfriendly to republican government; yet we ought to deprecate the hazard attending ardent and susceptible minds, from being too strongly, and too early prepossessed in favor of other political systems, before they are capable of appreciating their own. ... For this reason, I have greatly wished to see a plan adopted by which the arts, Sciences and Belles lettres, could be taught in their *fullest* extent; thereby embracing *all* the advantages of European tuition with the means of acquiring the liberal knowledge which is necessary to qualify our citizens for the exigencies of public, as well as private life; and (which with me, is a consideration of great magnitude) by assembling the youth from the different parts of this rising republic, contributing from their intercourse, and interchange of information, to the removal of prejudices which might perhaps, sometimes arise, from local circumstances. ... The federal City, from its centrality, and the advantages which, in other respects it must have over any other place in the U: States, ought to be preferred, as a proper site for such a University. And if a plan can be adopted upon a scale as *extensive* as I have described; and the execution of it shall commence under favorable auspices, in a reasonable time, with a fair prospect of success; I will grant, in perpetuity, fifty shares in the navigation of Potomac River towards the endowment of it." – George Washington, letter to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, Philadelphia, January 28, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:106-107

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – January 28, 1795

"It has always been a source of serious reflection and sincere regret with me, that the youth of the United States should be sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education. Altho there are doubtless many under these circumstances who escape the danger of contracting principles, unfriendly to republican government; yet we ought to deprecate the hazard attending ardent and susceptible minds, from being too strongly, and too early prepossessed in favor of other political systems, before they are capable of appreciating their own." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson with extract of his Will, January 28, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:106

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – February 1, 1795

"After so long an experience of your public services, I am naturally led, at this moment of your departure from office, which it has always been my wish to prevent, to review them. In every relation, which you have borne to me, I have found that my confidence in your talents, exertions and integrity, has been well placed. I the more freely render this testimony of my approbation, because I speak from opportunities of information wch. cannot deceive me, and which furnish satisfactory proof of your title to public regard." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, February 1, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:109

Letter to Robert Lewis – February 22, 1795

"Mrs. Haney should endeavor to do what she can for herself, this is a duty incumbent on every one; but you must not let her suffer, as she has thrown herself upon me; your advances on this account will be allowed always, at settlement; and I agree readily to furnish her with provisions: and for the good character you give of her daughter make the latter a present, in my name, of a handsome, but not costly gown, and other things which she may stand mostly in need of. You may charge me also with the worth of your tenement on which she is placed, and where perhaps it is better she should be, than at a great distance from your attentions to her." – George Washington, letter to Robert Lewis, Philadelphia, February 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:123

Letter to Jonathan Williams – March 2, 1795

"To the Great ruler of events, not to any exertions of mine, is to be ascribed the favorable termination of our late contest for liberty. I never considered the fortunate issue of any measure adopted by me in the progress of the Revolution in any other light than as the ordering of kind Providence; and if the partiality of my Countrymen do justice to my motives thro' that arduous struggle; and to those which have since occurred in the administration of the present Government, as, the result of the contest it is the only reward I ever sought, and the greatest that could be conferred on." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Williams, Philadelphia, March 2, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:130

Letter to Charles Carter – March 10, 1795

"My friends entertain a very erroneous idea of my pecuniary resources, when they set me down for a money lender, or one who (now) has a command of it. You may believe me, when I assert that the Bonds which were due to me before the Revolution, were discharged during the progress of it, with a few exceptions in depreciated paper (in some instances as low as a shilling in the pound). That such has been the management of my estate, for many years past, especially since my absence from home, now six years, as scarcely to support itself. That my public allowance (whatever the world may think of it) is inadequate to the expence of living in this city; to such an extravagant height has the necessaries as well as the conveniences of life, arisen. And, moreover, that to keep myself out of debt; I have found it expedient, now and then, to sell lands, or something else to effect this purpose. ... These are facts I have no inclination to publish to the world, nor should I have disclosed them on this occasion, had it not been due to friendship, to give you some explanation of my inability to comply with your request. If, however, by joining with nine others, the sum required can be obtained, notwithstanding my being under these circumstances, and notwithstanding the money will be to be withdrawn from another purpose, I will contribute one hundred pounds towards the accommodation of your sons wants, without any view to the receipt of interest therefrom." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carter, Philadelphia, March 10, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:139-140

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – March 15, 1795

"I had but little hesitation in giving the federal dist. a preference of all other places for this Institution, and for the following reasons. 1st. on account of its being the permanent Seat of the government of this Union, and where the laws and policy of it must be better understood than in any local part thereof. 2d, because of its centrality. 3d, because one half (or near it) of the district of Columbia, is within the Commonwealth of Virginia; and the whole of the State not inconvenient thereto. 4th, because as *part* of the endowment, it would be useful; but *alone*, would be inadequate to the end. 5th, because many advantages, I conceive, would result from the Jurisdiction which the general government will have over it, wch. no other spot would possess. And, lastly, as this Seminary is contemplated for the *completion* of education, and study of the sciences (not for boys in their rudiments) it will afford the Students an opportunity of attending the debates in Congress, and thereby becoming more liberally, and better acquainted with the principles of law, and government." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Philadelphia, March 15, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:147

Letter to Virginia Governor Robert Brooke – March 16, 1795

"It is with indescribable regret, that I have seen the youth of the United States migrating to foreign countries, in order to acquire the higher branches of erudition, and to obtain a knowledge of the Sciences. Altho' it would be injustice to many to pronounce the certainty of their imbibing maxims, not congenial with republicanism; it must nevertheless be admitted, that a serious danger is encountered, by sending abroad among other political systems those, who have not well learned the value of their own. ... The time is therefore come, when a plan of Universal education ought to be adopted in the United States." – George Washington, letter to Governor Robert Brooke, Philadelphia, March 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:149-150

Letter to William Pearce – March 22, 1795

"I had rather hear it was delayed than that it should be sown before every thing was in perfect order for it; for it is a fixed principle with me, that whatever is done should be well done. Unless this maxim is attended to, our labor is but in vain, and our expectation of a return, is always deceptive; whilst we are ascribing our disappointments to any thing rather than the true cause, namely not laying (by proper preparations) a good foundation, on which to build our hopes." – George Washington, letter to William Pearce, Philadelphia, March 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:153

Letter to Major General Daniel Morgan – March 27, 1795

"[I]t may be proper constantly and strongly to impress upon the Army that they are mere agents of Civil power: that out of Camp, they have no other authority, than other citizens that offences against the laws are to be examined, not by a military officer, but by a Magistrate; that they are not exempt from arrests and indictments for violations of the law." – George Washington, letter to Major General Daniel Morgan, Philadelphia, March 27, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:160

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – June 14, 1795

"By the last Post, I received the enclosed letter from James Butler; I wish you to let him know (and as soon as you conveniently can, that he may be under no mistake in the case) that he must look to those who placed him where he is, (if they think him qualified for the Office,) for his money; not a copper will he receive from me. ! allow £50 pt. Annum to the Academy in Alexandria for the purpose of instructing the children of poor persons who are unable to be at that expence themselves; but I have nothing to do with providing, or paying the Master who is employed for this purpose. This is left to the Trustees of the School, and I wish it may be found that my donation is as beneficially applied as my intention in bestowing of it, has been good. Whether the Revd. Mr. Muir (to whom the money has usually been paid) has any particular agency in the business, or not, I am unable to say; but wish you to shew him Butlers letter on this subject and let me know what he says to it." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, June 14, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:214

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – June 21, 1795

"I am sorry the rain you were wishing for, should have come attended with the disasters your letter represents; but to these it is our duty to submit. I never repine at acts of Providence, because I always suppose, however adverse they may be to our wishes, they are always for the best." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, June 21, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:217

Letter to Reverend Clement Cruttwell – July 10, 1795

It has so happened, but really I can hardly tell how, that I have been very deficient in not acknowledging at an earlier period the receipt of your obliging favor of the 1st. of May last year, accompanying a copy of the Works of the venerable Bishop of Sodor and Man; 33 which, agreeably to the Will of the late Doctor Wilson (his Son) you had the goodness to send me. ... Accept now, I pray you Sir, my thanks for the part you have executed in this business; and the assurances that my not having done it before did not proceed from want of respect to the memory of the Author, his son, or yourself; but to mere accident." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Clement Cruttwell, Philadelphia, July 10, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:234

Letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph – July 22, 1795

"My opinion respecting the treaty, is the same now that it was: namely, not favorable to it, but that it is better to ratify it in the manner the Senate have advised (and with the reservation already mentioned), than to suffer matters to remain as they are, unsettled. Little has been said to me on the subject of this treaty, along the road I passed; and I have seen no one since, from whom I could hear much concerning it; but from indirect discourses, I find endeavours are not wanting to place it in all the odious points of view, of which it is susceptible; and in some which it will not admit." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, July 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:244

Letter to Secretary of War Timothy Pickering – July 27, 1795

"But (much indeed to be regretted!) party disputes are now carried to that length, and truth is so enveloped in mist, and false representation that it is extremely difficult to know through what channel to seek it. This difficulty to one, who is of no party, and whose sole wish is to pursue, with undeviating steps a path which would lead this Country to respectability, wealth and happiness is exceedingly to be lamented. But such (for wise purposes it is presumed) is the turbulence of human passions in party disputes; when victory, more than truth, is the palm contended for, 'that the Post of honor is a private Station.'" – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, July 27, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:251

Address to Boston Selectmen - July 28, 1795

"In every act of my administration, I have sought the happiness of my fellow-citizens. My system for the attainment of this object has uniformly been to overlook all personal, local and partial considerations: to contemplate the United States, as one great whole: to confide, that sudden impressions, when erroneous, would yield to candid reflection: and to consult only the substantial and permanent interests of our country." – George Washington, address to the Boston Selectmen, July 28, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:252

"Without a predilection for my own judgment, I have weighed with attention every argument, which has at any time been brought into view. But the Constitution is the guide which I never will abandon. It has assigned to the President the power of making treaties, with the advice and consent of the senate. It was doubtless supposed that these two branches of government would combine, without passion, [and with the best means of information], those facts and principles upon which the success of our foreign relations will always depend: that they ought not to substitute for their own conviction the opinions of others." – George Washington, address to the Boston Selectmen, July 28, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:253

"While I feel the most lively gratitude for the many instances of approbation from my country; I can no otherwise deserve it, than by obeying the dictates of my conscience." – George Washington, address to the Boston Selectmen, July 28, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:254

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – July 29, 1795

"The difference of conduct between the friends, and foes of order, and good government, is in nothg. more striking than that, the latter are always working, like bees, to distil their poison; whilst the former, depending, often times too much, and too long upon the sense, and good dispositions of the people to work conviction, neglect the means of effecting it." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:254

Letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph – July 29, 1795

"To leave home so soon will be inconvenient; a month hence would have been otherwise; and was, as I hinted to you before I left the City, in contemplation by me, for the purpose of Mrs. Washington's remaining here until November, when I intended to come back for her. But whilst I am in office, I shall never suffer private convenience to interfere with what I conceive to be my official duties." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:255

"I view the opposition which the treaty is receiving from the meetings in different parts of the Union in a very serious light. Not because there is more weight in any of the objections which are made to it, than were foreseen at first; for there are none in some of them; and gross misrepresentations in others. Nor as it respects myself personally, for this shall have no influence on my conduct; plainly perceiving, and I am accordingly preparing my mind for, the obloquy which disappointment and malice are collecting to heap upon my character. But I am alarmed on acct. of the effect it may have on, and the advantage the French government may be disposed to make of, the spirit which is at work; to cherish a belief in them, that the treaty is calculated to favor G. Britain at their expence. Whether they believe, or disbelieve these tales, the effect it will have upon the nation, will be nearly the same: for whilst they are at war with that Power, or so long as the animosity between the two nations exists, it will, no matter at whose expence, be their policy, and it is feared it will be their conduct, to prevent us from being on good terms with G. Britain, or from her deriving any advantages from our commerce which they can prevent, however much we may be benefited thereby, ourselves. To what length this policy and interest may carry them, is problematical; but when they see the people of this Country divided, and such a violent opposition given to the measures of their own government, pretend [edify in their favor, it may be extremely embarrassing, to say no more of it. ... To sum the whole up in a few words, I have never, since I have been in the Administration of the government, seen a crisis wch, in my judgment, has been so pregnant of interesting events; nor one from which more is to be apprehended." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:256

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – July 29, 1795

"As the measures of the government, respecting the treaty, were taken before I left Philadelphia, something more imperious than has yet appeared, must turn up to occasion a change. Still, it is very desirable to ascertain, if possible, after the paroxysm of the fever is a little abated, what the real temper of the people is, concerning it; for at present the cry against the Treaty is like that against a mad-dog; and every one, in a manner, seems engaged in running it down. ... That it has received the most tortured interpretation, and that the writings agt. it (which are very industriously circulated) are pregnant of the most abominable mis-representations, admits of no doubt." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, July 29, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:262

Letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph – July 31, 1795

"To be wise and temperate, as well as firm, the crisis most eminently calls for; for there is too much reason to believe, from the pains which have been taken before, at, and since the advice of the Senate respecting the treaty [Jay Treaty with Great Britain] that the prejudices against it are more extensive than is generally imagined. This, I have lately understood to be the case from men in this quartr. who are of no party, but well disposed to the present Administration. How shd. it be otherwise? when no stone has been left unturned that could impress on the minds of the people the most arrant misrepresentation of facts; that their rights have not only been neglected, but absolutely sold." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, July 31, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:266

"It is not to be inferred from hence, that I am or shall be disposed to quit the ground I have taken, unless circumstances more imperious than have yet come to my knowledge should compel it; for there is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Edmund Randolph, July 31, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:266

Letter to Henry Knox – September 20, 1795

"Next to a conscientious discharge of my public duties, to carry along with me the approbation of my constituents would be the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of; but, the latter being secondary, I cannot make the former yield to it, unless some criterion more infallible than partial (if they are not party) meetings can be discovered, as the touchstone of public sentiment. If any power on earth could, or the Great Power above would, erect the standard of infallibility in political opinions, there is no being that inhabits this terrestrial globe that would resort to it with more eagerness than myself, so long as I remain a servant of the public. But as I have found no better guide hitherto than upright intentions, and dose investigation, I shall adhere to these maxims while I keep the watch; leaving it to those who will come after me to explore new ways, if they like; or think them better." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, September 20, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:310

Letter to Timothy Pickering, Acting Secretary of State – September 27, 1795

"I shall not, whilst I have the honor to Administer the government, bring a man into any office, of consequence knowingly whose political tenets are adverse to the measures which the *general* government are pursuing; for this, in my opinion, would be a sort of political Suicide" – George Washington, letter to Timothy Pickering, Acting Secretary of State, Mount Vernon, September 27, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:315

"[O]f two men equally well affected to the true interests of their country, of equal abilities and equally disposed to lend their support, it is the part of prudence to give a preference to him, against whom the *least* clamour can be excited." – George Washington, letter to Timothy Pickering, Acting Secretary of State, Mount Vernon, September 27, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:315

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – October 4, 1795

"The letter from Madame de Chastellux to me, is short, referring to the one she has written to you for particulars respecting herself and infant son. Her application to me is unquestionably misplaced, and to Congress it would certainly be unavailing, as the Chevalier Chastellux's pretensions (on which hers must be founded) to any allowance from this country, were no greater than that of any, and every other Officer of the French Army, who served in America the last War. To grant to one therefore, would open a wide door to applications of a similar nature, and to consequent embarrassments. Probably, the sum granted at the last Session of Congress to the daughters of the Count de Grasse, has given rise to this application. That it has done so in other instances, I have good reasons to believe." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, October 4, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:323

Letter to Edward Carrington – October 9, 1795

"In the appointments to the great offices of the government, my aim has been to combine geographical situations, and sometimes other considerations, with abilities; and fitness of *known* characters." – George Washington, letter to Edward Carrington, Mount Vernon, October 9, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:331

Letter to Patrick Henry – October 9, 1795

"I persuade myself, Sir, it has not escaped your observation, that a crisis is approaching that must if it cannot be arrested soon decide whether order and good government shall be preserved or anarchy and confusion ensue." – George Washington, letter to Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, October 9, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:335

"I can most religiously aver I have no wish, that is incompatible with the dignity, happiness and true interest of the people of this country. My ardent desire is, and my aim has been (as far as depended upon the Executive Department,) to comply strictly with all our engagements foreign and domestic; but to keep the United States free from political connections with every other country. To see that they may be independent of all, and under the influence of none. In a word, I want an American character, that the powers of Europe may be convinced we act for ourselves and not for others; this, in my judgment, is the only way to be respected abroad and happy at home." – George Washington, letter to Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, October 9, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:335

Letter to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton – November 16, 1795

"I would beg the favor of you to run your eye over the letter from Madam de Segur and let one of your young men make some enquiry into the truth of her narrative and if found just, to seal and forward my letter to her, safely. The reason why I give you this trouble, is, that applications of the kind have been, and still are very frequent; and in more instances than one, impositions have been practiced on me. If this lady's tale be true, her case is pitiable, and I have only to regret that the frequent calls upon my private purse, renders it inconvenient for me to do more for her than the pittance I enclose to her." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, November 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:363

Letter to Maryland Governor John Hawkins Stone – December 6, 1795

"I have long since resolved (for the present time at least) to let my calumniators proceed, without taking notice of their invectives myself, or by any other with my participation or knowledge. Their views, I dare say are readily perceived by all the enlightened and well disposed part of the Community; and by the Records of my Administration, and not by the voice of faction I expect to be acquitted or condemned hereafter." – George Washington, letter to Maryland Governor John Hawkins Stone, Philadelphia, December 6, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:385-386

Seventh Annual Address to Congress - December 8, 1795

"I trust I do not deceive myself, while I indulge the persuasion, that I have never met you at any period, when more than at present, the situation of our public affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation; and for inviting you, to join with me, in profound gratitude to the Author of all good, for the numerous, and extraordinary blessings we enjoy." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:386

"While many of the nations of Europe, with their American Dependencies, have been involved in a contest unusually bloody, exhausting and calamitous; in which the evils of foreign war have been aggravated by domestic convulsion and insurrection; in which many of the arts most useful to society have been exposed to discouragement and decay; in which scarcity of subsistence has embittered other sufferings; while even the anticipations of a return of the blessings of peace and repose, are alloyed by the sense of heavy and

accumulating burthens, which press upon all the departments of industry, and threaten to clog the future springs of Government: Our favored country, happy in a striking contrast, has enjoyed general tranquility; a tranquility the more satisfactory, because maintained at the expense of no duty. Faithful to ourselves, we have violated no obligation to others." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:388

"Our population advances with a celerity, which exceeding the most sanguine calculations, proportionally augments our strength and resources, and guarantees our future security." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:389

"Every part of the union displays indications of rapid and various improvement, and with burthens so light as scarcely to be perceived; with resources fully adequate to our present exigencies; with Governments founded on genuine principles of rational liberty, and with mild and wholesome laws; is it too much to say, that our country exhibits a spectacle of national happiness never surpassed if ever before equalled? ... Placed in a situation every way so auspicious, motives of commanding force impel us, with sincere acknowledgment to heaven, and pure love to our country, to unite our efforts to preserve, prolong, and improve, our immense advantages." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:389

"It is a valuable ingredient in the general estimate of our welfare, that the part of our country, which was lately the scene of disorder and insurrections, now enjoys the blessings of quiet and order. The misled have abandoned their errors, and pay the respect to our Constitution and laws which is due from good citizens, to the public authorities of the society. These circumstances, have induced me to pardon, generally, the offenders here referred to; and to extend forgiveness to those who had been adjudged to capital punishment." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:390

"[T]hough I shall always think it a sacred duty, to exercise with firmness and energy, the Constitutional powers with which I am vested, yet it appears to me no less consistent with the public good, than it is with my personal feelings, to mingle in the operations of government, every degree of moderation and tenderness, which the national justice, dignity and safety may permit." – George Washington, Seventh Annual Address to Congress, December 8, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:390

Letter to the Citizens of Frederick County, Virginia – December 16, 1795

"Next to the approbation of my own mind, arising from a consciousness of having uniformly, diligently and sincerely aimed, by doing my duty, to promote the true interests of my country, the approbation of my fellow citizens is dear to my heart. In a free country, such approbation *should* be a citizen's best reward; and so it *would* be, if Truth and Candour were always to estimate the conduct of public men. But the reverse is so often the case, that he who, wishing to serve his country, is not influenced by higher motives, runs the risk of being miserably disappointed. Under such discouragements, the good citizen will look beyond the applauses and reproaches of men, and persevering in his duty, stand firm in conscious rectitude, and in the hope of [an] approving Heaven." – George Washington, letter to the Citizens of Frederick County, Virginia, Philadelphia, December 16, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:395

Message to the House of Representatives – December 17, 1795

"The sentiments we have mutually expressed of profound gratitude to the source of those numerous blessings – the author of all good – are pledges of our obligations to unite our sincere and zealous endeavours, as the instruments of divine providence, to preserve and perpetuate them." – George Washington, message to the House of Representatives, December 17, 1795; Maxims p. 342

Letter to Gouverneur Morris – December 22, 1795

"It is well known, that Peace has been (to borrow a modern phraze) the order of the day with me, since the disturbances in Europe first commenced. My policy has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honor to remain in the administration of government, to be upon friendly terms with, but independant of, all nations of the earth. To share in the broils of none. To fulfil our own engagements. To supply the wants, and be carriers for them all: being thoroughly convinced that it is our policy and interest to do so; and that nothing short of self respect, and that justice which is essential to a national character, ought not involve us in War; for sure I am, if this country is preserved in tranquility twenty years longer, it may bid defiance, in a just cause, to any power whatever, such, in that time, will be its population, wealth, and resource." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, December 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:401

"In a government as free as ours where the people are at liberty, and will express their sentiments, oftentimes imprudently, and for want of information sometimes unjustly, allowances must be made for occasional effervescences; but after the declaration which I have here made of my political creed, you can run no hazard in asserting, that the Executive branch of this government never has, nor will suffer, while I preside, any improper conduct of its officers to escape with impunity; or will give its sanctions to any disorderly proceedings of its citizens." – George Washington, letter to Gouverneur Morris, Philadelphia, December 22, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:402

Letter to Doctor James Anderson – December 24, 1795

"The truth, is so little time is at my disposal for private gratifications, that it is but rarely I put pen to paper for purposes of my own." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Philadelphia, December 24, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:406

"I have no inclination to touch, much less to dilate on politics. For in politics, as in religion my tenets are few and simple: the leading one of which, and indeed that which embraces most others, is to be honest and just ourselves, and to exact it from others; meddling as little as possible in their affairs where our own are not involved. If this maxim was generally adopted Wars would cease, and our swords would soon be converted into reap-hooks, and our harvests be more abundant, peaceful, and happy." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Philadelphia, December 24, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:407

"The restless mind of man can not be at peace; and when there is disorder within, it will appear without, and soon or late will shew itself in acts. So it is with Nations, whose mind is only the aggregate of those of the individuals, where the Government is Representative, and the voice of a Despot, where it is not." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Philadelphia, December 24, 1795; Fitzpatrick 34:407

Letter to Pierre Auguste Adet, French Minister – January 1, 1796

"Born, Sir, in a land of liberty; having early learned its value; having engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it; having, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country; my anxious recollections, my sympathetic feeling, and my best wishes are irresistibly excited whenever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom." – George Washington, letter to Pierre Auguste Adet, Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, January 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:413

"To call your nation brave, were to pronounce but common praise. Wonderful people! Ages to come will read with astonishment the history of your brilliant exploits!" – George Washington, letter to Pierre Auguste Adet, Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, January 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:413

"I rejoice that liberty, which you have so long embraced with enthusiasm, liberty, of which you have been the invincible defenders, now finds an asylum in the bosom of a regularly organized government; a government, which, being formed to secure the happiness of the French people, corresponds with the ardent wishes of my heart, while it gratifies the pride of every citizen of the United States, by its resemblance to their own." – George Washington, letter to Pierre Auguste Adet, Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic, January 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:413-414

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – January 17, 1796

"It is hardly possible it can be three years since I subscribed to the Salary of Mr. [Thomas] Davis, [of Christ Church, Alexandria, Va.] how then can there be two years due when one has been paid? Surely it was not the terms of the Subscription to pay ten pounds at the beginning, and ten pounds at the end of the first year. But you can ascertain this matter by having recourse to the paper, or, Mr. Herbert, who was the gentleman that obtained my name to it." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, January 17, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:423

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – January 27, 1796

"I am very sorry for the death of Mr. Davenport on many Accts.; and not the least on Acct. of his poor family; who must, I am sure, be left in great distress. for this reason I request you to shew them all the kindness you can, and afford them any aid and comfort in your power. Altho' she can have no right to the meat, I would have none of it taken from her. You may also let her have middlings from the Mill; and until the house may become indispensably necessary for the succeeding Miller, let her remain in it. As she went from these parts she can have no friends (by these I mean relations) where she is. If therefore she wishes to return back to his, or her own relations, aid her in doing so." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, January 27, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:426

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – January 31, 1796

"As I am almost as confident as I can be of anything, that depends upon a bad memory, that it is not three years since I subscribed to a Salary for Mr. Davis, I cannot discover upon what ground it is he claims three years payment; unless my subscription anticipated a years payment, of which I have no recollection; but which must certainly be known to Mr. Herbert who was the Gentleman that solicited my name to the instrument. I am always willing to pay what I owe, but never that which I do not owe." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, January 31, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:431

Letter to Connecticut Governor Oliver Wolcott – February 1, 1796

"If the enlightened, and virtuous part of the Community will make allowances for my involuntary errors I will promise they shall have no cause to accuse me of wilful ones." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor Oliver Wolcott, Philadelphia, February 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:447

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – February 7, 1796

"You will perceive by the enclosed advertisement, which is intended more as an essay to see whether I can rent my farms upon the terms 23 I shall probably transmit you in my next letter, than from any sanguine expectation of doing it, what my wishes and views are: which may be summed up in a few words, namely, to make the remainder of my days, if I should live to finish my present term of Service, as free from care and trouble as possible; to reduce my income (be it little or much) to a certainty; and to see my farms in the hands of a number of Tenants (ff it can be accomplished agreeably to my publication) who are professed farmers, who understand, and will cultivate them in the manner most approved in England, with allowance for the differences of climate." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, February 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:450

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – March 27, 1796

"I am sorry to find by it that your winter grain has changed its appearance for the worse; and that your fences have been so much deranged by the high wind you have had, in a greater degree I think than it was here, tho' it was very violent with us also. These being acts of Providence and not within our controul, I never repine at them; but if the Roller will be of any use to the grain I beg it may be applied. Let the damage which the Cupulo, and other things have sustained from the wind be repaired as soon as possible." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, March 27, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:507

"Enclosed is a Letter, and some certificates from Mr. Butler. Let the latter be given to him, and if his distresses are truly represented, give him five or Six dollars; or more if it appears that he merits them: But tell him at the sametime, his claim on me is no greater than on any other; and therefore not to think of establishing it. And with respect to the school, I have nothing to do in providing Tutors for it." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, Philadelphia, March 27, 1796; Fitzpatrick 34:508

Letter to Elizabeth Parke Custis Law – March 30, 1796

"Melancholy as the event is, on which you wrote the 25th. instant; and unwelcome as you knew the information must be, yet it was the part of prudence to communicate it as early as you did: and the precaution you took of writing to me, was well judged; and wd. have been necessary, had we not been previously prepared for the shock, by letters from Mr. Lear; giving an account of her situation, which left no hope, in me of a different result. ... Mrs. [Fanny Bassett Washington] Lear was good and amiable, and your Society will feel the loss of her. But the Dispensations of Providence are as inscrutable, as they are wise and uncontrollable. It is the duty therefore of Religion and Philosophy, to submit to its decrees, with as little repining as the sensibility of our natures, will permit." – George Washington, letter to Elizabeth Parke Custis Law, Philadelphia, March 30, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:1

Letter to the House of Representatives – March 30, 1796

"The nature of foreign negotiations requires caution; and their success must often depend on secrecy: and even when brought to a conclusion, a full disclosure of all the measures, demands, or eventual concessions, which may have been proposed or contemplated, would be extremely impolitic: for this might have a pernicious influence on future negotiations; or produce immediate inconveniences, perhaps danger and mischief, in relation to other powers." – George Washington, letter to the House of Representatives, Philadelphia, March 30, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:2

"Having been a member of the General Convention, and knowing the principles on which the Constitution was formed, I have ever entertained but one opinion on this subject; and from the first establishment of the Government to this moment, my conduct has exemplified that opinion: that the power of making treaties is exclusively vested in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur, and that every treaty so made, and promulgated, thenceforward became the Law of the land. It is thus that the treaty making power has been understood by foreign Nations: and in all the treaties made with them, we have declared, and they have believed, that when ratified by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, they became obligatory." – George Washington, letter to the House of Representatives, Philadelphia, March 30, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:3

"It is a fact declared by the General Convention, and universally understood, that the Constitution of the United States was the result of a spirit of amity and mutual concession. And it is well known that under this influence the smaller States were admitted to an equal representation in the Senate with the larger States; and that this branch of the government was invested with great powers: for on the equal participation of those powers, the sovereignty and political safety of the smaller States were deemed essentially to depend." – George Washington, letter to the House of Representatives, Philadelphia, March 30, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:4

Letter to Tobias Lear – March 30, 1796

"It is the nature of humanity to mourn for the loss of our friends; and the more we loved them, the more poignant is our grief. It is part of the precepts of Religion and Philosophy, to consider the Dispensations of Providence as wise, immutable, uncontrollable; of course, that it is our duty to submit with as little repining, as the sensibility of our natures is capable of to all its decrees. But nature will, notwithstanding, indulge, for a while, its sorrow's. ... To say how much we loved, and esteemed our departed friend [Martha Washington's niece, Fanny Bassett Washington Lear], is unnecessary. She is now no more! but she must be happy, because her virtue has a claim to it." – George Washington, letter to Tobias Lear, Philadelphia, March 30, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:5-6

Letter to farm manager William Pearce – April 4, 1796

"If Mrs. Green and her family are really in distress, afford them some relief; I cannot say to what amount, because that depends upon the nature and extent of it. But in my opinion it had better be in anything than money, for I very strongly suspect that all that has, and perhaps all that will be given to her in that article, is applied more in rigging herself, than in the purchase of real and useful necessaries for her family. To aid her in this way is not my intention, but you will, from enquiry, know what her real situation is, and govern yourself thereby. ... If She cannot support her children she ought to bind them to good Masters and Mistresses, who will learn them Trades and do that justice by them which the Law directs." – George Washington, letter to farm manager William Pearce, April 4, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:13

Letter to Elizabeth Washington Lewis – April 7, 1796

"Harriot [Harriot Washington, an orphaned niece] having very little fortune herself, has no right property to expect a great one in the man she marry's; but if he has not a competency to support her in the way she has lived, in the circle of her friends, she will not find the matrimonial state so comfortable as she may have expected when a family is looking up to her and but scanty means to support it." – George Washington, letter to Elizabeth Washington Lewis, Philadelphia, April 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:15

"I do not wish to thwart Harriots [Harriot Washington, an orphaned niece] inclination if her affects. are placed on Mr. Park and if upon the enquiries I shall make or cause to be made into his family and connexions, there shall be found nothing exceptionable in them; that he is, as you say "very much respected by all his acquaintance, sober, sedate, and attentive to business;" and is moreover in good business; I shall throw no impedimt. in the way of their Marriage: altho' I should have preferred, if a good match had not offer'd in the meanwhile that she shd. have remained single until I was once more settled at Mt. Vernon and she a resident there which, if life is spared to us, will certainly happen to me in ten or eleven Months; because then she would have been in the way of seeing much company, and would have had a much fairer prospect of matching respectably than with one who is little known, and of whose circumstances few or none can know much about." – George Washington, letter to Elizabeth Washington Lewis, Philadelphia, April 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:15

Letter to Burwell Bassett – April 24, 1796

"With you, I sincerely regret the death of your amiable Sister [Frances Bassett Washington Lear]; but as it is one of those events which is dispensed by an All-wise and uncontrollable Providence; and as I believe no person could be better prepared to meet it, it is the duty of her relatives to submit, with as little repining as the Sensibility of our Natures is capable of." – George Washington, letter to Burwell Bassett, Philadelphia, April 24, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:26-27

Letter to Edward Carrington – May 1, 1796

"Whatever my own opinion may be on this, or any other subject, interesting to the Community at large, it always has been, and will continue to be, my earnest desire to learn, and to comply, as far as is consistent, with the public sentiment; but it is on great occasions only, and after time has been given for cool and deliberate reflection, that the real voice of the people can be known." – George Washington, letter to Edward Carrington, Philadelphia, May 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:31

"[F]or will any one suppose, that they who framed, or those who adopted, that instrument ever intended to give the power to the President and Senate to make treaties, and, declaring that when made and ratified they should be the supreme law of the land, would in the same breath place it in the powers of the House of Representatives to fix their vote on them; unless apparent marks of fraud or corruption (which in equity would set aside any contract) accompanied the measure, or such striking evidence of national injury attended their adoption, as to make a war or any other evil preferable? Every unbiassed mind will answer in the negative." – George Washington, letter to Edward Carrington, Philadelphia, May 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:32

Letter to John Jay – May 8, 1796

"I am Sure the Mass of Citizens in these United States mean well, and I firmly believe they will always act well, whenever they can obtain a right understanding of matters; but in some parts of the Union, where the sentiments of their delegates and leaders are adverse to the Govent. and great pains are taken to inculcate a belief that their rights are assailed, and their liberties endangered, it is

not easy to accomplish this; especially, as is the case invariably, when the Inventors, and abettors of pernicious measures use infinitely more industry in disseminating the poison, than the well disposed part of the Community to furnish the antidote. To this source all our discontents may be traced and from it our embarrassments proceed. Hence serious misfortunes originating in misrepresentation frequently flow and spread before they can be dissipated by truth." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, Philadelphia, May 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:36

"Serious misfortunes originating in misrepresentation, frequently flow and spread before they can be dissipated by truth." – George Washington, letter to John Jay, May 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:37

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – May 8, 1796

"We are an Independent Nation, and act for ourselves. Having fulfilled, and being willing to fulfil, (as far as we are able) our engagements with other Nations, and having decided on, and strictly observed a Neutral conduct towards the Belligerent Powers, from an unwillingness to involve ourselves in War. We will not be dictated to by the Politics of any Nation under Heaven, farther than Treaties require of us." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:40

"But if we are to be told by a foreign power...what we shall do, and what we shall not do, we have independence yet to seek, and have contended hitherto for very little." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, May 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:40

Letter to the Emperor of Germany – May 15, 1796

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask what under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the Basis of sound Policy and durable Glory. ... May the almighty and merciful Sovereign of the universe keep your Majesty under his protection and guidance." – George Washington, letter to the Emperor of Germany, Philadelphia, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:45

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – May 15, 1796

"My wish is, that the whole may appear in a plain stile; and be handed to the public in an honest; unaffected; simple garb." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:49

"My object has been, and must continue to be, to avoid personalities; allusions to particular measures, which may appear pointed; and to expressions which could not fail to draw upon me attacks which I should wish to avoid, and might not find agreeable to repel." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:50

First Draft of Farewell Speech – May 15, 1796

"In contemplating the moment at which the curtain is to drop forever on the public scenes of my life, my sensations anticipate and do not permit me to suspend, the deep acknowledgments required by that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred on me, for the distinguished confidence it has reposed in me, and for the opportunities I have thus enjoyed of testifying my inviolable attachment by the most steadfast services which my faculties could render. All the returns I have now to make will be in those vows which I shall carry with me to my retirement and to my grave, that Heaven may continue to favor the people of the United States with the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that their union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution which is the work of their own hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department, may be stamped with wisdom and with virtue; and that this character may be ensured to it, by that watchfulness over public servants and public measures, which on the one hand will be necessary, to prevent or correct a degeneracy; and that forbearance, on the other, from unfounded or indiscriminate jealousies which would deprive the public of the best services, by depriving a conscious integrity of one of the noblest incitements to perform them; that in fine the happiness of the people of America, under the auspices of liberty, may be made compleat, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire them the glorious satisfaction of recommending it to the affection; the praise; and the adoption of every Nation which is yet a stranger to it." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:53-54

"I am persuaded that honesty will forever be found to be the best policy." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:56

"That we may avoid connecting ourselves with the Politics of any Nation, farther than shall be found necessary to regulate our own trade; in order that commerce may be placed upon a stable footing; our merchants know their rights; and the government the ground on which those rights are to be supported." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:56

"That every citizen would take pride in the name of an American, and act as if he felt the importance of the character by considering that we ourselves are now a distinct Nation the dignity of which will be absorbed if not annihilated, if we enlist ourselves (further than our obligations may require) under the banners of any other Nation whatsoever." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:56

"That we may be always prepared for War, but never unsheath the sword except in self defence so long as Justice and our essential rights, and national respectability can be preserved without it; for without the gift of prophecy, it may safely be pronounced, that if this country can remain in peace 20 years longer: and I devoutly pray that it may do so to the end of time; such in all probability will be its population, riches, and resources, when combined with its peculiarly happy and remote Situation from the other quarters of the globe, as to bid defiance, in a just cause, to any earthly power whatsoever." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:57

"That our Union may be as lasting as time; for while we are encircled in one band, we shall possess the strength of a Giant and there will be none who can make us afraid. Divide, and we shall become weak; a prey to foreign Intriguers and internal discord; and shall be as miserable and contemptible as we are now enviable and happy." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:58

"That the several departments of Government may be preserved in their utmost Constitutional purity, without any attempt of one to encroach on the rights or privileges of another; that the Genl and State governmts may move in their propr Orbits; And that the authorities of our own constituting may be respected by ourselves as the most certain means of having them respected by foreigners." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:58

"If public servants, in the exercise of their official duties are found incompetent or pursuing wrong courses discontinue them. If they are guilty of mal-practices in office, let them be more ex[em]plarily punished; in both cases the Constitution and Laws have made provision, but do not withdraw your confidence from them, the best incentive to a faithful discharge of their duty, without just cause; nor infer, because measures of a complicated nature, which time, opportunity and close investigation alone can penetrate, and for these reasons are not easily comprehended by those who do not possess the means, that it necessarily follows .they must be wrong." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:58

"As this Address, Fellow citizens will be the last I shall ever make you, and as some of the Gazettes of the United States have teemed with all the Invective that disappointment, ignorance of facts, and malicious falsehoods could invent, to misrepresent my politics and affections; to wound my reputation and feelings; and to weaken, if not entirely destroy the confidence you had been pleased to repose in me; it might be expected at the parting scene of my public life that I should take some notice of such virulent abuse. But, as heretofore, I shall pass them over in utter silence; never having myself, nor by any other with my participation or knowledge, written, or published a scrap in answer to any of them. My politicks have been unconcealed; plain and direct." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:59

"The Acts of my Administration are on Record. By these, which will not change with circumstances, nor admit of different interpretations, I expect to be judged. If they will not acquit me, in your estimation, it will be a source of regret; but I shall hope notwithstanding, as I did not seek the Office with which you have honored me, that charity may throw her mantle over my want of abilities to do better; that the gray hairs of a man who has, excepting the interval between the close of the Revolutionary War, and the organization of the new governmt. either in a civil, or military character, spent five and forty years." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:59-60

"To err, is the lot of humanity, and never for a moment, have I ever had the presumption to suppose that I had not a full proportion of it. Infallibility not being the attribute of Man, wt ought to be cautious in censuring the opinions and conduct of one another. To avoid intentional error in my public conduct, has been my constant endeavor." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:60

"I feel proud in having it in my power to do so with truth, that it was not from ambitious views; it was not from ignorance of the hazard to which I knew I was exposing my reputation; it was not from an expectation of pecuniary compensation, that I have yielded to the calls of my country; and that, if my country has derived no benefit from my services, my fortune, in a pecuniary point of view, has received no augmentation from my country. But in delivering this last sentiment, let me be unequivocally understood as not intending to express any discontent on my part, or to imply any reproach on my country on that account." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:60-61

"I retire from the Chair of government no otherwise benefitted in this particular than what you have all experienced from the increased value of property, flowing from the Peace and prosperity with which our country has been blessed amidst tumults which have harrassed and involved other countries in all the horrors of War. I leave you with undefiled hands, an uncorrupted heart, and with ardent vows to heaven for the welfare and happiness of that country in which I and my forefathers to the third or fourth progenitor drew our first breath." – George Washington, first draft of Farewell Address enclosed to Alexander Hamilton, May 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:61

"From the Office of State you will receive every thing that relates to business; and the gazettes, which I presume accompany the dispatches, will bring you pretty well acquainted with the state of politics and of parties in this country; and show you in what manner I am attacked for a steady opposition to every measure which has a tendency to disturb the peace and tranquility of it. But these attacks, unjust and unpleasant as they are, will occasion no change in my conduct; nor will they work any other effect in my mind, than to increase the anxious desire which has long possessed my breast, to enjoy in the shades of retirement the consolation of having rendered my Country every service my abilities were competent to, uninfluenced by pecuniary or ambitious considerations as they respected myself, and without any attempt to provide for my friends farther than their merits, abstractedly, entitle them to; nor an attempt in any instance to bring a relation of mine into Office. Maliginity therefore may dart her shafts; but no earthly power can deprive me of the consolation of knowing that I have not in the course of my administration been guilty of a wilful error, however numerous they may have been from other causes." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Philadelphia, June 12, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:91

Letter to Robert Lewis – June 26, 1796

"I am sorry to hear of the death of Mrs. Haney; and will very cheerfully receive her daughter the moment I get settled at this place; sooner it would be impossible; because this house will be, as it has been, empty from the time we shall quit it in October, until my final establishment in the Spring. Such necessities as she needs in the meantime may, however, be furnished her at my expence, and if it is inconvenient for you to retain her in your own house, let her be boarded in some respectable family, where her morals and good behaviour will be attended to; at my expence also. Let her want for nothing that is decent and proper; and if she remains in your family, I wish for the Girls sake, as well as for the use she may be of to your Aunt when she comes here; that Mrs. Lewis would keep her industriously employed, always, and instructed in the care, and oeconomy of housekeeping." – George Washington, letter to Robert Lewis, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:100-101

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – June 26, 1796

"[H]aving no other wish than to promote the true and permanent interests of this country, I am anxious, always, to compare the opinions of those in whom I confide with one another; and those again (without being bound by them) with my own, that I may extract all the good I can." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:103

Letter to Thomas Jefferson – July 6, 1796

"I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics, or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no party man myself, and the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, Mount Vernon, July 6, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:119

"[U]ntil within the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would or even could go the length I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that, while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth, and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and, to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side *only* of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Jefferson, July 6, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:120

Letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney – July 8, 1796

"It is a fact too notorious to be denied that the greatest embarrassments under which the administration of this government labors, proceed from the counteraction of people among ourselves, who are more disposed to promote the views of another nation, than to establish a national character of their own; and that unless the virtuous and independent men of this country will come forward, it is not difficult to predict the consequences." – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, July 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:175

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – July 13, 1796

"[L]et me, in a friendly way, impress the following maxims upon the Executive Officers. In all important matters, to deliberate maturely, but to execute promptly and vigorously. And not to put things off until the Morrow which can be done, and require to be done, to day. Without an adherence to these rules, business never will be well done, or done in an easy manner; but will always be in arrear, with one thing treading upon the heels of another." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 13, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:138

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – August 1, 1796

"Good measures should always be executed as soon as they are conceived and circumstances will permit." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, August 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:161

Letter to Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt – August 8, 1796

"[M]en in responsible situations cannot, like those in private life, be governed solely by the dictates of their own inclinations, or by such motives as can only affect themselves." – George Washington, letter to Duc de la Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, Mount Vernon, August 8, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:167

Letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinkney – August 10, 1796

"With sincere pleasure I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th Ulto; learning by it that you may be so soon expected with your lady in Phila. to proceed on the Mission to Fre. ... If this letter should find you in Charleston, it is intended to express A regret that my original letters had not been received by you; and to ask, if there has been any miscarriage of a Mail in the Southern quarter; aiming thereby to come at some clue to the discovery of this accident. The sum sent was three hundred dollars in 3 Bank notes of Columbia." – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinkney, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:175-176

Letter to James Monroe – August 25, 1796

"My conduct in public and private life, as it relates to the important struggle in which the latter nation is engaged, has been uniform from the commencement of it, and may be summed up in a few words; that I have always wished well to the French revolution; that I have always given it as my decided opinion that no nation had a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that everyone had a right to form and adopt whatever government they like best to live under themselves, and that if this country could, consistently with its engagements, maintain a strict neutrality and thereby preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration that ought to actuate a people situated and circumstanced as we are, already deeply in debt, and in a convalescent state from the struggle we have been engaged in ourselves." – George Washington, letter to James Monroe, August 25, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:189

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – August 25, 1796

"I have given the Paper herewith enclosed, several serious and attentive readings; and prefer it greatly to the other draughts, being more copious on material points; more dignified on the whole; and with less egotism. Of course less exposed to criticism, and better calculated to meet the eye of discerning readers (foreigners particularly, whose curiosity I have little doubt will lead them to inspect it attentively and to pronounce their opinions on the performance)." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, August 25, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:190

"[A]s the Address was designed in a more especial manner for the Yeomanry of this Country I conceived it was proper they should be informed of the object of that abuse; the silence with which it had been treated; and the consequences which would naturally flow from such unceasing and virulent attempts to destroy all confidence in the Executive part of the Government; and that it was best to do it in language that was plain and intelligible to their understandings." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, August 25, 1796 Fitzpatrick 35:190-191

Talk to the Cherokee Nation – August 29, 1796

"The wise men of the United States meet together once a year, to consider what will be for the good of all their people. The wise men of each separate state also meet together once or twice every year, to consult and do what is good for the people of their respective states. I have thought that a meeting of your wise men once or twice a year would be alike useful to you. Every town might send one or two of its wisest counsellors to talk together on the affairs of your nation, and to recommend to your people whatever they should think would be serviceable." – George Washington, talk to the Cherokee Nation, City of Philadelphia, August 29, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:198

Letter to Alexander Hamilton – September 1, 1796

"Education generally [is] one of the surest means of enlightening and givg. just ways of thinkg to our Citizens." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, September 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:199

"[T]hat which would render it of the highest importance, in my opinion, is, that the Juvenal period of life, when friendships are formed, and habits established that will stick by one; the youth, or young men from different parts of the United States would be assembled together, and would by degrees discover that there was not that cause for those jealousies and prejudices which one part

of the Union had imbibed against another part: of course, sentiments of more liberality in the general policy of the Country would result from it. What, but the mixing of people from different parts of the United States during the War rubbed off these impressions? A century in the ordinary intercourse, would not have accomplished what the Seven years association in Arms did: but that ceasing, prejudices are beginning to revive again, and never will be eradicated so effectually by any other means as the intimate intercourse of characters in early life, who, in all probability, will be at the head of the councils of this country in a more advanced stage of it." – George Washington, letter to Alexander Hamilton, Philadelphia, September 1, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:199

Farewell Address – September 17, 1796

"The period for a new election of a Citizen, to Administer the Executive government of the United States, being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, 85 it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:214

"In the discharge of this trust I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed toward the organization and administration of the Government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:214

"In looking forward to the moment, which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude wch. I owe to my beloved country, for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that, under circumstances in which the Passions agitated in every direction were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of Success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your Union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its Administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and Virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:217-218

"Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:218

"The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad, of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:218

"[I]t is of definite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in the American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:219

"Citizens by birth or choice of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same Religion, Manners, Habits and political Principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together. The independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint councils, and joint efforts; of common dangers, sufferings and successes." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:219-220

"[E]very portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the Union of the whole." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:220

"The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal Laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of Maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South in the same Intercourse, benefitting by the Agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the National navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a Maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future Maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of Interest as one Nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign Power, must be intrinsically precarious." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:220

"While then every part of our Country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined in the united mass of means and efforts cannot fail to find greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their Peace by foreign Nations; and, what is of inestimable value! they must derive from Union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries, not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:221

"Hence likewise they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown Military establishments, which under any form of Government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to Republican Liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:221-222

"Is there a doubt, whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. 26 We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective Sub divisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. 'Tis well worth a fair and full experiment 27 With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, 28 affecting all parts of our country, 29 while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason, 30 to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:222

"[D]esigning men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings, which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those, who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:223

"To the efficacy and permanency of Your Union, a Government for the whole is indispensable. No Alliances however strict between the parts can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all Alliances in all times have experienced." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:224

"This Government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:224

"The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their Constitutions of Government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, 'till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole People, is sacredly obligatory upon all." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:224

"The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:224

"All obstructions to the execution of the Laws, all combinations and Associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, controul counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the Constituted authorities are destructive of this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put in the place of the delegated will of the Nation, the will of a party; often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the Community; and,

according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the Mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common councils and modified by mutual interests." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:224

"However combinations or Associations...may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:225

"Towards the preservation of your Government and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles however specious the pretexts. one method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:225

"In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of Governments, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing Constitution of a country; that facility in changes upon the credit of mere hypotheses and opinion exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypotheses and opinion: and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a Government of as much vigour as is consistent with the perfect security of Liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a Government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest Guardian." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:225-226

"It is indeed little else than a name, where the Government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the Society within the limits prescribed by the laws and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:226

"I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the state, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:226

"This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human Mind. It exists under different shapes in all Governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness and is truly their worst enemy." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:226

"The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of Public Liberty." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:226

"The common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. ... It serves always to distract the Public Councils, and enfeeble the Public Administration. It agitates the Community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:227

"It serves always to distract the Public Councils and enfeeble the Public administration. It agitates the Community with ill founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and and [sic] the will of one country, are subjected to the policy and will of another." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:227

"There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty. This within certain limits is probably true, and in Governments of a Monarchical cast Patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with layout, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched; it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming it should

consume." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:228

"A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 19, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:228

"It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free Country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective Constitutional Spheres; avoiding in the exercise of the Powers of one department to encroach upon another." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:228

"The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power and proneness to abuse it which predominates in the human heart is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:228

"The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power; by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the Guardian of the Public Weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:228

"If in the opinion of the People, the distribution or modification of the Constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:229

"The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:229

"Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, Religion and Morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of Patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of Men and Citizens. The mere Politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and public felicity." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:229

"Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice?" – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:229

"[L]et us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:229

"'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free Government. Who that is a sincere friend to it, can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:230

"Promote then as an object of primary importance, Institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:230

"As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible: avoiding occasions of expence by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expence, but by vigorous exertions in time of Peace to discharge the Debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your Representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be Revenue; that to have Revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the Conduct of the Government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for

obtaining Revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:230

"No taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:230

"Observe good faith and justice towards all Nations. Cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be that good policy does not equally enjoin it?" – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:231

"It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and, at no distant period, a great Nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence." – George Washington, Farewell Address, Sept. 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:231

"Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a Nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human Nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?" – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:231

"[N]othing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another a habitual hatred or a habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:231

"So likewise, a passionate attachment of one Nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and Wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification: It leads also to concessions to the favourite Nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the Nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom eq. privileges are withheld." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:232

"Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence, (I conjure you to believe me fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of Republican Government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:233

"Real Patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:233

"The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little political connection as possible. Here let us stop." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:233

"Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence therefore it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves, by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities" – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:234

"Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:234

"Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European Ambition, Rivalship, Interest, Humour or Caprice?" – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:234

"Tis our true policy to steer clear of permanent Alliances, with any portion of the foreign world." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:234

"I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is the best policy." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:235

"Harmony, liberal intercourse with all Nations, are recommended by policy, humanity and interest. But even our Commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and deversifying by gentle means the streams of Commerce, but forcing nothing, establishing with Powers so disposed; in order to give to trade a stable course, to define the rights of our Merchants, and to enable the Government to support them; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796, originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:235

"Tis folly in one Nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its Independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:235

"There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from Nation to Nation. 'Tis an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:235-236

"In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But, if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:236

"How far in the discharge of my Official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public Records and other evidences of my conduct must Witness to You and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick Vol. 35:236

"The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations. ... The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:237

"Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope, that my Country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:237

"Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a Man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several Generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow Citizens, the benign influence of good Laws under a free Government, the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers." – George Washington, Farewell Address, September 17, 1796; originally published in American Daily Advertiser on September 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:238

Letter to the Inhabitants of Shepherds Town – October 12, 1796

"That Beneficent Providence, which, hitherto, has preserved us in Peace, and increased our prosperity, will not, I trust, withdraw its protecting hand; while we, on our part, endeavour to merit a continuance of its favors. ... Equally persuaded am I, that no inconvenience will result from my retreat to the walks of private life. The good sense of my Countrymen will always discern, and can never be at a loss to choose, a fit character to administer the Executive Government of these United States. ... If it has been my good fortune, through the course of my Civil and Military employment, to have met the approbation of my Countrymen, my wishes will be consummated; and I shall have found the only reward I ever had in view." – George Washington, letter to the Inhabitants of

Letter to Landon Carter – October 17, 1796

"A few months more will put an end to my political existence and place me in the shades of Mount Vernon under my Vine and Fig Tree; where at all times I should be glad to see you. ... It is true (as you have heard) that to be a cultivator of Land has been my favorite amusement; but it is equally true that I have made very little proficiency in acquiring knowledge either in the principles or practice of Husbandry. My employments through life, have been so diversified, my absences from home have been so frequent, and so long at a time, as to have prevented me from bestowing the attention, and from making the experiments which are necessary to establish facts in the Science of Agriculture. And now, though I may amuse myself in that way for the short time I may remain on this Theatre, it is too late in the day for me to commence a scientific course of experiments." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Mount Vernon, October 17, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:246

Letter to George Washington Parke Custis – November 15, 1796

"[L]et your promotion result from your own application, and from intrinsic merit, not from the labors of others. The last would prove fallacious, and expose you to the reproach of the daw in borrowed feathers." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, November 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:282

"Never let an indigent person ask, without receiving something, if you have the means; always recollecting in what light the widow's mite was viewed." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, November 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:283

Letter to George Washington Parke Custis – November 28, 1796

"The assurances you give me of applying diligently to your studies, and fulfilling those obligations which are enjoined by your Creator and due to his creatures, are highly pleasing and satisfactory to me. I rejoice in it on two accounts; first, as it is the sure means of laying the foundation of your own happiness, and rendering you, if it should please God to spare your life, a useful member of society hereafter; and secondly, that I may, if I live to enjoy the pleasure, reflect that I have been, in some degree, instrumental in effecting these purposes." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, November 28, 179; Fitzpatrick 35:294-295

"T is well to be on good terms with all your fellow-students, and I am pleased to hear you are so, but while a courteous behavior is due to all, select the most deserving only for your friendships, and before this becomes intimate, weigh their dispositions and character well. True friendship is a plant of slow growth; to be sincere, there must be a congeniality of temper and pursuits. Virtue and vice can not be allied; nor can idleness and industry; of course, if you resolve to adhere to the two former of these extremes, an intimacy with those who incline to the latter of them, would be extremely embarrassing to you; it would be a stumbling block in your way; and act like a millstone hung to your neck, for it is the nature of idleness and vice to obtain as many votaries as they can." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, November 28, 179; Fitzpatrick 35:295-296

"I would guard you, too, against imbibing hasty and unfavorable impressions of any one. Let your judgment always balance well before you decide; and even then, where there is no occasion for expressing an opinion, it is best to be silent, for there is nothing more certain than that it is at all times more easy to make enemies than friends. And besides, to speak evil of any one, unless there is unequivocal proofs of their deserving it, is an injury for which there is no adequate reparation." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, November 28, 179; Fitzpatrick 35:296

"To speak evil of any one, unless there is unequivocal proofs of their deserving it, is an injury for which there is no adequate reparation." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, November 28, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:296

"To acknowledge the receipt of letters is always proper, to remove doubts of their miscarriage." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, November 28, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:296

Address to The Chiefs and Warriors, Representatives of Indian Tribes – November 29, 1796

"There are among the Indians as among the Whites, Individuals who will steal their Neighbour's property, when they find the opportunity, in preference to acquiring property to themselves by honest means. Bad White Men for example, will go into the Indian Country, and steal Horses; and bad Indians in like manner will go into the Settlement of the Whites, and steal their horses. If the Indian Nations wish to deserve the friendship of the United States, and to prevent the white Settlers on the frontiers from retaliation on their property, the Chiefs and Warriors of the respective Nations must use their endeavours to punish such Offenders, and restore to the Whites, or to some Officers of the United States, the property they may have stolen. As for the Government, it will use it's utmost endeavours to restore to every Indian any property of his which may have been stolen by Citizens of the United States, and will moreover punish those who violate the laws that have been made to prevent such practices, whenever the fact can be proved upon them." – George Washington, address to The Chiefs and Warriors, Representatives of the Wyandots, Delawares, Shawanoes, Ottawas,

Eighth Annual Message to Congress – December 7, 1796

"To an active external Commerce, the protection of a Naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to Wars in which a State itself is a party." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:314

"[I]t is in our own experience, that the most sincere neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of nations at war. To secure respect to a neutral flag, requires a naval force, organized and ready to vindicate it from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to War, by discouraging belligerent Powers from committing such violations of the rights of the Neutral party, as may first or last, leave no other option." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:314

"These considerations invite the United States, to look to the means, and to set about the gradual creation of a Navy. The increasing progress of their Navigation, promises them, at no distant period, the requisite supply of Seamen; and their means, in other respects, favour the undertaking. It is an encouragement, likewise, that their particular situation, will give weight and influence to a moderate Naval force in their hands." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:314

"As a general rule, manufactures on public accounts are inexpedient. But, where the state of things in a country leaves little hope, that certain branches of manufacture will, for a great length of time, obtain; when these are of a nature essential to the furnishing and equipping of the public force in time of war; are not establishments for procuring them on public account, to the extent of the ordinary demand for the public service, recommended by strong considerations of national policy, as an exception to the general rule? Ought our country to remain in such cases dependent on foreign supply, precarious, because liable to be interrupted? If the necessary articles should, in this mode, cost more in time of peace, will not the security and independence, thence arising, form an ample compensation? Establishments of this sort, commensurate only with the calls of the public service in time of peace, will, in time of war, easily be extended in proportion to the exigencies of the government; and may even, perhaps, be made to yield a surplus for the supply of our citizens at large, so as to mitigate the privations from the interruption of their trade." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:315

"It will not be doubted, that with reference either to individual, or National Welfare, Agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as Nations advance in population, and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent; and renders the cultivation of the Soil more and more, an object of public patronage." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:315

"I have heretofore proposed to the consideration of Congress, the expediency of establishing a National University; and also a Military Academy. The desirableness of both these Institutions, has so constantly increased with every new view I have taken of the subject, that I cannot omit the opportunity of once for all, recalling your attention to them. ... The Assembly to which I address myself, is too enlightened not to be fully sensible how much a flourishing state of the Arts and Sciences, contributes to National prosperity and reputation. True it is, that our Country, much to its honor, contains many Seminaries of learning highly respectable and useful; but the funds upon which they rest, are too narrow, to command the ablest Professors, in the different departments of liberal knowledge, for the Institution contemplated, though they would be excellent auxiliaries." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:316

"Amongst the motives to such an institution, the assimilation of the principles, opinions, and manners, of our countrymen, by the common education of a portion of our youth from every quarter, well deserves attention. The more homogeneous our citizens can be made in these particulars, the greater will be our prospect of permanent union; and a primary object of such a national institution should be, the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important, and what duty more pressing on its legislature, than to patronize a plan for communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?" – George Washington, Eighth Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:316

"The Institution of a Military Academy, is...recommended by cogent reasons. However pacific the general policy of a Nation may be, it ought never to be without an adequate stock of Military knowledge for emergencies. The first would impair the energy of its character, and both would hazard its safety, or expose it to greater evils when War could not be avoided. Besides that War, might often, not depend upon its own choice. In proportion, as the observance of pacific maxims, might exempt a Nation from the necessity of practising the rules of the Military Art, ought to be its care in preserving, and transmitting by proper establishments, the knowledge of that Art. Whatever argument may be drawn from particular examples, superficially viewed, a thorough examination of the subject will evince, that the Art of War, is at once comprehensive and complicated; that it demands much previous study; and that the possession of it, in its most improved and perfect state, is always of great moment to the security of a Nation. This, therefore, ought to be a serious care of every Government: and for this purpose, an Academy, where a regular course of Instruction is given, is an obvious expedient, which different Nations have successfully employed." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:317

"The compensations to the Officers of the United States, in various instances, and in none more than in respect to the most important stations, appear to call for Legislative revision. The consequences of a defective provision, are of serious import to the Government. If private wealth, is to supply the defect of public retribution, it will greatly contract the sphere within which, the selection of Characters for Office, is to be made, and will proportionally diminish the probability of a choice of Men, able, as well as upright: Besides that it would be repugnant to the vital principles of our Government, virtually to exclude from public trusts, talents and virtue, unless accompanied by wealth." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:318

"[I]t will afford me, heart felt satisfaction, to concur in such further measures, as will ascertain to our Country the prospect of a speedy extinguishment of the Debt. Posterity may have cause to regret, if, from any motive, intervals of tranquillity are left unimproved for accelerating this valuable end." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:319

"The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the Representatives of the People of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the Administration of the present form of Government commenced; and I cannot omit the occasion, to congratulate you and my Country, on the success of the experiment; nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and Sovereign Arbitrator of Nations, that his Providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the People, may be preserved; and that the Government, which they have instituted, for the protection of their liberties, may be perpetual." – George Washington, Eighth Annual Address to Congress, December 7, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:319

Speech to the House of Representatives – December 15, 1796

"To a Citizen whose views were unambitious, who preferred the shade and tranquility of private life to the splendour and solicitude of elevated stations, and whom the voice of duty and his country could alone have drawn from his chosen retreat, no reward for his public services can be so grateful as public approbation, accompanied by a consciousness that to render those services useful to that Country has been his single aim: and when this approbation is expressed by the Representatives of a free and enlightened Nation, the reward will admit of no addition." – George Washington, speech to the House of Representatives, December 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:320 Note

"The virtue and wisdom of my Successors, joined with the patriotism and intelligence of the Citizens who compose the other Branches of Government, I firmly trust will lead them to the adoption of measures which by the beneficence of Providence, will give stability to our System of government, add to its success, and secure to ourselves and to posterity that liberty which is to all of us so dear." – George Washington, speech to the House of Representatives, December 15, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:320 Note

Letter to George Washington Parke Custis – December 19, 1796

"Light reading (by this, I mean books of little importance) may amuse for the moment, but leaves nothing solid behind." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, December 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:341

"'Tis to close application and constant perseverance, men of letters and science are indebted for their knowledge and usefulness; and you are now at that period of life (as I have observed to you in a former letter) when these are to be acquired, or lost forever. But as you are well acquainted with my sentiments on this subject, and know how anxious all your friends are to see you enter upon the grand theatre of life, with the advantages of a finished education, a highly cultivated mind, and a proper sense of your duties to God and man, I shall only add one sentiment more before I close this letter (which, as I have others to write, will hardly be in time for the mail), and that is, to pay due respect and obedience to your tutors, and affectionate reverence for the president of the college, whose character merits your highest regards. Let no bad example, for such is to be met in all seminaries, have an improper influence upon your conduct. Let this be such, and let it be your pride, to demean yourself in such a manner to obtain the goodwill of your superiors, and the love of your fellow students." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, Philadelphia, December 19, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:341-342

Letter to Governor John Hawkins Stone – December 23, 1796

"Without assigning to my exertions the extensive influence they are pleased to ascribe to them, I may with great truth say that, the exercise of every faculty I possessed was joined to the efforts of the virtue, talents and valour of my fellow-citizens to effect our Independence: and I concur with the [Maryland] Legislature in repeating, with pride and joy, what will be an everlasting honor to our country, that our revolution was so distinguished for moderation virtue and humanity, as to merit the eulogium they have pronounced of being unsullied with a crime." – George Washington, letter to Governor John Hawkins Stone, Philadelphia, December 23, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:343

"With the same entire devotion to my country, every act of my civil Administration has been aimed to secure to it those advantages which result from a stable and free government; and with gratitude to Heaven, I unite with the Legislature of Maryland in the pleasing reflections, that our country has continued to feel the blessings of peace, liberty and prosperity, whilst Europe and the Indies have been convulsed with the horrors of a dreadful and desolating war. My ardent prayers are offered that those afflicted regions may now speedily see their calamities terminated, and also feel the blessings of returning peace." – George Washington, letter to Governor John Hawkins Stone, Philadelphia, December 23, 1796; Fitzpatrick 35:344

"I shall be pardoned when I add, that conscious integrity has been my unceasing support; and while it gave me confidence in the measures I pursued, the belief of it, by acquiring to me the confidence of my fellow-citizens, ensured the success which they have had. This consciousness will accompany me in my retirement: without it, public applauses could be viewed only as proofs of public error, and felt as the upbraidings of personal demerit." – George Washington, address to the Pennsylvania Senate, January 13, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:366

Letter to the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island – February 1797

"Supported by the patriotic exertions and pleasing approbation of my fellow-citizens, for a long series of years, in important, critical, and highly interesting situations, I have discharged my duties with that satisfaction to myself, which could only result from those circumstances. And when, in the decline of life, I gratify the fond wish of my heart in retiring from public labors, and find the language of approbation and fervent prayers for future happiness following that event, my heart expands with gratitude, and my feelings become unutterable." – George Washington, letter to the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island, February 1797; Sparks 12:241

"Although guided by our excellent constitution in the discharge of official duties, and actuated, through the whole course of my public life, solely by a wish to promote the best interests of our country; yet, without the beneficent interposition of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe we could not have reached the distinguished situation which we have attained with such unpremeditated rapidity. To Him, therefore, should we bow with gratitude and reverence, and endeavour to merit a continuance of his special favors." – George Washington, letter to the General Assembly of the State Rhode Island, February 1797; Sparks 12:242

Letter to Delaware Senators and Representatives – February 2, 1797

"If yielding to the calls of my fellow-citizens, I have renounced the ease and enjoyments of private life, to encounter the dangers and difficulties of the first and most arduous employments, it was because the sacrifices, on my part, were by them deemed interesting to their safety and welfare. Animated by such motives, and supported by the general spirit and patriotism of my countrymen, when the objects of my public agency were attained, nought remained to me but to seek again the private station which their partiality and confidence required me for a time to relinquish. In this chosen retirement, the approving voice of my country will ever be a subject of grateful recollection; while I behold its increasing prosperity, under the influence of the same public spirit, energy, justice and moderation, in which its independence, character and credit have been founded. That such may be the fruit of our labours, and such the happy progress of our Republic, is, and ever will be, the object of my ardent wishes." – George Washington, letter to Delaware Senators and Representatives, February 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:382-383

Reply to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives – February 17, 1797

"Though now seeking that repose which retirement and the tranquil pursuit of rural affairs are calculated to afford, and which my time of life requires, the love of my Country will indeed suffer no abatement: its safety and prosperity will be essential to the enjoyment of my remaining years. And I confide in the discernment and patriotism of my fellow Citizens for the choice of wise and virtuous men who will successively administer every branch of the Government in such manner, as under divine providence, to enforce the general happiness." – George Washington, reply to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, February 17, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:392-393

Letter to the Massachusetts Senators – February 24, 1797

"I entertain the pleasing hope, that the intelligence and superior information of my fellow citizens, enabling them to discern their true interests, will lead them to the successive choice of wise and virtuous men to watch over, protect and promote them, who while they pursue those maxims of moderation, equity and prudence, which will entitle our country to perpetual peace, will cultivate that fortitude and dignity of sentiment which are essential to the maintenance of our Liberty and independence." – George Washington, response to the Massachusetts Senators, February 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:398

"Should it please God, according to the prayers of your constituents, to grant me health and long life, my greatest enjoyment will be to behold the prosperity of my country; and the affection and attachment of my fellow citizens, through the whole period of my public employments, will be the subject of my most agreeable recollections: while the belief, which the affecting sentiments of the people of Massachusetts, expressed by their Senate and House of Representatives, with those of my fellow citizens in general, have inspired, that I have been the happy instrument of much good to my country and to mankind, will be a source of unceasing gratitude to Heaven." – George Washington, response to the Massachusetts Senators, February 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:398

Letter to Henry Knox – March 2, 1797

"From the friendship I have always borne you, and from the interest I have ever taken in whatever relates to your prosperity and happiness, I participated in the sorrows which I know you must have felt for your late heavy losses [death of three children]. But is not

for man to scan the wisdom of Providence. The best he can do, is to submit to its decrees. Reason, religion and Philosophy, teaches us to do this, but 'tis time alone that can ameliorate the pangs of humanity, and soften its woes." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Philadelphia, March 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:408-409

"But is not for man to scan the wisdom of Providence. The best he can do, is to submit to its decrees. Reason, religion and Philosophy, teaches us to do this, but 'tis time alone that can ameliorate the pangs of humanity, and soften its woes." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Philadelphia, March 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:409

"To the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do this in peace, is I perceive too much, to be endured by some. To misrepresent my motives; to reprobate my politics; and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects which cannot be relinquished by those who, will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political System. The consolation however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my Country, unequivocally expressed by its Representatives, deprives their sting of its poison, and places in the same point of view both the weakness, and malignity of their efforts." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Philadelphia, March 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:409

"Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet, I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates whom I love, among these, be assured you are one." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Philadelphia, March 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:410

Letter to United Episcopal Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's – March 2, 1797

"To this public testimony of your approbation of my conduct and affection for my person I am not insensible, and your prayers for my present and future happiness merit my warmest acknowledgments. It is with peculiar satisfaction I can say, that, prompted by a high sense of duty in my attendance on public worship, I have been gratified, during my residence among you, by the liberal and interesting discourses which have been delivered in your Churches. ... Believing that that Government alone can be approved by Heaven, which promotes peace and secures protection to its Citizens in every thing that is dear and interesting to them, it has been the great object of my administration to insure those invaluable ends; and when, to a consciousness of the purity of intentions, is added the approbation of my fellow Citizens, I shall experience in my retirement that heartfelt satisfaction which can only be exceeded by the hope of future happiness." – George Washington, address to the Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of the United Episcopal Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's, Philadelphia, March 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:410-411

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull – March 3, 1797

"In all free governments, contention in elections will take place; and, whilst it is confined to our own citizens it is not to be regretted; but severely indeed ought it to be reprobated when occasioned by foreign machinations. I trust however, that the good sense of our Countrymen will guard the public weal against this, and every other innovation; and that, altho we may be a little wrong, now and then, we shall return to the right path, with more avidity." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:412

"I can never believe that Providence, which has guided us so long, and through such a labyrinth, will withdraw its protection at this Crisis." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:412

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering - March 3, 1797

"I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters which first appeared in the year 1777, and were obtruded upon the public as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau, that I had left in the care of my Mulatto servant named Billy, who, it is pretended, was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period when these letters were first printed will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the public mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American Commander in Chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty. Another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character and deceive the people." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:414

"At the time, when these letters first appeared, it was notorious to the army immediately under my command, and particularly to the gentlemen attached to my person, that my Mulatto Man Billy had never been one moment in the power of the enemy. It is also a fact, that no part of my baggage, or any of my attendants, were captured during the whole course of the war. These well-known facts made it unnecessary, during the war, to call the public attention to the forgery, by any express declaration of mine: and a firm reliance on my fellow-citizens, and the abundant proofs they gave of their confidence in me, rendered it alike unnecessary to take any formal notice of the revival of the imposition, during my civil administration." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:415

"I have thought it a duty that I owed to Myself, to my Country and to Truth, now to detail the circumstances above recited; and to add my solemn declaration, that the letters herein described are a base forgery, and that I never saw or heard of them until they appeared in print." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:415

Speech to the Clergy of Different Denominations in Philadelphia – March 3, 1797

"Believing, as I do, that Religion and Morality are the essential pillars of Civil society, I view, with unspeakable pleasure, that harmony and brotherly love which characterizes the Clergy of different denominations, as well in this, as in other parts of the United States; exhibiting to the world a new and interesting spectacle, at once the pride of our Country and the surest basis of universal Harmony. ... That your labours for the good of Mankind may be crowned with success; that your temporal enjoyments may be commensurate with your merits; and that the future reward of good and faithful Servants may be your's, I shall not cease to supplicate the Divine Author of life and felicity." – George Washington, speech to Clergy of different denominations residing in or near the City of Philadelphia, March 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:416-417

Last Public Dinner – March 3, 1797

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man. I do it with sincerity, and wishing you all possible happiness." – George Washington, last public dinner, recollection of Bishop William White, March 3, 1797; "The court circles of the republic; or, The beauties and celebrities of the nation," by Mrs. Elizabeth Fries Ellet, Hartford Publishing Company (1869) p. 40

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SECTION V: Post-Presidential



Portrait of George Washington, painted by Charles Willson Peale, 1795-1800

Letter to Bartholomew Dandridge – March 8, 1797

"Your conduct during a six years residence in my family having been such as to meet my full approbation and believing that a declaration to this effect would be satisfactory to yourself and justice requiring it from me, I make it with pleasure. And in full confidence that those principles of honor, integrity and benevolence which I have reason to believe have hitherto guided your steps will still continue to mark your conduct, I have only to add a wish that you may lose no opportunity of making such advances in useful acquirements, as may benefit yourself, your friends and mankind. And I am led to anticipate an accomplishment of this wish when I consider the manner in which you have hitherto improved such occasions as have offered themselves to you." – George Washington, letter to Bartholomew Dandridge, Philadelphia, March 8, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:421

"The career of life on which you are now entering will present new Scenes and frequent opportunities for the improvement of a mind desirous of obtaining useful knowledge; but I am sure you will never forget, that, without Virtue and without integrity the finest talents of the most brilliant accomplishments can never gain the respect or conciliate the esteem of the truly valuable part of mankind." – George Washington, letter to Bartholomew Dandridge, Philadelphia, March 8, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:422

Address to Citizens of Alexandria and Its Neighborhood – March 23, 1797

"No wish in my retirement can exceed that of seeing our Country happy; and I can entertain no doubt of its being so, if all of us act the part of good Citizens; contributing our best endeavours to maintain the Constitution, support the laws, and guard our Independence against all assaults from whatsoever quarter they may come. clouds may and doubtless often will in the vicissitudes of events, hover over our political concerns, but a steady adherence to these principles will not only dispel them but render our prospects the brighter by such temporary obscurities." – George Washington, address to the Citizens of Alexandria and Its Neighborhood, March 23, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:423

"For the affectionate, and flattering manner in which you have been pleased to express your regrets on the occasion of my relinquishing public employment, and for your congratulations on my return to my long forsaken residence at Mr. Vernon, I pray you to accept my warmest acknowledgments, and the assurances of the additional pleasure I shall derive from the prospect of spending the remainder of my days in ease and tranquility among you; employed in rural pursuits and in the exercise of Domestic and other duties. ... For the prosperity of the Town and neighbourhood, and for your individual happiness, I offer my best vows." – George Washington, address to the Citizens of Alexandria and Its Neighborhood, March 23, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:423

Address to the Brothers of Ancient York Masons Lodge No. 22 – April 1, 1797

"While my heart acknowledges with Brotherly Love, your affectionate congratulations on my retirement from the arduous toils of past years, my gratitude is no less excited by your kind wishes for my future happiness. ... If it has pleased the Supreme Architect of the Universe to make me an humble instrument to promote the welfare and happiness of my fellow men, my exertions have been abundantly recompensed by the kind partiality with which they have been received; and the assurance you give me of your belief that I have acted upon the Square in my public Capacity, will be among my principle enjoyments in this Terrestrial Lodge." – George Washington, address to the Brothers of Ancient York Masons Lodge No. 22, April 1, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:426-427

Address to the General Assembly of Rhode Island – April 3, 1797

"Although guided by our excellent constitution, in the discharge of official duties, and actuated through the whole course of my public life, solely by a wish to promote the best interests of our Country; yet, without the beneficent [sic] interposition of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe we could not have reached the distinguished situation which we have attained with such unprecedented rapidity. To him, therefore, should we bow with gratitude and reverence, and endeavour to merit a continuance of his special favors." – George Washington, address to the General Assembly of Rhode Island, April 3, 1797; Maxims p. 362

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – April 3, 1797

"We get so many details in the Gazettes, and of such different complexions that it is impossible to know what credence to give to any of them." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:430

"The attentions we met with on our journey were very flattering, and to some whose minds are differently formed from mine would have been highly relished, but I avoided in every instance where I had any previous knowledge of the intention, and cd. by earnest entreaties prevail, all parade, or escorts." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:430

"I find myself in the situation, nearly, of a young beginner; for although I have not houses to build (except one, which I must erect for the accommodation and security of my Military, Civil and private Papers which are voluminous, and may be interestg) yet I have not one or scarcely anything else about me that does not require considerable repairs. In a word I am already surrounded by Joiners, Masons, Painters &ca &ca. and such is my anxiety to get out of their hands, that I have scarcely a room to put a friend into or to set in

myself, without the Music of hammers, or the odoriferous smell of Paint." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, April 3, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:430-431

Letter to Dr. James Anderson – April 7, 1797

"I am once more seated under my own Vine and fig tree, and hope to spend the remainder of my days, which in the ordinary course of things (being in my Sixty sixth year) cannot be many, in peaceful retirement, making political pursuits yield to the more rational amusement of cultivating the Earth." – George Washington, letter to Dr. James Anderson, Mount Vernon, April 7, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:432

Letter to George Lewis – April 9, 1797

"The melancholy of your writing [about the death of his mother, Betty Washington Lewis, who was George Washington's younger sister] has filled me with inexpressible concern. The debt of nature however sooner or later, must be paid by us all, and although the separation from our nearest relatives is a heart rending circumstance, reason, religion and philosophy, teach us to bear it with resignation, while time alone can ameliorate, and soften the pangs we experience at parting. ... It must have been a consoling circumstance to my deceased Sister, that so many of her friends were about her." – George Washington, letter to nephew George Lewis, Mount Vernon, April 9, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:434

Letter to Masons of Massachusetts – April 24, 1797

"In that retirement which declining years induced me to seek, and which repose, to a mind long employed in public concerns, rendered necessary, my wishes that bounteous Providence will continue to bless and preserve our country in Peace, and in the prosperity it has enjoyed, will be warm and sincere; And my attachment to the Society of which we are members will dispose me, always, to contribute my best endeavours to promote the honor and interest of the Craft." – George Washington, letter to the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mount Vernon, April 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:439

"For the Prayer you offer in my behalf I entreat you to accept the thanks of a grateful heart; with the assurance of fraternal regard and best wishes for the honor, happiness and prosperity of all the Members of the Grand-lodge of Massachusetts." – George Washington, letter to the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Mount Vernon, April 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35, 440

Letter to Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott – May 15, 1797

"For myself, having turned aside from the broad walks of political, into the narrow paths of private life I shall leave it with those whose duty it is, to consider subjects of this sort; and (as every good citizen ought to do) conform to whatsoever the ruling Powers shall decide. To make, and sell a little flour annually; to repair houses (going fast to ruin), to build one for the security of my Papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in Agricultural and rural pursuits will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial Globe. If to these I could now and then meet the friends I esteem, it would fill the measure and add zest to my enjoyments but if ever this happens it must be under my own Vine and Fig tree as I do not think it probable that I shall go beyond the radius of 20 miles from them." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott, Mount Vernon, May 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:447

"[T]here is so little dependence on Newspaper publications which take whatever complexion the Editors please to give them, that persons at a distance, and who have no other means of information, are oftentimes at a loss to form an opinion on the most important occurrences." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott, Mount Vernon, May 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:447

Letter to William Heath – May 20, 1797

"No policy, in my opinion, can be more clearly demonstrated, than that we should do justice to all but have no political connexions with any of the European Powers, beyond those which result from and serve to regulate our Commerce with them." – George Washington, letter to William Heath, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:449

"Our own experience (if it has not already had this effect) will soon convince us that disinterested favours, or friendship from any Nation whatever, is too novel to be calculated on; and there will always be found a wide difference between the words and actions of any of them." – George Washington, letter to William Heath, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:449

It gives me great pleasure to hear from yourself, that you are writing Memoirs 77 of those transactions which passed under your notice during the Revolution war. Having always understood, that you were exact and copious in noting occurrences at the time they happened, a work of this kind will, from the candour and ability with which I am persuaded they were taken, be uncommonly correct

and interesting. Whether you mean to publish them at your own expence, or by Subscription, is not intimated in yr. letter. If the latter, I pray you to consider me as a subscriber. and in any event as a purchaser of your production. That you may enjoy health to complete the work to your entire satisfaction, I devoutly pray, and that you may live afterwards to hear it applauded (as I doubt not it will be) I as sincerely wish. If I should live to see it published, I shall read it with great avidity." – George Washington, letter to William Heath, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:449-450

"Retired from noise myself, and the responsibility attached to public employment my hours will glide smoothly on. My best wishes however for the prosperity of our country will always have the first place in my affections." – George Washington, letter to William Heath, Mount Vernon, May 20, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:450

Letter to Thomas Pinckney – May 28, 1797

"The Presidents Speech will, I conceive, draw forth mediately or immediately, an expression of the Public mind; and as it is the right of the People that this should be carried into effect, their sentiments ought to be unequivocally known, that the principles on which the government has acted, and which from the Presidents Speech, are likely to be continued, may either be changed, or the opposition that is endeavouring to embarrass every measure of the Executive, may meet effectual discountenance. Things cannot, ought not to remain any longer in their present disagreeable state. Nor should the idea that the Government and the People have different views, be suffered any longer to prevail, at home or abroad; for it is not only injurious to us, but disgraceful also, that a government constituted as ours is, should be Administered contrary to their Interest and will, if the fact be so." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Pinckney, Mount Vernon, May 28, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:453

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – May 29, 1797

"I have nothing to say, that could either inform or amuse a Secretary of War in Philadelphia. ... I might tell him that I begin my diurnal course with the Sun; that if my hirelings are not in their places at that time I send them messages expressive of my sorrow for their indisposition; then having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further; and the more they are probed, the deeper I find the wounds are which my buildings have sustained by an absence and neglect of eight years; by the time I have accomplished these matters, breakfast (a little after seven O'clock, about the time I presume you are taking leave of Mrs. McHenry) is ready. This over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner; at which I rarely miss seeing strange faces; come, as they say, out of respect to me. Pray, would not the word curiosity answer as well? and how different this, from having a few social friends at a cheerful board? The usual time of sitting at Table; a walk, and Tea, brings me within the dawn of Candlelight; previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve, that, as soon as the glimmering taper, supplies the place of the great luminary, I will retire to my writing Table and acknowledge the letters I have received; but when the lights are brought, I feel tired, and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well: the next comes and with it the same causes for postponement, and effect, and so on. ... This will account for your letter remaining so long unacknowledged; and having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year; and I am persuaded you will not require a second edition of it: but it may strike you, that in this detail no mention is made of any portion of time allotted for reading; the remark would be just, for I have not looked into a book since I came home, nor shall I be able to do it until I have discharged my Workmen; probably not before the nights grow longer; when possibly, I may be looking in doomsday book." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, May 29, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:455

Letter to Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott – May 29, 1797

"The President has, in my opinion, placed matters upon their true ground in his speech to Congress. The crisis calls for an unequivocal expression of the public mind, and the Speech will, mediately, or immediately, bring this about. Things ought not, indeed cannot remain longer in their present State; and it is time the People should be thoroughly acquainted with the political Situation of this Country, and the causes which have produced it, that they may either give active and effectual support to those to whom they have entrusted the Administration of the government (if they approve the principles on which they have acted); or sanction the conduct of their opponents, who have endeavoured to bring about a change, by embarrassing all its measures; not even short of foreign means." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott, Mount Vernon, May 29, 1797; Fitzpatrick: 35:457

"With respect to the Nations of Europe, their situation appears so awful, that nothing short of Omnipotence can predict the issue, although every humane mind must feel for the miseries they endure. Our course is plain; they who run may read it. There is so bewildered and dark, so entangled and embarrassed, and so obviously under the influence of Intrigue, that one would suppose, if any thing could open the eyes of our misled citizens, the deplorable situation of those people could not fail to accomplish it." – George Washington, letter to Treasury Secretary Oliver Wolcott, Mount Vernon, May 29, 1797; Fitzpatrick: 35:457

Letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinkney – June 24, 1797

"I had left Philadelphia before your letters dated in Paris had been received at the Secretary of States Office, and not having seen Mr. [Peter] Horry yet, I have only such accounts as have been given to the Public, of the treatment you met with from the French Directory. So extraordinary indeed it is, as to require no comment; nor shall I add any thing more on the subject than that your

conduct on the occasion is universally approved: that it deserves to be so, is my decided opinion. ... I had nothing more in view by giving you a genuine copy of the intercepted letter from me to Gouv'r, Morris than to enable you, if a spurious one should be exhibited for insidious purposes, to place the correspondence in its true light. If the matter sleeps, I have no wish to awaken it. Should it, however, be brought before the public, it will prima faciæ carry along with it the mark of private intercourse; but if the case were otherwise, there is no sentiment expressed, that I have a disposition to retract. – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinkney, Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:470

"I am now seated in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree, and altho' I look with regret on many transactions which do not comport with my ideas, I shall, notwithstanding "view them in the calm lights of mild philosophy", persuaded, if any great crisis should occur, to require it, that the good sense and Spirit of the Major part of the people of this country, will direct them properly." – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:471

"The occupation of my time, unimportant indeed to all but myself, is not spent in idleness; for an absence of eight years (except short occasional visits which allowed me no leisure to inspect matters accurately) has so deranged my private concerns, and committed such depredations on my buildings, and all around them, that I have found as much occasion for workmen of various kinds, and as close employment in looking after them as if I had commenced a new establishment altogether." – George Washington, letter to Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, June 24, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:471

Letter to John Quincy Adams – June 25, 1797

"I am now, as you supposed the case would be when you then wrote, seated under my Vine and Fig-tree; where, while I am permitted to enjoy the shade of it, my vows will be continually offered for the welfare and prosperity of our country; and for the support, ease and honor of the Gentleman to whom the Administration of its concerns are entrusted. I have expressed to him my sentiments, and wishes, that you may be induced to continue in the Diplomatic line; and these sentiments and wishes, are the result of the surest conviction of its utility, as it relates to the public interest." – George Washington, letter to John Quincy Adams, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:476

"For the kind expressions you have extended to me, and the approbation of those sentiments, I took the liberty of submitting to my countrymen, in my late Valedictory, I have a grateful sense; and thank you for communicating them, and the approbation of good and Virtuous Men, is the most pleasing reward my mind is susceptible of, for any Service it has been in my power to render my Country." – George Washington, letter to John Quincy Adams, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35,p. 476

Letter to David Humphreys – June 26, 1797

"Presents however, to me, are of all things the most painful; but when I am so well satisfied of the motives which dictated yours, my scruples are removed; and I receive the Buckles (which are indeed very elegant) as a token of your regard and attachment." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:480

"I am clearly in sentiment with you, that every man who is in the vigor of life, ought to serve his country, in whatsoever line it requires, and he is fit for; it was not my intention therefore to persuade you to withdraw your Services whilst inclination, and the calls of your country demanded your service. but the desire of a companion in my latter days, in whom I could confide, might have induced me to express myself too strongly on the occasion. The change however, which I presume has 'ere this taken place in your domestic concerns, would of itself, have annihilated every hope of having you as an inmate if the circumstance had been known at the time." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:480

"I have a confidence, however, in that Providence, which has shielded the U. States from the Evils which have threatened them hitherto: and as I believe the major part of the people of this country are well affected to the Constitution and government of it, I rest satisfied that if ever a crisis should arise to call forth the sense of the Community it will be strong in support of the honor and dignity of the Nation. Therefore, however much I regret the opposition which has for its object the embarrassment of the Administration, I shall view things in the 'Calm light of mild Philosophy' and endeavour to finish my course in retirement and ease." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:481

"The Public buildings in the Federal City go on well: one wing of the Capitol (with which Congress might make a very good shift) and the Presidents house, will be covered in this autumn, or to speak more correctly perhaps, the latter is now receiving its cover, and the former will be ready for it by that epoch. An elegant bridge is thrown over the Potomack at the little Falls, and the navigation of the River above will be completed, nearly, this season; through which an immensity of Produce must flow to the Shipping Ports thereon." – George Washington, letter to David Humphreys, Mount Vernon, June 26, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:482

Letter to the Earl of Buchan – July 4, 1797

"[A]t no period have I been more closely employed, than within the three months I have been at home, in repairing the ravages which an eight years absence (except occasional short visits which were inadequate to investigation) have produced on my Farms, buildings, and everything around them." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:487

At the age of 65 I am recommending my Agricultural pursuits and rural amusements; which at all times have been the most pleasing occupation of my life, and most congenial with my temper, notwithstanding a small proportion of it has been spent in this way." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:487

"I was not sanguine in my hope of obtaining tenants from Great Britain, for my Farms of the estate on which I reside, although the experiment was made. It appeared to me more probable that Capitalists, and such as would answer my purpose would rather become Proprietors than tenants; although the latter, in reality, might prove the best medium to attain the former; experience having shewn, in many instances, that some by making precipitate purchases, have made injudicious establishments; while others, by holding off too long, have expended their means, when small, before they had decided on the part of the Country, or on the plan to be adopted." – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:487

"It was my constant endeavour whilst I had the honour to Administer the Government of these United States, to preserve them in Peace and friendship with all the World. Humanity, interest and policy all combined to dictate the measure; and I have reasons to believe that the Gentleman who has succeeded to the Chair of State will pursue a similar policy; and if to stop the further effusion of human blood; the expenditure of National wealth; and the cries, and distresses of fatherless children and widows made so by the most destructive Sword that has ever been drawn in modern times, are sufficient inducements for returning it to the Scabbard, a general Peace must surely be at hand. Be these things however as they may, as my glass is nearly run, I shall endeavour in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree to view things in the 'Calm light of mild Philosophy.'" – George Washington, letter to the Earl of Buchan, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:487-488

Letter to William Pleydell-Bouverie, the third Earl of Radnor – July 8, 1797

"For having performed duties, (which I conceive every Country has a right to require of its citizens) I claim no merit; but no man can feel more sensibly the reward of approbation for such services, than I do. Next to the consciousness of having acted faithfully in discharging the several trusts to which I have been called, the thanks of one's country, and the esteem of good men, is the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of." – George Washington, letter to William Pleydell-Bouverie, the third Earl of Radnor, Mount Vernon, July 8, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:493

"I am now placed in the shade of my Vine and Fig tree; and at the age of Sixty five, am re-commencing my Agricultural and Rural pursuits; which were always more congenial to my temper and disposition than the noise and bustle of public employments; notwithstanding so small a portion of my life has been engaged in the former. ... I reciprocate with great cordiality the good wishes you have been pleased to bestow on me; and pray devoutly, that we may both witness, and that shortly, the return of Peace; for a more bloody, expensive, and eventful War, is not recorded in modern, if it be found in ancient history." – George Washington, letter to William Pleydell-Bouverie, the third Earl of Radnor, Mount Vernon, July 8, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:493

Letter to Samuel Washington – July 12, 1797

"I perceive by your letter of the 7th Instant that you are under the same mistake that many others are, in supposing that I have money always at Command. ... The case is so much the reverse of it, that I found it expedient before I retired from public life to sell all my Lands (near 5000 Acres) in Pennsylvania in the Counties of Washington and Fayette, and my lands in the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia, in order to enable me to defray the expences of my station, and to raise money for other purposes." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Mount Vernon, July 12, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:497

"[Y]ou may be assured that there is no practice more dangerous than that of borrowing money (instance as proof the case of your father and uncles) for when money can be had in this way, repayment is seldom thought of in time; the interest becomes a moth; exertions to raise it by dint of Industry ceases, it comes easy and is spent freely: and many things indulged in that would never be thought of, if to be purchased by the sweat of the brow. in the mean time the debt is accumulating like a Snow ball in rolling." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Mount Vernon, July 12, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:498

"Great speculations and sometimes trade may be benefitted of obtaining money on Interest, but no landed Estate will bear it." – George Washington, letter to Samuel Washington, Mount Vernon, July 12, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:498

Letter to William Strickland – July 15, 1797

"[I]t is so natural for Man to wish to be the absolute Lord and Master of what he holds in occupancy, that his true interest is often made to yield to a false ambition." – George Washington, letter to William Strickland, Mount Vernon, July 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 35:500

Letter to Lawrence Lewis – August 4, 1797

"I wish from my soul that the Legislature of this State could see the policy of a gradual Abolition of Slavery; It would prevt. much future mischief." – George Washington, letter to Lawrence Lewis, Mount Vernon, August 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:2

Letter to Sir Edward Newenham – August 6, 1797

"As honesty however (in every transaction of life) is in my estimation, the best policy, I shall frankly declare to you, that soon after I entered upon the duties of my late station, I found that the multiplicity thereof allowed no leisure for the indulgence of private correspondencies; and having made it an invariable rule through life, to discharge every trust I engaged in, in behalf of the public, to the utmost of my judgment and abilities, I did not hesitate long in determining to relinquish the latter. I supposed, too, that when I should quit the arduous duties attached to the Presidency of this Country and return to the walks of private life, that I should have found abundant leisure to discharge all my epistolary obligations; but here also I have, hitherto, been disappointed; for my long absence from home (except in short occasional visits, which allowed no opportunities to look into the state of my personal concerns, and buildings) has so deranged matters which related thereto, and has committed such depredations thereon, as, at no period have I found closer employment than in the last five months I have been at home, to repair the damages: and this will continue to be the case for sometime to come." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Mount Vernon, August 6, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:4

"I am now seated in the shade of my own Vine and Fig tree, and shall devote the remainder of a life, nearly worn out to such Agricultural and rural amusements as will afford employment for myself, and cannot, or ought not, to give offence to any one; offering while I am on this Theatre, my sincere vows that the ravages of war, and the turbulence of passions; may yield their sceptors to Peace and tranquillity that the world may enjoy repose." – George Washington, letter to Sir Edward Newenham, Mount Vernon, August 6, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:4

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – August 19, 1797

"Candour is not a more conspicuous trait in the character of Governments, than it is of Individuals." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, August 29, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36; Fitzpatrick 36:18

Letter to Thaddeus Kosciuszko – August 31, 1797

"I beg you to be assured that, no one has a higher respect, and veneration for your character than I have; or one who more sincerely wished, during your arduous struggle in the cause of liberty and your country, that it might be crowned with Success. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and Mortals must submit. ... I pray you to believe, that at all times, and under any circumstances, it would make me happy to see you at my last retreat; from which I never expect to be more than twenty miles again." – George Washington, letter to Thaddeus Kosciuszko, Mount Vernon, August 31, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:22

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – October 8, 1797

"M. Frestal has been a true Mentor to George. No Parent could have been more attentive to a favourite Son; and he richly merits all that can be said of his virtues, of his good sense, and of his prudence. Both your son and him carry with them the vows, and regrets of this family, and of all who know them. And you may be assured that you yourself never stood higher in the affections of the People of this country than at the present moment. ... With what concerns myself, personally, I shall not take up your time; further than to add, that I have once more retreated to the shades of my own Vine and Fig tree, where I shall remain with best vows for the prosperity of that country for whose happiness I have toiled many years, to establish its Independence, Constitution, and Laws, and for the good of mankind in general, until the days of my sojournment, whh. cannot be many, are accomplished." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, October 8, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:40-41

Letter to Massachusetts Senator Benjamin Goodhue – October 15, 1797

"No man wishes more devoutly than I that a stop was put to the further effusion of blood; that harmony was restored to all nations; and that justice was done to ours: but I must confess that my hope of seeing them accomplished soon, exceed my expectation . The affairs of Europe seem to me to be in so perturbed a state, and the views of the principal Actors so discordant that it is not easy, on rational principles and fair calculation to predict events." – George Washington, letter to Massachusetts Senator Benjamin Goodhue, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:48

"Nothing is wanting in ourselves to steer clear of the vortex of misery, which has brought so many of the Nations of Europe to the brink of ruin in this desolating war, but unanimity; and if a steady adherence to the principles which have hitherto directed our councils is unable to effect this, it will nevertheless I hope, avert the evils which, otherwise might be expected to flow from the persevering opposition which is levelled at our government; and all those who stand forward in support of it. This is my Creed, and I shall believe in it until the contrary is verified, which Heaven avert!" – George Washington, letter to Massachusetts Senator Benjamin Goodhue, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:48

Letter to Reverend William Gordon – October 15, 1797

"Workmen in most countries, I believe, are necessary plagues; in this where entreaties as well as money must be used to obtain their work, and keep them to their duty they baffle all calculation in the accomplishment of any plan, or repairs they are engaged in; and require more attention to, and looking after, than can be well conceived." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:49

"Rural employments while I am spared (which in the natural course of things cannot be long) will now take place of toil, responsibility, and the sollicitudes attending the walks of public life; and with vows for the peace, the happiness, and prosperity of a country in whose service the prime of my life hath been spent, and with best wishes for the tranquillity of all Nations, and all men, the scene will close; grateful to that Providence which has directed my steps, and shielded me in the various changes and chances, through which I have passed, from my youth to the present moment." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:49

"I suffered every attack that was made upon my Executive conduct (the one just mentioned among the rest) to pass unnoticed while I remained in public office; well knowing that if the general tenor of it would not stand the test of investigation, a Newspaper vindication would be of little avail. But as immense pains has been taken by this said Mr. Bache, who is no more than the Agent or tool of those who are endeavouring to destroy the confidence of the people in the officers of Government (chosen by themselves) to disseminate these counterfeit letters, I conceived it a piece of justice due to my own character, and to Posterity to disavow them in explicit terms; and this I did in a letter directed to the Secretary of State to be filed in his Office the day on which I closed my Administration. This letter has since been published in the Gazettes by the head of that Department." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Gordon, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:50

Letter to John Langhorne – October 15, 1797

"For the divisions which have taken place among us, with respect to our political concerns; for the attacks which have been made upon those to whom the Administration of the government hath been entrusted by the People ; and for the calumnies which are levelled at all those who are disposed to support the measures thereof, I feel, on public account, as much as any man can do; because (in my opinion) much evil, and no good can result from such conduct, to this country. ... So far as these attacks are aimed at me, personally, it is, I can assure you, Sir, a misconception if it be supposed I feel the venom of the darts. Within me, I have a consolation which proves an antidote agt. their utmost malignity, rendering my mind in the retirement I have long panted after perfectly tranquil." – George Washington, letter to John Langhorne, Mount Vernon, October 15, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:52

Letter to George Lewis – November 13, 1797

"The running off of my Cook, has been a most inconvenient thing to this family; and what renders it more disagreeable, is, that I had resolved never to become the Master of another Slave by purchase ; but this resolution I fear I must break. ... I have endeavoured to hire, black or white, but am not yet supplied." – George Washington, letter to George Lewis, Mount Vernon, November 13, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:70

Letter to Daniel McCarty – November 13, 1797

"[I]t is a maxim with me, to take landed security which from its nature is unchangeable, to personal security which is subject to numberless vissitudes." – George Washington, letter to Daniel McCarty, Mount Vernon, November 13, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:74

Letter to John Luzac – December 2, 1797

"In times of turbulence, when passions are afloat, calm reason is swallowed up in the extremes to which measures are attempted to be carried; but when those subside and the empire of [reason] is resumed, the man who acts from principle, who pursues the paths of truth, moderation, and justice, will regain his influence." – George Washington, letter to John Luzac, Philologist and professor of Greek in the University of Leyden, editor in chief of the Gazette de Leyde, Mount Vernon, December 2, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:84

Letter to John Cotesworth Pinckney – December 4, 1797

"What has been the reception of the Embassy by the French Directory, is, to me, unknown; and what will be the result of it, is not for me to predict. The change, however, which took place at Paris on the 4th of September adds nothing to my hope of a favourable issue. In this I may be mistaken; but of another thing I am certain I shall not, and that is, that the failure (if such be the case) cannot be attributed to the want of justice on the part of the United States or from the want of an able representation of it, on the part of their Negotiators. Of course the issue must be favourable, or conviction will be produced in all, except those who do not want to be

convinced, that we have nothing to expect from the justice of the Nation with whom we are treating. In either case we shall ascertain our ground." – George Washington, letter to John Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:89-90

"That the Government of France views us as a divided people, I have little doubt; and that they have been led to entertain that opinion from representations, and the conduct of many of our own citizens, is still less doubtful; but I shall be very much mistaken, indeed, in the mass of the People of the United States, if an occasion should call for an unequivocal expression of the public voice, if the first wd. not find themselves very much deceived; and the latter (their leaders excepted) to change their notes. I pray devoutly that the Directory may not bring the matter to trial." – George Washington, letter to John Cotesworth Pinckney, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:90

Letter to John Marshall – December 4, 1797

"[U]nfortunately the nature of man is such, that the experience of others is not attended to as it ought to be; we must feel ourselves, before we can think, or perceive the danger that threatens." – George Washington, letter to John Marshall, Mount Vernon, December 4, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:93

Letter to George Washington Motier Lafayette – December 5, 1797

"If my best vows would have contributed to a prosperous Voyage, and a happy meeting with your Parents and Sisters in France, both must have happened to the utmost extent of your wishes 'ere this, for they were offered on the Altar of Sincerity; and are now followed with assurances that, if you should ever return to America again, that you will find the same cordial reception within the Walls of this Mansion, as you have heretofore experienced." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Motier Lafayette, Mount Vernon, December 5, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:95-96

Letter to James Anderson – December 21, 1797

"[T]he man who does not estimate time as money will forever miscalculate; for altho' the latter is not paid for the former, it is nevertheless a sure item in the cost of any undertaking." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 21, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:112

"If a person only sees, or directs from day to day what is to be done, business can never go on methodically or well, for in case of sickness, or the absence of the Director, delays must follow. System to all things is the soul of business. To deliberate maturely, and execute promptly is the way to conduct it to advantage. With me, it has always been a maxim, rather to let my designs appear from my works than by my expressions. To talk long before hand of things to be done, is unpleasant, if those things can as well be done at one time or another; but I do not mean by this to discourage you from proposing any plans to me which you may conceive to be beneficial, after having weighed them well in your own mind, on the contrary, I request you to do it with the utmost freedom, for the more combined, and distant things are seen, the more likely they are to be turned to advantage." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 21, 1797; Fitzpatrick 36:113

Conversation with John Bernard – 1798

"Not only do I pray for it, on the score of human dignity, but I can clearly foresee that nothing but the rooting out of slavery can perpetuate the existence of our union, by consolidating it in a common bond of principle." – George Washington, conversation with John Bernard, 1798; John Bernard's Retrospections of America, p. 91 (This is from Bernard's account of a conversation he had with Washington.)

Letter to George Washington Parke Custis – January 7, 1798

"System in all things should be aimed at; for in execution it renders every thing more easy." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, January 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:117

"From breakfast, until about an hour before Dinner (allowed for dressing, and preparing for it, that you may appear decent) I shall expect you will confine yourself to your studies; and diligently attend to them; endeavouring to make yourself master of whatever is recommended to, or required of you. ... While the afternoons are short, and but little interval between rising from dinner and assembling for Tea, you may employ that time in walking, or any other recreation." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, January 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:117

"Rise early, that by habit it may become familiar, agreeable, healthy, and profitable. It may, for a while, be irksome to do this, but that will wear off; and the practice will produce a rich harvest forever thereafter; whether in public or private walks of life." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, January 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:118

"Make it an invariable rule to be in place (unless extraordinary circumstances prevent it) at the usual breakfasting, dining, and tea hours. It is not only disagreeable, but it is also very inconvenient, for servants to be running here, and there, and they know not where, to summon you to them, when their duties, and attendance, on the company who are seated, render it improper." – George Washington, letter to George Washington Parke Custis, January 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:118

Letter to Sally Ball Haynie – February 11, 1798

"I have received your letter of the 28th. of last month, and without enquiry at this time why you left Mr. Lewis's family or how you employ your time, I have requested him to furnish you with ten pounds to supply you with such necessaries as you may be in immediate want. ... But as you have no fortune to support you, Industry, oeconomy, and a virtuous conduct are your surest resort, and best dependance. In every station of life, these are commendable. In the one in which it has pleased Providence to place you, it is indispensably necessary that they should mark all your footsteps. It is no disparagement to the first lady in the Land to be constantly employed, at some work or another; to you, it would prove, in addition to a chaste and unsullied reputation the surest means of attracting the notice of some man with whom your future fortune will be united in a Matrimonial bond and without which it would be in vain to expect a person of worth." – George Washington, letter to Sally Ball Haynie, Mount Vernon, February 11, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:162

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry - March 27, 1798

"A Report is circulated in Alexandria and its vicinity, transmitted, (it is said) in private letters from Philadelphia, that a correspondence has been discovered, or more properly, letters have been intercepted from some Ministers of Congress to the Directory of France, of a treasonable nature. Containing, among other matters, advice not to receive our Envoys; on the contrary, to menace us with hostile appearances, and they might rely upon bringing the U. States to her feet. The name of one person has been mentioned to me. ... Cruel must these reports be, if unfounded; and if well founded, what punishment can be too great for the Actors in so diabolical a Drama." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, March 27, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:192

"The period is big with events, but what it will produce is beyond the reach of human ken. On this, as upon all other occasions, I hope the best. It has always been my belief that Providence has not led us so far in the path of Independence of one Nation, to throw us into the Arms of another. And that the machinations of those, who are attempting it, will sooner or later recoil upon their own heads. Heaven grant it may soon happen upon all those, whose conduct deserve it." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, March 27, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:192

Remarks on James Monroe's "View of the Conduct of the Executive of the United States" – March 1798

"Acts of candor when performed, if acknowledged by the party to whom they are said to be rendered, ought not to be boasted of by those who perform them." – George Washington, remarks on James Monroe's "View of the Conduct of the Executive of the United States, March, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:208

"Why not, if the fact was admitted allow the American government to adopt some of the all perfect maxims of the French. It will not be denied that, to boast of what they do, and even of what they do not do is one of them." – George Washington, remarks on James Monroe's "View of the Conduct of the Executive of the United States," March, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:208

Letter to Thomas Law – May 7, 1798

"[I]t has been a maxim with me from early life, never to undertake anything without perceiving a door to the accomplishment, in a reasonable time and with my own resources." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Law, Mount Vernon, May 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:256-257

"My Estate (though it might sell, on credit, for a tolerable sum) has been, and probably will continue to be, far from a productive one: and it has so happened, that the proceeds of Landed and other Sales from it, hitherto, have been appropriated in a great measure to the expences my late situation obliged me, in a manner, to encounter." – George Washington, letter to Thomas Law, Mount Vernon, May 7, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:257

Letter to Sarah Cary Fairfax – May 16, 1798

"Worn out in a manner by the toils of my past labour, I am again seated under my Vine and Fig tree, and wish I could add that, there are none to make us affraid; but those whom we have been accustomed to call our good friends and Allies, are endeavouring, if not to make us affraid, yet to despoil us of our property; and are provoking us to Acts of self-defence, which may lead to War. What will be the result of such measures, time, that faithful expositor of all things, must disclose. My wish is, to spend the remainder of my days (which cannot be many) in rural amusements; free from those cares [from] which public responsibility is never exempt." – George Washington, letter to Sarah Cary Fairfax, Mount Vernon, May 16, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:263

"A Century hence, if this Country keeps united (and it is surely its policy and Interest to do so) will produce a City, though not as large as London, yet of a magnitude inferior to few others in Europe, on the Banks of the Potomack; where one is now establishing for the permanent Seat of the Government of the United States (between Alexandria and Georgetown, on the Maryland side of the River). A situation not excelled for commanding prospect, good water, salubrious air, and safe harbour by any in the world; and where elegant buildings are erecting and in forwardness, for the reception of Congress in the year 1800." – George Washington, letter to Sarah Cary Fairfax, Mount Vernon, May 16, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:264

"[I]f this Country can steer clear of European politics, stand firm on its [bottom], and be wise and temperate in its government, [it bids fair to be one of the greatest and happiest nations in the world." – George Washington, letter to Sarah Cary Fairfax, Mount Vernon, May 16, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:264

Letter to James Anderson – May 22, 1798

"I shall repeat now, what I said upon that occasion, viz. that I had no intention then, nor have I any desire now, to part with you as a manager; but having made this declaration I shall add (what I believe I then did) that I have no wish to retain any person in my Service who is discontented with my conduct; or who has any prospects more congenial with their inclinations or their Interest, in the service of another; and this I must presume to be the case with you, for it can hardly be supposed that the reasons you have assigned for leaving mine, are all that have urged you to the measure." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Federal City, May 22, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:266-267

"Strange, and singular indeed would it be, if the Proprietor of an Estate (than whom no one can be so good a judge of the resources as himself) should have nothing to say in, or controul over, his own expenditures; Should not be at liberty to square his oeconomy thereto; Nor should, without hurting the feelings of a Manager, point to such alterations." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Federal City, May 22, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:267

"[W]here have I been deficient? or in what have you just cause to complain? If I cannot remark upon my own business, passing every day under my eyes, without hurting your feelings, I must discontinue my rîdes, or become a cypher on my own Estate." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Federal City, May 22, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:268

Letter to U.S. District Judge Alexander Addison in Pennsylvania – June 3, 1798

"Not to have received the Instalment due to me on the Bond of the deceased Col. Ritchie (lodged in the Bank of Pennsylvania for collection) at the appointed period, is attended with considerable disappointment to me; and if it should not be paid (in whole) at the time mentioned in your Note the inconvenience will be sorely felt by me. To raise cash was the sole inducement to the Sale of my lands in Fayette and Washington Counties; and not to receive it, agreeably to contract, will defeat my object, and the expectation of others." – George Washington, letter to U.S. District Judge Alexander Addison in Pennsylvania, Mount Vernon, June 3, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:280

"I pray you, Sir, to accept my thanks for the Pamphlet you had the goodness to send me, containing your remarks on Mr. Gallatin's Speech in the house of Representatives of the United States, on the foreign Intercourse Bill, and for the Gazette containing an Oration delivered in the Town of W -- [Washington, Pa.] on the day recommended by the President [John Adams] to be observed as a General Fast." – George Washington, letter to U.S. District Judge Alexander Addison in Pennsylvania, Mount Vernon, June 3, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:280

Letter to Reverend William Lynn – June 4, 1798

"I received with thankfulness your favour of the 30th. Ulto., enclosing the discourse delivered by you on the day recommended by the President of the United States to be observed as a general Fast. I have read them both with pleasure; and feel grateful for the favourable sentiments you have been pleased to express in my behalf; but more especially for those good wishes which you offer for my temporal and eternal happiness; which I reciprocate with great cordiality, being with esteem and respect, Revd." – George Washington, letter to Reverend William Lynn. Mount Vernon, June 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:281

Letter to Reverend Jeremy Belknap – June 15, 1798

"If I can render you any service, in procuring materials for your valuable [American] Biography, I shall feel pleasure in doing it. I hope both life and health will be dispensed to you by him, in whose hands all things are, until this and many others of your good works are completed. For the Discourse, which you were so obliging as to send me, and for the favourable sentiments with which it was accompanied, I pray you to accept the best thanks of Revd." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jeremy Belknap, Mount Vernon, June 15, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:291

Letter to the Trustees of Washington Academy – June 17, 1798

"To promote Literature in this rising Empire, and to encourage the Arts, have ever been amongst the warmest wishes of my heart. And if the donation which the generosity of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Virginia has enabled me to bestow on Liberty-Hall, now by your politeness called, Washington Academy, is likely to prove a mean to accomplish these ends, it will contribute to the gratification of my desires." – George Washington, letter to the Trustees of Washington Academy, Mount Vernon, June 17, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:293

"Sentiments like those which flowed from your Pen, excite my gratitude, whilst I offer my best vows for the prosperity of the Academy, and for the honor and happiness of those under whose auspices it is conducted." – George Washington, letter to the Trustees of Washington Academy, Mount Vernon, June 17, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:293

Letter to Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz – June 18, 1798

"That your country is not as happy as your struggle to make it so, was Patriotic and Noble, is a matter which all lovers of national Liberty and the Rights of Man, have sorely lamented: and if my Vows, during the arduous contest could have availed, you would now, have been as happy in the enjoyment of these desirable blessings under your own Vine and Fig Tree, as the People of these United States may be under theirs." – George Washington, letter to Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, Mount Vernon, June 18, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:297

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – July 4, 1798

"To remark to a Military Man how all important the General Staff of an Army is to its well being, and how essential consequently to the Commander in Chief, seems to be unnecessary; and yet a good choice is of such immense consequence, that I must be allowed to explain myself. ... The Inspector General, Quartermaster General, Adjutant General, and Officer commanding the Corps of Artillerists and Engineers, ought to be men of the most respectable characters, and of first rate abilities; because, from the nature of their respective Offices, and from their being always about the Commander in Chief who is obliged to entrust many things to them confidentially, scarcely any movement can take place without their knowledge. It follows then, that besides possessing the qualifications just mentioned, they ought to have those of Integrity and prudence in an eminent degree, that entire confidence might be reposed in them; without these and their being on good terms with the Commanding General his measures if not designedly thwarted may be so embarrassed as to make them move heavily on." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:308

"Humanity, and feeling for the sick and wounded of an Army call loudly for skill, attention, and oeconomy in the Director of the Hospitals, and without the latter qualification, profusion, and misapplication of its stores, will inevitably take place." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:310

Letter to President John Adams – July 4, 1798

"At the Epoch of my retirement, an Invasion of these States by any European Power, or even the probability of such an event happening, in my days, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception that that, or any other occurrence would arise, in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shades of Mount Vernon. But this seems to be the Age of Wonders! and reserved for intoxicated and lawless France (for purposes of Providence far beyond the reach of human ken) to slaughter its own Citizens, and to disturb the repose of all the World besides." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, July 4, 1798 Fitzpatrick 36:313

"From a view of the past, from the prospect present; and of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide, satisfactorily, on the part it might best become me to act. In case of actual Invasion by a formidable force, I certainly should not Intrench myself under the cover of Age and retirement, if my services should be required by my Country, to assist in repelling it. And if there be good cause, which must be better known to the Government than to private Citizens to expect such an event, delay in preparing for it, might be dangerous, improper, and not to be justified by prudence. The uncertainty however of the latter, in my mind, creates my embarrassment; for I cannot fairly, bring it to believe, disregardful as the French are of Treaties, and of the Law of Nations; and capable as I conceive them to be of any species of Despotism and Injustice, that they will attempt to invade this Country, after such a uniform and unequivocal expression of the sense of the People, in all parts, to oppose them with their lives and fortunes." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:313

"That they have been led to believe by their Agents, and Partisans amongst Us, that we are a divided People; that the latter are opposed to their own Government; and that a show of a small force would occasion a revolt, I have no doubt; and how far these men, (grown desperate) will further attempt to deceive, and may succeed in keeping up the deception, is problematical. Without this, the folly of the Directory, in such an attempt, would, I conceive, be more conspicuous, if possible, than their wickedness." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:313-314

"Having with candour made this disclosure of the state of my Mind, it remains only that I should add, that to those who know me best, it is best known that if imperious circumstances should induce me to renounce the smooth paths of Retirement for the thorny ways of Public life, at a period too, when repose is most congenial to nature, and a calm indispensable for contemplation, that it would be

productive of Sensations which can be more easily conceived than expressed." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:314

Letter to Tobias Lear – July 4, 1798

"My Papers are yet in such a jumble, that I know not where, readily to look for your former A/c; but it dwells upon my Memory that in that, I was charged with £50 paid the Trustees of the Academy in Alexandria. if I am right in this, the Treasurer thereof, has received a years annuity more than the School is entitled to. Reference to your Books, if you have them by you, or to the A/c rendered to me when I come across it, will decide the matter at once." – George Washington, letter to Tobias Lear, Mount Vernon, July 4, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:317

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – July 11, 1798

"As I had every thing to risk and hardly any thing to gain (the vicissitudes of War being in the hands of the Supreme Director, where no controul is); and as the Army was about to be formed and every thing in a manner depending upon the arrangement and organization it could not be expected that I would take the Command of it without previously knowing who my Coadjutors were to be, and having the assistance of those in whom I could place confidence." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, July 11, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:323

"[F]or as neither Ambition, Interest, or personal gratification of any sort, could induce me to quit the walks of private life, to be disappointed in the only object I should have in view, would be mortifying beyond my powers of utterance. And what this public opinion and wish is, on this occasion, I know not; for I have studiously avoided touching on the subject, lest some inference, contrary to my meaning, should be drawn from it." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, July 11, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:326-327

Letter to President John Adams – July 13, 1798

"Satisfied therefore, that you have sincerely wished and endeavoured to avert war, and exhausted to the last drop, the cup of reconciliation, we can with pure hearts appeal to Heaven for the justice of our cause, and may confidently trust the final result to that kind Providence who has heretofore, and so often, signally favoured the People of these United States." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, July 13, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:328

Letter to Henry Knox – July 16, 1798

"Little did I imagine when I retired from the theatre of public life, that it was probable, or even possible, that any event would arise in my day, that could induce me to entertain, for a moment, an idea of relinquishing the tranquil walks, and refreshing shades, with which I am surrounded. But it is in vain I perceive, to look for ease and happiness in a world of troubles." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, July 16, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:345

"But my dear Sir, as you always have found, and trust ever will find, candour a prominent trait of my character." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, July 16, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:345

Letter to Doctor James Anderson – July 25, 1798

"I little imagined, when I took my last leave of the walks of Public life and retired to the Shades of my Vine and Fig tree that any event would arise in my day that could bring me again on a public theatre. But the unjust, ambitious and intoxicated conduct of France towards these U : States has been, and continues to be such, that it must be opposed by a firm and manly resistance, or we shall not only hazard the Subjugation of our Government but the Independence of our Nation also; both being evidently struck at by a lawless Domineering Power who respects no Rights, and is restrained by no Treaties when it is found inconvenient to observe them." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1798 Fitzpatrick 36:364

"When every thing Sacred, and dear to Freemen is thus threatened, I could not consistent with the principles which have actuated me through life, remain an idle spectator, and refuse to obey the call of my Country to lead its Armies for defence and therefore have pledged myself to come forward whensoever the exigency shall require it." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:365

"With what sensations at my time of life (now turned of 66) without Ambition or interest to stimulate me thereto, I shall relinquish the peaceful walks to which I had retired, and in the shades of which I had fondly hoped to spend the remnant of a life worn down with cares in contemplation on the past and in scenes present and to come of rural growth; let others, and especially those who are best acquainted with the construction of my Mind decide, while I believing that a man was not designed by the All wise Creator to live for himself alone prepare for the worst that can happen." – George Washington, letter to Doctor James Anderson, Mount Vernon, July 25,

Letter to Jonathan Trumbull – July 25, 1798

"New Scenes are opening upon us, and a very unexpected one, as it respects myself, is unfolding. What will be the final result of these measures is only known to that Providence in whose directions all things are. When I bid adieu last to the Theatre of public life, I thought it was hardly possible that any event would arise, in my day, that would induce me to tread that stage again." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:367

"But this is an age of Wonders, and I have once more consented to become an Actor in the great Drama. The conduct of the French Nation towards our own, has been so extraordinary and outrageous, as to have drawn forth an expression of the public sentiment as unequivocal, and pleasing to the friends of this Country, as it was unexpected, and must be mortifying to the Rulers of that, and their Partizans here. Both of whom, it is now evident, have been greatly mistaken in their calculation of the Temper of the People from one end of the Union to the other." – George Washington, letter to Jonathan Trumbull, Mount Vernon, July 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:367

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – July 27, 1798

"The Greyheads [called the Silver Greys] of Alexandria, pretty numerous it seems, and composed of all the respectable old People of the place; having formed themselves into a Company for the defence of the Town and its Vicinity, are in want of Colours; and it being intimated that the Presentation of them by Mrs. Washington would be flattering to them; I take the liberty of requesting the favour of you to have made and sent to me as soon as it is convenient, such as will be appropriate to the occasion. Handsome, but not more expensive than becomes Republicans (not Bachite Republicans) is reqd. If you think a Motto would be proper, the choice of one "chaste and unassuming," is left to your own judgment. Send the cost, and the money shall be remitted by Yours always." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, July 27, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:368

Letter to Charles Carroll of Carrollton – August 2, 1798

"[M]y coming forward, or rather taking the field, depends upon the contingencies mentioned in my letter to the President of the United States, which, I perceive, has been given to the public; and until that event takes place that I shall have no occasion for Aids de Camp. You also know, that it is an invariable maxim with me, never, before hand, and until the moment requires it, to pledge myself by promises which I might find embarrassing to comply with." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Mount Vernon, August 2, 1798; Fitzpatrick:Vol. 36:382-383

"Although I highly approve of the measures taken by Government to place this Country in a posture of defense, I even wish they had been more energetic, and shall be ready to obey its call, under the reservations I have made, whensoever it is made; yet I am not without hope, mad and intoxicated as the French are, that they will pause before they take the last step. That they have been deceived in their calculations on the devotion of the People, and the powerful support they expected from their party, is reduced to uncertainty; though it is somewhat equivocal still whether that party, who have been the curse of this country, and the source of the expences we have to encounter, may not be able to continue their delusion. What pity it is, this expence could not be taxed upon them." – George Washington, letter to Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Mount Vernon, August 2, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:383-384

Letter to James McHenry – August 10, 1798

"It is much easier at all times to prevent an evil than to rectify mistakes." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:403

"It is infinitely better to have a few good men than many indifferent ones." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, August 10, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:403

Letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher – August 15, 1798

"I can venture to assert, beforehand, and with confidence, that there is no man, in either country, more zealously devoted to Peace, and a good understanding between the two Nations than I am, nor one who is more disposed to bury in oblivion all animosities which have subsisted between them, and the Individuals of each." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:413

"Peace, with all the world is my sincere wish. I am sure it is our true policy. and am persuaded it is the Ardent desire of the Government. But there is a Nation whose intermeddling, and restless disposition; and attempts to divide, distract and influence the measures of other Countries, that will not suffer us, I fear, to enjoy this blessing long, unless we will yield to them our Rights, and submit to greater injuries and insults than we have already sustained, to avoid the calamities resulting from War." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:413

"What will be the consequences of our Arming for self defence, that Providence, who permits these doings in the Disturbers of Mankind; and who rules and Governs all things, alone can tell. To its all powerful decrees we must submit, whilst we hope that the justice of our Cause if War, must ensue. will entitle us to its Protection." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jonathan Boucher, Mount Vernon, August 15, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:413-414

Letter to Board of Managers of the Marine and City Hospitals of Philadelphia – September 10, 1798

"Among those who commiserate the afflicted Citizens of Philadelphia, I beg you to be persuaded that none do it with more sincerity, or with more feeling than I do. And the poignancy is very much increased by the declaration of the malignancy of the [yellow] fever, and difficulty of cure. ... That I may contribute my mite towards the relief of the suffering and unfortunate poor of that place, I enclose two Post notes of one hundred dollars each. You will be so good as to inform me by a line of their getting to hand, which is all the notice I wish to be taken of the donation." – George Washington, letter to to William Jones and Board of Managers of the Marine and City Hospitals of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Mount Vernon, September 10, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:435

Letter to President John Adams – September 25, 1798

"If in the course of it, any expression should escape me which may appear to be incompatible with either, let the purity of my intentions; the candour of my declarations; and a due respect for my own character, be received as an apology." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:453

"But if you had been pleased, previously to the nomination, to have enquired into the train of my thoughts upon the occasion, I would have told you with the frankness and candour which I hope will ever mark my character, on what terms I would have consented to the nomination; you would then have been enabled to decide, whether they were admissible or not." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:454

"It was not difficult for me to perceive that if we entered into a serious contest with France, that the character of the War would differ materially from the last we were engaged in. In the latter, time, caution, and worrying the enemy until we could be better provided with arms, and other means, and had better disciplined Troops to carry it on, was the plan for us. But if we should be engaged with the former, they ought to be attacked at every step, and, if possible, not suffered to make an establishment in the Country." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:457

"By some he is considered as an ambitious man, and therefore a dangerous one. That he is ambitious I shall readily grant, but it is of that laudable kind which prompts a man to excel in whatever he takes in hand. He is enterprising, quick in his perceptions, and his judgment intuitively great: qualities essential to a Military character, and therefore I repeat, that his loss will be irreparable." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:460 (Death of Alexander Hamilton)

"With respect to General Knox, I can say with truth, there is no man in the United States with whom I have been in habits of greater intimacy; no one whom I have loved more sincerely, nor any for whom I have had a greater friendship." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:461

"But, [in making appointments] esteem, love, and friendship, can have no influence on my mind when I conceive that the subjugation of our Government and Independence, are the objects aimed at by the enemies of our Peace; and, when, possibly, our all is at stake." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, September 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:461

Letter to Secretary of State James McHenry – September 30, 1798

"[A]s there will be characters enough of an opposite description, who are ready to receive appointments, circumspection is necessary; for my opinion of the first are; that you could as soon scrub the blackamore white, as to change the principles of a profest Democrat; and that he will leave nothing unattempted to overturn the Government of this Country." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, September 30, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:474

Letter to Landon Carter – October 5, 1798

"I thank you for the trouble you have taken in delivering your thoughts on the means of preserving health. Having, through life, been blessed with a competent share of it, without using preventatives against sickness, and as little medicine as possible when sick; I can have no inducement now to change my practice. against the effect of time and age, no remedy has ever yet been discovered; and like the rest of my fellow mortals, I must (if life is prolonged) submit, and be reconciled, to a gradual decline." – George Washington, letter to Landon Carter, Mount Vernon, October 5, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:484

Letter to Henry Knox – October 21, 1798

"[M]y first wish would be that my Military family, and the whole Army, should consider themselves as a band of brothers, willing and ready, to die for each other." – George Washington, letter to Henry Knox, Mount Vernon, October 21, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:508

Letter to Officers of the Tenth and Ninety-First Regiments – October 24, 1798

"When injuries and Insults have been heaped upon us, and when the Sovereignty and Independence of our Country are threatned, it is, in my opinion, no longer in the option of a good Citizen to withhold his Services from the Public. Let his situation be what it may, he forfeits all claim to the rights of one, if, in such a critical moment, he should not use every means in his power to aid in repelling the unprovoked and indignant [sic] aggression. ... Upon this ground I have accepted my Commission; and upon this ground I trust that every true American will be prepared to defend his Country against foreign encroachments; and to perpetuate the blessings which he enjoys under his own Government." – George Washington, letter to the Officers of the Tenth and Ninety-First Regiments of the Virginia Militia, Mount Vernon, October 24, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:517

"That there may be no occasion to gird on the Sword, none more ardently prays than I do; and no one, with more truth could add, that, if unfortunately, in defence of our rights we shall be compelled to unsheath I hope, after the object is attained, would return it to its Scabbard with more heart-felt satisfaction. But to avert the evil, or to meet it like men it is necessary under the present aspect of our Affairs to hold it in our hands, and be united in one band. ... Your prayers, and kind wishes in my behalf, I reciprocate with great Cordiality." – George Washington, letter to the Officers of the Tenth and Ninety-First Regiments of the Virginia Militia, Mount Vernon, October 24, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:517-518

Letter to Reverend G. W. Snyder – October 24, 1798

"It was not my intention to doubt that, the Doctrines of the Illuminati, and principles of Jacobinism had not spread in the United States. On the contrary, no one is more truly satisfied of this fact than I am. ... The idea that I meant to convey, was, that I did not believe that the Lodges of Free Masons in this Country had, as Societies, endeavoured to propagate the diabolical tenets of the first, or pernicious principles of the latter (if they are susceptible of seperation). That Individuals of them may have done it, or that the founder, or instrument employed to found, the Democratic Societies in the United States, may have had these objects; and actually had a seperation of the People from their Government in view, is too evident to be questioned." – George Washington, letter to Reverend G. W. Snyder, Mount Vernon, October 24, 1798; Fitzpatrick 36:518-519

Letter to the Maryland Grand Lodge of Free Masons – November 8, 1798

"[T]he favorable sentiments you are pleased to express of my conduct, permit me to observe, that, at this important and critical moment, when high and repeated indignities have been offered to the Government of one Country, and when the property of our Citizens is plundered without a prospect of redress, I conceive it to be the indispensable duty of every American, let his situation and circumstances in life be what they may, to come forward in support of the Government of his choice, and to give all the aid in his power towards maintaining that Independence which we have so dearly purchased: And, under this impression, I do not hesitate to lay aside all personal considerations and accept my appointment." – George Washington, letter to the Maryland Grand Lodge of Free Masons, November 8, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:13-14

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – December 13, 1798

"It has been very properly the policy of our Government to cultivate peace. But in contemplating the possibility of our being driven to unqualified War, it will be wise to anticipate, that frequently the most effectual way to defend is to attack." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Philadelphia, December 13, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:37:37

"The quantity of spirituous liquors, which is a component part of the ration, is so large as to endanger, where they might not before exist, habits of intemperance, alike fatal to health and discipline. Experience has repeatedly shown, that many soldiers will exchange their rum for other articles; which is productive of the double mischief of subjecting those with whom the exchange is made, to the loss of what is far more necessary and to all the consequences of brutal intoxication. The step having been once taken, a change is delicate; but it is believed to be indispensable, and that the temporary evils of a change can bear no proportion to the permanent and immense evils of a continuance of the error." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Philadelphia, December 13, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:55

Letter to George Washington Motier de Lafayette – December 25, 1798

"Young gentlemen of the first families, fortunes and expectations in the United States, are offering their Services; but I hope, and most ardently pray, that the Directory in your Country will not, by a perseverance in the insults and injuries which they have heaped on this, make it necessary to resort to Arms to repel an Invasion, or to do ourselves justice." – George Washington, letter to George

Letter to Marquis de Lafayette – December 25, 1798

"Convinced as you must be of the fact, it wd. be a mere waste of time to assure you of the sincere and heartfelt pleasure I derived from finding by the above letters, that you had not only regained your liberty; but were in the enjoyment of better health than could have been expected from your long and rigorous confinement; and that madame La Fayette and the young ladies were able to Survive it attall. On these desirable events I can add with truth, that amongst your numerous friends none can offer his congratulations with more warmth, or who prays more sincerely for the perfect restoration of your ladies health, than I do." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, December 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:69

"I wish well to all nations and to all men. My politics are plain and simple. I think every nation has a Right to establish that form of Government under which It conceives It shall live most happy; provided it infracts no Right or is not dangerous to others. And that no Governments ought to interfere with the internal concerns of Another, except for the security of what is due to themselves." – George Washington, letter to Marquis de Lafayette, Mount Vernon, December 25, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:70

Letter to Richard Raynal Keene – December 28, 1798

"At all times, when it is in my power to do it with tolerable convenience to myself, I feel pleasure in aiding the deserving and meritorious. ... But let me observe at the sametime, that a very mistaken opinion prevails, with respect to my means of accomplishing this, in a pecuniary way; for was I to judge of these opinions by the numerous applications which are made to me for money, it must be conjectured by them, that I have resources far, very far indeed, beyond what the fact will warrant. ... I can assure you, that I find it no easy matter to keep my expenditures within the limits of my receipts; and that, without travelling out of my own circle, I find more than enough to require all the surplusage of the latter, when I have any to spare." – George Washington, letter to Richard Raynal Keene, Mount Vernon, December 28, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:72-73

Letter to Brigadier General William Washington – December 28, 1798

"The object of this journey [to Philadelphia] was, among other things, to make a selection of characters from the numerous applicants for Military appointments in the Augmented force, for the new Corps. ... In this business, Majors General Hamilton and Pinckney, and myself, were closely occupied near five weeks; but not having all the information we wished relative to the two Carolinas and Georgia; and thinking the arrangement for those States (as was my opinion with respect to the whole) would be better made within them than at the Seat of the Government, this part of the business is left to Genl. Pinckney, yourself and Genl. Davie of North Carolina, to complete." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Washington, Mount Vernon, December 28, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:75

"I thought as you did, that nothing could ever have withdrawn me from my long saught retirement; during the remnant of a life which is journeying fast to the Mansions of my Ancesters. But we are little acquainted with ourselves and still less with the ways of Providence. It gives me pleasure, however, to learn from yourself, that you accept your appointment: the evidence of which you have, no doubt, long since received." – George Washington, letter to Brigadier General William Washington, Mount Vernon, December 28, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:75

Letter to John Marshall – December 30, 1798

"The Alien and Sedition Laws having employed many Pens, and we hear a number of tongues, in the Assembly of this State; the latter, I understand, to a very pernicious purpose; I send you the production of Judge Addison on these subjects. Whether any new lights are cast upon them by his charge, you will be better able to decide when you have read it. My opinion is, that if this, or other writings flashed conviction as clear as the Sun in its Meredian brightness, k would produce no effect in the conduct of the leaders of opposition; who, have points to carry, from which nothing will divert them in the prosecution. When you have read the charge give it to Bushrod Washington, or place it to any other uses you may think proper. I wish success to your Election, most sincerely, and if it should fail (of which I hope there is not the least danger) I shall not easily forgive myself for being urgent with you to take a Poll." – George Washington, letter to John Marshall, Mount Vernon, December 30, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:76

Letter to David Stuart – December 30, 1798

"When the applications for Military appointments came to be examined at Philadelphia, it was pleasing to find among them, so many Gentlemen of family, fortune and high expectations, soliciting commissions; and not in the high grades. ... This, and a thorough conviction that it was a vain attempt to keep Washington Custis to any literary pursuits, either in a public Siminary, or at home under the direction of any one, gave me the first idea of bringing him forward as a Cornet of Horse. To this measure too I was induced by a conviction paramount in my breast, that if real danger threatened the Country, no young man ought to be an idle Spectator of its defence; and that, if a state of preparation would avert the evil of an Invasion, he would be entitled to the merit of proffered service, without encountering the dangers of War: and besides, that it might divert his attention from a matrimonial pursuit (for a while at

least) to which his constitution seems to be too prone." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, December 30, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:77

"The only hesitation I had, to induce the caution before mentioned, arose from his being an only Son; indeed the only male of his Great great Grandfathers family; but the same Providence that wd watch over and protect him in domestic walks, can extend the same protection to him in a Camp, or the field of battle, if he should ever be in one." – George Washington, letter to David Stuart, Mount Vernon, December 30, 1798; Fitzpatrick 37:78

Letter to Patrick Henry – January 15, 1799

"The views of men can only be known, or guessed at, by their words or actions." – George Washington, letter to Patrick Henry, Mount Vernon, January 15, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:89

Letter to Reverend Bryan, Lord Fairfax – January 20, 1799

"For the details contained in these several letters, I pray you to accept my thanks; and congratulations on your safe arrival in England, although the Passage, on the whole, was not altogether as expeditious and agreeable as you expected. To this prayer, let me add my best wishes for the perfect restoration of your health, and the accomplishment of such other objects as might have induced you to undertake the Voyage. After which it would give your friends in this Country much pleasure to hail your return." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Bryan, Lord Fairfax, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:92

"When I presented my Valedictory address to the People of the United States, in September 1796, I little thought that any event would occur in my day that could again withdraw me from the Retirement after which I had been so long panting; but we know little of ourselves, and still less of the ways of Providence." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Bryan, Lord Fairfax, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:92

"[I]t appearing to be the wish of my Countrymen, and the request of the governing Powers that I should take charge of their Armies, I am embarked so far in the business as will appear by my letter to the President of the 13th. of July last; which, as it has run through all the Newspapers here and Published in many of the Foreign Gazettes, you probably may have seen; and though still at home, where indeed I hope to remain, under a persuasion that the French will discover the injustice and absurdity of their conduct, I hold myself in readiness to gird on the Sword, if the immergency shall require it." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Bryan, Lord Fairfax, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:93

"The favourable sentiments which others, you say, have been pleased to express respecting me, cannot but be pleasing to a mind [sic] who always walked on a straight line, and endeavoured as far as human frailties, and perhaps strong passions, would enable him, to discharge the relative duties to his Maker and fellow-men without seeking any indirect or left handed attempts to acquire popularity." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Bryan, Lord Fairfax, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:94

Letter to John Quincy Adams – January 20, 1799

"You know, my good Sir, that it is not the policy of this Country to employ Aliens, where it can well be avoided, either in the Civil or Military walks of life; but, for want of provident care and foresight, they will find themselves (indeed begin now to feel it) under the necessity of resorting to foreign aid for skilful men in the Engineering and Artillery Corps. and if my namesake is well instructed in either of these branches of Military science, which, by the by is hardly to be expected from his age, there would be no doubt of his favourable reception, without which I think it would be deceptive to encourage hopes of employment in the Army of the United States: for there is a species of selfimportance in all foreign Officers, that cannot be gratified without doing injustice to meritorious characters of our own Countrymen, who conceive, and justly, where there is no great preponderancy of experience, or merit, that they are entitled to the occupancy of all Offices in the gift of their Government." – George Washington, letter to John Quincy Adams, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:98

"When I offered my Valedictory Address to the People of the United States, I little thought that any event would arise in my day, that could withdraw me from the Retreat in wch. I expected to pass the remnant of a life (worn down with cares) in ruminating on past scenes, and contemplating the future granduer of this rising Empire. But we know little of ourselves, and much less of the designs of Providence." – George Washington, letter to John Quincy Adams, Mount Vernon, January 20, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:99

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – January 27, 1799

"On re-considering the Uniform for the Commander in Chief, it has become a matter of doubt with me (although, as it respected myself, personally, I was against all Embroidery), whether embroidery on the Cape, Cuffs and Pockets of the Coat, and none on the Buff waistcoat, would not have a disjointed, and aukward appearance." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, January 27, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:110

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – February 10, 1799

"Concealment is a species of mis-information; and misrepresentation and false alarms found the ground work of opposition." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, February 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:126

Letter to Maryland Senator James Lloyd – February 11, 1799

"It is not surprising that the latter should not prove agreeable to the taste of some Gentlemen in the Ho. of R -- p -- s. It served to place the views and objects of the Fr: Government in too conspicuous a light to be mistaken; and of course did not accord with their purposes. I wish, however, they were in every man's hand, for I am persuaded the great mass of our Citizens require only to understand matters rightly, to form right decisions; whilst the business of some among us seems to be, to pervert, and lead their judgments astray by false alarms, and a misrepresentation of facts." – George Washington, letter to Maryland Senator James Lloyd, Mount Vernon, February 11, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:129

"For the compliment you have been pleased to pay me, in asking my opinion of the eligibility of accepting your late appointment in the Army of the United States, I pray you to accept my thanks. ... However desirous I might have been of seeing you engaged in that line, candour requires I should declare, that under your statement of the circumstances of the case, I am inclined to believe that your Services in the civil line, in the present crisis of our affairs, and the temper in which this State in particular, appears to be (if it be fair to form a judgment from the Acts of its Legislature) would be more important: The first is contingent, of course may, or may not be called for, according to our doings in the latter. The second is in existence, and requires the active (and I will venture to add) the immediate, and unremitting exertions of the friends of Order and good government; to prevent the evils which it is but too apparent another description of men, among us, are endeavouring to involve the United States." – George Washington, letter to John Tayloe, Mount Vernon, February 12, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:130-131

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – February 25, 1799

"[It] is a maxim with me, that in times of imminent danger to a Country, every true Patriot should occupy the Post in which he can render them the most effectually." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, February 25, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:136

Letter to William Augustine Washington – February 27, 1799

"Of the recent afflicting event [the deaths of two children], which was related therein, we had received previous accounts; and on that, as on the former occasions of a similar nature, sympathized sincerely in your sorrows. But these are the decrees of an Allwise Providence, against whose dictates the skill, or foresight of Man can be of no avail; it is incumbent upon him therefore, to submit with as little repining as the sensibility of his nature will admit. This will have its course, but may be greatly ameliorated by philosophical reflection & resignation. As you have three children left, I trust they will be spared to you; and sincerely hope that in them you will find consolation & comfort." – George Washington, letter to William Augustine Washington, February 27, 1799; Papers, Retirement Series: 2:109

Letter to Reverend Jedediah Morse – February 28, 1799

"The letter with which you were pleased to favour me, dated the first instant, accompanying your thanksgiving Sermon came duly to hand. ... For the latter I pray you to accept my thanks. I have read it, and the Appendix with pleasure; and wish the latter at least, could meet a more general circulation than it probably will have, for it contains important information; as little known out of a small circle as the dissimulation of it would be useful, if spread through the Community." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jedediah Morse, Mount Vernon, February 28, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:140

Letter to President John Adams – March 3, 1799

"I sincerely pray, that in the discharge of these arduous and important duties committed to you, your health may be unimpaired, and that you may long live to enjoy those blessings which must flow to our Country, if we should be so happy as to pass this critical period in an honourable and dignified manner, without being involved in the horrors and calamities of War." – George Washington, letter to President John Adams, Mount Vernon, March 3, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:144

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – March 25, 1799

"A sixteen years absence from home (with short intervals only) could not fail to derange them considerably; and to require all the time I can spare from the usual avocations of life, to bring them into tune again. But this is not all, nor the worst, for being the Executor,

the Administrator, and Trustee of, and for other Estates, my greatest anxiety is to leave all these concerns in such a clear, and distinct form, as that no reproach may attach itself to me, when I have taken my departure for the land of Spirits." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, March 25, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:158

Letter to James Welch – April 7, 1799

"To contract new Debts, is not the way to pay old ones." – George Washington, letter to James Welch, Apr. 7, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:177

Letter to Daniel Morgan – April 10, 1799

"I assure you my dear sir it gave me not a little pleasure, to find the account of your death in the news papers was not founded in fact and I sincerely pray that many years may elapse before that event takes place, and that in the mean time you may be restored to the full enjoyment of your health and to your usefulness in Society being With very great regard etc." – George Washington, letter to Daniel Morgan, Mount Vernon, April 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:183

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – April 23, 1799

"I have no object seperated from the general welfare, to promote. I have no predilections, no prejudices to gratify; No friends whose interests or views I wish to advance at the expence of propriety, and I may add in the sincerity of my heart, there is no wish of it equal to that of their being no exigency in our Affrs. which may call me from retirement to take the direction of our forces." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, April 23, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:193

Letter to Reverend Jedediah Morse – May 26, 1799

"I thank you for your Sermon "Exhibiting the present dangers, and consequent duties of the Citizens of the United States of America" which came to hand by the last Post: and which I am persuaded I shall read with approbating pleasure, as soon as some matters on which I am engaged at present, are dispatch'd." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Jedediah Morse, Mount Vernon, May 26, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:215

Letter to John Marshall – June 16, 1799

"In the Death of Mr. [Parick] Henry (of which I fear there is little doubt) not only Virginia, but our Country at large has sustained a very serious loss. I sincerely lament his death as a friend; and the loss of his eminent talents as a Patriot." – George Washington, letter to John Marshall, Mount Vernon, June 16, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:235

Letter to Archibald Blair – June 24, 1799

"At any time I should have recd. the account of this Gentleman's [Patrick Henry] death with sorrow. In the present crisis of our public affairs, I have heard it with deep regret. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and not to be scanned by short sighted man; whose duty is submission, without repining at its decrees." – George Washington, letter to Archibald Blair, Mount Vernon, June 24, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:244

"My breast never harboured a suspicion that Mr. [Patrick] Henry was unfriendly to me, although I had reason to believe that the same Spirit which was at work to destroy all confidence in the Public functionaries, was not less busy in poisoning private fountains, and sowing the Seeds of distrust amg. men of the same Political sentiments. Mr. Henry had given me the most unequivocal proof whilst I had the honor to command the Troops of the United States in their Revolutionary struggle, that he was not to be worked upon by Intriguers; and not conscious that I had furnished any cause for it, I could not suppose that without a cause, he had become my enemy since." – George Washington, letter to Archibald Blair, Mount Vernon, June 24, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:245

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. – June 25, 1799

"The public mind has changed, and is yet changing every day, with respect to French principles. The people begin to see clearly, that the words and actions of the governing powers of that Nation can not be reconciled: and that, hitherto, they have been misled by sounds; in a word that while they were in pursuit of the shadow they had lost the substance. The late changes in the Congressional Representation sufficiently evince this opinion: for of the two sent from the State of Georgia; one certain, some say both are Federal characters; of six from South Carolina five are, decidedly so; of ten from North Carolina, seven may be counted upon; and of nineteen from this State (Virginia) eight are certain, a ninth doubtful, and, but for some egregious mismanagement, Eleven supporters of Governmental measures would have been elected. ... I mention these facts, merely to shew that we are progressing to a better state of

things ; not because we are quite right yet. Time I hope will shew us the necessity, or at least the propriety of becoming so. God grant it, and soon." – George Washington, letter to Governor John Trumbull, Mount Vernon, June 25, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:249

"It is unfortunate when men cannot, or will not, see danger at a distance; or seeing it, are undecided [sic] in the means which are necessary to avert, or keep it afar off." – George Washington, letter to Governor John Trumbull, Mount Vernon, June 25, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:250

"[O]ffensive operations, often times, is the surest, if not the only (in some cases) means of defence." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor John Trumbull, Jr., Mount Vernon, June 25, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:250

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – August 4, 1799

"The question I allude to, is, whether the Officers of Government intended to be acquiescent under the direct charge of bribery, exhibited in such aggravated terms by the Editor of the above Paper [Aurora]? The most dangerous consequences would in my opinion, have flowed from such silence, and therefore could not be overlooked. and yet, I am persuaded that if a rope, a little longer had been given him, he would have hung himself up something worse; if possible: for there seems to be no bounds to his attempts to destroy all confidence, that the People might, and (without sufficient proof of its demerits) ought to have, in their government; thereby dissolving it, and producing a disunion of the States. That this is the object of such Publications as the Aurora and other Papers of the same complexion teem with, those who "run may read." the motives which are ascribed to them, notwithstanding." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, August 4, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:323

Letter to Robert Lewis – August 18, 1799

"It is demonstratively clear, that on this Estate (Mount Vernon) I have more working Negroes by a full moiety, than can be employed to any advantage in the farming system, and I shall never turn Planter thereon. ... To sell the overplus I cannot, because I am principled against this kind of traffic in the human species. To hire them out, is almost as bad, because they could not be disposed of in families to any advantage, and to disperse the families I have an aversion." – George Washington, letter to Robert Lewis, August 18, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:338

Letter to Reverend Mason Locke Weems – August 29, 1799

"I have been duly favored with your letter of the 20th. instant, accompanying "The Philanthropist" ... For your politeness in sending the latter, I pray you to receive my best thanks. Much indeed is it to be wished that the sentiments contained in the Pamphlet, and the doctrine it endeavors to inculcate, were more prevalent. Happy would it be for this country at least, if they were so. But while the passions of Mankind are under so little restraint as they are among us. and while there are so many motives, and views, to bring them into action we may wish for, but will never see the accomplishment of it." – George Washington, letter to Reverend Mason Locke Weems, Mount Vernon, August 29, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:347

Letter to Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. – August 30, 1799

"It is too interesting not to be again repeated, that if principles, instead of men, are not the steady pursuit of the Federalists, their cause will soon be at an end. If these are pursued, they will not divide at the next Election of a President." – George Washington, letter to Connecticut Governor John Trumbull, Jr., Mount Vernon, August 30, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:349

Letter to James Anderson – September 10, 1799

"For at the same time that I should expect a reasonable compensation for the use of the property it would be equally my wish that you should find your account in the profit, arising therefrom. Live, and let live, is, in my opinion, a maxim founded in true policy; and is one I am disposed to pursue." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, September 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:357

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – September 14, 1799

"[W]hat, to me is more valuable, My time, that I mostly regard." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, September 14, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:360

Letter to Burges Ball – September 22, 1799

"The death of near relations [brother, Charles Washington] always produces awful and affecting emotions, under whatsoever circumstances it may happen. That of my brother's has been so long expected, and his latter days so uncomfortable to himself, must

have prepared all around him for the stroke; though painful in the effect. ... I was the first, and am now the last, of my fathers Children by the second marriage who remain. when I shall be called upon to follow them, is known only to the giver of life. When the summons comes I shall endeavour to obey it with a good grace." – George Washington, letter to Burgess Ball, Mount Vernon, September 22, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:372

Letter to William Vans Murray – October 26, 1799

"The Affairs of Europe have taken a most important, and interesting turn. What will be the final result of the uninterrupted successes of the combined Arms, (so far as the accounts which have been received in this Country, are brought down) is not for a man at the distance of 3000 miles from the great theatre of Action, to predict; but he may wish, and ardently wish on principles of humanity, and for the benevolent purpose of putting a stop to the further effusion of human blood, that the successful Powers may know at what Point to give cessation to the Sword, for the purpose of negotiation. It is not uncommon, however, in prosperous gales, to forget that adverse winds may blow." – George Washington, letter to William Vans Murray, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:399

"You are going to be employed in an important, and delicate Negotiation; for the success of which, in all its relations, no one more ardently, and sincerely prays than I do." – George Washington, letter to William Vans Murray, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:400

Letter to Daniel Morgan – October 26, 1799

"I do not know whether any provision has been made for Chaplins, and, at any rate, I cannot tell whether or not it will be thought proper to engage a temporary Chaplin, which, from the tenor of your letter seems to be Mr. Hill's object. I shall, however, transmit your letter to the Secretary of War, and will communicate to you whatever he may give me in reply on the subject. ... If provision is not already made for Chaplins I think it will be done, and it would certainly be very desirable to engage in that capacity such respectable Characters as Mr. Hill appears to be." – George Washington, letter to Daniel Morgan, Mount Vernon, October 26, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:406

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – October 27, 1799

"I do not observe in the "Act for the better organizing the Troops of the U.S. &ca." that any provision is made for Chaplins. Whether they are provided for in any other existing law, you can best tell. Mr. Hill appears to be a deserving and valuable Character; but from the tenor of General Morgan's letter, he seems rather to have it in view to officiate for a time with the Troops that may be at Harper's Ferry, than to wish a permanent appointment. Whether this is his intention or not I cannot say, neither do I know whether his services could be admitted on those terms. With your first convenience I will thank you to inform me on this subject." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, October 27, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:413

Letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering – November 3, 1799

"Your private and confidential letter of the 24th. Ult. came duly, and safely to hand. Its contents, I confess, surprised me. But as men will view the same things in different lights, I would now, fain hope that the P -- [President John Adams] has caught the true one; and, that good will come from the Mission, which is about to depart. ... These are my wishes, and no one is more ardent in them; but I see nothing in the present aspect of European Affairs on which to build them. Nor no possible evil under the same circumstances, that could result from delay, in forwarding it. ... But as the measure is resolved on, and progressing, it must be left to time, and a little will do it, to develop the consequences. I trust, as you do, that that Providence which has protected all our steps hitherto, will continue to direct them; to the consumation of our happiness and prosperity." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of State Timothy Pickering, Mount Vernon, November 3, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:418

Letter to Secretary of War James McHenry – November 17, 1799

"I have, for sometime past, viewed the political concerns of the United States with an anxious, and painful eye. They appear to me, to be moving by hasty strides to some awful crisis; but in what they will result, that Being, who sees, foresees, and directs all things, alone can tell. The Vessel is afloat, or very nearly so, and considering myself as a Passenger only, I shall trust to the Mariners whose duty it is to watch, to steer it into a safe Port." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, November 17, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:428-429

"The charge of British influence, in the appointment of Major Pinckney, 75 to be Minister at the Court of London, is a perfect enigma; my curiosity leads me to enquire on what ground it is built, and you would oblige in giving me an explanation. Was it the measure, or the Man, that gave rise to this insinuation? the first it cannot be; because an exchange of Ministers had long been invited; sought after; and the tardiness of G. Britain in not meeting the advances of the U. States in this respect, was considered, and complained of, as an Indignity. Could it be the Man? Could he, who had fought against that Country; had bled in defence of his own, in the conflict; of acknowledged abilities, and irreproachable character, be suspected of undue influence? if neither, I ask again, on what is the

accusation founded? The whole, is a mystery to me! And merely to satisfy my curiosity, I wish to have it un. riddled; and not, from the present view wch. I have of the subject, because I shall think myself bd. to answer any interrogatories which maybe dictated by insidious impertinence." – George Washington, letter to Secretary of War James McHenry, Mount Vernon, November 17, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:429

Letter to Ralph Wormeley – November 18, 1799

"Whence the Report of my visiting Norfolk could have arisen, I know not. From any intention of mine it did not, for nothing was ever more, foreign from them. I have never been farther from home since I left the Chair of Government, than the Federal City except when I was called to Philadelphia by the Secretary of War; and that distance, I am persuaded will circumscribe my Walks; unless, which heaven avert! I should be obliged to resume a military career." – George Washington, letter to Ralph Wormeley, Mount Vernon, November 18, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:430-431

Letter to Benjamin Goodhue – November 22, 1799

"Without expressing any opinion with respect to the Embassy which Sailed from this Country; I will hope for the best: Being among those who believes that Providence after its numberless favours toward us, will still continue an outstretched arm to help, and deliver us from the evils with which we have been, and continue to be, assailed." – George Washington, letter to Benjamin Goodhue, Mount Vernon, November 22, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:436

Letter to James Anderson – December 10, 1799

"A System closely pursued (altho' it may not in all its parts be the best that could be devised) is attended with innumerable advantages." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:460

"[W]hen no plan is fixed, when directions flow from day to day, the business becomes a mere chaos: frequently shifting, and sometimes at a stand, for want of directions what to do, or the manner of doing it. These occasion a waste of time, which is of more importance than is generally imagined." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:460

"Nothing can so effectually obviate the evil, as an established, and regular course of proceeding; made known to all who are actors in it; that all may, thereby, be enabled to play their parts, to advantage. ... This would give ease to the principal Conductor of the business; It would be more satisfactory to the persons who immediately Overlook it; and would be less harrassing to those who labour; as well as more beneficial for those who employ them." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:460-461

"Economy in all things is as commendable, in the Manager as it is beneficial and desirable by the Employer." – George Washington, letter to James Anderson, Mount Vernon, December 10, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:461

Letter to Major General Alexander Hamilton – December 12, 1799

"The Establishment of an Institution of this kind, upon a respectable and extensive basis, has ever been considered by me as an Object of primary importance to this Country; and while I was in the Chair of Government I omitted no proper opportunity of recommending it, in my public Speeches, and other ways, to the attention of the Legislature." – George Washington, letter to Major General Alexander Hamilton, Mount Vernon, December 12, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:473

Final Words Spoken to Tobias Lear – December 14, 1799

"Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. I believed, from my first attack, that I should not survive it. My breath cannot last long." – George Washington, spoken to Doctor James Craik before his death, recounted by Tobias Lear, Mount Vernon, December 14, 1799; Ford 14:169

"I am just going. Have me decently buried, and do not let my body be put into the Vault in less than two [three] days after I am dead." – George Washington, spoken minutes before his death and recounted by Tobias Lear, Mount Vernon, December 14, 1799; Ford 14:170

"Tis well." – George Washington, last words, as recorded by Tobias Lear, in his journal, December 14, 1799; Ford 14:170

Excerpts from Last Will and Testament

"Upon the decease of my wife, it is my Will and desire that all the Slaves which I hold in my own right, shall receive their freedom. To emancipate them during her life, would, tho' earnestly wished by me, be attended with such insuperable difficulties on account of their intermixture by Marriages with the Dower Negroes, as to excite the most painful sensations, if not disagreeable consequences from the latter, while both descriptions are in the occupancy of the same Proprietor; it not being in my power, under the tenure by which the Dower Negroes are held, to manumit them. And whereas among those who will receive freedom according to this devise, there may be some, who from old age or bodily infirmities, and others who on account of their infancy, that will be unable to support themselves; it is my Will and desire that all who come under the first and second description shall be comfortably clothed and fed by my heirs while they live." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:276

"And I do moreover most pointedly, and most solemnly enjoin it upon my Executors hereafter named, or the Survivors of them, to see that this [cl]ause respecting Slaves, and every part thereof be religiously fulfilled at the Epoch at which it is directed to take place; without evasion, neglect or delay, after the Crops which may then be on the ground axe harvested, particularly as it respects [4] the aged and infirm." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:277

"To the Trustees (Governors, or by whatsoever other name they may be designated) of the Academy in the Town of Alexandria, I give and bequeath, in Trust, four thousand dollars, or in other words twenty of the shares which I hold in the Bank of Alexandria, towards the support of a Free school established at, and annexed to, the said Academy; for the purpose of Educating such Orphan children, or the children of such other poor and indigent persons as are unable to accomplish it with their own means; and who, in the judgment of the Trustees of the said Seminary, are best entitled to the benefit of this donation." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:278

"[I]t has always been a source of serious regret with me, to see the youth of these United States sent to foreign Countries for the purpose of Education, often before their minds were formed, or they had imbibed any adequate ideas of the happiness of their own; contracting, too frequently, not only habits of dissipation and extravagance, but principles unfriendly to Republican Governmt. and to the true and genuine liberties of mankind; which, thereafter are rarely overcome." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:279

"I give and bequeath in perpetuity the fifty shares which I hold in the Potomac Company (under the aforesaid Acts of the Legislature of Virginia) towards the endowment of a UNIVERSITY to be established within the limits of the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the General Government, if that government should incline to extend a fostering hand towards it." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:280

"The hundred shares which I held in the James River Company, I have given, and now confirm in perpetuity to, and for the use and benefit of Liberty-Hall Academy, in the County of Rockbridge, in the Commonwealth of Virga." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:281

"To the Reverend, now Bryan, Lord Fairfax, I give a Bible in three large folio volumes, 30 with notes, presented to me by the Right reverend Thomas Wilson, Bishop of Sodor and Man." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:286

"To each of my Nephews, William Augustine Washington, George Lewis, George Steptoe Washington, Bushrod Washington and Samuel Washington, I give one of the Swords or Cutteaux of which I may die possessed; and they are to chuse in the order they are named. These Swords are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheath them for the purpose of shedding blood, except it be for self defence, or in defence of their Country and its rights; and in the latter case, to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands, to the relinquishment thereof." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:288

"The family Vault at Mount Vernon requiring repairs, and being improperly situated besides, I desire that a new one of Brick, and upon a larger Scale, may be built at the foot of what is commonly called the Vineyard Inclosure, on the ground which is marked out. 53 In which my remains, with those of my deceased relatives (now in the old Vault) and such others of my family as may clause to be entombed there, may be deposited. And it is my express desire that my Corpse may be Interred in a private manner, without parade, or funeral Oration." – George Washington, Last Will and Testament, 1799; Fitzpatrick 37:293

APPENDICES



Stained glass window of Washington kneeling in prayer, Capitol Prayer Room, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.

APPENDIX I – THE RULES OF CIVILITY AND DECENT BEHAVIOR IN COMPANY AND CONVERSATION

1. Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.
2. When in company, put not your hands to any part of the body not usually discovered.
3. Show nothing to your friend that may affright him.
4. In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming voice, or drum with your fingers or feet.
5. If you cough, sneeze, sigh, or yawn, do it not loud but privately, and speak not in your yawning, but put your handkerchief or hand before your face and turn aside.
6. Sleep not when others speak; sit not when others stand; speak not when you should hold your peace; walk not on when others stop.
7. Put not off your clothes in the presence of others, nor go out your chamber half dressed.
8. At play and at fire, it's good manners to give place to the last comer, and affect not to speak louder than ordinary.
9. Spit not into the fire, nor stoop low before it; neither put your hands into the flames to warm them, nor set your feet upon the fire, especially if there be meat before it.
10. When you sit down, keep your feet firm and even; without putting one on the other or crossing them.
11. Shift not yourself in the sight of others, nor gnaw your nails.
12. Shake not the head, feet, or legs; roll not the eyes; lift not one eyebrow higher than the other, wring not the mouth, and bedew no man's face with your spittle by [approaching too near] him [when] you speak.
13. Kill no vermin, or fleas, lice, ticks, etc. in the sight of others; if you see any filth or thick spittle put your foot dexterously upon it; if it be upon the clothes of your companions, put it off privately, and if it be upon your own clothes, return thanks to him who puts it off.
14. Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk on which another reads or writes; lean not upon anyone.
15. Keep your nails clean and short, also your hands and teeth clean, yet without showing any great concern for them.
16. Do not puff up the cheeks, loll not out the tongue with the hands, or beard, thrust out the lips, or bite them, or keep the lips too open or too close.
17. Be no flatterer, neither play with any that delight not to be played withal.
18. Read no letter, books, or papers in company, but when there is a necessity for the doing of it, you must ask leave; come not near the books or writings of another so as to read them unless desired, or give your opinion of them unasked; also look not nigh when another is writing a letter.
19. Let your countenance be pleasant but in serious matters somewhat grave.
20. The gestures of the body must be suited to the discourse you are upon.
21. Reproach none for the infirmities of nature, nor delight to put them that have in mind of thereof.
22. Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another though he were your enemy.
23. When you see a crime punished, you may be inwardly pleased; but [] show pity to the suffering offender.
24. Do not laugh too loud or too much at any Public Spectacle.
25. Superfluous compliments and all affectation of ceremonies are to be avoided, yet where due they are not to be neglected.
26. In putting off your hat to persons of distinction, as noblemen, justices, churchmen, etc., make a reverence, bowing more or less according to the custom of the better bred, and quality of the persons; among your equals expect not always that they should begin with you first; but to pull off the hat when there is no need is affectation, in the manner of saluting and resaluting in word keep to the most usual custom.

27. 'Tis ill manners to bid one more eminent than yourself be covered, as well as not to do it to whom it is due. Likewise he that makes too much haste to put on his hat does not well, yet he ought to put it on at the first, or at most the second time of being asked; now what is herein spoken, of qualification in behavior or saluting, ought also to be observed in taking of place and sitting down for ceremonies without bounds are troublesome.
28. If any one come to speak to you while you are [are] sitting, stand up, though he be your inferior, and when you present seats, let it be to everyone according to his degree.
29. When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop, and retire, especially if it be at a door or any straight place, to give way for him to pass.
30. In walking the highest place in most countries seems to be on the right hand; therefore place yourself on the left of him whom you desire to honor: but if three walk together the middle place is the most honorable; the wall is usually given to the most worthy if two walk together.
31. If anyone far surpasses others, either in age, estate, or merits [and] would give place to a meaner than himself, the same ought not to accept it, s[ave he offer] it above once or twice.
32. To one that is your equal, or not much inferior, you are to give the chief place in your lodging, and he to whom it is offered ought at the first to refuse it, but at the second to accept though not without acknowledging his own unworthiness.
33. They that are in dignity or in office have in all places precedency, but whilst they are young, they ought to respect those that are their equals in birth or other qualities, though they have no public charge.
34. It is good manners to prefer them to whom we speak before ourselves, especially if they be above us, with whom in no sort we ought to begin.
35. Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.
36. Artificers and persons of low degree ought not to use many ceremonies to lords or others of high degree, but respect and highly honor them, and those of high degree ought to treat them with affability and courtesy, without arrogance.
37. In speaking to men of quality do not lean nor look them full in the face, nor approach too near them at left. Keep a full pace from them.
38. In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician if you be not knowing therein.
39. In writing or speaking, give to every person his due title according to his degree and the custom of the place.
40. Strive not with your superior in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.
41. Undertake not to teach your equal in the art himself professes; it savours of arrogance.
42. Let thy ceremonies in Courtesy be proper to the Dignity of his place with whom thou converses for it is absurd to act same with a clown and a prince.
43. Do not express joy before one sick in pain, for that contrary passion will aggravate his misery.
44. When a man does all he can, though it succeed not well, blame not him that did it.
45. Being to advise or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, and presently or at some other time; in what terms to do it; and in reproving show no signs of cholor but do it with all sweetness and mildness.
46. Take all admonitions thankfully in what time or place soever given, but afterwards not being culpable take a time and place convenient to let him [him] know it that gave them.
47. Mock not nor jest at any thing of importance. Break no jests that are sharp, biting; and if you deliver any thing witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing thereat yourself.
48. Wherein you reprove another be unblameable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precepts.
49. Use no reproachful language against any one; neither curse nor revile.
50. Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any.

51. Wear not your clothes foul, or ripped, or dusty, but see they be brushed once every day at least and take heed that you approach not to any uncleanness.
52. In your apparel be modest and endeavor to accommodate nature, rather than to procure admiration; keep to the fashion of your equals, such as are civil and orderly with respect to time and places.
53. Run not in the streets, neither go too slowly, nor with mouth open; go not shaking of arms, nor upon the toes, nor in a dancing [damaged manuscript].
54. Play not the peacock, looking every where about you, to see if you be well decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly and clothes handsomely.
55. Eat not in the streets, nor in your house, out of season.
56. Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for 'tis better to be alone than in bad company.
57. In walking up and down in a house, only with one in company if he be greater than yourself, at the first give him the right hand and stop not till he does and be not the first that turns, and when you do turn let it be with your face towards him; if he be a man of great quality walk not with him cheek by jowl but somewhat behind him but yet in such a manner that he may easily speak to you.
58. Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for 'tis a sign of a tractable and commendable nature, and in all causes of passion permit reason to govern.
59. Never express anything unbecoming, nor act against the rules before your inferiors.
60. Be not immodest in urging your friends to discover a secret.
61. Utter not base and frivolous things among grave and learned men, nor very difficult questions or subjects among the ignorant, or things hard to be believed; stuff not your discourse with sentences among your betters nor equals.
62. Speak not of doleful things in a time of mirth or at the table; speak not of melancholy things or death and wounds, and if others mention them, change if you can the discourse; tell not your dreams, but to your intimate friend.
63. A man ought not to value himself of his achievements or rare qualities [damaged manuscript] virtue or kindred.
64. Break not a jest where none take pleasure in mirth; laugh not alone, nor at all without occasion; deride no man's misfortune though there seem to be some cause.
65. Speak not injurious words neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none although they give occasion.
66. Be not froward but friendly and courteous, the first to salute, hear, and answer; and be not pensive when it's a time to converse.
67. Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commanding.
68. Go not thither, where you know not whether you shall be welcome or not; give not advice without being asked, and when desired do it briefly.
69. If two contend together take not the part of either unconstrained, and be not obstinate in your own opinion; in things indifferent be of the major side.
70. Reprehend not the imperfections of others, for that belongs to parents, masters, and superiors.
71. Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.
72. Speak not in an unknown tongue in company but in your own language and that as those of quality do and not as the vulgar; sublime matters treat seriously.
73. Think before you speak; pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.
74. When another speaks, be attentive yourself; and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not nor prompt him without desired; interrupt him not, nor answer him till his speech has ended.
75. In the midst of Discourse ask not of what one treateth but if you Perceive any Stop because of your coming you may well intreat him gently to Proceed: If a Person of Quality comes in while your Conversing it's handsome to Repeat what was said before.

76. While you are talking, point not with your finger at him of whom you discourse, nor approach too near him to whom you talk especially to his face.
77. Treat with men at fit times about business and whisper not in the company of others.
78. Make no comparisons and if any of the company be commended for any brave act of virtue, commend not another for the same.
79. Be not apt to relate news if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard, name not your author always; a secret discover not.
80. Be not tedious in discourse or in reading unless you find the company pleased therewith.
81. Be not curious to know the affairs of others, neither approach those that speak in private.
82. Undertake not what you cannot perform but be careful to keep your promise.
83. When you deliver a matter do it without passion and with discretion, however mean the person be you do it to.
84. When your superiors talk to anybody hear not neither speak nor laugh.
85. In company of those of higher quality than yourself, speak not 'til you are asked a question, then stand upright, put off your hat and answer in few words.
86. In disputes, be not so desirous to overcome as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion and submit to the judgment of the major part, specially if they are judges of the dispute.
87. Let thy carriage be such as becomes a Man Grave Settled and attentive to that which is spoken. Contradict not at every turn what others Say.
88. Be not diverse in discourse; make not many digressions; nor repeat often the same manner of discourse.
89. Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust.
90. Being set at meat scratch not, neither spit, cough, or blow your nose except there's a necessity for it.
91. Make no show of taking great delight in your victuals; feed not with greediness; eat your bread with a knife; lean not on the table; neither find fault with what you eat.
92. Take no salt or cut bread with your knife greasy.
93. Entertaining anyone at table it is decent to present him with meat; undertake not to help others undesired by the master.
94. If you soak bread in the sauce, let it be no more than what you put in your mouth at a time and blow not your broth at table; let it stay till cools of itself.
95. Put not your meat to your mouth with your knife in your hand; neither spit forth the stones of any fruit pie upon a dish nor cast anything under the table.
96. It's unbecoming to heap much to one's meat; keep your fingers clean; when foul wipe them on a corner of your table napkin.
97. Put not another bite into your mouth till the former be swallowed; let not your morsels be too big.
98. Drink not nor talk with your mouth full; neither gaze about you while you are a drinking.
99. Drink not too leisurely nor yet too hastily. Before and after drinking wipe your lips; breathe not then or ever with too great a noise, for it is an evil.
100. Cleanse not your teeth with the table cloth napkin, fork, or knife; but if others do it, let it be done without a peep to them.
101. Rinse not your mouth in the presence of others.
102. It is out of use to call upon the company often to eat; nor need you drink to others every time you drink.
103. In the company of your betters, be not longer in eating than they are; lay not your arm but only your hand upon the table.

104. It belongs to the chiefest in company to unfold his napkin and fall to meat first; but he ought then to begin in time and to dispatch with dexterity that the slowest may have time allowed him.

105. Be not angry at table whatever happens and if you have reason to be so, show it not but on a cheerful countenance especially if there be strangers, for good humor makes one dish of meat and whey.

106. Set not yourself at the upper of the table but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, lest you should trouble the company.

107. If others talk at table be attentive but talk not with meat in your mouth.

108. When you speak of God or his Attributes, let it be seriously; reverence, honor and obey your natural parents although they be poor.

109. Let your recreations be manful not sinful.

110. Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.

– "George Washington: A Collection," compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988) Prologue, pp. 19-26

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

APPENDIX II – First Inaugural Address

New York, Thursday, April 30, 1789

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the fourteenth day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision, as the asylum of my declining years—a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence, one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver, is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope, is, that if, in executing this task, I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow citizens, and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination, for the weighty and untried cares before me; my *error* will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the public summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe; who presides in the councils of nations; and whose providential aid can supply every human defect; that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the People of the United States, a Government instituted by themselves for these essential purposes, and may enable every instrument employed in its administration, to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the Great Author of every public and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow citizens at large less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude, along with an humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none under the influence of which the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

By the article establishing the Executive Department, it is made the duty of the President “to recommend to your consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” The circumstances under which I now meet you will acquit me from entering into that subject, further than to refer to the great constitutional charter under which you are assembled, and which, in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actuate me, to substitute, in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism, which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honorable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges that, as on one side no local prejudices or attachments—no separate views, nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests; so on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the pre-eminence of free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can inspire: since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage; between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity: since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the external rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally*, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American People.

Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide how far an exercise of the occasional power, delegated by the fifth article of the constitution, is rendered expedient at the present juncture, by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the public good: for I assure myself, that, whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience, a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the public harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question, how far the former can be more impregably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and will therefore be as brief as possible. When I was first honored with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty, required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline, as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the Executive Department; and must accordingly pray, that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed, may, during my continuance in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the public good may be thought to require.

Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave; but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that, since he has been pleased to favor the American People with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government for the security of their union, and the advancement of their happiness, so his divine blessing may be equally *conspicuous* in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures, on which the success of this Government must depend.

Geo. Washington.

On Monday, May 18, 1789, the Senate waited on the President of the United States, and the Vice President, in their name, delivered to him the following.

Sir:

We, the Senate of the United States, return you our sincere thanks for your excellent speech delivered to both Houses of Congress; congratulate you on the complete organization of the Federal Government; and felicitate ourselves and our fellow-citizens on your elevation to the office of President—an office highly important by the powers constitutionally annexed to it, and extremely honorable from the manner in which the appointment is made. The unanimous suffrage of the elective body in your favor, is peculiarly expressive of the gratitude, confidence, and affection, of the citizens of America, and is the highest testimonial, at once of your merit and their esteem. We are sensible, sir, that nothing but the voice of your fellow-citizens could have called you from a retreat, chosen with the fondest predilection, endeared by habit, and consecrated to the repose of declining years. We rejoice, and with us all America, that, in obedience to the call of our common country, you have returned once more to public life. In you all parties confide; in you all interests unite; and we have no doubt that your past services, great as they have been, will be equalled by your future exertions; and that your prudence and sagacity as a statesman will tend to avert the dangers to which we were exposed, to give stability to the present government, and dignity and splendor to that country which your skill and valor, as a soldier, so eminently contributed to raise to independence and empire.

When we contemplate the coincidence of circumstances, and wonderful combination of causes, which gradually prepared the People of this country for independence: when we contemplate the rise, progress, and termination of the late war, which gave them a name among the nations of the earth; we are, with you, unavoidably led to acknowledge and adore the Great Arbiter of the universe, by whom empires rise and fall. A review of the many signal instances of divine interposition in favor of this country, claims our most pious gratitude; and permit us, sir, to observe, that, among the great events which have led to the formation and establishment of a Federal Government, we esteem your acceptance of the office of President as one of the most propitious and important.

In the execution of the trust reposed in us, we shall endeavor to pursue that enlarged and liberal policy to which your speech so happily directs. We are conscious that the prosperity of each State is inseparably connected with the welfare of all; and that, in promoting the latter, we shall effectually advance the former. In full persuasion of this truth, it shall be our invariable aim to divest ourselves of local prejudices and attachments, and to view the great assemblage of communities and interests committed to our charge with an equal eye. We feel, sir, the force, and acknowledge the justness of the observation, that the foundation of our national policy should be laid in private morality. If individuals be not influenced by moral principles, it is in vain to look for public virtue; it is, therefore, the duty of legislators to enforce, both by precept and example, the utility, as well as the necessity, of a strict adherence to the rules of distributive justice. We beg you to be assured that the Senate will, at all times, cheerfully co-operate in every measure which may strengthen the Union, conduce to the happiness, or secure and perpetuate the liberties of this great confederated republic.

We commend you, sir, to the protection of Almighty God, earnestly beseeching him long to preserve a life so valuable and dear to the People of the United States, and that your administration may be prosperous to the nation and glorious to yourself.

To which the President of the United States replied as follows:

Gentlemen:

I thank you for your address, in which the most affectionate sentiments are expressed in the most obliging terms. The coincidence of circumstances which led to this auspicious crisis; the confidence reposed in me by my fellow-citizens; and the assistance I may expect from counsels which will be dictated by an enlarged and liberal policy; seem to presage a more prosperous issue to my administration than a diffidence of my abilities had taught me to anticipate. I now feel myself inexpressibly happy in a belief that Heaven, which has

done so much for our infant nation, will not withdraw its providential influence before our political felicity shall have been completed, and in a conviction that the Senate will at all times co-operate in every measure which may tend to promote the welfare of this confederated republic. Thus supported by a firm trust in the Great Arbiter of the universe, aided by the collected wisdom of the Union, and imploring the divine benediction on our joint exertions in the service of our country, I readily engage with you in the arduous but pleasing task of attempting to make a nation happy.

Geo. Washington.

On Friday, May 8, 1789, the Speaker, attended by the members of the House of Representatives, waited on the President of the United States, and presented to him the following.

Sir:

The Representatives of the People of the United States present their congratulations on the event by which your fellow-citizens have attested the pre-eminence of your merit. You have long held the first place in their esteem. You have often received tokens of their affection. You now possess the only proof that remained of their gratitude for your services, of their reverence for your wisdom, and of their confidence in your virtues. You enjoy the highest, because the truest honor of being the first Magistrate, by the unanimous choice of the freest people on the face of the earth.

We well know the anxieties with which you must have obeyed a summons from the repose reserved for your declining years, into public scenes, of which you had taken your leave for ever. But the obedience was due to the occasion. It is already applauded by the universal joy which welcomes you to your station. And we cannot doubt that it will be rewarded with all the satisfaction with which an ardent love for your fellow-citizens must review successful efforts to promote their happiness.

This anticipation is not justified merely by the past experience of your signal services: it is particularly suggested by the pious impressions under which you commence your administration, and the enlightened maxims by which you mean to conduct it. We feel with you the strongest obligations to adore the invisible hand which has led the American People through so many difficulties, to cherish a conscious responsibility for the destiny of republican liberty; and to seek the only sure means of preserving and recommending the precious deposit in a system of legislation founded on the principles of an honest policy, and directed by the spirit of a diffusive patriotism.

The question arising out of the fifth article of the constitution will receive all the attention demanded by its importance; and will, we trust, be decided under the influence of all the considerations to which you allude.

In forming the pecuniary provisions for the Executive department, we shall not lose sight of a wish resulting from motives which give it a peculiar claim to our regard. Your resolution, in a moment critical to the liberties of your country, to renounce all personal emolument, was among the many presages of your patriotic services, which have been amply fulfilled; and your scrupulous adherence now to the law then imposed on yourself, cannot fail to demonstrate the purity, whilst it increases the lustre, of a character which has so many titles to admiration.

Such are the sentiments which we have thought fit to address to you. They flow from our own hearts, and we verily believe, that, among the millions we represent, there is not a virtuous citizen whose heart will disown them.

All that remains is, that we join in our fervent supplications for the blessings of Heaven on our country, and that we add our own for the choicest of these blessings on the most beloved of her citizens.

To which the President of the United States made the following reply:

Gentlemen:

Your very affectionate address produces emotions which I know not how to express. I feel that my past endeavors in the service of my country are far overpaid by its goodness; and I fear much that my future ones may not fulfil your kind anticipation. All that I can promise, is, that they will be invariably directed by an honest and an ardent zeal; of this resource my heart assures me; for all beyond, I rely on the wisdom and patriotism of those with whom I am to co-operate, and a continuance of the blessings of Heaven on our beloved country.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

APPENDIX III – Thanksgiving Proclamation, October 3, 1789

THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION
City of New York, October 3, 1789.

Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor, and Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanks-giving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness."

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th. day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be. That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks, for his kind care and protection of the People of this country previous to their becoming a Nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war, for the great degree of tranquillity, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed, for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted, for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the People, by constantly being a government of wise, just and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.

COURTESY & PROPER USE OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELPS (SUKH)

APPENDIX IV- First Annual Message to Congress

Friday, January 8, 1790

Fellow-citizens of the Senate

and House of Representatives:

I embrace, with great satisfaction, the opportunity which now presents itself of congratulating you on the present favorable prospects of our public affairs. The recent accession of the important State of North Carolina to the constitution of the United States (of which official information has been received), the rising credit and respectability of our country; the general and increasing good will towards the government of the Union; and the concord, peace, and plenty, with which we are blessed, are circumstances auspicious in an eminent degree to our national prosperity.

In resuming your consultations for the general good, you cannot but derive encouragement from the reflection, that the measures of the last session have been as satisfactory to your constituents, as the novelty and difficulty of the work allowed you to hope. Still further to realize their expectations, and to secure the blessings which a gracious Providence has placed within our reach, will, in the course of the present important session, call for the cool and deliberate exertion of your patriotism, firmness, and wisdom.

Among the many interesting objects which will engage your attention, that of providing for the common defence will merit particular regard. To be prepared for war, is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.

A free people ought not only to be armed, but disciplined; to which end, a uniform and well digested plan is requisite: and their safety and interest require that they should promote such manufactories as tend to render them independent on others for essential, particularly for military supplies.

The proper establishment of the troops which may be deemed indispensable, will be entitled to mature consideration. In the arrangements which may be made respecting it, it will be of importance to conciliate the comfortable support of the officers and soldiers, with a due regard to economy.

There was reason to hope that the pacific measures adopted with regard to certain hostile tribes of Indians, would have relieved the inhabitants of our southern and western frontiers from their depredations; but you will perceive, from the information contained in the papers which I shall direct to be laid before you, (comprehending a communication from the Commonwealth of Virginia) that we ought to be prepared to afford protection to those parts of the Union, and, if necessary, to punish aggressors.

The interests of the United States require, that our intercourse with other nations should be facilitated by such provisions as will enable me to fulfil my duty in that respect, in the manner which circumstances may render most conducive to the public good; and to this end, that the compensations to be made to the persons who may be employed, should, according to the nature of their appointments, be defined by law; and a competent fund designated for defraying the expenses incident to the conduct of our foreign affairs.

Various considerations also render it expedient that the terms on which foreigners may be admitted to the rights of citizens, should be speedily ascertained by a uniform rule of naturalization.

Uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures, of the United States, is an object of great importance, and will, I am persuaded, be duly attended to.

The advancement of agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, by all proper means, will not, I trust, need recommendation; but I cannot forbear intimating to you the expediency of giving effectual encouragement, as well to the introduction of new and useful inventions from abroad, as to the exertions of skill and genius in producing them at home; and of facilitating the intercourse between the distant parts of our country by a due attention to the post office and post roads.

Nor am I less persuaded, that you will agree with me in opinion, that there is nothing which can better deserve your patronage, than the promotion of science and literature. Knowledge is, in every country, the surest basis of public happiness. In one in which the measures of government receive their impression so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionably essential. To the security of a free constitution it contributes in various ways: by convincing those who are entrusted with the public administration, that every valuable end of government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people; and by teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights; to discern and provide against invasions of them; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority; between burthens proceeding from a disregard to their convenience, and those resulting from the inevitable exigences of society; to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness—cherishing the first, avoiding the last; and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the laws.

Whether this desirable object will be best promoted by affording aids to seminaries of learning already established; by the institution of a national university; or by any other expedients, will be well worthy of a place in the deliberations of the Legislature.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

I saw, with peculiar pleasure, at the close of the last session, the resolution entered into by you, expressive of your opinion that an adequate provision for the support of the public credit, is a matter of high importance to the national honor and prosperity. In this sentiment I entirely concur. And, to a perfect confidence in your best endeavors to devise such a provision as will be truly consistent with the end, I add an equal reliance on the cheerful co-operation of the other branch of the Legislature. It would be superfluous to specify inducements to a measure in which the character and permanent interests of the United States are so obviously and so deeply concerned, and which has received so explicit a sanction from your declaration.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

I have directed the proper officers to lay before you, respectively, such papers and estimates as regard the affairs particularly recommended to your consideration, and necessary to convey to you that information of the state of the Union which it is my duty to afford.

The welfare of our country is the great object to which our cares and efforts ought to be directed. And I shall derive great satisfaction from a co-operation with you in the pleasing, though arduous task, of ensuring to our fellow-citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient, and equal government.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP
COURTESY & PROPERTY OF KHMER HELP

APPENDIX V- Second Annual Message to Congress

Wednesday, December 8, 1790

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

In meeting you again, I feel much satisfaction in being able to repeat my congratulations on the favorable prospects which continue to distinguish our public affairs. The abundant fruits of another year have blessed our country with plenty, and with the means of a flourishing commerce. The progress of public credit is witnessed by a considerable rise of American stock, abroad as well as at home; and the revenues allotted for this and other national purposes, have been productive beyond the calculations by which they were regulated. This latter circumstance is the more pleasing, as it is not only a proof of the fertility of our resources, but as it assures us of a further increase of the national respectability and credit; and, let me add, as it bears an honorable testimony to the patriotism and integrity of the mercantile and marine part of our citizens. The punctuality of the former in discharging their engagements has been exemplary.

In conforming to the powers vested in me by acts of the last session, a loan of three millions of florins, towards which some provisional measures had previously taken place, has been completed in Holland. As well the celerity with which it has been filled, as the nature of the terms, (considering the more than ordinary demand for borrowing, created by the situation of Europe) give a reasonable hope that the further execution of those powers may proceed with advantage and success. The Secretary of the Treasury has my direction to communicate such further particulars as may be requisite for more precise information.

Since your last sessions, I have received communications, by which it appears that the district of Kentucky, at present a part of Virginia, has concurred in certain propositions contained in a law of that State; in consequence of which, the district is to become a distinct member of the Union, in case the requisite sanction of Congress be added. For this sanction application is now made. I shall cause the papers on this very important transaction to be laid before you. The liberality and harmony with which it has been conducted, will be found to do great honor to both the parties; and the sentiments of warm attachment to the Union and its present government, expressed by our fellow citizens of Kentucky, cannot fail to add an affectionate concern for their particular welfare to the great national impressions under which you will decide on the case submitted to you.

It has been heretofore known to Congress, that frequent incursions have been made on our frontier settlements by certain banditti of Indians from the northwest side of the Ohio. These, with some of the tribes dwelling on and near the Wabash, have of late been particularly active in their depredations; and, being emboldened by the impunity of their crimes, and aided by such parts of the neighboring tribes as could be seduced to join in their hostilities, or afford them a retreat for their prisoners and plunder, they have, instead of listening to the humane invitations and overtures made on the part of the United States, renewed their violences with fresh alacrity and greater effect. The lives of a number of valuable citizens have thus been sacrificed, and some of them under circumstances peculiarly shocking; whilst others have been carried into a deplorable captivity.

These aggravated provocations rendered it essential to the safety of the western settlements that the aggressors should be made sensible that the government of the Union is not less capable of punishing their crimes, than it is disposed to respect their rights and reward their attachments. As this object could not be effected by defensive measures, it became necessary to put in force the act which empowers the President to call out the militia for the protection of the frontiers; and I have accordingly authorized an expedition, in which the regular troops in that quarter are combined with such draughts of militia as were deemed sufficient: the event of the measure is yet unknown to me. The Secretary of War is directed to lay before you a statement of the information on which it is founded, as well as an estimate of the expense with which it will be attended.

The disturbed situation of Europe, and particularly the critical posture of the great maritime Powers, whilst it ought to make us the more thankful for the general peace and security enjoyed by the United States, reminds us, at the same time, of the circumspection with which it becomes us to preserve these blessings. It requires, also, that we should not overlook the tendency of a war, and even of preparations for a war, among the nations most concerned in active commerce with this country, to abridge the means, and thereby at least enhance the price of transporting its valuable productions to their proper markets. I recommend it to your serious reflections, how far, and in what mode, it may be expedient to guard against embarrassments from these contingencies, by such encouragements to our own navigation as will render our commerce and agriculture less dependent on foreign bottoms, which may fail us in the very moments most interesting to both of these great objects. Our fisheries, and the transportation of our own produce, offer us abundant means for guarding ourselves against this evil.

Your attention seems to be not less due to that particular branch of our trade which belongs to the Mediterranean. So many circumstances unite in rendering the present state of it distressful to us, that you will not think any deliberations misemployed which may lead to its relief and protection.

The laws you have already passed for the establishment of a judiciary system, have opened the doors of justice to all descriptions of persons. You will consider, in your wisdom, whether improvements in that system may yet be made; and particularly whether an uniform process of execution, on sentences issuing from the federal courts, be not desirable through all the States.

The patronage of our commerce, of our merchants, and seamen, has called for the appointment of consuls in foreign countries. It seems expedient to regulate by law the exercise of that jurisdiction, and those functions which are permitted them, either by express convention, or by a friendly indulgence in the places of their residence. The consular convention, too, with His Most Christian Majesty, has stipulated, in certain cases, the aid of the national authority to his consuls established here. Some legislative provision is requisite to carry these stipulations into full effect.

The establishment of the militia, of a mint, of standards of weights and measures, of the post office and post roads, are subjects which I presume you will resume of course, and which are abundantly urged by their own importance.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

The sufficiency of the revenues you have established for the objects to which they are appropriated, leaves no doubt that the residuary provisions will be commensurate to the other objects for which the public faith stands now pledged. Allow me, moreover, to hope that it will be a favorite policy with you, not merely to secure a payment of the interest of the debt funded, but, as far and as fast as the growing resources of the country will permit, to exonerate it of the principal itself. The appropriation you have made of the western lands, explains your dispositions on this subject; and I am persuaded the sooner that valuable fund can be made to contribute, along with other means, to the actual reduction of the public debt, the more salutary will the measure be to every public interest, as well as the more satisfactory to our constituents.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

In pursuing the various and weighty business of the present session, I indulge the fullest persuasion that your consultations will be equally marked with wisdom, and animated by the love of your country. In whatever belongs to my duty, you shall have all the co-operation which an undiminished zeal for its welfare can inspire. It will be happy for us both, and our best reward, if, by a successful administration of our respective trusts, we can make the established government more and more instrumental in promoting the good of our fellow-citizens, and more and more the object of their attachment and confidence.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W. B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP CENTER (SCKHC)

APPENDIX VI – Third Annual Message to Congress

Tuesday, October 25, 1791

Fellow-citizens of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives:

I meet you upon the present occasion with the feelings which are naturally inspired by a strong impression of the prosperous situation of our common country, and by a persuasion, equally strong, that the labors of the session which has just commenced, will, under the guidance of a spirit no less prudent than patriotic, issue in measures conducive to the stability and increase of national prosperity.

Numerous as are the providential blessings which demand our grateful acknowledgments, the abundance with which another year has again rewarded the industry of the husbandman is too important to escape recollection.

Your own observations in your respective situations will have satisfied you of the progressive state of agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation. In tracing their causes, you will have remarked, with particular pleasure, the happy effects of that revival of confidence, public as well as private, to which the constitution and laws of the United States have so eminently contributed; and you will have observed, with no less interest, new and decisive proofs of the increasing reputation and credit of the nation. But you, nevertheless, cannot fail to derive satisfaction from the confirmation of these circumstances, which will be disclosed in the several official communications that will be made to you in the course of your deliberations.

The rapid subscription to the Bank of the United States, which completed the sum allowed to be subscribed in a single day, is among the striking and pleasing evidences which present themselves, not only of confidence in the Government, but of resource in the community.

In the interval of your recess, due attention has been paid to the execution of the different objects which were specially provided for by the laws and resolutions of the last session.

Among the most important of these, is the defence and security of the western frontiers. To accomplish it on the most humane principles was a primary wish. Accordingly, at the same time that treaties have been provisionally concluded, and other proper means used to attach the wavering, and to confirm in their friendship the well disposed tribes of Indians, effectual measures have been adopted to make those of a hostile description sensible that a pacification was desired upon terms of moderation and justice.

These measures having proved unsuccessful, it became necessary to convince the refractory of the power of the United States to punish their depredations. Offensive operations have therefore been directed, to be conducted, however, as consistently as possible with the dictates of humanity. Some of these have been crowned with full success, and others are yet depending. The expeditions which have been completed were carried on under the authority, and at the expense of the United States, by the militia of Kentucky; whose enterprise, intrepidity, and good conduct, are entitled to peculiar commendation.

Overtures of peace are still continued to the deluded tribes, and considerable numbers of individuals belonging to them have lately renounced all further opposition, removed from their former situations, and placed themselves under the immediate protection of the United States.

It is sincerely to be desired that all need of coercion in future may cease; and that an intimate intercourse may succeed, calculated to advance the happiness of the Indians, and to attach them firmly to the United States.

In order to this, it seems necessary—

That they should experience the benefits of an impartial dispensation of justice;

That the mode of alienating their lands, the main source of discontent and war, should be so defined and regulated as to obviate imposition, and, as far as may be practicable, controversy concerning the reality and extent of the alienations which are made;

That commerce with them should be promoted under regulations tending to secure an equitable deportment towards them, and that such rational experiments should be made, for imparting to them the blessings of civilization, as may, from time to time, suit their condition;

That the Executive of the United States should be enabled to employ the means to which the Indians have been long accustomed for uniting their immediate interests with the preservation of peace;

And that efficacious provision should be made for inflicting adequate penalties upon all those who, by violating their rights, shall infringe the treaties, and endanger the peace of the Union.

A system corresponding with the mild principles of religion and philanthropy, towards an unenlightened race of men, whose happiness materially depends on the conduct of the United States, would be as honorable to the national character as conformable to the dictates of sound policy.

The powers specially vested in me by the act laying certain duties on distilled spirits, which respect the subdivisions of the districts into surveys, the appointment of officers, and the assignment of compensations, have likewise been carried into effect. In a matter in which both materials and experience were wanting to guide the calculation, it will be readily conceived that there must have been difficulty in such an adjustment of the rates of compensation as would conciliate a reasonable competency with a proper regard to the limits prescribed by the law. It is hoped that the circumspection which has been used, will be found, in the result, to have secured the last of the two objects; but it is probable, that, with a view to the first, in some instances a revision of the provision will be found advisable.

The impressions with which this law has been received by the community, have been, upon the whole, such as were to be expected among enlightened and well disposed citizens, from the propriety and necessity of the measure. The novelty, however, of the tax, in a considerable part of the United States, and a misconception of some of its provisions, have given occasion, in particular places, to some degree of discontent. But it is satisfactory to know that this disposition yields to proper explanations and more just apprehensions of the true nature of the law. And I entertain a full confidence that it will, in all, give way to motives which arise out of a just sense of duty, and a virtuous regard to the public welfare.

If there are any circumstances in the law, which, consistently with its main design, may be so varied as to remove any well intentioned objections that may happen to exist, it will consist with a wise moderation to make the proper variations. It is desirable, on all occasions, to unite, with a steady and firm adherence to constitutional and necessary acts of government, the fullest evidence of a disposition, as far as may be practicable, to consult the wishes of every part of the community, and to lay the foundations of the public administration in the affections of the People.

Pursuant to the authority contained in the several acts on that subject, a district of ten miles square, for the permanent seat of the Government of the United States, has been fixed, and announced by proclamation; which district will comprehend lands on both sides of the river Potomac, and the towns of Alexandria and Georgetown. A city has also been laid out, agreeably to a plan which will be placed before Congress; and as there is a prospect, favored by the rate of sales which have already taken place, of ample funds for carrying on the necessary public buildings, there is every expectation of their due progress.

The completion of the census of the inhabitants, for which provision was made by law, has been duly notified, (excepting one instance, in which the return has been informal, and another, in which it has been omitted or miscarried,) and the returns of the officers who were charged with this duty, which will be laid before you, will give you the pleasing assurance that the present population of the United States borders on four millions of persons.

It is proper also to inform you, that a further loan of two millions and a half of florins has been completed in Holland; the terms of which are similar to those of the one last announced, except as to a small reduction of charges. Another, on like terms, for six millions of florins, had been set on foot under circumstances that assured an immediate completion.

Gentlemen of the Senate:

Two treaties, which have been provisionally concluded with the Cherokees and Six Nations of Indians, will be laid before you for your consideration and ratification.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

In entering upon the discharge of your legislative trust, you must anticipate with pleasure, that many of the difficulties necessarily incident to the first arrangements of a new government for an extensive country, have been happily surmounted by the zealous and judicious exertions of your predecessors, in co-operation with the other branch of the Legislature. The important objects which remain to be accomplished, will, I am persuaded, be conducted upon principles equally comprehensive, and equally well calculated for the advancement of the general weal.

The time limited for receiving subscriptions to the loans proposed by the act making provision for the debt of the United States having expired, statements from the proper department will, as soon as possible, apprise you of the exact result. Enough, however, is already known, to afford an assurance that the views of that act have been substantially fulfilled. The subscription, in the domestic debt of the United States, has embraced by far the greatest proportion of that debt; affording, at the same time, proof of the general satisfaction of the public creditors with the system which has been proposed to their acceptance, and of the spirit of accommodation to the convenience of the Government with which they are actuated. The subscriptions in the debts of the respective States, as far as the provisions of the law have permitted, may be said to be yet more general. The part of the debt of the United States which remains unsubscribed, will naturally engage your further deliberations.

It is particularly pleasing to me to be able to announce to you, that the revenues which have been established promise to be adequate to their objects, and may be permitted, if no unforeseen exigency occurs, to supersede, for the present, the necessity of any new burthens upon our constituents.

An object which will claim your early attention, is a provision for the current service of the ensuing year, together with such ascertained demands upon the Treasury as require to be immediately discharged, and such casualties as may have arisen in the execution of the public business, for which no specific appropriation may have yet been made; of all which a proper estimate will be laid before you.

Gentlemen of the Senate

and of the House of Representatives:

I shall content myself with a general reference to former communications for several objects, upon which the urgency of other affairs has hitherto postponed any definitive resolution. Their importance will recall them to your attention, and I trust that the progress already made in the most arduous arrangements of the Government, will afford you leisure to resume them with advantage.

There are, however, some of them, of which I cannot forbear a more particular mention. These are: the militia; the post office and post roads; the mint; weights and measures; a provision for the sale of the vacant lands of the United States.

The first is certainly an object of primary importance, whether viewed in reference to the national security, to the satisfaction of the community, or to the preservation of order. In connexion with this, the establishment of competent magazines and arsenals, and the fortification of such places as are peculiarly important and vulnerable, naturally present themselves to consideration. The safety of the United States, under divine protection, ought to rest on the basis of systematic and solid arrangements; exposed as little as possible to the hazards of fortuitous circumstances.

The importance of the post office and post roads, on a plan sufficiently liberal and comprehensive, as they respect the expedition, safety, and facility of communication, is increased by the instrumentality in diffusing a knowledge of the laws and proceedings of the Government; which, while it contributes to the security of the people, serves also to guard them against the effects of misrepresentation and misconception. The establishment of additional cross posts, especially to some of the important points in the western and northern parts of the Union, cannot fail to be of material utility.

The disorders in the existing currency, and especially the scarcity of small change—a scarcity so peculiarly distressing to the poorer classes—strongly recommend the carrying into immediate effect the resolution already entered into concerning the establishment of a mint. Measures have been taken, pursuant to that resolution, for procuring some of the most necessary artists, together with the requisite apparatus.

An uniformity in the weights and measures of the country is among the important objects submitted to you by the constitution; and if it can be derived from a standard at once invariable and universal, must be no less honorable to the public councils than conducive to the public convenience.

A provision for the sale of the vacant lands of the United States is particularly urged, among other reasons, by the important considerations, that they are pledged as a fund for reimbursing the public debt; that, if timely and judiciously applied, they may save the necessity of burthening our citizens with new taxes for the extinguishment of the principal; and that, being free to discharge the principal but in a limited proportion, no opportunity ought to be lost for availing the public of its right.

Geo. Washington.

— "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

APPENDIX VII – Fourth Annual Message to Congress

Tuesday, November 6, 1792

Fellow-citizens of the Senate

and of the House of Representatives:

It is some abatement of the satisfaction with which I meet you on the present occasion, that, in felicitating you on a continuance of the national prosperity, generally, I am not able to add to it information that the Indian hostilities, which have, for some time past, distressed our northwestern frontier, have terminated.

You will, I am persuaded, learn, with no less concern than I communicate it, that reiterated endeavors towards effecting a pacification, have hitherto issued only in new and outrageous proofs of persevering hostility on the part of the tribes with whom we are in contest. An earnest desire to procure tranquillity to the frontier; to stop the further effusion of blood; to arrest the progress of expense; to forward the prevalent wish of the nation for peace; has led to strenuous efforts, through various channels, to accomplish these desirable purposes: in making which efforts, I consulted less my own anticipations of the event, or the scruples which some considerations were calculated to inspire, than the wish to find the object attainable; or, if not attainable, to ascertain unequivocally that such is the case.

A detail of the measures which have been pursued, and of their consequences, which will be laid before you while it will confirm to you the want of success, thus far, will, I trust, evince that means as proper and as efficacious as could have been devised have been employed. The issue of some of them, indeed, is still depending; but a favorable one, though not to be despaired of, is not promised by any thing that has yet happened.

In the course of the attempts which have been made, some valuable citizens have fallen victims to their zeal for the public service. A sanction, commonly respected even among savages, has been found, in this instance, insufficient to protect from massacre the emissaries of peace. It will, I presume, be duly considered whether the occasion does not call for an exercise of liberality towards the families of the deceased.

It must add to your concern to be informed, that, besides the continuation of hostile appearances among the tribes north of the Ohio, some threatening symptoms have of late been revived among some of those south of it.

A part of the Cherokees, known by the name of Chickamagas, inhabiting five villages on the Tennessee river, have long been in the practice of committing depredations on the neighboring settlements.

It was hoped that the treaty of Holston, made with the Cherokee nation in July, 1791, would have prevented a repetition of such depredations. But the event has not answered this hope. The Chickamagas, aided by some banditti of another tribe in their vicinity, have recently perpetrated wanton and unprovoked hostilities upon the citizens of the United States in that quarter. The information which has been received on this subject will be laid before you. Hitherto, defensive precautions only have been strictly enjoined and observed.

It is not understood that any breach of treaty, or aggression whatsoever, on the part of the United States, or their citizens, is even alleged as a pretext for the spirit of hostility in this quarter.

I have reason to believe that every practicable exertion has been made (pursuant to the provision by law for that purpose) to be prepared for the alternative of a prosecution of the war, in the event of a failure of pacific overtures. A large proportion of the troops authorized to be raised have been recruited, though the number is still incomplete; and pains have been taken to discipline and put them in condition for the particular kind of service to be performed. A delay of operations (besides being dictated by the measures which were pursuing towards a pacific termination of the war) has been in itself deemed preferable to immature efforts. A statement from the proper department, with regard to the number of troops raised, and some other points which have been suggested, will afford more precise information as a guide to the legislative consultations; and, among other things, will enable Congress to judge whether some additional stimulus to the recruiting service may not be advisable.

In looking forward to the future expense of the operations which may be found inevitable, I derive consolation from the information I receive, that the product of the revenues for the present year is likely to supersede the necessity of additional burthens on the community for the service of the ensuing year. This, however, will be better ascertained in the course of the session; and it is proper to add, that the information alluded to proceeds upon the supposition of no material extension of the spirit of hostility.

I cannot dismiss the subject of Indian affairs, without again recommending to your consideration the expediency of more adequate provision for giving energy to the laws throughout our interior frontier; and for restraining the commission of outrages upon the Indians; without which, all pacific plans must prove nugatory. To enable, by competent rewards, the employment of qualified and

trusty persons to reside among them, as agents, would also contribute to the preservation of peace and good neighborhood. If, in addition to these expedients, an eligible plan could be devised for promoting civilization among the friendly tribes, and for carrying on trade with them, upon a scale equal to their wants, and under regulations calculated to protect them from imposition and extortion, its influence in cementing their interests with ours could not but be considerable.

The prosperous state of our revenue has been intimated. This would be still more the case, were it not for the impediments which, in some places, continue to embarrass the collection of the duties on spirits distilled within the United States. These impediments have lessened, and are lessening, in local extent; and, as applied to the community at large, the contentment with the law appears to be progressive.

But symptoms of increased opposition having lately manifested themselves in certain quarters, I judged a special interposition on my part proper and advisable; and, under this impression, have issued a proclamation, warning against all unlawful combinations and proceedings, having for their object or tending to obstruct the operation of the law in question, and announcing that all lawful ways and means would be strictly put in execution for bringing to justice the infractors thereof, and securing obedience thereto.

Measures have also been taken for the prosecution of offenders; and Congress may be assured, that nothing within constitutional and legal limits, which may depend on me, shall be wanting to assert and maintain the just authority of the laws. In fulfilling this trust, I shall count entirely upon the full co-operation of the other departments of the Government, and upon the zealous support of all good citizens.

I cannot forbear to bring again into the view of the Legislature the subject of a revision of the judiciary system. A representation from the judges of the supreme court, which will be laid before you, points out some of the inconveniences that are experienced. In the course of the execution of the laws, considerations arise out of the structure of that system, which, in some cases, tend to relax their efficacy. As connected with this subject, provisions to facilitate the taking of bail upon processes out of the courts of the United States, and a supplementary definition of offences against the constitution and laws of the Union, and of the punishment for such offences, will, it is presumed, be found worthy of particular attention.

Observations on the value of peace with other nations are unnecessary. It would be wise, however, by timely provisions, to guard against those acts of our own citizens which might tend to disturb it, and to put ourselves in a condition to give that satisfaction to foreign nations which we may sometimes have occasion to require from them. I particularly recommend to your consideration the means of preventing those aggressions by our citizens on the territory of other nations, and other infractions of the law of nations, which, furnishing just subject of complaint, might endanger our peace with them; and, in general, the maintenance of a friendly intercourse with foreign Powers will be presented to your attention by the expiration of the law for that purpose, which takes place, if not renewed, at the close of the present session.

In execution of the authority given by the Legislature, measures have been taken for engaging some artists from abroad to aid in the establishment of our mint; others have been employed at home. Provision has been made for the requisite buildings, and these are now putting into proper condition for the purposes of the establishment. There has also been a small beginning in the coinage of half dimes, the want of small coins in circulation calling the first attention to them.

The regulation of foreign coins, in correspondency with the principles of our national coinage, as being essential to their due operation, and to order in our money concerns, will, I doubt not, be resumed and completed.

It is represented that some provisions in the law which establishes the post office, operate, in experiment, against the transmission of newspapers to distant parts of the country. Should this, upon due inquiry, be found to be the fact, a full conviction of the importance of facilitating the circulation of political intelligence and information, will, I doubt not, lead to the application of a remedy.

The adoption of a constitution for the State of Kentucky has been notified to me. The Legislature will share with me in the satisfaction which arises from an event interesting to the happiness of the part of the nation to which it relates, and conducive to the general order.

It is proper likewise to inform you, that, since my last communication on the subject, and in further execution of the acts severally making provision for the public debt and for the reduction thereof, three new loans have been effected, each for three millions of florins; one at Antwerp, at the annual interest of four and one half per cent with an allowance of four per cent in lieu of all charges; and the other two at Amsterdam, at the annual interest of four per cent with an allowance of five and one half per cent in one case, and of five per cent, in the other, in lieu of all charges. The rates of these loans, and the circumstances under which they have been made, are confirmations of the high state of our credit abroad.

Among the objects to which these funds have been directed to be applied, the payments of the debts due to certain foreign officers, according to the provision made during the last session, has been embraced.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

I entertain a strong hope that the state of the national finances is now sufficiently matured to enable you to enter upon a systematic and effectual arrangement for the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt, according to the right which has been reserved to the Government; no measure can be more desirable, whether viewed with an eye to its intrinsic importance, or to the general sentiment and wish of the nation.

Provision is likewise requisite for the reimbursement of the loan which has been made of the Bank of the United States, pursuant to the eleventh section of the act by which it is incorporated. In fulfilling the public stipulations in this particular, it is expected a valuable saving will be made.

Appropriations for the current service of the ensuing year, and for such extraordinaries as may require provision, will demand, and I doubt not will engage, your early attention.

Gentlemen of the Senate

and of the House of Representatives:

I content myself with recalling your attention, generally, to such objects, not particularized in my present, as have been suggested in my former communications to you.

Various temporary laws will expire during the present session. Among these, that which regulates trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes will merit particular notice.

The results of your common deliberations hitherto, will, I trust, be productive of solid and durable advantages to our constituents; such as, by conciliating more and more their ultimate suffrage, will tend to strengthen and confirm their attachment to that constitution of government, upon which, under divine Providence, materially depend their union, their safety, and their happiness.

Still further to promote and secure these inestimable ends, there is nothing which can have a more powerful tendency than the careful cultivation of harmony, combined with a due regard to stability in the public councils.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KEMER (SCHHK)

APPENDIX VIII – Second Inaugural Address

Monday, March 4, 1793

Fellow-citizens:

I am again called upon, by the voice of my country, to execute the functions of its Chief Magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the People of United America.

Previous to the execution of any official act of the President, the constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence; that, if it should be found, during my administration of the Government, I have, in any instance, violated willingly or knowingly, the injunction thereof, I may, (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

APPENDIX IX – Fifth Annual Message to Congress

Philadelphia, Tuesday, December 3, 1793

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

Since the commencement of the term for which I have been again called into office, no fit occasion has arisen for expressing to my fellow-citizens at large the deep and respectful sense which I feel of the renewed testimony of public approbation. While, on the one hand, it awakened my gratitude for all those instances of affectionate partiality with which I have been honored by my country; on the other, it could not prevent an earnest wish for that retirement from which no private consideration should ever have torn me. But, influenced by the belief that my conduct would be estimated according to its real motives, and that the People, and the authorities derived from them, would support exertions having nothing personal for their object, I have obeyed the suffrage which commanded me to resume the Executive power; and I humbly implore that Being, on whose will the fate of nations depends, to crown with success our mutual endeavors for the general happiness.

As soon as the war in Europe had embraced those Powers with whom the United States have the most extensive relations, there was reason to apprehend that our intercourse with them might be interrupted, and our disposition for peace drawn into question by the suspicions too often entertained by belligerent nations. It seemed, therefore, to be my duty to admonish our citizens of the consequences of a contraband trade, and of hostile acts to any of the parties; and to obtain, by a declaration of the existing legal state of things, an easier admission of our right to the immunities belonging to our situation. Under these impressions, the proclamation which will be laid before you was issued.

In this posture of affairs, both new and delicate, I resolved to adopt general rules, which should conform to the treaties, and assert the privileges, of the United States. These were reduced into a system, which will be communicated to you. Although I have not thought myself at liberty to forbid the sale of the prizes, permitted by our treaty of commerce with France to be brought into our ports, I have not refused to cause them to be restored when they were taken within the protection of our territory, or by vessels commissioned or equipped in a warlike form within the limits of the United States.

It rests with the wisdom of Congress to correct, improve, or enforce, this plan of procedure; and it will probably be found expedient to extend the legal code and the jurisdiction of the courts of the United States to many cases which, though dependent on principles already recognized, demand some further provisions.

Where individuals shall, within the United States, array themselves in hostility against any of the Powers at war; or enter upon military expeditions or enterprises within the jurisdiction of the United States; or usurp and exercise judicial authority within the United States; or where the penalties on violations of the law of nations may have been indistinctly marked, or are inadequate: these offences cannot receive too early and close an attention, and require prompt and decisive remedies.

Whatsoever those remedies may be, they will be well administered by the judiciary, who possess a long established course of investigation, effectual process, and officers in the habit of executing it.

In like manner, as several of the courts have doubted, under particular circumstances, their power to liberate the vessels of a nation at peace, and even of a citizen of the United States, although seized under a false color of being hostile property, and have denied their power to liberate certain captures within the protection of our territory, it would seem proper to regulate their jurisdiction in these points; but if the Executive is to be the resort in either of the two last mentioned cases, it is hoped that he will be authorized by law to have facts ascertained by the courts, when, for his own information, he shall request it.

I cannot recommend to your notice measures for the fulfilment of our duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing ourselves in a condition of complete defence, and of exacting from them the fulfilment of their duties towards us. The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion, that, contrary to the order of human events, they will forever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States, among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our rising prosperity, it must be known that we are at all times ready for war. The documents which will be presented to you will shew the amount and kinds of arms and military stores now in our magazines and arsenals; and yet an addition even to these supplies cannot, with prudence, be neglected, as it would leave nothing to the uncertainty of procuring a warlike apparatus in the moment of public danger.

Nor can such arrangements, with such objects, be exposed to the censure or jealousy of the warmest friends of republican government. They are incapable of abuse in the hands of the militia, who ought to possess a pride in being the depository of the force of the republic, and may be trained to a degree of energy equal to every military exigency of the United States. But, it is an inquiry which cannot be too solemnly pursued, whether the act "more effectually to provide for the national defence, by establishing a uniform militia throughout the United States," has organized them so as to produce their full effect; whether your own experience in the several States has not detected some imperfections in the scheme; and whether a material feature, in an improvement of it,

ought not to be, to afford an opportunity for the study of those branches of the military art which can scarcely ever be attained by practice alone.

The connexion of the United States with Europe has become extremely interesting. The occurrences which relate to it and have passed under the knowledge of the Executive, will be exhibited to Congress in a subsequent communication.

When we contemplate the war on our frontiers, it may be truly affirmed that every reasonable effort has been made to adjust the causes of dissension with the Indians north of the Ohio. The instructions given to the commissioners evince a moderation and equity proceeding from a sincere love of peace and a liberality having no restriction but the essential interests and dignity of the United States. The attempt, however, of an amicable negotiation, having been frustrated, the troops have marched to act offensively. Although the proposed treaty did not arrest the progress of military preparation, it is doubtful how far the advance of the season, before good faith justified active movements may retard them, during the remainder of the year. From the papers and intelligence which relate to this important subject, you will determine, whether the deficiency in the number of troops, granted by law, shall be compensated by succors of militia, or additional encouragement shall be proposed to recruits.

An anxiety has been also demonstrated by the Executive for peace with the Creeks and the Cherokees. The former have been relieved with corn and with clothing, and offensive measures against them prohibited during the recess of Congress. To satisfy the complaints of the latter, prosecutions have been instituted for the violences committed upon them. But the papers which will be delivered to you disclose the critical footing on which we stand in regard to both those tribes; and it is with Congress to pronounce what shall be done.

After they shall have provided for the present emergency, it will merit their most serious labors to render tranquillity with the savages permanent, by creating ties of interest. Next to a rigorous execution of justice on the violaters of peace, the establishment of commerce with the Indian nations, in behalf of the United States, is most likely to conciliate their attachment. But it ought to be conducted without fraud, without extortion, with constant and plentiful supplies; with a ready market for the commodities of the Indians, and a stated price for what they give in payment and receive in exchange. Individuals will not pursue such traffic, unless they be allured by the hope of profit; but it will be enough for the United States to be reimbursed only. Should this recommendation accord with the opinion of Congress, they will recollect that it cannot be accomplished by any means yet in the hands of the Executive.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

The commissioners, charged with the settlement of accounts between the United States and individual States concluded their important functions within the time limited by law; and the balances struck in their report, which will be laid before Congress, have been placed on the books of the Treasury.

On the first day of June last, an instalment of one million of florins became payable on the loans of the United States in Holland. This was adjusted by a prolongation of the period of reimbursement, in nature of a new loan at an interest of five per cent for the term of ten years; and the expenses of this operation were a commission of three per cent.

The first instalment of the loan of two millions of dollars, from the Bank of the United States, has been paid, as was directed by law. For the second it is necessary that provision should be made.

No pecuniary consideration is more urgent than the regular redemption and discharge of the public debt; of none can delay be more injurious, or an economy of time more valuable.

The productiveness of the public revenues hitherto, has continued to equal the anticipations which were formed of it; but it is not expected to prove commensurate with all the objects which have been suggested. Some auxiliary provisions will, therefore, it is presumed, be requisite; and it is hoped that these may be made, consistently with a due regard to the convenience of our citizens, who cannot but be sensible of the true wisdom of encountering a small present addition to their contributions, to obviate a future accumulation of burthens.

But here I cannot forbear to recommend a repeal of the tax on the transportation of public prints. There is no resource so firm for the Government of the United States as the affections of the people, guided by an enlightened policy; and to this primary good nothing can conduce more than a faithful representation of public proceedings, diffused without restraint, throughout the United States.

An estimate of the appropriations necessary for the current service of the ensuing year, and a statement of a purchase of arms and military stores, made during the recess, will be presented to Congress.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

The several subjects to which I have now referred, open a wide range to your deliberations, and involve some of the choicest interests of our common country. Permit me to bring to your remembrance the magnitude of your task. Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the Government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of sentiment, its dignity

may be lost. But, as the legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper or of candor, so shall not the public happiness languish from the want of my strenuous and warmest co-operation.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

APPENDIX X – Sixth Annual Message to Congress

Wednesday, November 19, 1794

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

When we call to mind the gracious indulgence of Heaven, by which the American People became a nation, when we survey the general prosperity of our country, and look forward to the riches, power, and happiness, to which it seems destined; with the deepest regret do I announce to you that, during your recess, some of the citizens of the United States have been found capable of an insurrection. It is due, however, to the character of our Government, and to its stability, which cannot be shaken by the enemies of order, freely to unfold the course of this event.

During the session of the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety, it was expedient to exercise the legislative power, granted by the constitution of the United States, "to lay and collect excises." In a majority of the States scarcely an objection was heard to this mode of taxation. In some, indeed, alarms were at first conceived, until they were banished by reason and patriotism. In the four western counties of Pennsylvania, a prejudice, fostered and embittered by the artifice of men, who labored for an ascendancy over the will of others, by the guidance of their passions, produced symptoms of riot and violence. It is well known, that Congress did not hesitate to examine the complaints which were presented; and to relieve them, as far as justice dictated, or general convenience would permit. But, the impression which this moderation made on the discontented, did not correspond with what it deserved. The arts of delusion were no longer confined to the efforts of designing individuals. The very forbearance to press prosecutions was misinterpreted into a fear of urging the execution of the laws, and associations of men began to denounce threats against the officers employed. From a belief, that, by a more formal concert, their operation might be defeated, certain self-created societies assumed the tone of condemnation. Hence, while the greater part of Pennsylvania itself were conforming themselves to the acts of excise, a few counties were resolved to frustrate them. It was now perceived, that every expectation from the tenderness which had been hitherto pursued was unavailing, and that further delay could only create an opinion of impotency or irresolution in the Government. Legal process was therefore delivered to the marshal against the rioters and delinquent distillers.

No sooner was he understood to be engaged in this duty, than the vengeance of armed men was aimed at *his* person, and the person and property of the inspector of the revenue. They fired upon the marshal, arrested him and detained him, for some time, as a prisoner. He was obliged, by the jeopardy of his life, to renounce the service of other process, on the west side of the Allegheny mountain; and a deputation was afterwards sent to him to demand a surrender of that which he had served. A numerous body repeatedly attacked the house of the inspector, seized his papers of office, and finally destroyed by fire his buildings and whatsoever they contained. Both of these officers, from a just regard to their safety, fled to the seat of government—it being avowed, that the motives to such outrages were to compel the resignation of the inspector; to withstand by force of arms the authority of the United States; and thereby to extort a repeal of the laws of excise, and an alteration in the conduct of Government.

Upon the testimony of these facts, an associate justice of the supreme court of the United States notified to me that, "in the counties of Washington and Allegheny, in Pennsylvania, laws of the United States were opposed, and the execution thereof obstructed, by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshal of that district." On this call, momentous in the extreme, I sought and weighed what might best subdue the crisis. On the one hand, the judiciary was pronounced to be stripped of its capacity to enforce the laws; crimes, which reached the very existence of social order, were perpetrated without control; the friends of government were insulted, abused, and overawed into silence, or an apparent acquiescence; and, to yield to the treasonable fury of so small a portion of the United States, would be to violate the fundamental principle of our constitution, which enjoins that the will of the majority shall prevail. On the other, to array citizen against citizen, to publish the dishonor of such excesses, to encounter the expense, and other embarrassments, of so distant an expedition, were steps too delicate, too closely interwoven with many affecting considerations, to be lightly adopted. I postponed, therefore, the summoning of the militia immediately into the field but I required them to be held in readiness, that, if my anxious endeavors to reclaim the deluded, and to convince the malignant of their danger, should be fruitless, military force might be prepared to act, before the season should be too far advanced.

My proclamation of the 7th of August last was accordingly issued, and accompanied by the appointment of commissioners, who were charged to repair to the scene of insurrection. They were authorized to confer with any bodies of men or individuals. They were instructed to be candid and explicit in stating the sensations which had been excited in the Executive, and his earnest wish to avoid a resort to coercion; to represent, however, that, without submission, coercion *must* be the resort; but to invite them, at the same time, to return to the demeanor of faithful citizens, by such accommodations as lay within the sphere of Executive power. Pardon, too, was tendered to them by the Government of the United States, and that of Pennsylvania, upon no other condition than a satisfactory assurance of obedience to the laws.

Although the report of the commissioners marks their firmness and abilities, and must unite all virtuous men, shewing that the means of conciliation have been exhausted, all of those who had committed or abetted the tumult did not subscribe the mild form which was proposed as the atonement; and the indications of a peaceable temper were neither sufficiently general nor conclusive to recommend or warrant the farther suspension of the march of the militia.

Thus, the painful alternative could not be discarded. I ordered the militia to march, after once more admonishing the insurgents, in my proclamation of the 25th of September last.

It was a task too difficult to ascertain with precision the lowest degree of force competent to the quelling of the insurrection. From a respect, indeed, to economy, and the ease of my fellow-citizens belonging to the militia, it would have gratified me to accomplish such an estimate. My very reluctance to ascribe too much importance to the opposition, had its extent been accurately seen, would have been a decided inducement to the smallest efficient number. In this uncertainty, therefore, I put into motion fifteen thousand men, as being an army which, according to all human calculation, would be prompt and adequate in every view, and might, perhaps, by rendering resistance desperate, prevent the effusion of blood. Quotas had been assigned to the States of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia; the Governor of Pennsylvania having declared, on this occasion, an opinion which justified a requisition to the other States.

As commander in chief of the militia, when called into the actual service of the United States, I have visited the places of general rendezvous, to obtain more exact information, and to direct a plan for ulterior movements. Had there been room for a persuasion, that the laws were secure from obstruction; that the civil magistrate was able to bring to justice such of the most culpable as have not embraced the proffered terms of amnesty, and may be deemed fit objects of example; that the friends to peace and good government were not in need of that aid and countenance which they ought always to receive, and, I trust, ever will receive, against the vicious and turbulent; I should have caught with avidity the opportunity of restoring the militia to their families and home. But, succeeding intelligence has tended to manifest the necessity of what has been done; it being now confessed by those, who were not inclined to exaggerate the ill conduct of the insurgents, that their malevolence was not pointed merely to a particular law, but that a spirit, inimical to all order, has actuated many of the offenders. If the state of things had afforded reason for the continuance of my presence with the army, it would not have been withholden. But every appearance assuring such an issue as will redound to the reputation and strength of the United States, I have judged it most proper to resume my duties at the seat of government, leaving the chief command with the Governor of Virginia.

Still, however, as it is probable that, in a commotion like the present, whatsoever may be the pretence, the purposes of mischief and revenge may not be laid aside, the stationing of a small force, for a certain period, in the four western counties of Pennsylvania will be indispensable, whether we contemplate the situation of those who are connected with the execution of the laws, or of others, who may have exposed themselves by an honorable attachment to them. Thirty days from the commencement of this session being the legal limitation of the employment of the militia, Congress cannot be too early occupied with this subject.

Among the discussions which may arise from this aspect of our affairs, and from the documents which will be submitted to Congress, it will not escape their observation, that not only the inspector of the revenue, but other officers of the United States, in Pennsylvania, have, from their fidelity in the discharge of their functions, sustained material injuries to their property. The obligation and policy of indemnifying them are strong and obvious. It may also merit attention, whether policy will not enlarge this provision to the retribution of other citizens, who, though not under the ties of office, may have suffered damage by their generous exertions for upholding the constitution and the laws. The amount, even if all the injured were included, would not be great; and on future emergencies, the Government would be amply repaid by the influence of an example, that he, who incurs a loss in its defence, shall find a recompence in its liberality.

While there is cause to lament that occurrences of this nature should have disgraced the name, or interrupted the tranquillity, of any part of our community, or should have diverted, to a new application, any portion of the public resources, there are not wanting real and substantial consolations for the misfortune. It has demonstrated, that our prosperity rests on solid foundations, by furnishing an additional proof, that my fellow-citizens understand the true principles of government and liberty; that they feel their inseparable union; that, notwithstanding all the devices which have been used to sway them from their interest and duty, they are now as ready to maintain the authority of the laws against licentious invasions, as they were to defend their rights against usurpation. It has been a spectacle, displaying to the highest advantage the value of republican government, to behold the most and the least wealthy of our citizens standing in the same ranks, as private soldiers, pre-eminently distinguished by being the army of the constitution; undeterred by a march of three hundred miles over rugged mountains, by the approach of an inclement season, or by any other discouragement. Nor ought I to omit to acknowledge the efficacious and patriotic co-operation which I have experienced from the Chief Magistrates of the States to which my requisitions have been addressed.

To every description, indeed, of citizens, let praise be given. But let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the constitution of the United States. Let them cherish it, too, for the sake of those who, from every clime, are daily seeking a dwelling in our land. And when, in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences, and disregarding the unerring truth, that those who rouse cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated, from an ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations, of the whole Government.

Having thus fulfilled the engagement which I took, when I entered into office, "to the best of my ability to preserve, protect, and defend, the constitution of the United States," on you, gentlemen, and the people by whom you are deputed, I rely for support.

In the arrangements to which the possibility of a similar contingency will naturally draw your attention, it ought not to be forgotten that the militia laws have exhibited such striking defects as could not have been supplied but by the zeal of our citizens. Besides the extraordinary expense and waste, which are not the least of the defects, every appeal to those laws is attended with a doubt on its success.

The devising and establishing of a well regulated militia would be a genuine source of legislative honor, and a perfect title to public gratitude. I, therefore, entertain a hope, that the present session will not pass, without carrying, to its full energy, the power of organizing, arming, and disciplining, the militia; and thus providing, in the language of the constitution, for calling them forth to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.

As auxiliary to the state of our defence, to which Congress can never too frequently recur, they will not omit to inquire, whether the fortifications, which have been already licensed by law, be commensurate with our exigencies.

The intelligence from the army under the command of General Wayne is a happy presage to our military operations against the hostile Indians north of the Ohio. From the advices which have been forwarded, the advance which he has made must have damped the ardor of the savages, and weakened their obstinacy in waging war against the United States. And yet, even at this late hour, when our power to punish them cannot be questioned, we shall not be unwilling to cement a lasting peace, upon terms of candor, equity, and good neighborhood.

Towards none of the Indian tribes have overtures of friendship been spared. The Creeks, in particular, are covered from encroachment by the interposition of the General Government and that of Georgia. From a desire, also, to remove the discontents of the Six Nations, a settlement meditated at Presqu' isle, on Lake Erie, has been suspended: and an agent is now endeavoring to rectify any misconception into which they may have fallen. But, I cannot refrain from again pressing upon your deliberations the plan which I recommended at the last session, for the improvement of harmony with all the Indians within our limits, by the fixing and conducting of trading houses upon the principles then expressed.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

The time which has elapsed since the commencement of our fiscal measures has developed our pecuniary resources, so as to open the way for a definitive plan for the redemption of the public debt. It is believed that the result is such as to encourage Congress to consummate this work without delay. Nothing can more promote the permanent welfare of the nation, and nothing would be more grateful to our constituents. Indeed, whatsoever is unfinished of our system of public credit, cannot be benefited by procrastination; and, as far as may be practicable, we ought to place that credit on grounds which cannot be disturbed, and to prevent that progressive accumulation of debt, which must ultimately endanger all governments.

An estimate of the necessary appropriations, including the expenditures into which we have been driven by the insurrection, will be submitted to Congress.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

The mint of the United States has entered upon the coinage of the precious metals; and considerable sums of defective coins and bullion have been lodged with the director, by individuals. There is a pleasing prospect that the institution will, at no remote day, realize the expectation which was originally formed of its utility.

In subsequent communications, certain circumstances of our intercourse with foreign nations will be transmitted to Congress. However, it may not be unseasonable to announce that my policy, in our foreign transactions, has been to cultivate peace with all the world; to observe treaties with pure and absolute faith; to check every deviation from the line of impartiality; to explain what may have been misapprehended, and correct what may have been injurious to any nation; and, having thus acquired the right, to lose no time in acquiring the ability, to insist upon justice being done to ourselves.

Let us unite, therefore, in imploring the Supreme Ruler of nations to spread his holy protection over these United States; to turn the machinations of the wicked to the confirming of our constitution; to enable us, at all times, to root out internal sedition, and put invasion to flight; to perpetuate to our country that prosperity, which his goodness has already conferred; and to verify the anticipations of this government being a safeguard to human rights.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

APPENDIX XI – Seventh Annual Message to Congress

Tuesday, December 8, 1795

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

I trust I do not deceive myself, while I indulge the persuasion that I have never met you at any period, when, more than at the present, the situation of our public affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation, and for inviting you to join with me in profound gratitude to the author of all good for the numerous and extraordinary blessings we enjoy.

The termination of the long, expensive, and distressing war in which we have been engaged with certain Indians northwest of the Ohio, is placed in the option of the United States, by a treaty which the commander of our army has concluded provisionally with the hostile tribes in that region. In the adjustment of the terms, the satisfaction of the Indians was deemed an object worthy no less of the policy than of the liberality of the United States, as the necessary basis of durable tranquillity. This object, it is believed, has been fully attained. The articles agreed upon will immediately be laid before the Senate, for their consideration.

The Creek and Cherokee Indians, who, alone, of the southern tribes, had annoyed our frontier, have lately confirmed their pre-existing treaties with us, and were giving evidence of a sincere disposition to carry them into effect, by the surrender of the prisoners and property they had taken. But we have to lament, that the fair prospect in this quarter has been once more clouded by wanton murders, which some citizens of Georgia are represented to have recently perpetrated on hunting parties of the Creeks, which have again subjected that frontier to inquietude and danger; which will be productive of further expense, and may occasion more effusion of blood. Measures are pursuing to prevent or mitigate the usual consequences of such outrages, and with the hope of their succeeding, at least to avert general hostility.

A letter from the Emperor of Morocco announces to me his recognition of our treaty made with his father, the late Emperor, and, consequently, the continuance of peace with that Power. With peculiar satisfaction I add, that information has been received from an agent deputed on our part to Algiers, importing that the terms of a treaty with the Dey and Regency of that country had been adjusted in such a manner as to authorize the expectation of a speedy peace, and the restoration of our unfortunate fellow-citizens from a grievous captivity.

The latest advices from our envoy at the court of Madrid, give, moreover, the pleasing information that he had received assurances of a speedy and satisfactory conclusion of his negotiation. While the event, depending upon unadjusted particulars, cannot be regarded as ascertained, it is agreeable to cherish the expectation of an issue, which, securing amicably very essential interests of the United States, will, at the same time, lay the foundation of lasting harmony with a Power whose friendship we have uniformly and sincerely desired to cultivate.

Though not before officially disclosed to the House of Representatives, you, gentlemen, are all apprised that a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, has been negotiated with Great Britain, and that the Senate have advised and consented to its ratification, upon a condition which excepts part of one article. Agreeably thereto, and to the best judgment I was able to form of the public interest, after full and mature deliberation, I have added my sanction. The result on the part of His Britannic Majesty is unknown. When received, the subject will, without delay, be placed before Congress.

This interesting summary of our affairs, with regard to the foreign Powers between whom and the United States controversies have subsisted; and with regard, also, to those of our Indian neighbors with whom we have been in a state of enmity or misunderstanding; opens a wide field for consoling and gratifying reflections. If, by prudence and moderation on every side, the extinguishment of all the causes of external discord, which have heretofore menaced our tranquillity, on terms compatible with our national rights and honor, shall be the happy result, how firm and how precious a foundation will have been laid for accelerating, maturing, and establishing, the prosperity of our country.

Contemplating the internal situation, as well as the external relations, of the United States, we discover equal cause for contentment and satisfaction. While many of the nations of Europe, with their American dependencies, have been involved in a contest unusually bloody, exhausting, and calamitous, in which the evils of foreign war have been aggravated by domestic convulsion and insurrection; in which many of the arts most useful to society have been exposed to discouragement and decay; in which scarcity of subsistence has embittered other sufferings, while even the anticipations of a return of the blessings of peace and repose are alloyed by the sense of heavy and accumulating burthens, which press upon all the departments of industry, and threaten to clog the future springs of Government; our favored country, happy in a striking contrast, has enjoyed general tranquillity—a tranquillity the more satisfactory, because maintained at the expense of no duty. Faithful to ourselves, we have violated no obligation to others. Our agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, prosper beyond former example; the molestations of our trade (to prevent a continuance of which, however, very pointed remonstrances have been made,) being over-balanced by the aggregate benefits which it derives from a neutral position. Our population advances with a celerity which, exceeding the most sanguine calculations, proportionally augments our strength and resources, and guarantees our future security. Every part of the Union displays indications of rapid and various improvement; and, with burthens so light as scarcely to be perceived; with resources fully adequate to our present exigencies; with

governments founded on the genuine principles of rational liberty; and with mild and wholesome laws; is it too much to say, that our country exhibits a spectacle of national happiness, never surpassed, if ever before equalled?

Placed in a situation every way so auspicious, motives of commanding force impel us, with sincere acknowledgment to Heaven, and pure love to our country, to unite our efforts to preserve, prolong, and improve, our immense advantages. To co-operate with you in this desirable work, is a fervent and favorite wish of my heart.

It is a valuable ingredient in the general estimate of our welfare, that the part of our country which was lately the scene of disorder and insurrection, now enjoys the blessings of quiet and order. The misled have abandoned their errors, and pay the respect to our constitution and laws which is due from good citizens to the public authorities of the society. These circumstances have induced me to pardon, generally, the offenders here referred to, and to extend forgiveness to those who had been adjudged to capital punishment: for, though I shall always think it a sacred duty to exercise with firmness and energy the constitutional powers with which I am vested, yet it appears to me no less consistent with the public good, than it is with my personal feelings, to mingle in the operations of government every degree of moderation and tenderness which the national justice, dignity, and safety, may permit.

Gentlemen:

Among the objects which will claim your attention in the course of the session, a review of our military establishment is not the least important. It is called for by the events which have changed, and may be expected still further to change, the relative situation of our frontiers. In this review you will doubtless allow due weight to the considerations, that the questions between us and certain foreign Powers are not yet finally adjusted; that the war in Europe is not yet terminated; and that our western posts, when recovered, will demand provision for garrisoning and securing them. A statement of our present military force will be laid before you by the Department of War.

With the review of our army establishment is naturally connected that of the militia. It will merit inquiry, what imperfections in the existing plan further experience may have unfolded. The subject is of so much moment, in my estimation, as to excite a constant solicitude that the consideration of it may be renewed, till the greatest attainable perfection shall be accomplished. Time is wearing away some advantages for forwarding the object, while none better deserves the persevering attention of the public councils.

While we indulge the satisfaction which the actual condition of our western borders so well authorizes, it is necessary that we should not lose sight of an important truth, which continually receives new confirmations, namely, that the provisions heretofore made with a view to the protection of the Indians from the violences of the lawless part of our frontier inhabitants, are insufficient. It is demonstrated that these violences can now be perpetrated with impunity. And it can need no argument to prove that, unless the murdering of Indians can be restrained, by bringing the murderers to condign punishment, all the exertions of the Government to prevent destructive retaliations by the Indians, will prove fruitless, and all our present agreeable prospects illusory. The frequent destruction of innocent women and children, who are chiefly the victims of retaliation, must continue to shock humanity, and an enormous expense to drain the Treasury of the Union.

To enforce upon the Indians the observance of justice, it is indispensable that there shall be competent means of rendering justice to them. If these means can be devised by the wisdom of Congress, and especially if there can be added an adequate provision for supplying the necessities of the Indians, on reasonable terms, (a measure, the mention of which I the more readily repeat, as, in all the conferences with them, they urge it with solicitude,) I should not hesitate to entertain a strong hope of rendering our tranquillity permanent. I add, with pleasure, that the probability even of their civilization is not diminished by the experiments which have been thus far made under the auspices of Government. The accomplishment of this work, if practicable, will reflect undecaying lustre on our national character, and administer the most grateful consolations that virtuous minds can know.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

The state of our revenue, with the sums which have been borrowed and reimbursed, pursuant to different acts of Congress, will be submitted from the proper department, together with an estimate of the appropriations necessary to be made for the service of the ensuing year.

Whether measures may not be advisable to reinforce the provision for the redemption of the public debt will naturally engage your examination. Congress have demonstrated their sense to be, and it were superfluous to repeat mine, that whatsoever will tend to accelerate the honorable extinction of our public debt, accords as much with the true interest of our country as with the general sense of our constituents.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House of Representatives:

The statements which will be laid before you relative to the mint, will show the situation of that institution, and the necessity of some further legislative provisions for carrying the business of it more completely into effect, and for checking abuses which appear to be arising in particular quarters.

The progress in providing materials for the frigates, and in building them; the state of the fortifications of our harbors; the measures which have been pursued for obtaining proper sites for arsenals, and for replenishing our magazines with military stores; and the steps which have been taken towards the execution of the law for opening a trade with the Indians, will likewise be presented for the information of Congress.

Temperate discussion of the important subjects which may arise in the course of the session, and mutual forbearance where there is a difference of opinion, are too obvious and necessary for the peace, happiness, and welfare, of our country, to need any recommendation of mine.

Geo. Washington.

– "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

COURTESY & PROPERTY OF
SUPREME COUNCIL OF KHMER HELP KHMER (SCKHK)

APPENDIX XII – Eighth Annual Message to Congress

Wednesday, December 7, 1796

Fellow-citizens of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

In recurring to the internal situation of our country, since I had last the pleasure to address you, I find ample reason for a renewed expression of that gratitude to the Ruler of the Universe, which a continued series of prosperity has so often and so justly called forth.

The acts of the last session, which required special arrangements, have been, as far as circumstances would admit, carried into operation.

Measures calculated to ensure a continuance of the friendship of the Indians, and to preserve peace along the extent of our interior frontier, have been digested and adopted. In the framing of these, care has been taken to guard, on the one hand, our advanced settlements from the predatory incursions of those unruly individuals who cannot be restrained by their tribes; and on the other hand to protect the rights secured to the Indians by treaties to draw them nearer to the civilized state; and inspire them with correct conceptions of the power as well as justice of the Government.

The meeting of the deputies from the Creek nation at Colerain, in the State of Georgia, which had for a principal object the purchase of a parcel of their land by that State, broke up without its being accomplished—the nation having, previous to their departure, instructed them against making any sale; the occasion however, has been improved, to confirm, by a new treaty with the Creeks, their pre-existing engagements with the United States, and to obtain their consent to the establishment of trading houses and military posts within their boundary; by means of which, their friendship, and the general peace, may be more effectually secured.

The period during the late session at which the appropriation was passed for carrying into effect the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, between the United States and his Britannic Majesty, necessarily procrastinated the reception of the posts stipulated to be delivered, beyond the date assigned for that event. As soon however, as the Governor General of Canada could be addressed with propriety on the subject, arrangements were cordially and promptly concluded for their evacuation, and the United States took possession of the principal of them, comprehending Oswego, Niagara, Detroit, Michilimakinac, and Fort Miami, where such repairs and additions have been ordered to be made, as appeared indispensable.

The Commissioners appointed on the part of the United States and of Great Britain, to determine which is the river St. Croix, mentioned in the treaty of peace of 1783, agreed in the choice of Egbert Benson, Esq. of New York for the third commissioner. The whole met at St. Andrew's, in Passamaquoddy, Bay, in the beginning of October and directed surveys to be made of the rivers in dispute; but, deeming it impracticable to have these surveys completed before the next year, they adjourned, to meet at Boston, in August, 1797, for the final decision of the question.

Other commissioners, appointed on the part of the United States, agreeably to the seventh article of the treaty with Great Britain, relative to captures and condemnation of vessels and other property, met the commissioners of his Britannic Majesty, in London, in August last, when John Trumbull, Esq. was chosen by lot, for the fifth commissioner. In October following, the Board were to proceed to business. As yet, there has been no communication of commissioners on the part of Great Britain, to unite with those who have been appointed on the part of the United States, for carrying into effect the sixth article of the treaty.

The treaty with Spain required that the commissioners for running the boundary line between the territory the United States and his Catholic Majesty's provinces of East and West Florida should meet at the Natchez before the expiration of six months after the exchange of the ratifications, which was effected at Aranjuez on the twenty-fifth day of April; and the troops of his Catholic Majesty occupying any posts within the limits of the United States, were, within the same period, to be withdrawn. The commissioner of the United States, therefore, commenced his journey for the Natchez in September; and troops were ordered to occupy the posts from which the Spanish garrisons should be withdrawn. Information has been recently received of the appointment of a commissioner on the part of his Catholic Majesty, for running the boundary line; but none of any appointment for the adjustment of the claims of our citizens whose vessels were captured by the armed vessels of Spain.

In pursuance of the act of Congress passed in the last session, for the protection and relief of American seamen, agents were appointed, one to reside in Great Britain, and the other in the West Indies. The effects of the agents in the West Indies are not yet fully ascertained; but those which have been communicated afford grounds to believe the measure will be beneficial. The agent destined to reside in Great Britain declining to accept the appointment, the business has consequently devolved on the Minister of the United States in London, and will command his attention until a new agent shall be appointed.

After many delays and disappointments, arising out of the European war, the final arrangements for fulfilling the engagements made to the Dey and Regency of Algiers, will, in all present appearance, be crowned with success but under great, though inevitable disadvantages, in the pecuniary transactions, occasioned by that war, which will render a further provision necessary. The actual

liberation of all our citizens who were prisoners in Algiers, while it gratifies every feeling heart, is itself an earnest of a satisfactory termination of the whole negotiation. Measures are in operation for effecting treaties with the Regencies of Tunis and Tripoli.

To an active external commerce, the protection of a naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to wars in which a State is itself a party. But besides this, it is in our own experience, that the most sincere neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of nations at war. To secure respect to a neutral flag, requires a naval force, organized and ready to vindicate it from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to war, by discouraging belligerent Powers from committing such violations of the rights of the neutral party, as may, first or last, leave no other option. From the best information I have been able to obtain, it would seem as if our trade to the Mediterranean, without a protecting force, will always be insecure, and our citizens exposed to the calamities from which numbers of them have but just been relieved.

These considerations invite the United States to look to the means, and to set about the gradual creation of a navy. The increasing progress of their navigation promises them, at no distant period, the requisite supply of seamen; and their means, in other respects, favor the undertaking. It is an encouragement, likewise, that their particular situation will give weight and influence to a moderate naval force in their hands. Will it not then be advisable to begin, without delay, to provide and lay up the materials for the building and equipping of ships of war, and to proceed in the work, by degrees, in proportion as our resources shall render it practicable without inconvenience; so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unprotected state in which it was found by the present?

Congress have repeatedly, and not without success, directed their attention to the encouragement of manufactures. The object is of too much consequence not to ensure a continuance of their efforts in every way which shall appear eligible. As a general rule, manufactures on public account are inexpedient; but where the state of things in a country leaves little hope that certain branches of manufactures will, for a great length of time, obtain; when these are of a nature essential to the furnishing and equipping of the public force, in time of war; are not establishments for procuring them on public account, to the extent of the ordinary demand for the public service, recommended by strong considerations of national policy, as an exception to the general rule? Ought our country to remain in such cases dependent on foreign supply, precarious, because liable to be interrupted? If the necessary article should, in this mode, cost more in time of peace, will not the security and independence thence arising, form an ample compensation? Establishments of this sort, commensurate only with the calls of the public service in time of peace, will, in time of war, easily be extended in proportion to the exigencies of the Government, and may even perhaps be made to yield a surplus for the supply of our citizens at large, so as to mitigate the privations from the interruption of their trade. If adopted, the plan ought to exclude all those branches which are already or likely soon to be established in the country; in order that there may be no danger of interference with pursuits of individual industry.

It will not be doubted that, with reference either to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage. Institutions for promoting it, grow up, supported by the public purse: and to what object can it be dedicated with greater propriety? Among the means which have been employed to this end, none have been attended with greater success than the establishment of Boards, composed of proper characters, charged with collecting and diffusing information, and enabled, by premiums and small pecuniary aids, to encourage and assist a spirit of discovery and improvement. This species of establishment contributes doubly to the increase of improvement, by stimulating to enterprise and experiment, and by drawing to a common centre the results every where of individual skill and observation, and spreading them thence over the whole nation. Experience accordingly has shown, that they are very cheap instruments of immense national benefits.

I have heretofore proposed to the consideration of Congress, the expediency of establishing a national university, and also a military academy. The desirableness of both these institutions has so constantly increased with every new view I have taken of the subject, that I cannot omit the opportunity of once for all recalling your attention to them.

The assembly to which I address myself, is too enlightened not to be fully sensible how much a flourishing state of the arts and sciences contributes to national prosperity and reputation. True it is, that our country, much to its honor, contains many seminaries of learning, highly respectable and useful; but the funds upon which they rest are too narrow to command the ablest professors in the different departments of liberal knowledge, for the institution contemplated, though they would be excellent auxiliaries.

Amongst the motives to such an institution, the assimilation of the principles, opinions, and manners, of our countrymen, by the common education of a portion of our youth from every quarter, well deserves attention. The more homogeneous our citizens can be made in these particulars, the greater will be our prospect of permanent union; and a primary object of such a national institution should be, the education of our youth in the science of *government*. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally important? and what duty more pressing on its legislature, than to patronize a plan for communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?

The institution of a military academy is also recommended by cogent reasons. However pacific the general policy of a nation may be, it ought never to be without an adequate stock of military knowledge for emergencies. The first would impair the energy of its character, and both would hazard its safety, or expose it to greater evils when war could not be avoided. Besides, that war might often not depend upon its own choice. In proportion as the observance of pacific maxims might exempt a nation from the necessity of

practising the rules of the military art, ought to be its care in preserving and transmitting, by proper establishments, the knowledge of that art. Whatever argument may be drawn from particular examples, superficially viewed, a thorough examination of the subject will evince, that the art of war is at once comprehensive and complicated; that it demands much previous study; and that the possession of it, in its most improved and perfect state, is always of great moment to the security of a nation. This, therefore, ought to be a serious care of every government; and for this purpose an academy, where a regular course of instruction is given, is an obvious expedient, which different nations have successfully employed.

The compensations to the officers of the United States, in various instances, and in none more than in respect to the most important stations, appear to call for legislative revision. The consequences of a defective provision are of serious import to the Government. If private wealth is to supply the defect of public retribution, it will greatly contract the sphere within which the selection of character for office is to be made, and will proportionally diminish the probability of a choice of men able as well as upright. Besides, that it would be repugnant to the vital principles of our Government, virtually to exclude from public trusts, talents and virtue, unless accompanied by wealth.

While, in our external relations, some serious inconveniences and embarrassments have been overcome, and others lessened, it is with much pain and deep regret I mention, that circumstances of a very unwelcome nature have lately occurred. Our trade has suffered, and is suffering, extensive injuries in the West Indies, from the cruisers and agents of the French republic; and communications have been received from its minister here, which indicate the danger of a further disturbance of our commerce by its authority; and which are, in other respects, far from agreeable.

It has been my constant, sincere, and earnest wish, in conformity with that of our nation, to maintain cordial harmony and a perfectly friendly understanding with that republic. This wish remains unabated; and I shall persevere in the endeavor to fulfil it, to the utmost extent of what shall be consistent with a just and indispensable regard to the rights and honor of our country; nor will I easily cease to cherish the expectation, that a spirit of justice, candor, and friendship, on the part of the republic, will eventually ensure success.

In pursuing this course, however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our government and nation; or to a full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude, of my countrymen.

I reserve for a special message a more particular communication on this interesting subject.

Gentlemen of the House of Representatives:

I have directed an estimate of the appropriations, necessary for the service of the ensuing year, to be submitted from the proper department; with a view of the public receipts and expenditures to the latest period to which an account can be prepared.

It is with satisfaction I am able to inform you, that the revenues of the United States continue in a state of progressive improvement.

A reinforcement of the existing provisions for discharging our public debt was mentioned in my address at the opening of the last session. Some preliminary steps were taken towards it, the maturing of which will, no doubt, engage your zealous attention during the present. I will only add, that it will afford me a heartfelt satisfaction to concur in such further measures as will ascertain to our country the prospect of a speedy extinguishment of the debt. Posterity may have cause to regret, if, from any motive, intervals of tranquillity are left unimproved for accelerating this valuable end.

Gentlemen of the Senate and of the House of Representatives:

My solicitude to see the militia of the United States placed on an efficient establishment, has been so often and so ardently expressed, that I shall but barely recall the subject to your view on the present occasion; at the same time that I shall submit to your inquiry, whether our harbors are yet sufficiently secured?

The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the Representatives of the People of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of government commenced; and I cannot omit the occasion to congratulate you, and my country, on the success of the experiment; nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the universe and Sovereign Arbiter of nations, that his providential care may still be extended to the United States; that the virtue and happiness of the People may be preserved; and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties may be perpetual.

Geo. Washington.

— "George Washington: A Collection, " compiled and edited by W.B. Allen (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1988), Chapter Eleven: Presidential Addresses 1789-1796

APPENDIX XIII – Farewell Address, September 17, 1796

Friends and Citizens:

The period for a new election of a citizen to administer the executive government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those out of whom a choice is to be made.

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured that this resolution has not been taken without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness, but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in, the office to which your suffrages have twice called me have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety, and am persuaded, whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that, in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious in the outset of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe that, while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all-important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

The unity of government which constitutes you one people is also now dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquility at home, your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that, from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with

jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

For this you have every inducement of sympathy and interest. Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the North, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and, while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and, what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantic side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While, then, every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and, what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighboring countries not tied together by the same governments, which their own rival ships alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is that your union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those who in any quarter may endeavor to weaken its bands.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matter of serious concern that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations, Northern and Southern, Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heartburnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our Western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event, throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the General Government and in the Atlantic States unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them everything they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, towards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliance, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws,

acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government. But the Constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans digested by common counsels and modified by mutual interests.

However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.

Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of governments as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion; and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigor as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

I have already intimated to you the danger of parties in the State, with particular reference to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party generally.

This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but, in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight), the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms, kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment occasionally riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which finds a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency, it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose. And there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands a uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest, instead of warming, it should consume.

It is important, likewise, that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the

exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositaries, and constituting each the guardian of the public weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designates. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit, which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked: Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?

Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened. As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit. One method of preserving it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it, avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertion in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burden which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment, inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties), ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue, which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

Observe good faith and justice towards all nations; cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and at no distant period, a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt that, in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it? Can it be that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas! is it rendered impossible by its vices?

In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations, and passionate attachments for others, should be excluded; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another a habitual hatred or a habitual fondness is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation against another disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur. Hence, frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill-will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty, of nations, has been the victim.

So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation), facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to

mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils. Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop. Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none; or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people under an efficient government. the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalship, interest, humor or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing (with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them) conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that, by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favors, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect or calculate upon real favors from nation to nation. It is an illusion, which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations. But, if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good; that they may now and then recur to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

How far in the discharge of my official duties I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the public records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my proclamation of the twenty-second of April, 1793, is the index of my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your representatives in both houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me, uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

After deliberate examination, with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take, a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe that, according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without anything more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and consistency which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty five years of my life dedicated to its service with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever-favorite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers.

– "The Life of George Washington: Special Edition for Schools," Appendix V: Farewell Address, editors Robert Faulkner and Paul Carrese (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2000)

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"My Beloved Country!" The New Portrait of George Washington

by Igor V. Babailov is in the Collection of the George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Museum, Mount Vernon, Virginia

APPENDIX XIV – Tributes to George Washington

"While the American army, under the command of Washington, lay encamped at Morristown, New Jersey, it occurred that the service of the communion (then observed semi-annually only) was to be administered in the Presbyterian church of that village. In a morning of the previous week, the General, after his accustomed inspection of the camp, visited the house of the Reverend Dr. Jones, then pastor of the church, and, after the usual preliminaries, thus accosted him. 'Doctor, I understand that the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated with you next Sunday; I would learn if it accords with the canon 'of your church to admit communicants of another denomination.' The Doctor rejoined; 'Most certainly; ours is not the Presbyterian table, General, but the Lord's table; and we hence give the Lord's invitation to all his followers, of whatever name.' The General replied, 'I am glad of it; that is as it ought to be; but, as I was not quite sure of the fact, I thought I would ascertain it from yourself, as I propose to join with you on that occasion. Though a member of the Church of England, I have no exclusive partialities.'" – Rev. Samuel H. Coxe, D.D., pastor of Laight Street Presbyterian Church, New York City, testimony of Dr. Timothy Johnes; Sparks 12:410

"Alone, of all white men, he has been admitted to the Indian Heaven, because of his justice to the Red Men. He lives in a great palace, built like a fort. All the Indians, as they go to Heaven, pass by, and he himself is in his uniform, a sword at his side, walking to and fro. They bow reverently with great humility. He returns the salute, but says nothing. Such is the reward of his justice to the Red Men." – Tradition of the New York Indians

"I am a chief and ruler over my tribes. My influence extends to the waters of the great lakes and to the far blue mountains. I have traveled a long and weary path that I might see the young warrior of the great battle. It was on the day when the white man's blood mixed with the streams of our forests that I first beheld this chief [Washington]. ... I called to my young men and said, "Mark yon tall and daring warrior? He is not of the red-coat tribe—he hath an Indian's wisdom and his warriors fight as we do—himself alone exposed. Quick, let your aim be certain, and he dies." ... Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for you, knew not how to miss—'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we shielded you. ... Seeing you were under the special guardianship of the Great Spirit, we immediately ceased to fire at you. I am old and shall soon be gathered to the great council fire of my fathers in the land of the shades, but ere I go, there is something bids me speak in the voice of prophecy: Listen! The Great Spirit protects that man [pointing at Washington], and guides his destinies—he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire. I am come to pay homage to the man who is the particular favorite of Heaven, and who can never die in battle." – Unnamed Indian Chief, describing the Battle of the Monongahela, story recounted by Dr. James Craik, Fall 1770; "Recollections and Private Memoirs of Washington," by George Washington Parke Custis, Edited by Benson J. Lossing, Vol. 1, page 248 (This story of God's divine protection and of Washington's open gratitude could be found in virtually all school textbooks until 1934. Now few Americans have read it. Washington often recalled this dramatic event that helped shape his character and confirm God's call on his life.)

"I never knew so constant an attendant in church as Washington. And his behavior in the house of God was ever so deeply reverential that it produced the happiest effect on my congregation, and greatly assisted me in my pulpit labors. No company ever withheld him from church. I have often been at Mount Vernon on Sabbath morning, when his breakfast table was filled with guests; but to him they furnished no pretext for neglecting his God and losing the satisfaction of setting a good example. For instead of staying at home, out of false complaisance to them, he used constantly to invite them to accompany him." – Rev. Lee Massey, Rector of Pohick (Truro) Church before the Revolution, quoted by Bishop Meade

"A hero in a republic, he excites another sort of respect which seems to spring from the sole idea that the safety of each individual is attached to his person ... The goodness and benevolence which characterize him are evident in all that surrounds him, but the confidence that he calls forth never occasions improper familiarity." – Marquis de Chastellux

"The melancholy event which was yesterday announced with doubt, has been rendered but too certain. Our Washington is no more! The Hero, the Sage, and the Patriot of America -- the man on whom in times of danger every eye was turned, and all hopes were placed -- lives now only in his own great actions, and in the hearts of an affectionate and afflicted people." – John Marshall, address to the House of Representatives, December 19, 1799; "Ulster County Gazette, " Published at Kingston, (Ulster County,) by Samuel Freer and Son [Vol. II.] SATURDAY, January 4, 1800. [Num. 88]

"First in war—first in peace—and first in the hearts of his countrymen, he was second to none in the humble and enduring scenes of private life; pious, just, humane, temperate, and sincere; uniform, dignified, and commanding, his example was as edifying to all around him as were the effects of that example lasting. To his equals he was condescending, to his inferiors kind, and to the dear object of his affections exemplarily tender; correct throughout, vice shuddered in his presence, and virtue always felt his fostering hand; the purity of his private character gave effulgence to his public virtues. His last scene comported with the whole tenor of his life—although in extreme pain, not a sigh, not a groan escaped him; and with undisturbed serenity he closed his well-spent life. Such was the man America has lost—such was the man for whom our nation mourns." – General Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, eulogy delivered at Washington's funeral, December 18, 1799; "Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History, " William Safire, editor (2004) New York: W.W. Norton. p. 185

"The virtues of our departed friend were crowned by piety. He is known to have been habitually devout. To Christian institutions he gave the countenance of his example; and no one could express, more fully, his sense of the Providence of God, and the dependence of man." – Reverend John Thornton Kirkland, eulogy delivered at the New South Church, Boston, December 29, 1799; "America's God and Country Encyclopedia of Quotations, " William J. Federer, editor (June 1, 1994) St. Louis: Amerisearch, Inc.

"We, my friends, have particular cause to bemoan our loss. To us he has been the sympathising friend and tender father. He has watched over us, and viewed our degraded and afflicted state with compassion and pity — his heart was not insensible to our sufferings. He whose wisdom the nations revered thought we had a right to liberty. Unbiased by the popular opinion of the state in which is the memorable Mount Vernon — he dared to do his duty, and wipe off the only stain with which man could ever reproach him." – Richard Allen, eulogizing George Washington, Philadelphia's African Methodist Episcopal Church, December 29, 1799; "Philadelphia Gazette," December 31, 1799; "We Participate in Common": Richard Allen's Eulogy of Washington and the Challenge of Interracial Appeals, Richard S. Newman, William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Jan. 2007)

"The name of Washington will live when the sculptured marble and statue of bronze shall be crumbled into dust—for it is the decree of the eternal God that 'the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, but the memorial of the wicked shall rot.'" – Richard Allen, eulogizing George Washington, Philadelphia's African Methodist Episcopal Church, December 29, 1799; "Philadelphia Gazette," December 31, 1799; "We Participate in Common": Richard Allen's Eulogy of Washington and the Challenge of Interracial Appeals, Richard S. Newman, William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Jan. 2007)

"The private virtues of this great man exactly corresponded with those exhibited in public life. ... To crown all these moral virtues, he had the deepest sense of religion impressed on his heart; the true foundation-stone of all the moral virtues. This he constantly manifested on all proper occasions." – Jonathan Sewell, from an eulogy by Jonathan Mitchell Sewell, speaking of George Washington, December 31, 1799; "Eulogies and Orations on the Life and Death of General George Washington," (Boston: Manning and Loring, 1800):36-37

"His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no General ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in re-adjustment. The consequence was, that he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and York." – Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Walter Jones, on George Washington, Monticello, January 2, 1814; Bergh 14:48

"He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose, whatever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, a wise, a good, and a great man." – Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Walter Jones, on George Washington, Monticello, January 2, 1814; Bergh 14:48

"His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, his deportment easy, erect and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation, his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas, nor fluency of words. In public, when called on for a sudden opinion, he was unready, short and embarrassed. Yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. This he had acquired by conversation with the world, for his education was merely reading, writing and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying at a later day." – Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Walter Jones, on George Washington, January 2, 1814; Bergh 14:49-50

"On the whole, his character was, in its mass, perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man an everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit, of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its councils through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example." – Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Walter Jones, on George Washington, January 2, 1814; Bergh 14:50

"I felt on his death, with my countrymen, that 'verily a great man hath fallen this day in Israel.'" – Thomas Jefferson, letter to Dr. Walter Jones, on George Washington, January 2, 1814; Bergh 14:52

APPENDIX XV - EULOGY ON WASHINGTON by FISHER AMES

DELIVERED, AT THE REQUEST OF THE LEGISLATURE OF MASSACHUSETTS, FEB. 8, 1800

IT is natural that the gratitude of mankind should be drawn to their benefactors. A number of these have successively arisen, who were no less distinguished for the elevation of their virtues, than the lustre of their talents. Of those, however, who were born, and who acted, through life, as if they were born, not for their country and the whole human race, how few, alas! are recorded in the long annals of ages, and how wide the intervals of time and space that divide them. In all this dreary length of way, they appear like five or six light houses on as many thousand miles of coast: they gleam upon the surrounding darkness, with an inextinguishable splendour, like stars seen through a mist; but they are seen like stars, to cheer, to guide, and to save. WASHINGTON is now added to that small number. Already he attracts curiosity, like a newly discovered star, whose benignant light will travel on to the worlds and times farthest bounds. Already his name is hung up by history as conspicuously, as if it sparkled in one of the constellations of the sky.

BY commemorating his death, we are called this day to yield the homage that is due to virtue; to confess the common debt of mankind as well as our own; and to pronounce for posterity, now dumb, that eulogium, which they will delight to echo ten ages hence, when we are dumb.

I CONSIDER myself not merely in the midst of the citizens of this town, or even of the state. In idea, I gather round me the nation. In the vast and venerable congregation of the patriots of all countries and of all enlightened men, I would, if I could, raise my voice, and speak to mankind in a strain worthy of my audience, and as elevated as my subject. But you have assigned me a task that is impossible.

IF I could perform it, if I could illustrate his principles in my discourse as he displayed them in his life, if I could paint his virtues as he practised them, if I could convert the fervid enthusiasm of my heart into the talent to transmit his fame, as it ought to pass, to posterity, I should be the successful organ of your will, the minister of his virtues, and may I dare to say, the humble partaker of his immortal glory. These are ambitious, deceiving hopes, and I reject them; for it is, perhaps, almost as difficult, at once with judgment and feeling, to praise great actions, as to perform them. A lavish and undistinguishing eulogium is not praise; and to discriminate such excellent qualities as were characteristic and peculiar to him, would be to raise a name, as he raised it, above envy, above parallel, perhaps, for that very reason, above emulation.

SUCH a portraying of character, however, must be addressed to the understanding, and, therefore, even if it were well executed, would seem to be rather an analysis of moral principles, than the recital of a hero's exploits.

WITH whatever fidelity I might execute this task, I know that some would prefer a picture drawn to the imagination. They would have our WASHINGTON represented of a giant's size, and in the character of a hero of romance. They who love to wonder better than to reason, would not be satisfied with the contemplation of a great example, unless, in the exhibition, it should be so distorted into prodigy, as to be both incredible and useless. Others, I hope but few, who think meanly of human nature, will deem it incredible, that even WASHINGTON should think with as much dignity and elevation as he acted; and they will grovel in vain in the search for mean and selfish motives, that could incite and sustain him to devote his life to his country.

Do not these suggestions sound in your ears like a profanation of virtue? And, while I pronounce them, do you not feel, a thrill of indignation at your hearts? Forbear. Time never fails to bring every exalted reputation to a strict scrutiny: the world, in passing the judgment that is never to be reversed, will deny all partiality even to the name of WASHINGTON. Let it be denied, for its justice will confer glory.

SUCH a life as WASHINGTON'S cannot derive honour from the circumstances of birth and education, though it throws back a lustre upon both. With an inquisitive mind, that always profited by the lights of others, and was unclouded by passions of its own, he acquired a maturity of judgment, rare in age, unparalleled in youth. Perhaps no young man had so early laid up a life's stock of materials for solid reflection, or settled so soon the principles and habits of his conduct. Gray experience listened to his counsels with respect, and, at a time when youth is almost privileged to be rash, Virginia committed the safety of her frontier, and, ultimately, the safety of America, not merely to his valour, for that would be scarcely praise, but to his prudence.

IT is not in Indian wars that heroes are celebrated; but it is there they are formed. No enemy can be more formidable, by the craft of his ambushes, the suddenness of his onset, or the ferocity of his vengeance. The soul of WASHINGTON was thus exercised to danger; and, on the first trial, as on every other, it appeared firm in adversity, cool in action, undaunted, self-possessed. His spirit, and still more his prudence, on the occasion of Braddock's defeat, diffused his name throughout America, and across the Atlantick. Even then his country viewed him with complacency, as her most hopeful son.

AT the peace of 1763, Great Britain, in consequence of her victories, stood in a position to prescribe her own terms. She chose, perhaps, better for us than for herself: for by expelling the French from Canada, we no longer feared hostile neighbours; and we soon found just cause to be afraid of our protectors. We discerned, even then, a truth, which the conduct of France has since so strongly confirmed, that there is nothing which the gratitude of weak states can give, that will satisfy strong allies for their aid, but authority: nations that want protectors, will have masters. Our settlements, no longer checked by enemies on the frontier, rapidly increased; and it was discovered, that America was growing to a size that could defend itself.

IN this, perhaps unforeseen, but at length obvious state of things, the British government conceived a jealousy of the colonies, of which, and of their intended measures of precaution, they made no secret.

OUR nation, like its great leader, had only to take counsel from its courage. When WASHINGTON heard the voice of his country in distress, his obedience was prompt; and though his sacrifices were great, they cost him no effort. Neither the object, nor the limits of my plan, permit me to dilate on the military events of the revolutionary war. Our history is but a transcript of his claims on our gratitude: our hearts bear testimony, that they are claims not to be satisfied. When overmatched by numbers, a fugitive with a little band of faithful soldiers, the states as much exhausted as dismayed, he explored his own undaunted heart, and found there resources to retrieve our affairs. We have seen him display as much valour as gives fame to heroes, and as consummate prudence as ensures success to valour; fearless of dangers that were personal to him, hesitating and cautious, when they affected his country; preferring fame before safety or repose, and duty before fame.

ROME did not owe more to Fabius, than America to WASHINGTON. Our nation shapes with him the singular glory of having conducted a civil war with mildness, and a revolution with order.

THE event of that war seemed to crown the felicity and glory both of America and its chief. Until that contest, a great part of the civilized world had been surprisingly ignorant of the force and character, and almost of the existence, of the British colonies. They had not retained what they knew, nor felt curiosity to know the state of thirteen wretched settlements, which vast woods enclosed, and still vaster woods divided from each other. They did not view the colonists so much a people, as a race of fugitives, whom want, and solitude, and intermixture with, the savages, had made barbarians.

AT this time, while Great Britain wielded a force truly formidable to the most powerful states, suddenly, astonished Europe beheld a feeble people, till then unknown, stand forth, and defy this giant to the combat. It was so unequal, all expected it would be short. Our final success exalted their admiration to its highest point: they allowed to WASHINGTON all that is due to transcendent virtue, and to the Americans more than is due to human nature. They considered us a race of WASHINGTONS, and admitted that nature in America was fruitful only in prodigies. Their books and their travellers, exaggerating and distorting all their representations, assisted to establish the opinion, that this is a new world, with a new order of men and things adapted to it; that here we practise industry, amidst the abundance that requires none; that we have morals so refined, that we do not need laws; and though we have them, yet we ought to consider their execution as an insult and a wrong; that we have virtue without weaknesses, sentiment without passions, and liberty without factions. These illusions, in spite of their absurdity, and, perhaps, because they are absurd enough to have dominion over the imagination only, have been received by many of the malecontents against the governments of Europe, and induced them to emigrate. Such illusions are too soothing to vanity to be entirely checked in their currency among Americans.

THEY have been pernicious, as they cherish false ideas of the rights of men and the duties of rulers. They have led the citizens to look for liberty, where it is not; and to consider the government, which is its castle, as its prison.

WASHINGTON retired to Mount Vernon, and the eyes of the world followed him. He left his countrymen to their simplicity and their passions, and their glory soon departed. Europe began to be undeceived, and it seemed, for a time, as if, by the acquisition of independence, our citizens were disappointed. The confederation was then the only compact made "to form" a perfect union of the states, to establish justice, to ensure the "tranquillity, and provide for the security, of the nation;" and accordingly, union was a name that still commanded reverence, though not obedience. The system called justice was, in some of the states, iniquity reduced to elementary principles; and the public tranquillity was such a portentous calm, as rings in deep caverns before the explosion of an earthquake. Most of the states then were in fact, though not in form, unbalanced democracies. Reason, it is true, spoke audibly in their constitutions; passion and prejudice louder in their laws. It is to the honour of Massachusetts, that it is chargeable with little deviation from principles: its adherence to them was one of the causes of a dangerous rebellion. It was scarcely possible that such governments should not be agitated by parties, and that prevailing parties should not be vindictive and unjust. Accordingly, in some of the states, creditors were treated as outlaws; bankrupts were armed with legal authority to be persecutors; and, by the shock of all confidence and faith, society was shaken to its foundations. Liberty we had, but we dreaded its abuse almost as much as its loss; and the wise, who deplored the one, clearly foresaw the other.

THE peace of America hung by a thread, and factions were already sharpening their weapons to cut it. The project of three separate empires in America was beginning to be broached, and the progress of licentiousness would have soon rendered her citizens unfit for liberty in either of them. An age of blood and misery would have punished our disunion: but these were not the considerations to deter ambition from its purpose, while there were so many circumstances in our political situation to favour it.

AT this awful crisis, which all the wise so much dreaded at the time, yet which appears, on a retrospect, so much more dreadful than their fears; some man was wanting who possessed a commanding power over the popular passions, but over whom those passions had no power. That man was WASHINGTON.

His name, at the head of such a list of worthies as would reflect honour on any country, had its proper weight with all the enlightened, and with almost all the well disposed among the less informed citizens, and, blessed be God! the constitution was adopted. Yes, to the eternal honour of America among the nations of the earth, it was adopted, in spite of the obstacles, which, in any other country, and, perhaps, in any other age of (his, would have been insurmountable; in spite of the doubts and fears, which well-meaning prejudice creates for itself, and which party so artfully inflames into stubbornness; in spite of the vice, which it has subjected to restraint, and which is therefore its immortal and implacable foe; in spite of the oligarchies in some of the states, from whom it snatched dominion; it was adopted, and our country enjoys, one more invaluable chance for its union and happiness: invaluable! if the retrospect of the

dangers we have escaped shall sufficiently inculcate the principles we have so tardily established. Perhaps multitudes are not to be taught by their fears only, without suffering much to deepen the impression; for experience brandishes in her school a whip of scorpions, and teaches nations her summary lessons of wisdom by the scars and wounds of their adversity.

THE amendments which have been projected in some of the states shew, that, in them at least, these lessons are not well remembered. In a confederacy of states, some power ful, others weak, the weakness of the federal union will, sooner or later, encourage, and will not restrain, the ambition and injustice of the members: the weak can no otherwise be strong or safe, but in the energy of the national government. It is this defect, which the blind jealousy of the weak states not unfrequently contributes to prolong, that has proved fatal to all the confederations that ever existed.

ALTHOUGH it was impossible that such merit as WASHINGTON'S should not produce envy, it was scarcely possible that, with such a transcendent reputation, he should have rivals. Accordingly, he was unanimously chosen president of the United States.

As a general and a patriot, the measure of his glory was already full: there was no fame left for him to excel but his own ; and even that task, the mightiest of all his labours, his civil magistracy has accomplished.

No sooner did the new government begin its auspicious course, than order seemed to arise out of confusion. Commerce and industry awoke, and were cheerful at their labours; for credit and confidence awoke with them. Every where was the appearance of prosperity; and the only fear was, that its progress was too rapid to consist with the purity and simplicity of ancient manners. The cares and labours of the president were incessant: his exhortations, example, and authority, were employed to excite zeal and activity for the publick service: able officers were selected, only for their merits; and some of them remarkably distinguished themselves by their successful management of the publick business. Government was administered with such integrity, without mystery, and in so prosperous a course, that it seemed to be wholly employed in acts of beneficence. Though it has made many thousand malecontents, it has never, by its rigour or injustice, made one man wretched.

SUCH was the state of publick affairs: and did it not seem perfectly to ensure uninterrupted harmony to the citizens? Did they not, in respect to their government and its administration, possess their whole heart's desire? They had seen and suffered long the want of an efficient constitution; they had freely- ratified it; they saw WASHINGTON, their tried friend, the father of his country, invested with its powers: they knew that he could not exceed or betray them, without forfeiting his own reputation. Consider, for a moment, what a reputation it was: such as no man ever before possessed by so clear a title, and in so high a degree. His fame seemed in its purity to exceed even its brightness: office took honour from his acceptance, but conferred none. Ambition stood awed and darkened by his shadow. For where, through the wide earth, was the man so vain as to dispute precedence with him; or what were the honours that could make the possessor WASHINGTON'S superiour ? Refined and complex as the ideas of virtue are, even the gross could discern in his life the infinite superiority of her rewards. Mankind perceived some change in their ideas of greatness: the splendour of power, and even of the name of conqueror, had grown dim in their eyes. They did not know that WASHINGTON could augment his fame; but they knew and felt, that the world's wealth, and its empire too, would be a bribe far beneath his acceptance. THIS is not exaggeration: never was confidence in a man and a chief magistrate more widely diffused, or more solidly established.

IF it had been in the nature of man, that we should enjoy liberty, without the agitations of party, the United States had a right, under these circumstances, to expect it: but it was impossible. Where there is no liberty, they may be exempt from party. It will seem strange, but it scarcely admits a doubt, that there are fewer malecontents in Turkey, than in any free state in the world. Where the people have no power, they enter into no contests, and are not anxious to know how they shall use it. The spirit of discontent becomes torpid for want of employment, and sighs itself to rest. The people sleep soundly in their chains, and do not even dream of their weight. They lose their turbulence with their energy, and become as tractable as any other animals: a state of degradation, in which they extort our scorn, and engage our pity, for the misery they do not feel. Yet that heart is a base one, and fit only for a slave's bosom, that would not bleed freely, rather than submit to such a condition; for liberty with all its parties and agitations is more desirable than slavery. Who would not prefer the republicks of ancient Greece, where liberty once subsisted in its excess, its delirium, terrible in its charms, and glistening to the last with the blaze of the very fire that consumed it?

I DO not know that I ought, but I am sure that I do, prefer those republicks to the dozing slavery of the modern Greece, where the degraded wretches have suffered scorn till they merit it, where they tread on classic ground, on the ashes of heroes and patriots, unconscious of their ancestry, ignorant of the nature, and almost of the name of liberty, and insensible even to the passion for it. Who, on this contrast, can forbear to say, it is the modern Greece that lies buried, that sleeps forgotten in the caves of Turkish darkness? It is the ancient Greece that lives in remembrance, that is still bright with glory, still fresh in immortal youth. They are unworthy of liberty, who entertain a less exalted idea of its excellence. The misfortune is, that those who profess to be its most passionate admirers have, generally, the least comprehension of its hazards and impediments : they expect, that an enthusiastick admiration of its nature will reconcile the multitude to the irksomeness of its restraints. Delusive expectation! WASHINGTON was not thus deluded. We have his solemn warning against the often fatal propensities of liberty. He had reflected, that men are often false to their country and their honour, false to duty and even to their interest, but multitudes of men are never long false or deaf to their passions : these will find obstacles in the laws, associates in party. The fellowships thus formed are more intimate, and impose commands more imperious, than those of society.

THUS party forms a state within the state, and is animated by a rivalry, fear, and hatred, of its superiour. When this happens, the merits of the government will become fresh provocations and offences, for they are the merits of an enemy. No wonder then, that as soon as party found the virtue and glory of WASHINGTON were obstacles, the attempt was made, by calumny, to surmount them both. For this, the greatest of all his trials, we know that he was prepared. He knew, that the government must possess sufficient strength

from within or without, or fall a victim to faction. This interior strength was plainly inadequate to its defence, unless it could be reinforced from without by the zeal and patriotism of the citizens; and this latter resource was certainly as accessible to president WASHINGTON, as to any chief magistrate that ever lived. The life of the federal government, he considered, was in the breath of the people's nostrils: whenever they should happen to be so infatuated or inflamed as to abandon its defence, its end must be as speedy, and might be as tragical, as a constitution for France.

WHILE the president was thus administering the government in so wise and just a manner, as to engage the great majority of the enlightened and virtuous citizens to co-operate with him for its support, and while he indulged the hope that time and habit were confirming their attachment, the French revolution had reached that point in its progress, when its terrible principles began to agitate all civilized nations. I will not, on this occasion, detain you to express, though my thoughts teem with it, my deep abhorrence of that revolution; its despotism, by the mob or the military, from the first, and its hypocrisy of morals to the last. Scenes have passed there which exceed description, and which, for other reasons, I will not attempt to describe; for it would not be possible, even at this distance of time, and with the sea between us and France, to go through with the recital of them, without perceiving horror gather, like a frost, about the heart, and almost stop its pulse. That revolution has been constant in nothing but its vicissitudes, and its promises; always delusive, but always renewed, to establish philosophy by crimes, and liberty by the sword. The people of France, if they are not like the modern Greeks, find their cap of liberty is a soldier's helmet: and with all their imitation of dictators and consuls, their exactest similitude to these Roman ornaments, is in their chains. The nations of Europe perceive another resemblance, in their all-conquering ambition.

BUT it is only the influence of that event on America, and on the measures of the president, that belongs to my subject. It would be ingratiously wrong to his character, to be silent in respect to a part of it, which has the most signally illustrated his virtues.

THE genuine character of that revolution is not even yet so well understood, as the dictates of self-preservation require it should be. The chief duty and care of all governments is to protect the rights of property, and the tranquillity of society.

The leaders of the French revolution, from the beginning, excited the poor against the rich. This has made the rich poor, but it will never make the poor rich. On the contrary, they were used only as blind instruments to make those leaders masters, first of the adverse party, and then of the state. Thus the powers of the state were turned round into a direction exactly contrary to the proper one, not to preserve tranquillity and restrain violence, but to excite violence by the lure of power, and plunder, and vengeance. Thus all France has been, and still is, as much the prize of the ruling party, as a captured ship; and if any right or possession has escaped confiscation, there is none that has not been liable to it.

THUS it clearly appears, that, in its origin, its character, and its means, the government of that country is revolutionary; that is, not only different from, but directly contrary to, every regular and well-ordered society. It is a danger, similar in its kind, and at least equal in degree, to that, with which ancient Rome menaced her enemies. The allies of Rome were slaves; and it cost some hundred years efforts of her policy and arms, to make her enemies her allies. Nations, at this day, can trust no better to treaties; they cannot even trust to arms, unless they are used with a spirit and perseverance becoming the magnitude of their danger. For the French revolution has been, from the first, hostile to all right and justice, to all peace and order in society; and, therefore, its very existence has been a state of warfare against the civilized world, and most of all against free and orderly republics, for such are never without factions, ready to be the allies of France, and to aid her in the work of destruction. Accordingly, scarcely any but republics have they subverted. Such governments, by shewing in practice what republican liberty was, detect French imposture, and shew what their pretexts are not.

To subvert them, therefore, they had, besides the facility that faction affords, the double excitement of removing a reproach, and converting their greatest obstacles into their most efficient auxiliaries.

WHO then, on careful reflection, will be surprised, that the French and their partizans instantly conceived the desire, and made the most powerful attempts, to revolutionize the American government? But it will hereafter seem strange that their excesses should be excused, as the effects of a struggle for liberty; and that so many of our citizens should be flattered, while they were insulted with the idea, that our example was copied, and our principles pursued. Nothing was ever more false, or more fascinating. Our liberty depends on our education, our laws, and habits, to which even prejudices yield; on the dispersion of our people on farms, and on the almost equal diffusion of property; it is founded on morals and religion, whose authority reigns in the heart; and on the influence all these produce on public opinion, before that opinion governs rulers. Here liberty is restraint; there it is violence: here it is mild and cheering, like the morning sun of our summer, brightening the hills, and making the vallies green; there it is like the sun, when his rays dart pestilence on the sands of Africa. American liberty calms and restrains the licentious passions, like an angel that says to the winds and troubled seas, be still; but how has French licentiousness appeared to the wretched citizens of Switzerland and Venice? Do not their haunted imaginations, even when they wake, represent her as a monster, with eyes that flash wild fire, hands that hurl thunderbolts, a voice that shakes the foundation of the hills? She stands, and her ambition measures the earth; she speaks, and an epidemick fury seizes the nations.

EXPERIENCE is lost upon us, if we deny, that it had seized a large part of the American nation. It is as sober, and intelligent, as free, and as worthy to be free, as any in the world; yet, like all other people, we have passions and prejudices, and they had received a violent impulse, which, for a time, misled us.

JACOBINISM had become here, as in France, rather a sect than a party, inspiring a fanaticism that was equally intolerant and contagious. The delusion was general enough to be thought the voice of the people, therefore, claiming authority without proof, and jealous enough to exact acquiescence without a murmur of contradiction. Some progress was made in training multitudes to be

vindictive and ferocious. To them nothing seemed amiable, but the revolutionary justice of Paris; nothing terrible, but the government and justice of America. The very name of patriots was claimed and applied, in proportion as the citizens had alienated their hearts from America, and transferred their affections to their foreign corrupter. Party discerned its intimate connection of interest with France, and consummated its profligacy by yielding to foreign influence.

THE views of these allies required, that this country should engage in war with Great Britain. Nothing less would give to France all the means of annoying this dreaded rival: nothing less would ensure the subjection of America, as a satellite to the ambition of France: nothing else could make a revolution here perfectly inevitable.

FOR this end, the minds of the citizens were artfully inflamed, and the moment was watched, and impatiently waited for, when their long heated passions should be in fusion, to pour them forth like the lava of a volcano, to blacken and consume the peace and government of our country.

THE systematick operations of a faction under foreign influence had begun to appear, and were successively pursued, in a manner too deeply alarming to be soon forgotten. Who of us does not remember this worst of evils in this worst of ways? Shame would forget, if it could, that, in one of the states, amendments were proposed to break down the federal senate, which, as in the state governments, is a great bulwark of the publick order. To break down another, an extravagant judiciary power was claimed for states. In another state a rebellion was fomented by the agent of France: and who, without fresh indignation, can remember, that the powers of government were openly usurped, troops levied, and ships fitted out to fight for her? Nor can any true friend to our government consider without dread, that, soon afterwards, the treaty-making power was boldly challenged for a branch of the government, from which the constitution has wisely withholden it.

I AM oppressed, and know not how to proceed with my subject. WASHINGTON, blessed be GOD! who endued him with wisdom and clothed him with power; WASHINGTON issued his proclamation of neutrality, and, at an early period, arrested the intrigues of France and the passions of his countrymen, on the very edge of the precipice of war and revolution.

THIS act of firmness, at the hazard of his reputation and peace, entitles him to the name of the first of patriots. Time was gained for the citizens to recover their virtue and good sense, and they soon recovered them. The crisis was passed, and America was saved.

You and I, most respected fellow citizens, should be sooner tired than satisfied in recounting the particulars of this illustrious man's life.

Plow great he appeared while he administered the government, how much greater when he retired from it, how he accepted the chief military command under his wise and upright successor, how his life was unspotted like his fame, and how his death was worthy of his life, are so many distinct subjects of instruction, and each of them singly more than enough for an eulogium. I leave the task, however, to his story and to posterity; they will be faithful to it.

IT is not impossible, that some will affect to consider the honours paid to this great patriot by the nation, as excessive, idolatrous, and degrading to freemen, who are all equal. I answer, that refusing to virtue its legitimate honours would not prevent their being lavished, in future, on any worthless and ambitious favourite. If this day's example should have its natural effect, it will be salutary. Let such honours be so conferred only when, in future, they shall be so merited: then the publick sentiment will not be misled, nor the principles of a just equality corrupted. The best evidence of reputation is a man's whole life. We have now, alas! all WASHINGTON'S before us. There has scarcely appeared a really great man, whose character has been more admired in his life time, or less correctly understood by his admirers. When it is comprehended, it is no easy task to delineate its excellences in such a manner, as to give to the portrait both interest and resemblance; for it requires thought and study to understand the true ground of the superiority of his character over many others, whom he resembled in the principles of action, and even in the manner of acting. But perhaps he excels all the great men that ever lived, in the steadiness of his adherence to his maxims of life, and in the uniformity of all his conduct to the same maxims. These maxims, though wise, were yet not so remarkable for their wisdom, as for their authority over his life: for if there were any errors in his judgment, (and he discovered as few as any man) we know of no blemishes in his virtue. He was the patriot without reproach: he loved his country well enough to hold his success in serving it an ample recompense. Thus far self-love and love of country coincided: but when his country needed sacrifices, that no other man could, or perhaps would be willing to make, he did not even hesitate. This was virtue in its most exalted character. More than once he put his fame at hazard, when he had reason to think it would be sacrificed, at least in this age. Two instances cannot be denied: when the army was disbanded; and again, when he stood, like Leonidas at the pass of Thermopylae, to defend our independence against France.

IT is indeed almost as difficult to draw his character, as the portrait of virtue. The reasons are similar: our ideas of moral excellence are obscure, because they are complex, and we are obliged to resort to illustrations. WASHINGTON'S example is the happiest, to shew what virtue is; and to delineate his character, we naturally expatiate on the beauty of virtue: much must be felt, and much imagined. His preeminence is not so much to be seen in the display of any one virtue, as in the possession of them all, and in the practice of the most difficult. Hereafter, therefore, his character must be studied before it will be striking; and then it will be admitted as a model, a precious one to a free republic!

IT is no less difficult to speak of his talents. They were adapted to lead, without dazzling mankind; and to draw forth and employ the talents of others, without being misled by them. In this he was certainly superiour, that he neither mistook nor misapplied his own. His great modesty and reserve would have concealed them, if great occasions had not called them forth; and then, as he never spoke from the affectation to shine, nor acted from any sinister motives, it is from their effects only that we are to judge of their greatness and extent. In publick trusts, where men, acting conspicuously, are cautious, and in those private concerns, where few conceal or resist

their weaknesses, WASHINGTON was uniformly great, pursuing right conduct from right maxims. His talents were such as assist a sound judgment, and ripen with it. His prudence was consummate, and seemed to take the direction of his powers and passions; for, as a soldier, he was more solicitous to avoid mistakes that might be fatal, than to perform exploits that are brilliant; and as a statesman, to adhere to just principles, however old, than to pursue novelties; and therefore, in both characters, his qualities were singularly adapted to the interest, and were tried in the greatest perils, of the country His habits of inquiry were so far remarkable, that he was never satisfied with, investigating, nor desisted from it, so long as he had less than all the light that he could obtain upon a subject, and then he made his decision without bias.

THIS command over the partialities that so generally stop men short, or turn them aside in their pursuit of truth, is one of the chief causes of his unvaried course of right conduct in so many difficult scenes, where every human actor must be presumed to err. If he had strong passions, he had learned to subdue them, and to be moderate and mild. If he had weak nesses, he concealed them, which is rare, and excluded them from the government of his temper and conduct, which is still more rare. If he loved fame, he never made improper compliances for what is called popularity. The fame he enjoyed is of the kind that will last forever ; yet it was rather the effect, than the motive, of his conduct. Some future Plutarch will search for a parallel to his character. Epaminondas is perhaps the brightest name of all antiquity. WASHINGTON resembled him in the purity and ardour of his patriotism; and, like him, he first exalted the glory of his country. There, it is to be hoped, the parallel ends: for Thebes fell with Epaminondas. But such comparisons cannot be pursued far, without departing from the similitude. For we shall find it as difficult to compare great men as great rivers: some we admire for the length and rapidity of their current, and the grandeur of their cataracts; others, for the majestick silence and fulness of their streams: we cannot bring them together to measure the difference of their waters. The unambitious life of WASHINGTON, declining fame, yet courted by it, seemed, like the Ohio, to choose its long way through solitudes, diffusing fertility; or like his own Potowmack, widening and deepening his channel, as he approaches the sea, and displaying most the usefulness and serenity of his greatness towards the end of his course. Such a citizen would do honour to any country. The constant veneration and affection of his country will shew, that it was worthy of such a citizen.

HOWEVER his military fame may excite the wonder of mankind, it is chiefly by his civil magistracy, that his example will instruct them. Great generals have arisen in all ages of the world, and perhaps most in those of despotism and darkness. In times of violence and convulsion, they rise, by the force of the whirlwind, high enough to ride in it, and direct the storm. Like meteors, they glare on the black clouds with a splendour, that, while it dazzles and terrifies, makes nothing visible but the darkness. The fame of heroes is indeed growing vulgar: they multiply in every long war; they stand in history, and thicken in their ranks, almost as undistinguished as their own soldiers.

BUT such a chief magistrate as WASHINGTON appears like the pole star in a clear sky, to direct the skilful statesman. His presidency will form an epoch, and be distinguished as the age of WASHINGTON. Already it assumes its high place in the political region. Like the milky way, it whitens along its allotted portion of the hemisphere. The latest generations of men will survey, through the telescope of history, the space where so many virtues blend their rays, and delight to separate them into groups and distinct virtues. As the best illustration of them, the living monument, to which the first of patriots would have chosen to consign his fame, it is my earnest prayer to heaven, that our country may subsist, even to that late day, in the plenitude of its liberty and happiness, and mingle Us mild glory with WASHINGTON.

SUPREME COUNCIL OF JUDGES HELD BY THE SUPREME COURT



The Apotheosis of Washington

19th Century, Artist unknown

Reverse painting on glass. George Washington is seen ascending into heaven upon his death.
Watercolor on glass. Morristown National Historical Park