Dear Sir

Washington City, Dec. 26th, 1829

Having closed the festivities of Christmas, and tired with trudging along the streets of this metropolis on business through an incessant rain, I have retired to devote an hour to the call of friendship.

It was my intention, at a leisure moment in this district, to reply at large to the contents of your last favor, received before I left home, and to attempt to refute, to the best of my capacity, what I deem its antirepublican doctrines. But the frightful attitude in which the convention has since placed itself by its votes and the undisguised expression of the intentions of the real on the all-absorbing subject of the basis of representation proves minor considerations in its vast abyss and sheds the more upon the appalling contemplation of the dire result which may be produced by a pertinacious refusal to redress to any salutary extent those grievances in the existing system of government, a deep sense of which forces the state into convention. The torpor into which a long continued privation of political rights sinks a nation is not easily disturbed. For all experience proves that people are more prone to bear with evils while they are sufferable than to make any great exertion to remove them. But when a feeling are a glaring conviction of oppression causes a majority of the community to a determined resistance, its voice, like that of the royal beast of the forest, makes everything quake around. Hence is patience but despair unmanagable. Can it then be wise or prudent or politic in the minority unjustly possessed of the power of the state to hazard the rueful consequences of driving the majority of the people to despair of attaining their just and equal rights by an appeal to reason, justice, or at least a prospect of arriving one day at a consummation so devoutly to be wished for?

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Long have the citizens of Virginia waited for a peaceable reform of their constitution. They have contemplated the call of a convention as the harbinger of the restoration of their equal and unalienable rights. The assembling of that body was looked to with deep interest. The excitement produced by its proceedings is great. A crisis seems to have arrived. It is a moment of awful suspense and penetrating solicitude. The public feeling is intense.

Would the convention on which the expectation of relief rested, dissolve in smoke, or still worse, by a deliberate act, determine to perpetuate the galling yoke of political slavery on the necks of the majority, can they flatter themselves that it will be patiently borne, or quietly obey as in times past? Is it reasonable or probable that men knowing themselves helpless of the physical power to right themselves, considering that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves consents that every helper of the physical power to right themselves? Such a submission to the will or dictates of the few would be at war with every manly feeling of the heart, every just sentiment of the human understanding.

I cannot accord with those members who declare that whatever may be the result of your present deliberations (perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more properly, as the result of your present deliberations perhaps more 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grants no present, nor indeed prospective relief. And should such a plan be presented to the people and accepted by them its inevitable effect would be to fix us long immaturity any radical reform. Would feel myself a traitor to those principles for which our forefathers fought and that were I to advise the adoption of a constitution with such delusive features.

From the temper manifested by the east, and the confident tone which they have assumed since the late acquisition to their number, I think any attempt to procure a provision in the constitution (should one be agreed on) for its future amendment which would permit an equitable revision at some future period, would be altogether unjust. Without such a provision, or such alterations as would render it in some degree acceptable to the majority of the freemen, I care not how bad it shall be. The more hateful its complexion the better would I be pleased. Because I would then hope that its deformity would diminish a portion of its present favor and cause an indignant people to rise in the majority of their strength for its demolition.

I see no likelihood of any benefit to arise from your continuance if you will adjourn ere long. Beware of compromises which shall delude the people by specious appearance where no operative principle is secured or practical good obtained.

It is probable I shall leave this district before you can obtain the idea executed which I intimated to you the other day. I have written the president and find him a plain, unostentation republican in manners quite acceptable. But I cannot receive the impression that he is a great man.

Your friend, Arch. McClean.
Charles A. Morgan Esqr
of the Convention
Richmond
Virginia
Feb. 26, 1839
Jan. 8, 1830

FREE
Archie McLean P.M.
of Archville now at Washington