

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1777

A letter, of the 10, from Governor Henry, was read, and referred to the Board of War.¹

and latter passed without opposition or dissent, the second occasioned two days debate. It stood originally the third article; and expressed only a reservation of the power of regulating the internal police, and consequently resigned every other power. It appeared to me that this was not what the States expected, and, I thought, it left it in the power of the future Congress or General Council to explain away every right belonging to the States and to make their own power as unlimited as they please. I proposed, therefore an amendment, which held up the principle, that all sovereign power was in the States separately, and that particular acts of it, which should be expressly enumerated, would be exercised in conjunction, and not otherwise; but that in all things else each State would exercise all the rights and power of sovereignty, uncontrolled. This was at first so little understood that it was some time before it was seconded, and South Carolina first took it up. The opposition was made by Mr. Wilson of Pennsylvania, and Mr. R. H. Lee of Virginia: in the end, however, the question was carried for my proposition, eleven ayes, one no, and one divided. The no was Virginia; the divided, New Hampshire. I was much pleased to find the opinion of accumulating powers to Congress so little supported, and I promise myself, in the whole business I shall find my ideas relative thereto nearly similar to those of most of the States. In a word, Sir, I am of opinion, the Congress should have power enough to call out and apply the common strength for the common defense: but not for the partial purposes of ambition. We shall next proceed to the structure of the common Councils; and here, I think, we shall meet with difficulties of the most arduous nature. The inequality of the States, and yet the necessity of maintaining their separate independence, will occasion dilemmas almost inextricable. You shall, Sir, know the whole progress of the matter if I can conceive and convey it with sufficient clearness." *Thomas Burke to Governor Caswell, 29 April, 1777. North Carolina Colonial Records, XI, 461.*

"Since my last we have made no progress in the business of Confederation. A difficulty occurs, which, I fear, will be insuperable: that is how to secure to each State its separate independence, and give each its proper weight in the public Councils. So unequal as the States are, it will be nearly impossible to effect this: and after all it is far from improbable that the only Confederation will be a defensive Alliance. Nothing of importance has been determined in Congress, except what is merely executory.

"In one of my letters I believe I mentioned that Georgia was of no use in Congress but to vote with Connecticut. This was owing I believe to this circumstance, only one Delegate was then present, who is by birth a Connecticut man. Since then a Mr. Walton has given his attendance, which was before interrupted by illness; and I perceive that Georgia is now frequently divided when any question related to Colonial politics, so that these two Delegates are of different principles or different judgments." *Thomas Burke to Governor Caswell, 23 May, 1777. North Carolina Colonial Records, XI, 477.*

¹ A letter of the 11th is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 71, I, folio 109.

Resolved, That the copy of General Howe's letter, which was enclosed in General Washington's letter of the 5, be referred to the committee appointed to enquire into the conduct of the British and Hessian generals and officers.

The committee to whom was re-committed the report on the proceedings of the ||committees from the|| four New England States, brought in their ||another|| report, which was taken into consideration: Whereupon,

Resolved, That considering the situation of the New England States, Congress approve of the measures adopted and recommended by the committee from the four New England States, for the defence of the State of Rhode Island; and also of the measures to be taken for preventing the depreciation of their currency, except that part which recommends the striking bills bearing interest, which, being a measure tending to depreciate the continental and other currencies, ought not to be adopted, and it is so recommended by Congress to the said New England states:

That the plan for regulating the price of labour, of manufactures and of internal produce within those states, and of goods imported from foreign parts, except military stores, be referred to the consideration of the other united States: and that it be recommended to them, to adopt such measures, as they shall think most expedient to remedy the evils occasioned by the present fluctuating and exorbitant prices of the articles aforesaid:

That, for this purpose, it be recommended to the legislatures, or, in their recess, to the executive powers of the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, to appoint commissioners to meet at York town, in Pennsylvania, on the 3d Monday in March next, to consider of, and form a system of regulation adapted to those States, to be laid before the respective legislatures of each State, for their approbation:

That, for the like purpose, it be recommended to the legislatures, or executive powers in the recess of the legislatures of the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, to appoint commissioners to meet at Charlestown, in South Carolina, on the first Monday in May next:

That it be recommended to the legislatures of the several States, to take the most effectual measures for manning the continental frigates, fitted for the sea in their respective States:

That it be earnestly recommended to the united States, to avoid, as far as possible, further emissions of paper money, and to take the most effectual measures for speedily drawing in and sinking their paper currency already emitted:

That such parts of the proceedings of the said committees ||from the four New England states,|| as relate to the price of labour and other things, be published and transmitted to the other States, together with these resolutions:

The Committee of Treasury reported,

That there is due to William Lavelly, for entertaining a party of the Virginia light horse, on their march to General Washington [$\text{\pounds}5\ 9=$] 14 48/90 dollars.

That there should be paid to the Honourable Mann Page, on account of Henry Baker, for provisions supplied by him to Captain Morgan's company, of Virginia, in July, 1775, the sum of [$\text{\pounds}16\ 17\ 4$ Virginia currency=] 56 20/90 dollars:

That there should be paid to Peter Kemp, for a waggon horse, that was ~~employed~~ impressed in public service, and died on his return from Philadelphia, where he had been with baggage belonging to the Virginia troops, the sum of [$\text{\pounds}30=$] 80 dollars: