

Hon. R. Baldwin's Letter

Read by Mr. Perry, on Thursday last, in the House of Assembly.

FRONT STREET, March 16th 1836.

DEAR SIR:—

Myself and my colleagues having felt it our duty to tender our resignations, and the Lieutenant Governor having been pleased to accept them, I waited on his Excellency to request his permission to make public in the usual parliamentary way the steps, which led to the formation of his Excellency's late cabinet, and the circumstances which occasioned its dissolution:—to which His Excellency in the handsomest manner frankly acceded, most graciously assuring me that his confidence in me personally was such that he presented me with a carte blanche to state the whole from the commencement of the negotiations to the acceptance of our resignations.

None of the members of the late Provincial Administration having the honor of a seat in the Commons, I know of no way in which such information can be more respectfully communicated than in a letter addressed to you for the purpose of being read in your place, or of the house being put in possession of its contents in whatever other way your more intimate acquaintance with parliamentary forms may suggest.

I therefore beg leave to state that his Excellency having done me the honor to send for me, explained the position in which he found himself placed on assuming the government of the Province, and declaring himself most anxious to do the best he could to insure to the province good and cheap government, expressed himself most desirous that I would afford him my assistance by joining his Executive Council assuring me that in the event of my acceding to his proposal I should enjoy his full and entire confidence—I informed his Excellency of my extreme reluctance to again embark in public life, and proceeded to state that notwithstanding such reluctance, and reserving to myself the option of declining to accept the seat which his Excellency had tendered to me on private grounds merely. I yet felt as his Excellency had done me the honor of sending for me I would not be performing my duty to my sovereign or the country if I did not with his Excellency's permission explain fully to his Excellency my views of the constitution of the province and the change necessary in the practical administration of it particularly as I considered the delay in adopting this change as the great and all absorbing grievance, before which all others in my mind sunk into insignificance, and the remedy of which would most effectually lead, and that in a constitutional way, to the redress of every other real grievance, and the finally putting an end to all clamor about imaginary ones; and that these desirable objects could thus be accomplished without in the

efficiently representing and urging my views His Excellency declaring that his doors should at all times be open to me, and that he should be happy to listen and give his most serious consideration to any subject which I might any time think it important to lay before him. His Excellency always reserving the right to decide for himself; His Excellency at the same time remarking that he had no objection to the Council, each continuing to enter and urge his individual opinions, as the opinions of one would be neutralized by those of another. I then informed His Excellency that upon the principles which I had opened to him there were two grounds upon which I could not consistently comply with His Excellency's wishes—first, that no provincial administration would in my opinion be capable of affording His Excellency that assistance and support which his government would require unless sufficiently possessed of the confidence of the Provincial Parliament to command majorities in it, and that I did not feel that confidence could be obtained without further assistance—and secondly, that though in private life I was on perfectly good terms with all the gentlemen who composed His Excellency's Executive Council, and on most friendly terms with one of them, yet as public men I had in them no confidence whatever and had formerly when in public life denounced them and those with whom they acted as politically unworthy of the confidence of the country, & therefore that I felt I could not take office with them. At length after a consultation held by His Excellency's permission, with Dr. Rolph and my father, finally, on the two grounds above mentioned declined to accept a seat in the Executive Council.

It is proper that I should here remark though those principles were fully opened to His Excellency at my first interview some part of the conversations above adverted to (though I believe none that could be considered essential to the full exposition of the principles themselves) passed during the subsequent interview which I had the honor of having with the Lieutenant Governor in the course of the negotiation.

Having been subsequently again sent for by His Excellency and requested to state more explicitly what the assistance was to which he had before alluded. I replied that I considered the assistance of Dr. Rolph, Mr. Bidwell, Father and Mr. Dunn in the Executive Council most desirable and that of Dr. Rolph as absolutely necessary to insure that public confidence in His Excellency's Government without which I was convinced His Excellency with the best intentions in the world would fail to accomplish those desirable objects which he had in view. His Excellency after a further interview which he informed me he had with Mr. Bidwell again opened the negotiation by a renewed tender of a Seat in the Executive Council, giving me at the same time to un-