

Eye), I continued to be guided in the negligent Confidence of a Soldier. But the whole world saw, and all America confessed, the Overtures of the second commission exceeded our expectations. If there was any Suspicion of the National liberties, it arose from its excess.

“Do any believe we were at that time really entangled by an Alliance with France? and thus they have been duped by a virtuous Credulity, in the incautious moments of intemperate passion, to give up their fidelity to serve a Nation counting both the will and power to protect us and aiming at the destruction both of the Mother Country and the Provinces. In the plainness of Common Sense, for I pretend to no Casuistry, did the pretended Treaty with the court of Versailles amount to more than an Overture to America? Certainly not, because no Authority had been given by the people to conclude it, nor to this very hour have they authorized its ratification—the Articles of Confederation remain still unsigned.

“In the firm persuasion, therefore that the private judgment of any Individual Citizen of this country is as free from all Conventional Restraints since, as before the Insidious offers of France, I preferred those from Great Britain, thinking it infinitely wiser and safer to cast my confidence upon her justice and generosity, than to trust a Monarchy too feeble to establish your Independency, so Perilous to her distant Dominions, the Enemy of the Protestant Faith, and fraudulently avowing an affection for the liberties of mankind, while she holds her Native Sons in Vassalage and Chains.

“I affect no disguise, and therefore frankly declare that in these principles, I had determined to retain my arms and Command for an opportunity to surrender them to Great Britain, and in concerting the Measures for a purpose, in my Opinion, as grateful as it would have been beneficial to my Country; I was only solicitous to accomplish an event of decisive Importance, and to prevent, as much as possible in the Execution of it, the Effusion of blood.