

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 29b

the smallest opening to bring everything to confusion. He would be afraid of seeming to throw ridicule on Congress if he reported to the King the curious metaphysical arguments by which they support their pretensions to a share in the fisheries on British coasts. Gérard has informed members of Congress that he thought the King would support the United States in their demands as regards the Nova Scotia fisheries, so long as these demands did not offer an obstacle to peace. p. 70

1780
Philadelphia,
Jan. 16.

La Luzerne to Vergennes. No. 25. States that neither he nor Congress has received any news from Europe since his arrival. The terms of the Ultimatum, of which Adams is the bearer, are coming to be known in the Eastern States, and are causing so much excitement as to be disquieting were it not for the sincerity of the other states towards the Alliance. The four New England states, already so influential, have made a sort of coalition with Pennsylvania and Delaware, by which they obtain a practical control over the work of Congress. As Georgia is not represented, the States line up 6 against 6, the New England group being perfectly united, while the other is broken up by internal divisions. New York State is exercised over posture of affairs, and is taking steps to counteract the measures of the northern states, when this seems necessary. La Luzerne advises, as best plan, an effort to detach Pennsylvania and Delaware from the New England states. The most intelligent members think there will always be rivalry between the northern and the southern states, and that it will be with the middle states, that is to say, New York, the Jerseys, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware, to hold the balance between the opposing forces. La Luzerne presumes that the fleet which left New York lately is destined for the conquest of South Carolina, and possibly of North Carolina as well. If the English become masters of the two Carolinas, their Assemblies will send no more members to Congress. To offset the weakening of the Southern influence, La Luzerne suggested that the members for those states now in Congress, should be authorized by their constituents to represent them for an indefinite period, at the time their period of representation was limited to one year. p. 1