

ATTACHMENT 2A

George Washington to David Humphreys, October 22, 1786

[IMAGES](#)

The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

Mount Vernon, October 22, 1786.

My Dr. Humphreys: Your favor of the 24th. ulto. came to my hands about the middle of this month. For the enclosures it contained I pray you to receive my warmest acknowledgments and thanks. The Poem, tho' I profess not to be a connoisseur in these kind of writings, appears pretty in my eye, and has sentiment and elegance which must I think render it pleasing to others.

With respect to the circular letter,³² I see no cause for suppressing or altering any part of it, except as to the place of meeting. Philadelphia, on three accots. is my opinion must be more convenient to the majority of the delegation, than New York. 1st. as most central. 2dly. because there are regularly established packet-boats, well accommodated for Passengers, to it from the Southern States; and 3dly. because it appears to me that the seat of Congress would not be so well for this meeting. When you have digested your thoughts for publication, in the case of Capt'n. Asgill, I would thank you for a copy of them; having arrested the account I had furnished Mr. Tilghman, with an assurance of a more authentic one for his friend in England.

[Note 32: See Washington's letter to the State societies of the Cincinnati, Oct. 31, 1786, *post.*]

I am pleased with the choice of Delegates which was made at your State meeting; and wish the Representatives of all the State societies may appear at the Genl. Meeting, with as good dispositions as I believe they will. It gives me pleasure also to hear that so many Officers are sent to your Assembly: I am persuaded they will carry with them more liberality of sentiments, than is to be found among any other class of Citizens. The speech of our friend Cobb was noble, worthy of a patriot and himself; as was the conduct of Genl. Sullivan. But for God's sake tell me what is the cause of all these commotions:³³ do they proceed from licentiousness, British-influence disseminated by the tories, or real grievances which admit of redress? If the latter, why were they delayed 'till the public mind had become so much agitated? If the former why are not the powers of Government tried at once? It is as well to be without, as not to live under their exercise. Commotions of this sort, like snow-balls, gather strength as they roll, if there is no opposition in the way to divide and crumble them. Do write me fully, I beseech you, on these matters; not only with respect to facts, but as to opinions of their tendency and issue. **I am mortified**

beyond expression that in the moment of our acknowledged independence we should by our conduct verify the predictions of our transatlantic foe, and render ourselves ridiculous and contemptible in the eyes of all Europe. My health (I thank you for the enquiry) is restored to me; and all under this roof join me in most affectionate regards, and in regretting that your letter has held out no idea of visiting it again this winter, as you gave us hope of doing when you left us. To all the gentn. of my acquaintance who may happen to be in your circle, I beg to be remembered with sincere regard. To assure you of the

[Note 33: Shay's rebellion in Massachusetts.] sincerity of my friendship for you, would be unnecessary; as you must I think be perfectly satisfied of the high esteem and affection with which, I am, etc.³⁴

[Note 34: From the "Letter Book" copy in the *Washington Papers*.]

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