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## Documents Online

**Title:** Letter from James Buchanan to V. Best

**Date:** March 21, 1836

**Location:** MC 1998.10, B1, F15

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2 letters  
1836  
16500

Dear Sir,

Washington 21 March 1836.

I thank you for your two kind letters from Harrisburg. My friends there do not write me often. Letting myself, I suppose they are so much engaged they have but little time for correspondence. These letters, however, are but a small portion of the debt which I owe you. The uniform kindness which you have manifested towards me in your paper deserves & has obtained my lasting gratitude.

I have been somewhat astonished that several of my <sup>in Pennsylvania</sup> friends have advised me to disobey the instructions of the Legislature, in case they should pass, directing me to vote against Colonel Benton's Expurgation Resolution. To do so, would be to abandon my own principles, and to prostrate so far as I could do it, one of the principal landmarks of the Democracy of the Union. It would be to justify all those Senators whom we have so loudly condemned, by my example; & place me upon the same list with them. Not a friend from any other State in the Union, and I have consulted

many of the distinguished Republicans here has hesitated for a moment in advising me to obey or to resign. I wish all my friends in Pennsylvania to know that I shall adopt one or other of these alternatives, in case it should become necessary. A large majority of my friends here advise me to the former, though my own judgment & inclination <sup>are in favor</sup> ~~is in favor~~ of the latter. I shall decide promptly, should the occasion require it.

V. Best Ery

from your friend in haste  
James Buchanan

P.S. You will perceive at once that if the Senator is to be the judge - & if he is to decide whether the Legislature speaks the voice of the people, the rights of Legislative Instruction might as well ~~at once~~ be abandoned.



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