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Title: Letter from James Buchanan to Ross Wilkins

Date: November 19, 1841

Location: MC 1998.10, B1, F27

Contact:

Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

Lancaster 19th November 1841.

My dear Sir,

I thank you for your kind letter of the 5th instant & for the agreeable news which it communicated. Michigan is indeed herself again & long may she continue to stand erect! Her Democracy violated one of the most essential principles of the party in establishing the "Wild cat" Banking system; and this, I presume, was one great cause of its prostration. I see it stated in the New York Herald, (not very good authority to be sure) that the recent election in Michigan will lead to the repudiation of her State debt. Should this be the case, your ~~recent~~ ^{late} victory will be ^{but} as short lived triumph. A war with England, in a righteous cause, I do not dread. In such a cause, I should not yield an iota of the national honor to insurre pease. But should the States repudiate their debts & England interfere to protect her subjects from the effects of this swindling operation, our cause would be unrighteous, the feelings of the civilized world would be against us, & Republican Government itself would be disgraced & dishonored. I

conjecture that I regard recent events in Mississippi with more alarm than any occurrence of a public nature which has happened for years. It is true that the General Government cannot be held responsible for the State debts; but if England should hold the several States responsible, it will amount to the same thing in the end, for the States must be defended.

~~The~~ ^{Our} sudden flush of victory throughout the Union renders it highly necessary that we should conduct with great prudence & circumspection as a party. It is probably fortunate for us that the Whigs are in a majority in both Houses of Congress. This will relieve us from much responsibility. Is the Land Distribution Bill popular in Michigan or not?

I have not interfered with any of Captain Tyler's removals or appointments; but yet I shall find means to communicate to him a knowledge of the facts stated by you in relation to the Postmaster at Detroit.

Your list of the members elect of the Legislature of Michigan was very acceptable. I shall probably send them some documents in the course of the winter. After the meeting of your Legislature & the publication of the names of the members, with their post offices, I would thank you to send me a copy.

Please to remember me in the very kindest terms to Mr. Wilkins & to Mr. & Mrs. Norville. I believe me ever to be sincerely & respectfully your friend

Hon: Ross Wilkins

James Buchanan

Lancaster 19th. November 1841

My Dear Sir/

I thank you for your kind letter of the 9th. Instant & for the agreeable news which it communicated. Michigan is indeed herself again & long may she continue to stand erect! Her democracy violated one of the most essential principles of the party in establishing the "Wild cat" Banking system: and this, I presume, was one great cause of its prostration. I see it stated in the New York Herald, (not very good authority to be sure), that the recent election in Michigan will lead to the repudiation the State debt. Should this be the case, your ~~recent~~ late victory will be but a short lived triumph. A war with England, in a righteous cause, I do not dread. In such a cause, I should not yield an iota of the national honor to preserve peace. But should the States repudiate there debts & England interpose to protect her subjects from the effects of this swindling operation, our cause would be unrighteous, the feelings of the civilised world would be against us, & Republican Government itself would be disgraced & dishonored. I

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