

THIS LETTER IS FICTIONAL BUT AUTHENTICALLY REPRESENTS THE IDEAS OF THE HISTORICAL FIGURE. QUOTATIONS INDICATE STATEMENTS ACTUALLY MADE BY THE HISTORICAL PERSON.

Dear Secretary Jefferson,

President Washinton has notified me of your opposition to sending troops to put down the insurrection in Western Pennsylvania. In this time of great crisis, I ask that you put aside our differences and join me in an effort to create a strong national government. We know that the roots of the trouble in Pennsylvania began when I proposed a financial plan for establishing a stable economy. But if our new nation is to prosper, we must pay our war debts and gain the confidence of the propertied class. It is those merchants, bankers, and large landholders who have the power to ensure our survival. Assuming the debts incurred during the war with Great Britain is an obvious step in showing the propertied class and the world that we are now a strong United States rather than isolated colonies. Now that the national bank is established, an excise tax will pay off these debts and transform our nation into a prosperous, stable society supported by steady tax revenue.

I repeat that our government must have the support of those with influence and power. If those propertied individuals are to support our government, they must know that we will protect their rights and property from abuse by the majority. Although we have had a revolution, the basic principles regulating human society remain unchanged. "All communities divide themselves into a few and the many. The first are the rich and well born, the other [are] the mass of the people.... The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right." We must protect the voice of the first class in the government so that they can "check the unsteadiness of the second" class. In the end, this works out best for all citizens. Because it is in the interest of the first class to maintain order and stability, they will not seek policies that give them unfair advantages.

Such policies would enrage the masses. Instead, they will support fair laws that work for the public good. The rebellious actions taken by those in Pennsylvania threaten our survival. They must be put down firmly to discourage other rebellions and to reassure those with property that our government is determined to maintain law and order. Our forceful actions "will do us a great deal of good and add to the solidity of everything in this country." We must take notice of the French situation. In France, disregard of law and civilized procedures have led to fear, disorder and great loss of life and property. If we do not establish a strong, centralized government, we will face similar mob rule accompanied by panic in the streets. I know that you do not agree with me on all of these ideas, but I ask you to look toward the greater good, the survival of our nation.

Sincerely,

Alexander Hamilton