

TO THE PUBLIC.



My name having been, to some extent, brought before the public (contrary to my wishes) as being among those from whom Gen. TAYLOR would be likely to select his Cabinet I deem it to be due to myself and friends to publish the subjoined correspondence, for which I have the permission of the President. Notwithstanding the purposes of Gen. TAYLOR, as to the composition of his Cabinet, underwent considerable modification subsequent to my declination of his offer, yet I desire it may be understood that I retract nothing of the views, sentiments, and avowals contained in my letter of the 2d of March.

TRUMAN SMITH.

WASHINGTON, *March 17, 1849.*

WILLARD'S HOTEL, FRIDAY, *March 2.*

DEAR SIR: Having the greatest confidence in your ability to fill any office under the Government, I desire to say that, should the bill creating a Home Department become a law, it is my purpose to tender you the appointment of Secretary of that Department.

I have the honor to remain, with high respect, yours, very truly,

Z. TAYLOR.

Hon. TRUMAN SMITH,

House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.

WASHINGTON, (HOUSE OF REPS.),

March 2d, 1849.

Gen. ZACHARY TAYLOR—

DEAR SIR: I receive, with profound sensibility, the offer of a seat in your Cabinet as Secretary of the Home Department, (should the bill now pending in the Senate become a law,) which you do me the honor to tender to me by your note of this day's date. For this distinguished expression of your confidence be pleased to accept my heartfelt thanks. I assure you that nothing could be to me a source of more pride than to be associated

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with you in the administration of our Government, or to have imposed on me the duty of seconding your efforts to promote the happiness and prosperity of the American people; but many considerations would call on me to pause before I could assume such high responsibilities. You are, sir, not unaware of the part which, as a delegate to the Philadelphia Convention, I felt it to be my duty to take in promoting your nomination to the Presidency, after giving full expression to the respect and confidence which the people of Connecticut have long cherished for the distinguished statesman of Kentucky, nor of the labors and responsibilities which were devolved on me as the organ of the Whig Executive Committee of the two Houses of Congress during the subsequent canvass; and I can say, with truth, that in performing that duty, and in undertaking those labors and responsibilities, I did not for a moment harbor the thought of deriving any other advantage from your success than such as would redound to the country at large. Were I now to accept office at your hands I should, I fear, lay myself open to the imputation of having been actuated by other than patriotic motives. I turn, therefore, from the allurements of place and power, under your benignant auspices, to the high duties to which I have been called by the people of my native State, to whose generous confidence I am indebted for all that I am and all that I expect to be. As a member of the Senate of the United States, (however humble may be my position in that august body,) I flatter myself that I can contribute something to the success of your Administration and to the welfare of the Republic.

And, furthermore, I deem it best not to renounce my seat in that body, as I am by no means satisfied with the spirit of alienation which seems to be springing up between different sections of our beloved country. While it will be my purpose to represent faithfully the predominating feeling and sentiment of my own section, I do not intend to be put on extreme courses, and hope, by concurrence in wise and moderate counsels, to aid in allaying the irritation now existing, to some extent, in the public mind, and in adjusting pending questions in such manner as to satisfy good men in all parts of the Union.

I cannot conclude this response without proffering my sympathies on account of the unexampled difficulties and embarrassment which have attended the discharge, by you, of one of the most delicate duties which can devolve on one about to become the Chief Magistrate of the Republic. Having spent a large portion of your life on the frontiers, far removed from the abodes of civilized men, and much of the residue in the tented field, amidst the din of arms and the clangor of war, you have not enjoyed the usual opportunities to obtain, by personal observation and intercourse, a thorough knowledge of our public men; and having postponed your ar-

rival at the seat of Government until a late day, you have been plunged into the midst of the raging political elements of this metropolis, and are obliged to grope your way through all sorts of representations, vehemently urged, to a safe and proper organization of your Cabinet. I think, sir, you must be something more than human if you do not make, under such trying circumstances, some mistakes; and, in consideration of those circumstances, your ultimate arrangements should, in my judgment, be received with great indulgence by your friends throughout the country. I can bear testimony to the profound anxiety which you have manifested to do justice in the selection of your confidential advisers to all the great interests of the country, and all sections of the Republic, and, being assured of the purity of your motives, and of the generous patriotism by which you are actuated, you have my unreserved confidence in advance, with a determination, on my part, to stand by you "through evil report and through good report," and to consecrate all my faculties to render your Administration as successful (so far as a proper discharge of my legislative duties can contribute to that end,) as your career in another department of the public service has been illustrious. I have, therefore, to request you to make other arrangements for the Home Department, should the bill pass the Senate, and, in the mean time, to accept assurances of the respect with which I am, truly and faithfully, your friend.

TRUMAN SMITH.