

Letter of John C. Calhoun, 10 March 1825

EDSITEment: <https://edsitement.neh.gov/sites/edsitement.neh.gov/files/worksheets/Calhoun.pdf>

Washington

10th March 1825

Strictly Confidential

My dear sir,

I have seized the first leisure on the termination of my official duties to renew our correspondence on my part. We have passed through many and strange events during last winter, which are but little known to the country. The result of which is, that we have triumphed in part and been defeated in part. The policy of Mr. Monroe's administration I consider fixed. He is too popular to be attacked. This is a great point; but there ends our victory. The mass of political and moral power, which carried the late administration through in triumph, has been wholly neglected in the new organization; and in the final stages of the election, the voices and the power of the people has been set at naught; and the result has been a President elected not by them, but by a few ambitious men with a view of their own interest, I fear. This result has caused the deepest discontent, and in my opinion deservedly. There is a solemn feeling of duty, that it must be corrected at another election, or the liberty of the country will be in danger. It is my opinion, that the country will never be quiet till the example is corrected, and the Constitution so amended as to prevent the recurrence of the danger. The country will appear to subside, but the appearance will be deceitful. Principles cannot be violated in this country with impunity. In four years all that has happened will be reversed, and the country will settle down on sound principles, and wise policy.

As to myself, I do not think of moving under existing circumstances. I know the force of my position, and my friends need not fear, I trust, either ambition, or imprudence on my part. I however, cannot but see what must come; and I shall never separate from principles, let the consequences be what it may. I see in the fact that Mr. Clay has made the President against the voice of his constituents, and that he has been rewarded by the man elevated by him by the first office in his gift, the most dangerous stab, which the liberty of this country has ever received. I will not be on that side. I am with the people. And shall remain so...

With great respect,

I am

J C Calhoun

(Source: Hay, Thomas Robson. "John C. Calhoun and the Presidential Campaign of 1824: Some Unpublished Calhoun Letters, II." *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 40, Issue 2. January 1935. 287-300.)