

Andrew Jackson to James Craine Bronaugh, July 18, 1822, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO DR. JAMES C. BRONAUGH.

Hermitage, July 18, 1822.

. . . . I sincerely regret the disagreeable situation of the Territory from the absence of the officers appointed to carry the organization into effect given to the Territory by the late act of Congress; but one thing is certain, that the existing authority continues, untill the officers appointed under the late regulations arive and are sworn into office, and the idea of an interregnum which I see afloat in your country is intirely ideal. The conduct of Mr Monroe in appointing councillors, not inhabitants of the Floridas at the time of the appointment is inconsistant with (my recollection of) the act of Congress, for that act if I mistake not conferres the selection of the council from amonghst the then citizens or residents of Florida.¹ It is very strange that he has not filled the vacancy in the Judiciary of West Florida by the non-acceptance of Mr Brown, but not more strange than his appointing him when he knew he would not accept the appointment; I am of the opinion he does not intend to appoint our mutual friend Brakenridge if he can get any body in North Carolina to accept it—for my part I cannot understand him, he has wrote me a very cou[r]teous, and studied answer in which he takes no particular notice of the anonymous Letter; I have not replied to it as yet.

1 “from among the citizens of the United States residing there”. Act of Mar. 30, 1822, sec. 5.

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It affords me much pleasure to hear that the Gov² has reached you, and that he has been well received by the people, this argues well, but I know the people there, and you may look out for feuds, and party, and unless the Gov shapes his course at first, and firmly pursues an undeviating policy, he will get himself in difficulty, the council (if united) will be his efficient prop, but Colo. Barnett will raise a party in opposition to the views of the Governor, except he goes with Barnett which I am certain he will not—nay that he cannot, if he pursues a course, to produce the best results to the interest and prosperity of the country. and say to Govr. Duval to have his eye upon the Colo. he is arch, and cunning, and if he can, will intrigue. By pursuing an energetic, steady, course the Governor will succeed in keeping down party spirit, and administering the Government, both, to the happiness, and harmony, of the people, as well as to the benefit of the country—but to effect this he must at once take his course with energy, and convince those spirits of party, that he cannot be shaken. I have not the act of congress before me, but I am of the opinion the Legislative council can by law point out and establish the mode of electing the delegate, and if it is found from the lateness of the season, that a law authorising the election of the delegate by the people, cannot be passed and promulgated in due time for an election before congress meets, it strikes me, that the council can, temporarily, appoint the delegate untill an election by the people can take place—but not having the law before me, I cannot, nor do I, pretend to give a deliberate opinion upon this subject.³

2 William P. Duvall.

3 “The said delegate shall be elected by such description of persons, at such times, and under such regulations, as the Governor and Legislative Council may, from time to time, ordain and direct.” Act of Mar. 30, 1822, sect. 14.

I hope you will have nothing to fear from the opposition of Colo. Barnett. Should not Mr Worthington of East Florida be a candidate, I will write him, and I expect he will support you, Should he, with the interest of the Govr. you will have but little to apprehend. from Mr

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W. farewell adress, I was apprehensive he was preparing the way for some favour from the people.

I am happy to find from letters from Capts Call and Easter that all my old friends will support you, I knew Major Bowie was a snake in the grass—he is opposed to you. I hope Mr Austin will support you. Say to Colo. Watrous I cherish for him the sincere feelings of friendship, he has my best wishes. I would write him but I am really oppressed with answering letters. in the last quarter my postage amounted to \$54, this is equal to my cotton crop, give my good wishes to all my friends. I shall write Overton, Call and Easter and Brakenridge tomorrow. Mrs. J. and the andrews Join me in good wishes, you will see from the papers that my name has been brought forward—every application to me, I give the same answer that I have never been a candidate for any office. I never will. But the people have a right to choose whom the[y] will to perform their constitutional duties, and when the people call, the Citizen is bound to render the service required. I think Crawford is lost sight of, and his friends are about to bring forward Mr Clay. Calhoun (Eaton says) at Congress is the strongest man. I am told Mr Adams at present the strongest in this state accept my Dear Sir, of my best wishes adieu for the present⁴

⁴ This was perhaps Jackson's last letter to Dr. Bronaugh, to whom he was deeply attached. Yellow fever was then prevalent in Pensacola and the Doctor did not spare his efforts in behalf of the sufferers. He was seized himself, and died Sept. 2, 1822.