

Executive Speech  
of  
Isaac Tichenor  
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*Speech of Gov. Tichenor – 1804*<sup>1</sup>.

*Gentlemen of the Council, and of the House of Representatives,* – When the Legislative Representatives of a free People assemble to deliberate upon the measures of advancing and securing the welfare of the State, many and important are the subjects before them, and very extensive will be the Influence of their Decisions. To present to your view such objects as Demand your attention is a part of the Constitutional duty of the Executive.

In addition to the ordinary business that may come before you and that which has been referred to this session it may be expedient to enquire into the situation of the Northern line of this State. Some of the Inhabitants residing on the line are apprehensive that the boundaries are not clearly defined, and that it is not distinctly known where the line runs which separate the Northern part of this State from the Province of Canada.

I find that much pains were taken in the year 1767 by the then Provinces of New York and Canada to ascertain by astronomical Calculations, the Latitude forty five Degrees, and to fix a Monument with accuracy at the place where the line crosses Lake Champlain; from thence a line was afterwards run by M<sup>r</sup>. Collins to Connecticut River, but with what accuracy never has been ascertained. If it was not properly run and designated by the erection of durable monuments, contests will arise that will not only affect the property of individuals, but the boundaries of this and the United States. The serious difficulties which other states have experience, in settling their boundary lines, admonish us, by an early attention to the subject, to guard against complaints of a similar nature.

A vigilant attention to the fiscal concerns of this State is an essential part of your duty, and is consistent with that economy which the Principles of our Republican Government strictly enjoin and require. It is believed that the State of our Treasury is not sufficient to satisfy the Demands of Government. It cannot be consistent with sound policy, that a public debt should be accumulating in a time of peace and prosperity. The amounts of our annual expenses, and the expenses of the several departments in which they are incurred, should be clearly ascertained and defined, that those, on whom the burden of payment falls, may judge of the propriety and expediency of the public expenditures. Should the debt be found increasing, it will be necessary to provide for its reduction, by the most economical mode of transacting the public business, and of raising and expending the public money.

The time is not far distant, in which a choice must be made of the Electors in this State of President and Vice President of the United States. By the Law now in force a choice must be made by the Members of the Legislature: You will judge whether it is best to continue this mode of choosing Electors, or refer it to the great body of the Freemen, in districts, or through the State at large; both modes are in practice among the several States of the Union, and both consistent with the Federal Constitution.

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has transmitted to me certain Resolutions of their Legislature proposing an amendment of an article in the Federal Constitution, respecting the Principles of Representation [in Congress,] aiming to confine it to the Votes of the Freemen, and not depend upon the number of Slaves, in any part of the Federal Territory. These Resolutions will be laid before you.

That the Federal compact should be approached with caution, and there should exist an equality of political Rights among the several States in the national Representation, are truths of which you can never lose sight. Therefore these Resolutions will receive a candid and deliberate consideration before you are prepared to say, that the number of Slaves already in the United States, and those which are daily imported, ought to increase the power or influence of their masters, in making Laws to bind the Freemen of a State, in which the principles of liberty are so complete and entire as not to admit slavery to appear, or exist within its limits.

The flourishing and happy state of our country, which has been witnessed in years past, cannot but endear to us the Republican principles and maxims on which its government is founded. From recent events in Europe it would seem that our Country is the only place on this Globe in which there is a prospect that the Republican

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<sup>1</sup> Ms. *Council Journal*, Vol. 5, p.58

system can succeed. Should that system here fail, in a time and under circumstances so favorable to its continuance, future generations must pronounce it impracticable. To preserve it among ourselves, we must guard against all intolerance, intrigue, party spirit, and party measures. Our Elections and Laws must be made with the purest views and motives. When the Representatives of the People are superior to the views and aims of party; when they steadily and unanimously pursue the public good, a ready obedience will be given to the Laws, and a cheerful support to the Government. A spirit of disunion and the influence of faction in the Legislature, will produce disquietude among the Citizens, and those measures which are not dictated by wisdom and prudence can never find support.

Assembled from different parts of the State, you know the circumstances and interests of your Constituents: while the greatest general good is your chief object, your united endeavors will guard the Rights of Individuals, and promote the present and future prosperity of all.

ISAAC TICHENOR.