

[The following though verbose, and in an uncommon style, we cannot withhold from the publick, as the grievance it complains of really exists, and calls loudly for redress].

For the C E N T I N E L.

Mr. PRINTER,

AS a citizen, a tradesman and rate-payer, I think I have a good right to give my opinion on publick matters—My parents happened not to be rich, so I was much better taught than fed, and I have constantly read your Centinerever since it was first printed. As I love my country, and am anxious to help establish its good name, I cannot help mentioning an Anecdote, I think you call it, of our great Statesman, philosopher, and tradesman, Dr. Franklin, who during the late war, while our Ambassador among our good allies, gave orders that certain vessels then in France, should be manned wholly by Americans—Soon after, the Captain of one of them presented a list of his crew for inspection, when his Excellency observing several who had signed only *their marks*, he instantly took his pen and erased them—The Captain, in surprize, asked his Excellency if he was not mistaken, as he believed those erased were Americans—“*Americans?* (replied the Doctor) *it is no such thing; there never was an American yet who could not write his name.*”—I know you will forgive this digression—it contains something delectable to us Americans:—But to return, as our Preachers say in their sermons, I frequently see in your paper many good observations on our national situation and the tottering state of our honour—and hope means will be used to support the one, and make the other better—I know of none so good as the prompt payment of rates—And this brings me to the point I intended writing on. I lately received a tax bill of about 7l.—This is something heavy—but as it is part of the price of the Independence so happily acquired by America (it does my heart good to look on the map of it) I do not grumble, as your Conventioneers do; but what I do complain of, and what all of my occupation complain of, (I forgot, by the bye, to tell you I am a Carpenter, and have a family), is, not the heaviness of the tax, but the want of an equal chance to get the money to pay it—for we are frequently put out of employ, by the flocks of

country Carpenters; or rather *Bunglers*, among us, to the number of 200—who paying no taxes, for like hawks they leave us in winter, can afford to work cheaper than we possibly can.—Now, Mr. Printer, is not this a real grievance, and such as loudly calls for redress—either let them be made to pay a proportionable part of the taxes, or else let it be put out of their power to prevent our being able to pay them. Our folks at the helm ought to see to it, and you, Mr. Centinel, ought to alarm them of the danger which is threatened from this and other quarters, if not attended to. If no remedy can be found out, we must sit contented under our burdens, pay as long as we can, and when we have nothing, as poor Richard says, the State must loose its right.

ANDREW FOREPLANE.