

Andrew Jackson to John Macpherson Berrien, June 15, 1831, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO ATTORNEY GENERAL BERRIEN.¹

¹ This draft, in Jackson's handwriting, is like the letter actually sent. Another draft, in A. J. Donelson's handwriting and much revised, until it is like the one here given, is in the Jackson MSS. Berrien's resignation is dated June 15, 1831.

Washington, June 15, 1831.

Sir, I have received your letter resigning the office of attorney General. In the conversation which I held with you, the day before yesterday, upon this subject, it was my desire to present to you the considerations upon which I acted in accepting the resignation of the other members of the cabinet, and to assure you in regard to yourself, as well as to them, that they imply no dissatisfaction with the manner in which the duties of their respective departments have been performed. It affords me great pleasure to find that you have not misconceived the character of those considerations, and that you do justice to the personal feelings with which they are unconnected.

I will only add, that the determination to change my Cabinet was dictated by an imperious sense of public duty and a thorough tho painful conviction that the Stewardship of power with which I am cloathed, called for it, as a measure of justice to those who had been alike invited to maintain near me the relation of confidential advisers. Perceiving that the harmony in feeling so necessary to an efficient administration had failed in a considerable degree to mark the course of this; and having assented on this account to the voluntary retirement of the Secretaries of State and war, no alternative was left me but to give this

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assent a latitude coextensive with the embarrassments which it recognized, and the duty which I owed to each member of the cabinet.

In accepting your resignation as attorney general I take pleasure in expressing my approbation of the zeal and efficiency with which its duties have been performed, and in assuring you, that you carry with you my best wishes for your prosperity and happiness

I am Sir, very respectfully

P.S. you will please continue to discharge the duties of the office, until you make all those arrangements which you may deem necessary, which when compleated and I am notified thereof by you, a successor will be appointed.

A.J.