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Dear Sir

I expected to have the pleasure by to morrows Post of transmitting to you the Result of Congress respecting the dispute between the Town of Portsmouth and M^r De la tour but Congress has been so immersed in the Business of Fin^{ance} that I was not able to obtain a Determination but hope you will receive it by next weeks Mail.

I shall however take the Liberty of giving you the following Definition of the Droit d^{au} Raine and Droit de Detraction.

Droit d^{au} Raine is a Right ^{by} which Sovereign Princes claim the Estates of Foreigners dying within their Dominions to the exclusion of their Administrators &c. This is defined in Molloy De jure maritimo and by most other Writers who treat of the Laws of different Nations. This Droit d^{au} Raine is part of the common Law of France. The Droit de Detraction appertains more particularly to the German Dominions and

and is there exercised for preventing the
emigration of the Subjects of one State
to the Dominions of another or to Foreign
Kingdoms and is thus defined by the Ger-
man Lawyers.

"Le Droit de Detraction ou des
"Detractions gabella Hereditatis Censur emi-
"grationis is a certain Sum which ought
"to be paid to the Sovereign upon the value
"of the Estate of those of his Subjects who
"quit this Kingdom to pass into another or
"upon the sale of an Estate depending to a
"Foreigner who will not come to inhabit
"in the Country. . . . This right varies much
"from an Hundred to ten per Cent according
"to the amount of Sales of the Estate which
"the Heir or Legatee would carry out. The
"Sovereign has a legal Hypothecation and
"the Preference of Payment in such Goods.
"In some Countries ^{this right} is by common Law in
"others such as France after the treaty of
"abolition of Droit d'aubaine it is exercised
"only by retention". . . .
This expression is become the Style in
the

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the Treaty of abolition and is found in our
Treaty of Commerce by superabundance &
by an Exercise of foresight in the Parties
contracting.

The King of France therefore ~~by~~
~~where~~ ~~the~~ abolishing these rights ^{respecting} the Ame-
ricans ~~in~~ in effect permits their Estates
to descend to the Heirs or to be taken by the Ex-
ecutor or Administrator and permits them
to depart from this Kingdom with all their
Effects without subtraction or ~~diminution~~
Diminution.

What We now request from the Ame-
rican States is to pass Laws granting like
Privileges to His Subjects.

I have the Honor to be
with much Esteem your
most obed^t Servant

J^{no} Sullivan

Hon^{ble} Meshears Weare Esq^r

From Gen Sullivan
Dec 25th 1780

Letter from Gen. Geo. Sullivan
relating to the dispute between
the town of Portsmouth and
Mr. De la Tour.
Dec. 25, 1780.