

**Nicholas Collin to Matthias Hultgren, Philadelphia,
29 March 1788 (excerpt)**

. . . Party spirit is violent, and worst in this State. In Carlisle there has been a riot; and many petitions have been presented to the Assembly against the Constitution. Foederal and antifederal are now in America what hat and cap¹ were in Sweden. Even the better antif—I writers call the new Constitution a conspiracy, and show the public snares and chains in every section of it. It is, however, really good, and gives Congress the power to tax and defend the country, which is absolutely necessary. As has previously been related, I wrote a piece while the Convention was in Session—An essay on the means of promoting foederal Sentiments in the United States of America, by a foreign spectator, with the addition in the last number by a Native of Sweden. It circulated in 30 successive numbers for 2 months around the whole continent. Just before the Convention published its work, I had gotten toward the end and proved that the power they had given Congress, and even some more was entirely necessary. To avoid all suspicion of any collusion, I visited none of its members beforehand, nor was I aware of the least of their proceedings. I wrote as my words were, unasked, unadvised, unbiased. This work pleased the Public and I may have some profit by it during my sojourn here. . . .

1. In 1721 Russia and Sweden signed the Peace of Nystad by which Sweden gave up several Swedish provinces. After the peace Russia tried to intervene in Swedish domestic affairs. In 1738–39 the “Hat” Party, which wanted war with Russia and industrial growth, gained control of the government and called themselves “*hattar*” or “men of boldness and action.” The “hats” called their opponents “*nattmössor*” (“night-caps,” or “ninnies”), hence “caps.”

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