

## **Anarchy, Poughkeepsie Country Journal, 18 March 1788**

To the *Anti-federal Electors* of the County of Dutchess.

Gentlemen, As you appear to be something at a loss in the nomination of candidates for the ensuing election for members of convention, I flatter myself that the following advice (from one well acquainted with your political views) will not be unacceptable.

By no means choose a man possessed of a large estate as he will make a very improper member, because every possessor of wealth wishes to keep it, and if so, will readily give his assent to any government calculated for the security of property; but on the other hand, a man embarrassed in his circumstances, will never consent to the establishing a government that will not open a door for the discharge of his debts some other way than paying them. Learning has ever been considered by all wise men, from the followers of Jack Cade down to the Ulster, Orange and Dutchess Anti-federalists, to be the bane of republicanism, as it creates distinctions among men, who are made by nature equal, you therefore cannot be too cautious of men of education of every denomination; besides the men the most distinguished for genius and learning, are friendly to that system of tyranny planned by those usurpers at Philadelphia, and therefore unfit to judge it; for a man is not to be a judge in his own cause, but even if they were advocates for your cause, their learning might prompt them to an attempt to defend it by reason and argument, a test it is by no means calculated to bare, and by that means hazard the reputation of the whole party; a *silent vote* is the shortest and surest method of deciding your business; *probatum est*. It will be dangerous to choose an officer of the late army because by travel and an acquaintance with the world, he has extended his ideas of humanity and public utility over the union, when they ought to be confined to the precinct he is chosen from, however if he either resigned or was deranged before the war was over, it is probable he is disgusted with the federal government, and therefore may make a good instrument in opposing of it.

By no means choose a member of the Cincinnati: because he is bound by the sacred institution of his order to promote the union, happiness and welfare of America, and of course must give his assent to the proposed government—on the other hand choose a man either in a profitable office under the State government, or in expectation of being so, for if he is doing comfortably now, he will not wish a change. If you have a man among you of a haughty imperious temper, and so far protected by his present office as to insult with impunity private citizens that happen to differ from him in opinion, he wishes no change, choose him. If you have a man among you of a turbulent factious disposition, who wishes to be dabbling in troubled waters, choose him, if he happens to be tinctured with vice, so much the better, he will vote against reason and conscience with a better grace.—If you have a man among you who never had firmness enough to speak his own sentiments, but who has ever been a cringing sycophant to his superiors in office, he is a fit man, choose him; should he happen to be embarrassed in his circumstances, it is a good qualification, as it will make him shudder at a permanent government.

By all means collect together in some factious part of the county, previous to the election, call all your friends; the discontented grumblers in every government, admit no advocates to the new constitution, as they ought not to have any voice in the election, being parties in the controversy; and then make explicit arrangements to promote the glorious cause of disunion, by distributing your adherents through the county to disseminate lotteries of increase of taxes, aristocratic government, standing armies, national navies, armed militia, liberty of the press, trial by jury, unequal representation, ill-balanced government, and system of Congressional oppression; perhaps these measures may excite some drunken tavern-keeper to call together a thoughtless mob, in imitation of your brethren of Ulster, burn the constitution; this will give your friend, Mr. Greenleaf, an opportunity to display his talents of misrepresentation, in giving the history of another riot—if the whole should be unraveled afterwards, it will be considered only a federal contradiction.

May success attend you, adieu! my dear friends adieu!

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