

Honorius, Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 3 January 1788

To the PUBLIC.

Let me request your unprejudiced attention, to the following remarks, on the production sign'd HELVIDIUS PRISCUS, in the last *Independent Chronicle*. I shall not advert to every insidious reflection contained in that performance; many of them are so gross, that they carry an antidote in their very construction, to the poison they were *designed* to disseminate.

PRISCUS begins his essay with a passage from the celebrated speech of Mr. Wilson, viz. [“]That *after a lapse of six thousand years, America has now presented the first instance of a people assembled to weigh deliberately and calmly, and to decide leisurely and peaceably on a form of government, by which they shall bind themselves and posterity.*” PRISCUS then adds, the following very *extraordinary* question, “Has he not here suggested the strongest reason that can be urged, for postponing the adoption of the new system?” It may be asked, could *perverseness* itself draw a more preposterous, and absurd conclusion, than this query contains? For admitting Mr. Wilson’s assertion to be true, and *true* is, to the honour of America does it not clearly follow, that a *Constitution*, tints *calmly* and *deliberately* framed by men deputed from *among ourselves*, whose *unanimity* can be ascribed to Heaven alone, ought in all reason to be as *speedily* adopted as possible, lest the *Demon of Discord*, by the insinuations of PRISCUS and others, *should* deprive us of the inestimable opportunity—this LUCID PAUSE, the *first* since creation! and leave the disgraceful and melancholly fact still recorded, to blacken the annals of humanity, “That government is the effect of *accident, fraud* or *violence*?[”] It appears a darling object of PRISCUS, to calumniate some certain characters in the late Convention, but reflections of this sort are highly insidious; for, so far as they have truth for their basis, the obloquy falls on *those States* who have deputed such odious characters. According to this *Nestor*, some were “*infants*, when the principles of the late revolution led the patriots to a noble resistance, &c.” The truth is, *few* if any of the members were under thirty years of age; the majority *forty* and *upwards*. With what propriety PRISCUS places such in their “pupilage,” may be gathered from this circumstance,—he recommends to the *rising generation*, the politicks and publications, “the *excellent* publications upon government,” from 63 to 75; and the men of *that day* are to be the oracles of the youth of the *present*; but the members of Convention they are to consider as in their “*pupilage*”! although venerable from years, abilities and experience.—The assertion of PRISCUS, that the late Convention have “ambitiously and daringly” presumed to establish a “*Draconian Code*,” and to bind posterity by their “*secret Councils*,” is weak, wicked and false: But thank Heaven, the days are over, when such kind of declamation was necessary. “To the law and to the testimony.”

Fellow citizens! These *secret councils* are *published* upon the *House-Top*. This “*Draconian Code*,” these *bloody laws*, this *terrible system*, is in your own hands; *see, think* and *judge* for yourselves,—be not gulled out of the blessings of a good government by such base and abusive misrepresentations.

The idea of "*Conclave*," originated with the antifederalists at the southward!—it is a term fraught with *chicanery*, *roguery* and *villainy*, and is an *insult* upon those *twelve States* who were represented in Convention! *This insult* upon the *majesty of the people*, we have no reason to suppose, would ever have offended the public eye, in *this quarter*, had PRISCUS been a member of that illustrious assembly!

PRISCUS is an enemy to the *union of the States*, for none but such characters could *reprobate* that work of wisdom and benevolence, "the address that was used to reconcile so many jarring interests" as were in the late Convention. This union, *thus* happily effected, is the most pleasing circumstance respecting our country, that has transpired since independency.

Mr. Wilson's allusion to the "Lycian League," and "Amphyctionick Council," was doubtless in point; and the miserable fate of those nations as pourtrayed by the glowing pencil of PRISCUS, fully evinces the necessity of *our Union*, and of speedily adopting a firm and efficient *national government*, for these American States. Not "*because we are no longer capable of enjoying our liberties*", (insidious expression!) but, *because the present auspicious moment seems to be pointed out by the finger of Heaven, as the most favourable to the attainment of this important object. "Learn to be wise by others harms, and you shall do full well."*

Fellow citizens! we have fought for our liberties; we have cemented our union by the richest blood of our brothers and friends! we have destroyed the system of foreign power and laid the British government in the dust; and *now*, through the favour of Heaven, we are about to erect a *glorious fabrick* on the ruins of tyranny, that we may realize the blessings of "*Peace, Liberty and Safety*"—But the *Demons of jealousy and discord* would defeat the design! and still deprive us of all the happiness which we fondly anticipated from the costly purchase of *Independence*! And shall our "honour, our character, our freedom," be swallowed up in the vortex of anarchy and confusion? Shall it be said of us, Why is there a price put into the hands of a fool to get wisdom, seeing he hath no heart to improve it? *Forbid it Heaven!*

"The star of intelligence," sheds its benign influence upon us; the *necessity* of a *firm, efficient Federal Government*, is *seen and felt* by every man; the *United Voice* of America proclaims the truth. This *conviction*, must lead to the *adoption* of that system, which the wisest men, that America *could* select from her sons, have framed. May Heaven preserve us from the fell designs of *local, disappointed, bigotted and party* politicians. That the *fabric* of the *Federal Republic*! ennobling idea! may be speedily established, on the basis of that UNION, which gave us Independence, and which, if *continued*, will give us, "devoutly to be wished," the blessings of *National Government*.

PRISCUS calls upon the youth of America, to attend to the publications and politicks of 1763 to 1775. What PRISCUS! are those weapons that were employed against the *foreign* enemies of our country, to be turned against our brethren? No, let them rather turn their thoughts to the contemplation of the *proposed System*; let them cultivate a spirit of *Union and Harmony*, and by *mutual concessions* lead the way to an adoption of such a government, as will ensure them peace and security, and perpetuate those liberties for which their fathers fought, to all succeeding generations: They appear to be fully sensible that the proposed Constitution alone is competent to these great

purposes.

Suppose any member of the late Convention had foolishly expressed himself in the words of PRISCUS, which by the way is doubted; pray what has that to do with the MERITS of the Constitution?—Friends, let us not break the *chain of Union!* PRISCUS is one of those who will risk every evil that an infatuated divided people can suffer, rather than not effect his purpose; the overthrow of *America's last Hope*, the proposed Constitution.

It is a matter of joy, fellow-citizens, that you have been led to choose several Members of the late *Continental* Convention, to sit in that of this State. Much information will thereby be derived, which could not be expected from any other quarter: And if they are such “ambitious and daring” men as PRISCUS has represented;—their “*secret councils*” may be explored, and all the “*roguery, knavery and villainy of the Conclave,*” developed.

“Let the *old Patriots* come forward,” (the day of election is over)—and let the *young ones* not keep back: We are *all equally* interested and concerned:—And instead of *secret reserves*, untimely and unpardonable timidity, let them take a decided part. Let the proposed Constitution, be the constant subject of discussion; its worth appreciates the more it is scanned; its competency is more and more apparent.—*Citizens of America!* pleasing term! 'tis music to the friends of our National *Honour, Union, Liberty and Happiness!*

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