

A Citizen, *Massachusetts Gazette*, 16 October 1787

As the New Constitution for the United States, now before the publick, is a concern of such vast importance to the freedom and happiness of our young nation, the people ought to bestow upon it the most serious attention, and also “ask wisdom of God who giveth to them who ask it,”—and as we are to expect some erroneous *friends*, as well as artful *enemies*, who will give their sentiments to the publick upon this great subject, in order to guard the people as much as possible from impositions, it seems necessary that every writer should leave his name with the Printer, that any one, who may be desirous of knowing the author, should be informed.

This appears perfectly reasonable, and is perfectly consistent with the liberty of the press. No honest man I conceive, can object to this rule, in the present very interesting concern. Every man will admit, that this period is big with importance to our country—And if foreign and domestick enemies are allowed to publish their *dark and alarming fears*, while *they are concealed*, many honest people may suppose such fears were expressed by real friends and patriots, and therefore may receive an undue impression from them.—Enemies we certainly have, who wish to prevent our growth and prosperity; and shall we at this critical day suffer them to sow the seeds of our ruin, *in the dark*?

And as to real friends, no one can rationally object to have his name known, as the author of what he publishes—therefore it is expected that every Printer, who is a true patriot, will adhere to this rule.

(As it is not the wish of an individual citizen only, but the desire of a great majority of them, that the Printers should adopt the rule referred to in the above,—the Publisher of the *Massachusetts Gazette* is determined to coincide with those wishes, so far as they respect pieces wrote on the most important of all subjects—the New Federal Constitution.)