

New York Journal, 24 March 1788

Extract of a letter from Massachusetts, dated March 19, 1788.

Your Excellency is pleased to inform us, that the convention which was appointed to deliberate upon the constitution and frame of government for the United States of America, agreed upon by the late general convention, have concluded their sessions after having adopted and ratified the proposed plan. We have long been sensible of the imbecility of the confederation of the United States, and of the consequences of that imbecility, and therefore appointed delegates to the late general convention, for the sole and express purpose of revising the articles of confederation, and reporting to Congress and the several legislatures such alterations and provisions therein, as shall, when agreed to in Congress, and confirmed by the states, render the federal constitution adequate to the exigencies of government and the preservation of the union! If they had observed, and acted agreeably to their commission, no difficulty perhaps would have arisen from the numbers of a people spread over a vast extent of territory, containing such a great variety of soils, and under such extremes of climate, and with such different views and habits while they were so well united in that one object, we are fully persuaded that our national existence might in that way have been preserved with unanimity, tranquility and peace. We do not wish to be known to the world under any other appellation than that of the United States. . . .

While we suspend our opinion of the purity of intention, and of the great zeal for the interest and welfare with which the late convention assembled, we are in justice to our constituents constrained to say that the result of their deliberations does not seem well calculated for those valuable purposes. . . .

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