

**Brutus, Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 24 January 1788**

January 23, 1787.

Mess'rs. Adams and Nourse, I have this moment read in the Centinel, what is said to be a letter from General Washington. I have had, and do as yet entertain a high opinion of that illustrious Commander, and therefore have not yet brought myself to believe this to be his production, for he never could thus insult the country *with a military arrogance*. The letter says, that "*if one State, however important it may conceive itself to be, or a minority of them, should suppose that they can dictate a Constitution to the Union, unless they have the power of applying the ULTIMO RATIO, to good effect, they will find themselves deceived.*"

The subject of the letter, is the proposed Constitution. A general Convention was appointed to add efficient articles to the confederation—but they have reported a form of government, as nearly like that of Great-Britain, as the circumstances of the country will admit. This if adopted, dissolves the confederation, and the people are called to deliberate on this momentous question. In the midst of their debates, is published a letter said to be from General Washington, holding up the idea that if a majority of the States, agree to this New Constitution, the ULTIMO RATIO, that is the BAYONET, shall compel the minority to submit. To justify the threat, it is declared that government is at an end.—Are we then in a state of nature? Is there any other tyranny than that of compelling the weaker to submit to the stronger?—Is this what that illustrious General fought for? Are these his Laurels? If they are, he borrowed them from Cæsar.

Cite as: *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition*, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009.

Canonic URL: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/RNCN-03-15-02-0036-0004> [accessed 12 Jan 2012]

Original source: Commentaries on the Constitution, Volume XV: Commentaries on the Constitution, No. 3