

Curtiopolis, New York *Daily Advertiser*, 18 January 1788

To the Honorable legislature of the state of new-york.

Fathers, Friends, Countrymen, Brethren and Fellow Citizens, The happiness and existence of America being now suspended upon your wise deliberations; three or four sly Aristocrats having lashed the public passions, like wild horses, to the car of Legislation, and driving us all in the midst of political clouds of error, into that ditch of despotism lately dug by the Convention: Such dismal circumstances have induced a private citizen to lay before you, in as concise a manner as possible, the objections that have been made, by the Pennsylvania Secession, Brutus, Cato, Cincinnatus, Farmer, An Officer, &c. &c. our best men.

1. The Convention were delegated to *amend* our political Constitution, instead of which they *altered* it.

2. It was composed of *unblemished* characters, which proves their detestable *hypocrisy*.

3. It possessed the *first rate abilities*, which proves that their *concerted mischief* will be the more certain and extensive.

4. Its discussions were in *secret*, which proves that they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were *evil*.

5. The whole plan is futile, and any *change* in the Government *unnecessary*.—1st. Because the present Government is an excellent one, *if* the States would but do as they ought. 2dly. Because it was approved of in its birth, by both Washington and Franklin. The former had not then *commanded* an army, nor the latter smelt the *despotic* air of France. 3dly. Because it answered our purposes *even* in times of *turbulence*, and must, therefore, certainly in *peace*. 4thly. Because those who, at present, hold the offices of trust, power, and profit, are generally as honest *as can be expected*.

6. By the new plan, the States will be politically *consolidated*, which is absolutely impossible, under a Republican form of Government, because *some* people say, that Montesquieu has said so.

7. *Faith* ought to be the principle of Union. For if we well and truly believe, that the States are united, we shall be just as happy as if they really were so.

8. An *extensive* territory cannot be free; this is too self evident to require a reason.

9. The Federal Head *ought to be supreme*, but ought *not* to possess a *coercive* power over the State Sovereignities, because this will *annihilate* them.

10. The Constitution proposed, will be too *energetic*, that is, it will have a power to *force* obedience, and the idea of *forcing*, is incompatible with that of *freedom*.

11. It is the most unheard of, unexampled, *incomprehensible*, motley, despotic, complication of biennial, quadrennial, and sextennial Aristocracies.

12. It is a *Government of individuals*; for *whole* years together, particular persons will be *entrusted* with *power*, notwithstanding the experience of ages has demonstrated how prone men are to make an *ill* use of it.

13. It, by such distinctions, counteracts the sacred design of nature, which has created all men free and *equal*.

14. It supposes *compulsion* a necessary sanction to its laws, which is treating us not as generous citizens, but as slaves and brutes.

15. It ordains a representation of the people, *too small* to be safe. 1st. Because a majority of 79 Legislators¹ may easily be bribed, you know, gentlemen. 2dly. Because it is impossible that one man can be the image of, or know the interests, or feel the feelings of 30,000 constituents. 3dly. Because he must burst with vanity in such a situation.

16. It will be as *oppressive* as dangerous. 1st. Because it is so *numerous* as to occasion in a few years, tumult in its councils. 2dly. Procrastination in its proceedings. 3dly. Excessive taxation.

17. It appoints elections to be held for these rascally Despots, once only, in *two years*, when the time ought not to exceed *six months*; because the trust being more important than State Legislation, ought more frequently to change hands.

18. It will occasion tumults, *bloody noses* and broken heads among the people, as they will feel more interested in these elections, from *this* very circumstance of their being *something less frequent*.

19. It gives Congress the power to appoint the place of elections for the house of Representatives, but not for *Senators*; which was because they all intended to get into the Senate.—Some silyly pretend it was intended to hinder any one or two great States from being thrown out of the Federal Representation, by a temporary spirit of faction in their Legislatures. Rhode-Island was indeed unrepresented in Convention, from this cause—but the devil has got into Rhode-Island-and her proceedings can furnish no precedent.

20. It will oblige us sooner or later, to *pay the public debt*—Monstrum horrendum!—Not only the foreign but *domestic*—Not only the interest, but the *principal*!

21. It encourages the importation and slavery of Africans, because it leaves the States in this respect at perfect liberty to do *as they please*.

22. It will occasion the revolt of the *ancient dominion*, by assuming a power at the end of the twenty years, to make those black gentry as good *as ourselves*.

23. It admits to legislation, 1st. Quakers, who will make the blacks saucy, and at the same time deprive us of the means of defence—2dly. Mahometans, who ridicule the doctrine of the trinity—3dly. Deists, abominable wretches—4thly. Negroes, the seed of Cain—5thly. Beggars, who when set on horseback will ride to the devil—6thly. Jews, &c. &c.

24. It gives the command of the whole militia to the President—should he hereafter be a Jew, our dear posterity may be ordered to rebuild Jerusalem.

25. It gives our Representatives a power to keep up a *standing army* for two whole years—which would be well enough, had not Butler prov'd, that

They who fight and run away,
Shall live to fight another day:
But they who are in battle slain,
Shall never live to fight again.

26. It allows of other modes of trial besides that by jury, and of course this is *abolished*: such modes will be instituted under the direction of Congress, as will leave

offenders, traitors, *malcontents*, or such of us as fall under the lash, *no chance at all*.

27. It affects to despise our paper money and all paper rights: In the war your predecessors all perjured themselves for want of a proper bill of rights—when they ordained the court of conspiracy; and often since, when from pretence of public good, they have picked the pockets of the public creditors.

28. It destroys the Freedom of the Press, and it will press us out of our freedom: The people will never exercise the liberty of conscience, and the rulers will have no consciences at all.

29. The preceding clause declares they make all *necessary* and *proper* laws, which would be very unnecessary and improper; because such laws are sometimes very disgusting; the truth is not always to be spoken.

30. It is to be crammed down our throats.

31. The *old woman* in Pennsylvania has discovered the whole arrangement of *the conspirators*.

In short, gentlemen, if you prize your own characters or your country's happiness; if you would not be made to eat the rice of Virginia against your consents; if you would not wish to see your smoke and other little houses converted into *centinel* boxes; the poor ground to dust, and this dust trampled upon; you will never suffer *the impost* to be given up, or this wicked, detestable, ridiculous, designing, artful, ill-contrived, clumsy, energetic and execrable Government to be set up over your *own heads*: It will deprive us of our liberties: It can never work: The people will never bear it—and it will end in Monocracy, Theocracy, Aristocracy, or some Ocracy or another.

To conclude, I would advise you to take good notice of that vile conspirator, *the author of Publius*: I think he might be impeached for high treason: he continues to do infinite mischief *among readers*: this whole city, except about forty or fifty of us, are all bewitched with him, and he is a playing the very devil elsewhere.

Jan. 14.

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