

Richard Price: On the American Government, Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*, 16 May 1787

Extract of a letter from Dr. Price, dated London, January 26, 1787, to one of his correspondents in this city.

“The newspapers which you sent me were very acceptable to me, the essays and information they contain have contributed towards gratifying a curiosity which I am always feeling with respect to the affairs of the United States. Your federal government is a point of great difficulty and importance which I find still remains unsettled. I dread the thoughts of such a division of the states into three confederacies, as you say have been talked of. It is a pity that some general controuling power cannot be established of sufficient vigor to decide disputes, to regulate commerce, to prevent wars and to constitute a union which shall have weight and credit. At present the power of Congress in Europe is an object of derision rather than respect, at the same time the tumults in New-England, the weakness of Congress, the difficulties and sufferings of many of the states, and the knavery of the Rhode-Island Legislature, form subjects of triumph in this country. The conclusion is that you are falling to pieces, and will soon repent of your independence. But the hope of the friends of virtue and liberty is (to borrow an expression from your letter) that whereas the kingdoms of Europe travelled to tranquility through seas of *blood*, the United States are travelling to a degree of tranquility and liberty that will make them an example to the world, ONLY through seas of BLUNDERS. God grant this may be the truth.”

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