

## Jonathan Mitchell Sewall Oration, Portsmouth, N.H., 4 July 1788 (excerpt)

...The abuse of government to the perverting its proper ends, has been equally obvious to our sight and feelings.

The arbitrary measures of Britain, with our successful opposition thereto, exemplify the latter—our own sufferings from the want of a permanent, efficient, national government, since that success, evince the former.

At length Heaven has again graciously smiled upon us.

A Federal Constitution of government is now ratified by nine, which is, in effect, by all the United States. A constitution which no earthly power short of our own, will ever be able to frustrate, or violate! And next to him “by whom kings reign, and states decree justice,” our gratitude should arise to those patriotic sages, the members of the general and particular conventions (many of whom were also instrumental, in the cabinet, and in the field, in promoting that revolution for which we are this day called to rejoice) who, with all the labours of wisdom and public-virtue, inforced with all the powers of eloquence, happily effected the glorious, all-important object. Long, long may they live to taste the blessings it so justly promises! ...

<sup>1</sup>See Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*: “Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness....”

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