

Daniel Shays to the Antifederal Junto in Philadelphia, Independent Gazetteer, 25 September 1787

Tioga point, 15th September, 1787.

My dear Friends, It is with great concern that I have heard that you are composed of only *five* members, and that a great body of citizens who once followed you in every thing, have lately joined the federal party. Rest assured, they never were sound at bottom, that is, they never were attached to *themselves* above all things, or they never would have left you at this trying juncture.

My advice to you upon this occasion is, give the new government all the opposition that lies in your power. For this purpose, if you are applied to to sign a petition to your Assembly to recommend the adoption of it,—you must say “*you* have not read it;” or if you have, that “*you* want time to consider of it.”

Besides this, you must *snarle* at the Convention in every company, and write letters to the frontier countries, where the people is most easily deceived, and alarm them with a number of hard words, such as *aristocracy, monarchy, oligarchy*, and the like, none of which they will understand.

You must tell them further, that by the constitution of Pennsylvania, which *you* are sworne to support (and no wonder, for its treasury supports *you*) the federal government cannot be adopted in Pennsylvania. Even the *people* themselves cannot consent to any alterations of the constitution; for the constitution is above them all, and above every thing else, except you, five gentlemen, who live by it, and who may break it, and twist it, and turn it when ever it suits your interest and party.

You must try further to put off the recommendation of a Convention, till the next session of your Assembly. This will give you time to look about you, and perhaps to throw a lock upon one of the wheels of the great continental waggon; for you may depend upon it your wheelbarrow, and the new flying machine, cannot long travel the same road together.

With great regard, and sincere wishes for your success in every thing that tends to anarchy, distress, poverty, and tyranny, I am your friend and humble servant, DANIEL SHAYS.

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