

Pieter Johann Van Berckel to the States General, New York, 3 November 1787 (excerpt)

My last dispatch to Your High Mightinesses was dated October first, a Copy of which I have the honor to enclose.

The Plan of the new government for these 13 American States, sent by Congress to the respective States, was immediately taken into deliberation by the Legislative Power of Pennsylvania, which was then in Session, and it was recommended, by a Resolution immediately following, to the Citizens of that State to choose Deputies, in order to deliberate and decide upon the new Constitution in a Convention to be held for that purpose. This Resolution met with much opposition however, and 16 of the Members of the General Assembly have made their reasons for opposition public in an address to their Constituents, and while this illuminates this matter considerably, it also contains the most important points upon which the opponents of the new Constitution, or as they are distinguished here, between Fœderalists and Antifœderalists, base themselves, and I therefore take the liberty of sending Your High Mightinesses this document in print. The States of Massachusetts and Connecticut passed similar Resolutions, and in the month of January the respective Conventions of those States will convene. The remaining States have done nothing about this matter yet, as they have not yet convened. Meanwhile, the Citizens of several Districts of New Jersey and Virginia have passed Resolutions of Approval, although it is maintained that in the last mentioned State much opposition was found, especially among the more conservative Residents. The Fœderalists cannot boast of Success in the States of New York and Rhode Island either....

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