

A Virginian, *Virginia Independent Chronicle*, 13 February 1788

A hint to the people called QUAKERS in Virginia

Gentlemen, Have you considered the plan of the new Constitution? If you have, I think you certainly disapprove it, especially in two points. 1st. As it admits of the importation of slaves to America for a limited time; for admitting slavery to be justifiable, it would be very impolitic to allow of any more of the poor Africans to be brought amongst us; instead whereof, I think it would better become us all as men and Christians, to endeavor to release those already under our care from the grievous burthens they are labouring under, than to permit any more to be subjected to the like sufferings. 2dly. I think by the plan in its present form, the governors which are thereby to be set up at Philadelphia, will have it in their power to make war on any terms they please: If so, no doubt but they may point out the part every man shall take therein, or be liable to such fines and penalties as they may think proper to impose; therefore gentlemen, as you are principled against war, in case we should be so unhappy as to be again involved therein, to whom will you apply for indulgence on account of your religious scruples? Not to the Assembly of Virginia, from whom, as I lately heard a respectable member of your society say, you have experienced many favors;² no, my friends, I apprehend our Assembly will not have the power of interfering in such matters, indeed, as I conceive, there will be but a mere shaddow of power left in the hands of our legislature in any respect.

There are divers other parts of the plan very exceptionable in my humble opinion, by which you will be liable in common with other people to be very much affected. Now, although you are a peaceable people, and do not incline to meddle with the affairs of government, yet, I don't see there can be any impropriety in your endeavoring to guard yourselves in time against such measures as may be likely at length to bring on you great impositions and cruel sufferings.

February 4, 1788.

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