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To the People of Pennsylvania.

*Fellow-Citizens*, Conscious guilt has taken the alarm, thrown out the signal of distress, and even appealed to the generosity of patriotism. The authors and abettors of the new constitution shudder at the term *conspirators* being applied to them, as it designates their true character, and seems prophetic of the catastrophe: they read their fate in the epithet.

In despair they are weakly endeavouring to screen their criminality by interposing the shield of the virtues of a Washington, in representing his concurrence in the proposed system of government, as evidence of the purity of their intentions; but this impotent attempt to degrade the brightest ornament of his country to a base level with themselves, will be considered as an aggravation of their treason, and an insult on the good sense of the people, who have too much discernment not to make a just discrimination between the honest mistaken zeal of the patriot, and the flagitious machinations of an ambitious junto, and will resent the imposition that Machiavelian arts and consummate cunning have practised upon our *illustrious chief*.

The term *conspirators* was not, as has been alledged, rashly or inconsiderately adopted; it is the language of dispassionate and deliberate reason, influenced by the purest patriotism: the consideration of the nature and construction of the new constitution naturally suggests the epithet; its justness is strikingly illustrated by the conduct of the patrons of this plan of government, but if any doubt had remained whether this epithet is merited, it is now removed by the very uneasiness it occasions; this is a confirmation of its propriety. Innocence would have nothing to dread from such a stigma, but would triumph over the shafts of malice.

The conduct of men is the best clue to their principles. The system of deception that has been practised; the constant solicitude shewn to prevent information diffusing its salutary light, are evidence of a conspiracy beyond the arts of sophistry to palliate, or the ingenuity of falsehood to invalidate: the means practised to establish the new constitution are demonstrative of the principles and designs of its authors and abettors.

At the time, says Mr. Martin (deputy from the state of Maryland in the general convention) when the public prints were announcing our perfect unanimity, discord prevailed to such a degree, that the minority were upon the point of appealing to the public against the machinations of ambition. By such a base imposition, repeated in every newspaper and reverberated from one end of the union to the other, was the people lulled into a false confidence, into an implicit reliance upon the wisdom and patriotism of the convention; and when ambition, by her deceptive wiles, had succeeded to usher forth the new system of government with apparent unanimity of sentiment, the public delusion was compleat. The most extravagant fictions were palmed upon the people, the seal of divinity was even ascribed to the new constitution; a felicity more than human was to ensue from its establishment—overlooking the real cause of our difficulties and burthens, which have their proper remedy, the people were

taught that the new constitution would prove a mine of wealth and prosperity equal to every want, or the most sanguine desire; that it would effect what can only be produced by the exertion of industry and the practice of œconomy.

The conspirators, aware of the danger of delay, that allowing time for a rational investigation would prove fatal to their designs, precipitated the establishment of the new constitution with all possible celerity; in Massachusetts the deputies of that convention, who are to give the final fiat in behalf of that great state to a measure upon which their dearest concerns depend, were elected by express in the first moments of blind enthusiasm; similar conduct has prevailed in the other states as far as circumstances permitted.

If the foregoing circumstances did not prove a conspiracy, there are others that must strike conviction in the most unsuspecting. Attempts to prevent discussion by shackling the press ought ever to be a signal of alarm to freemen, and considered as an annunciation of meditated tyranny; this is a truth that the uniform experience of mankind has established beyond the possibility of doubt. Bring the conduct of the authors and abettors of the new constitution to this test, let this be the criterion of their criminality, and every patriotic mind must unite in branding them with the stigma of conspirators against the public liberties.—No stage of this business but what has been marked with every exertion of influence and device of ambition to suppress information and intimidate public discussion; the virtue and firmness of some of the printers, rose superior to the menaces of violence, and the lucre of private interest; when every means failed to shackle the press, the free and independent papers were attempted to be demolished by withdrawing all the subscriptions to them within the sphere of the influence of the conspirators; fortunately for the cause of liberty and truth, these daring high handed attempts have failed except in one instance, where from a peculiarity of circumstances, ambition has triumphed. Under the flimsy pretence of vindicating the character of a contemptible drudge of party rendered ridiculous by his superlative folly in the late convention, of which the statement given in the *Pennsylvania Herald*, was confessedly a faithful representation, this newspaper has been silenced by some hundreds of its subscribers (who it seems are generally among the devoted tools of party, or those who are obliged from their thralldom to yield implicit assent to the mandates of the junto) withdrawing their support from it; by this stroke the conspirators have suppressed the publication of the most valuable debates of the late convention, which would have been given in course by the Editor of that paper, whose stipend now ceasing, he cannot afford without compensation the time and attention necessary to this business...

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