

Nathan Dane's Motion, 26 September 1787

Whereas Congress Sensible that there were defects in the present Confederation; and that several of the States were desirous that a Convention of Delegates should be formed to consider the same, and to propose necessary alterations in the federal Constitution; in February last resolved that it was expedient that a Convention of the States should be held for the Sole and express purpose of revising the articles of Confederation and reporting to Congress and the several legislatures such alterations and provisions therein, as Should when agreed to in Congress, and be confirmed by the States, render the federal Constitution adequate to the exigencies of Government, and the preservation of the union—

And whereas it appears by Credentials laid before Congress, that twelve States appointed Delegates who assembled in Convention accordingly, and who did on the 17th. instant, by the unanimous consent of the States then present in convention agree upon, and afterwards lay before Congress, a Constitution for the United States, to be submitted to a convention of Delegates, chosen in each State by the people thereof, under the recommendation of its legislature, for their assent and ratification which constitution appears to be intended as an entire system in itself, and not as any part of, or alteration in the Articles of Confederation;—to alterations in which articles, the deliberations and powers of Congress are, in this Case, constitutionally confined—and whereas Congress cannot with propriety proceed to examine and alter the said Constitution proposed, unless it be with a view so essentially to change the principles and forms of it, as to make it an additional part in the said Confederation and the members of Congress not feeling themselves authorised by the forms of Government under which they are assembled, to express an opinion respecting a system of Government no way connected with those forms; but conceiving that the respect they owe their constituents and the importance of the subject require, that the report of the Convention should, with all convenient dispatch, be transmitted to the Several States to be laid before the respective legislatures ther[eof,] therefore

Resolved that there be transmitted to the Supreme executive of each State a copy of the report of the Convention of the States lately Assembled in the City of Philadelphia signed by their deputies the seventeenth instant including their resolutions and their letter directed to the president of Congress—

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