

The Election Campaign, Timoleon: On the Election Campaign

In the recess of the legislature, the Tories went immediately to canvassing for the election of Convention men. As if by concert, they spread rumors throughout the state that the Whigs would be averse from the new Federal Constitution; and they everywhere set themselves up as the patrons of it. They asserted in the most false and scandalous manner without the least foundation, that certain respectable characters, in each county, were opposed to the Constitution. As nobody in the state opposed its establishment, their lying and slandering and affected eagerness in defense of the new Constitution could only be accounted for from a desire of gaining popularity and seizing upon the powers of the new government. The Whigs rejoiced at the prospect of any government that would probably relieve them from the wanton tyranny of DIONYSIUS [George Read]. Those more adequate to the task soon determined that the new Constitution was formed on republican principles; that its powers were no more than adequate to good government; that the people were free enough, and had full powers to maintain their liberty, so long as they were virtuous. There was this odds indeed between the Whigs and Tories, that the latter approved by authority, the former from reflection and judgment. We were led to this discovery by observing that a number of the more intimate acquaintance[s] of DIONYSIUS lamented that the government had not been more monarchical. This led into an inquiry into the TYRANT's own sentiments. We soon found that his wish was to bask in the sunshine of monarchy; that the scheme of government which he had advocated in the Convention was a monarch chosen for life, Senators also chosen for life, and an entire abolition of state governments. Nevertheless, his followers make a mere hobby-horse of the Federal Constitution; and, let the government be what it may, they hope to ride in chief authority.

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