Philelaetheros
Providence *United States Chronicle*, 22 November 1787

Mr. WHEELER, On perusing your useful Chronicle, of November 8, among a variety of other matter, I observed a piece (from the Boston Gazette) fraught with invective against the Hon. E. Gerry, Esq; and signed *A Federalist*. The impossibility there stated of any injustice or error resulting from the deliberations of his capital MAJORITY, and his severe disquisitions on the procedure of the minority, and their enormous disparity, brought to my mind an Anecdote of King James I. of England, and his Privy-Council.—It is as follows:—"JAMES, having called together his Privy-Council on some special business, after some deliberations, it seems, he distrusted their adhearance to justice—leaving his seat he went immediately out at the door, and after a few minutes calls to his Council to come out and see a strange phænomenon, *a star in the sun*. Out they come, and each took a view—Don't you see it? says his majesty: To which the Prime Minister replied, Yes, my liege; and immediately the vote for a star in the sun became general by a majority, which left but *one* dissenter in all his Privy Council. What! don't you see it, says James to the individual dissenter? No, replies he, and with an unshaken firmness, unmoved as Mount Atlas, calls in question the veracity of his liege, with 'nor do I believe my liege sees it.' In consequence of this undissembled reply, James laid his hand on the shoulder of the faithful counsellor, and exclaimed, Well, I find there is *one* honest man in my Council."—Now, with your leave, I would ask Mr. Federalist, whether it is not as probable that the *three* dissenters[1] mentioned are as likely to be honest men, as King James' *one*?—and whether MAJORITY is *surely* and *always* right?

North-Providence, Nov. 10, 1787.

1. The reference is to Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts and Edmund Randolph and George Mason of Virginia, the three delegates in attendance who refused to sign the Constitution when the Constitutional Convention adjourned on 17 September.

CITE AS: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. XXIV: Rhode Island [1] (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2011), 62–63.