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George Washington to Marquis de Lafayette Mount Vernon, Fairfax Co., Va., 10 January 1788 (excerpts)

I fear my dear marqs., you will believe me to have been remiss in attentions to you. my last letters, I find, have been unaccountably concentrated in the same hands and unreasonably delayed; entirely contrary to my expectation. when you shall have received them by the Chevalier Paul Jones, you will acquit me of any intended or real neglect. one of these letters containing the form of Government which has been submitted by the foederal Convention to the People of these States I wished to have got to your hands by the first conveyance as it was my intention that you should have been among the first to be informed of the proceedings of that body. . . .

To guard against the similar calamities of domestic discord or foreign interposition, and effectually to secure our liberties, with all the benefits of an efficient Government, is now the important subject that engrosses the attention of all our part America, you will doubtless have seen, in the public papers, in what manner the new Constitution has been attacked and defended. There have been some compositions published in its defence, which I think will, at least, do credit to American genius. I dare say its principles and tendencies have, also, before this time been amply discussed in Europe. Here, that is in United America, it is strongly advocated by a very a great and decided majority.—The Conventions, in the States of Jersey and Delaware, have *unanimously* adopted it: and that of Pennsylvania by a majority of two to one. no other State has yet had an opportunity of deciding. New England (with the exception of Rhode Island, which seems itself, politically speaking, to be an exception from all that is good) it is believed will chearfully and fully accept it: and there is little doubt but that the three Southern States will do the same. In Virginia and new york its fate is somewhat more questionable: though, in my private opinion, I have no hisitation to believe there will be a Clear majority in its favor, in the former: of the latter, I can say nothing from my own knowledge, its advocates, there, generally conclude that they shall carry it.

Upon this summary view, you will perceive, my dear Marquis, the highest probability exists that the proposed Constitution will be adopted by more than nine States, by some period early in the coming summer. . . .

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