James Madison to Edmund Randolph
Orange Co., Va., 10 April 1788 (excerpts)

My dear friend

Since I got home which was on the day preceding our election, I have received your favor of the 29th. of Feby. which did not reach New York before I had left it. . . .

I shall be extremely happy to see a coalition among all the real federalists. Recommendatory alterations are the only ground that occurs to me. A conditional ratification or a second convention appears to me utterly irreconcileable in the present state of things with the dictates of prudence and safety. I am confirmed, by a comparative view of the publications on the subject, and still more of the debates in the several conventions, that a second experiment would be either wholly abortive, or would end in something much more remote from your ideas and those of others who wish a salutary Government, than the plan now before the public. It is to be considered also that besides the local & personal pride that wd. stand in the way, it could not be a very easy matter to bring about a reconsideration and recision of what ~~has~~ will certainly have been done in six and probably eight States, and in several of those by unanimous votes. Add to all this the extreme facility with which those who secretly aim at disunion, (and there are probably some such in most if not all the States) will be able to carry on their schemes, under the mask of contending for alterations popular in some places and known to be inadmissible in others. Every danger of this sort might be justly dreaded from such men as this State & N. York only could furnish, playing for such a purpose, into each others hands. The declaration of H —— y mentioned in your letter is a proof to me that desperate measures will be his game. If Report does not more than usually exaggerate, M also is ripening fast for going every length. His licentiousness of animadversion, it is said, no longer spares even the *moderate opponents* of the Constitution. Yrs. affecly

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