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## An American Citizen IV: On the Federal Government, Philadelphia, 21 October 1787 (excerpts)

In considering the respective powers of the President, the Senate and the House of Representatives, under the foederal constitution, we have seen *a part of the wholesome precautions*, which are contained in the new system. Let us examine what *further securities for the safety and happiness of the people* are contained in the general stipulations and provisions.

. . . The importation of slaves from any foreign country is, by a clear implication, held up to the world as equally inconsistent with the dispositions and the duties of the people of America. A solid foundation is laid for exploding the principles of negro slavery, in which many good men of all parties in Pennsylvania, and throughout the union, have already concurred. The *temporary* reservation of any particular matter must ever be deemed an admission that it should be done away. This appears to have been well understood. In addition to the arguments drawn from liberty, justice and religion, opinions against this practice, *founded in sound policy*, have no doubt been urged. Regard was necessarily paid to the peculiar situation of our southern fellow-citizens; but they, on the other hand, have not been insensible of *the delicate situation of our national character on this subject*. . . .

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