

“A,” Newberryport Essex Journal, 10 October 1787

Mr. Printer, <So evident are the traces of wisdom and sound judgment in the Constitution lately formed by some of the best characters in the United States, that I cannot avoid anticipating our future happiness, should it be adopted.>

I have neither leisure nor abilities to display the harmony of all its parts in their various connexions: I would only just observe, that we are all feelingly sensible that several European nations, particularly Great Britain, not only can, but have enacted such laws, as not only shut *their* ports against us, but, which is intolerably humiliating and distressing, have, in a sense, confined our shipping to our own harbours, refusing to take any of our produce, however necessary to themselves, but what they are the carriers of, which is the cause of an almost universal stagnation of business among all classes of men; and as this town depends principally on *Ship-building* for its subsistence, there is not a town in the Union, perhaps, which suffers more severely on this account.

The British are sensible of our national difficulties, and undoubtedly rejoice at them, well knowing we have no government, which has sufficient energy to counteract their measures, or redress our own grievances—for it is true enough, we now lie at the mercy of those whose tender mercies we have experimentally found to be cruelty in the extreme—I only mean to say, they make use of the advantage which our want of government gives them, whereas, should this frame of Government (which is a General Court of the United States, and of the same nature, nearly, with that of this state) be adopted, <it will set all the springs of action in motion. The government will be able to counteract the oppressive acts of other nations respecting our trade, our own ships and seamen will be employed in exporting our own produce—This will revive ship-building; and we may soon expect to see our rivers lined, as heretofore, with new ships; this gives employment to carpenters, joiners, black-smiths, and even to every species of tradesmen—and not only so, but timber and lumber of every kind, as well as every other produce of the country will find a free vent—to which I may add this happy and agreeable circumstance, that we shall be one people, and governed by the same general laws from New-Hampshire to Georgia.>

Time would fail to enumerate all the advantages of an energetic government, such an one as would raise us from the lowest degree of contempt, into which we are now plunged, to an honorable, and consequently equal station among the nations. I shall therefore close, by cautioning my countrymen to be on their guard against a certain class of men, whose only hopes of subsistence are founded on a distracted government, and universal confusion—such men there are, and they will spare no pains to influence those honest well-minded persons, who have not leisure to read and think for themselves.

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