

## Honorius, *Independent Chronicle*, 3 January 1788

To the PUBLIC.

Let me request your unprejudiced attention, to the following remarks, on the production sign'd HELVIDIUS PRISCUS, in the last *Independent Chronicle*. I shall not advert to every insidious reflection contained in that performance; many of them are *so gross*, that they carry an antidote in their very construction, to the poison they were *designed* to disseminate...

It appears a darling object of PRISCUS, to calumniate some certain characters in the late Convention, but reflections of this sort are highly insidious; for, so far as they have truth for their basis, the obloquy falls on *those States* who have deputed such odious characters. According to this *Nestor*, some were "*infants*, when the principles of the late revolution led the patriots to a noble resistance, &c." The truth is, *few* if any of the members were under thirty years of age; the majority *forty* and *upwards*. With what propriety PRISCUS places such in their "*pupilage*," may be gathered from this circumstance,—he recommends to the *rising generation*, the politicks and publications, "*the excellent* publications upon government," from 63 to 75; and the men of *that day* are to be the oracles of the youth of the *present*; but the members of Convention they are to consider as in their "*pupilage*"! although venerable from years, abilities and experience.—The assertion of PRISCUS, that the late Convention have "*ambitiously and daringly*" presumed to establish a "*Draconian Code*," and to bind posterity by their "*secret Councils*," is weak, wicked and false: But thank Heaven, the days are over, when such kind of declamation was necessary. "*To the law and to the testimony.*"

Fellow citizens! These *secret councils* are *published* upon the *House-Top*. This "*Draconian Code*," these *bloody laws*, this *terrible system*, is in your own hands; *see, think* and *judge* for yourselves,—be not gulled out of the blessings of a good government by such base and abusive misrepresentations.

The idea of "*Conclave*," originated with the antifederalists at the southward!—it is a term fraught with *chicanery*, *roguery* and *villainy*, and is an *insult* upon those *twelve States* who were represented in Convention! *This insult* upon the *majesty of the people*, we have no reason to suppose, would ever have offended the public eye, in *this quarter*, had PRISCUS been a member of that illustrious assembly!

PRISCUS is an enemy to the *union of the States*, for none but such characters could *reprobate* that work of wisdom and benevolence, "*the address* that was used to reconcile so many jarring interests" as were in the late Convention. This union, *thus* happily effected, is the most pleasing circumstance respecting our country, that has transpired since independency...

Suppose any member of the late Convention had foolishly expressed himself in the words of PRISCUS, which by the way is doubted; pray what has that to do with the MERITS of the Constitution?—Friends, let us not break the *chain of Union*! PRISCUS is one of those who will

risk every evil that an infatuated divided people can suffer, rather than not effect his purpose; the overthrow of *America's last Hope*, the proposed Constitution.

It is a matter of joy, fellow-citizens, that you have been led to choose several Members of the late *Continental* Convention, to sit in that of this State. Much information will thereby be derived, which could not be expected from any other quarter: And if they are such "ambitious and daring" men as PRISCUS has represented;—their "*secret councils*" may be explored, and all the "*roguery, knavery and villainy of the Conclave,*" developed.

"Let the *old Patriots* come forward," (the day of election is over)—and let the *young ones* not keep back: We are *all equally* interested and concerned:—And instead of *secret reserves*, untimely and unpardonable timidity, let them take a decided part. Let the proposed Constitution, be the constant subject of discussion; its worth appreciates the more it is scanned; its competency is more and more apparent.—*Citizens of America!* pleasing term!' tis music to the friends of our National *Honour, Union, Liberty and Happiness!*

3 Isaiah 8:20. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because *there is* no light in them."

4 The quoted text paraphrases a statement made by "Helvidius Priscus," who had quoted James Wilson's 24 November speech.

8 Nathaniel Gorham, Rufus King, and Caleb Strong, three of the four Massachusetts delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention, were elected delegates to the state Convention. The fourth delegate was Elbridge Gerry.

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