

## **New York, *Hudson Weekly Gazette*, 17 June 1788**

“It has been frequently asserted that amendments of the federal constitution can be as easily effected before the adoption of it as after. Let us for a moment apply our cool and close attention to this point. To amend before the adoption will require that all the states who are to become members of the new confederacy, should adopt all the amendments that shall be adopted by any one. For example, if five amendments should be proposed by a new general convention, and adopted by one state, every other state that should not adopt them all would effectually reject the constitution. That is, the consent of the whole thirteen will be necessary to obtain any one amendment, however salutary. But to amend the constitution after its adoption, will require the conventions or legislatures of only three fourths of the states: That is ten out of the whole thirteen. Hence it clearly follows, that the difficulty of obtaining amendments after the ratification will be as much less than to procure them before the ratification, as ten is less than thirteen. It has been urged that the officers of the federal government will not part with power after they have got it; but those who make this remark really have not duly considered the constitution, for congress will be obliged to call a federal convention on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the states: And all amendments proposed by such federal conventions are to be valid, when adopted by the legislatures or conventions of three fourths of the states. It therefore clearly appears that two thirds of the states can always procure a general convention for the purpose of amending the constitution, and that three fourths of them can introduce those amendments into the constitution, although the president, senate and federal house of representatives should be unanimously opposed to each and all of them. CONGRESS THEREFORE CANNOT HOLD ANY POWER, WHICH THREE FOURTHS OF THE STATES SHALL NOT APPROVE ON EXPERIENCE.”

The preceding paragraph is extracted from the *Pennsylvania Mercury*; who can be so stupid as not to see, or so uncandid as not to confess that the doctrine of amendments to the proposed constitution is reduced to a mathematical certainty against them, previous to its adoption? It is now asked the members of convention, assembled at Poughkeepsie, whether they have the vanity to suppose that this state will be able to dictate amendments to the new system, in which all the other states will concur? We conjure you to lay aside, party feelings, to be candid, to think how we suffer as a people, to view the situation of our western country, and behold us intercepted and robbed of the fur trade, and our late enemy possessing strong holds, which are, palpably, breaches of every thing sacred; and shall we suffer this, and numberless other wrongs, merely on account of a few imaginary defects in a proposed, republican, energetic, government? Government springs from the people, and in these states from an enlightened people; who will not be duped, who are not about to be made slaves—will that people, who, in the years 73 and 74, as it were, like a band of brethren and freemen, with one voice and one consent, nobly and avowedly resisted the first attacks, on a very trifling subject, to enslave them, we ask, have that people so far degenerated, as not to have that same flame and spirit of liberty touch them, whenever they see their rulers, attempting to be ARBITRARY? We despise the idea, we are able of ourselves to awe tyranny—and who are these people that are about to enslave us? our countrymen, our brethren, chosen from among us—divided, we perish; united, we shall arrive to the state of a respectable, great and happy people.

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