

Edward Carrington to Thomas Jefferson New York, 24 April (excerpts)¹

... I am certain that a great Majority of our Convention will be for adopting upon being ascertained that Nine States will adopt, as much worse apprehensions are held from the event of a disunion, that [i.e., than] from any thing that is in the constitution—We have a party that is truly antifederal headed by Mr. Henry, but it will be limited to a few, unless the federalists who are for amendments, should, from a mistaken view of the probability of the measures being carried into effect by Nine States, be drawn into steps favouring the antifederal scheme—Mr. H—does not openly declare for a dismemberment of the Union, but his Arguments in support of his opposition to the constitution, go directly to that issue—He says that three Confederacies would be practicable & better suited to the good of America, than one—God forbid that I should ever see the trial made—Virginia would fall into a division from which she might add to her burthens, but could never derive aid of any kind.

North Carolina is to set after Virginia, and it is probable, will follow her....

1. RC, Jefferson Papers, DLC. Printed: Boyd, XIII, 100–3. This letter was carried by John Paradise who was on his way to Paris. (See James Madison to Jefferson, 22 April, note 2, above, and Carrington to Jefferson, 14 May, below.)

Cite as:

John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. IX: Virginia (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1990), 755.