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Federalist and Antifederalist: The Origin of the Terms > Federalists as Consolidators

Horatio to Publius

Baltimore *Maryland Gazette*, 22 April 1788 (excerpt)

. . . The term *antifederal* is applied by the advocates of the *new* government for America, by way of reproach to all those who oppose it. Words are often misunderstood and as often misapplied. The government proposed is truly a *national*, and not a *federal* government. A *national* government is a supreme authority pervading and ruling over the *people* of a country: Its advocates therefore may, with propriety be called *nationals*; and its opponents *anti-nationals*.—A *federal* government is an union or league of independent States, for mutual protection and defence; and its advocates are truly *federal*. This town is called *federal* by *Publius*.—The following anecdote will shew how the term is misapplied, and that is only used to deceive the common people. It being objected, to the new government, that in its effects and operation, it would annihilate the *State* governments and *State* legislatures, a busy, meddling, factious Priest, of this town a quaint, smooth, tru son of Calvin, that sins against his reason, replied, “That the sooner the *State* governments were abolished the better.” Prob pudor!¹ and yet this man boasts of his *federalism*, and his party are the friends of the people.

“For *Churchmen*, tho’ they itch to govern *all*,
are silly, woeful, awkward *politicians*.”²

1. Latin: For shame.

2. Edward Bysshe, *The Art of English Poetry* (1702).

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