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Albany Federal Committee: An Impartial Address c. 20 April 1788 (excerpt)

. . . A Convention could no doubt be easily obtained to agree upon amendments after the adoption of the system, whenever three fourths of the states should unite in calling one for the purpose;¹ but we have no reason to believe that if the proposed plan should be rejected or adopted with amendments, which amounts to the same thing, and is but another expression for a total rejection, that we, in such case, could obtain a new Convention. Georgia, Delaware, New-Jersey and Connecticut, have adopted it with an unanimity before unheard of, and the minority in Massachusetts, have expressed the most noble sentiments of giving it their support: These states, therefore, would reluctantly yield to a new Convention, in compliment to New-York. And even granting the states would agree to another Convention, of whom would it be composed? most surely of the partizans who, with warmth, have either opposed or defended the system now under consideration—would unanimity be expected from such a Council? would not each member feel obligations to support the views of those by whom he was honored? Could that calm, dispassionate spirit of enquiry, which pervaded the former Convention, be expected to prevail in a new one formed under such circumstances? Beware then, that under the specious and plausible idea of previous amendments, you are not led to an act which will, eventually, defeat a system which you shudder at the thought of wholly rejecting. Experience will be the surest guide to what amendments are really necessary, and the Constitution has pointed out a mode of making them without hazarding our national existence. Be not deceived with the threadbare comparison of the New Government to a *private contract*; a contract, true it is, of the most solemn nature, but remember there are no less than THIRTEEN parties, SIX of whom have already sealed and delivered; how can we expect the other twelve will submit to receive alterations from one, and that one too which has already shewn no friendly disposition to her neighbors—THE GRAND AMERICAN UNION has already encircled us, except on the one side, where our haughty enemy still bleeds with the wounds of our conquest; and on the other a defenceless sea-coast, invites the avarice of an adventitious invader: our neighbors and friends extend their arms to embrace us—UNITE then, ye lovers of our common country; betray no unmanly jealousies of those who have fought your battles and guided your counsels with success, and by one rational act convince the world, that AMERICANS, as in war, they have been firm and intrepid, so in peace they will be UNITED and HAPPY.

By Order of the Federal Committee,

ROBERT M'CLALLEN, Chairman.

Members of the Committee.

STEPHEN LUSH,
DANIEL HALE,
THOMAS HUN,
JOHN D. P. TEN EYCK,
CORNELIUS GLEN,
THEODORUS V. W. GRAHAM,
JAMES CALDWELL,
RICHARD SILL,
PHILIP VAN RENSSELAER,
LEONARD GANSEVOORT, jun.
JEREMIAH LANSINGH.
STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER
JAMES BLOODGOOD,
THOMAS L. WITBEEK

We whose names are hereunto subscribed, deeply impressed with the importance of improving the present critical moment for establishing a Free, Republican Form of National Government; upon a full and deliberate investigation of the Plan proposed to our consideration, do approve of the same;—the foregoing reasons, alledged by the Federal Committee, in answer to the objections taken by the enemies of our National Union, are fully satisfactory to us, and we trust they will have the same weight with all True Friends to our common country—we caution all such, to beware, least under an idea of amending the proposed Plan, by a single state, previous to its adoption, an intention [is?] not covered to defeat the whole System.

John H. Ten Eyck,
Philip Schuyler,
John M. Beekman,
Volkert P. Douw,
Peter Lansingh,
Sander Lansing,
Thomas Lansing,
Jacob Jno. Lansing,
Jacob Bleecker,
Isaac Van Aernam,
David Groesbeek,
John H. Wendell,
Isaac D. Forest,
Jacobus Van Sante,
Teunus Visscher,
Cornelius Swits,
James Sharpe,
Peter Van Bergen,

Herme Gansevoort,
Abraham Ten Broeck,
Henry Glen,
Samuel Stringer,
John J. Lansing,
Gerardus Lansing,
Abraham A. Lansing,
Barent Ten Eyck,
Marte Mynderse,
Peter De Wandeler,
Abraham H. Wendell,
John A. Wendell,
Peter Gansevoort,
John J. Bleecker,
Thomas Barry,
John Ten Broeck,
Jelles Winne,
Barent Van Alen,

Jacob Bleecker, jun.
Anthony Hallenbake,
Jacob Vander Heyden,
Matthew Watson,
John Maley,²
Elbert Willett,
William Van Wie,
William Hun,
Gerrit Witbeek,
Abraham Eights,
Jacob Cuyler, jun.
Maus R. Van Vranken,
Henry Van Woert,
Benjamin Wallace,
Edward Cumpston,
Peter D. Van Dyck,
Dirck Ten Broeck,
John Fonda,
Lawrence Tremper,
Casparus Hewson,
Jacob Winne,

Lucas Van Veghten,
John Boyd,
John F. Pruyn,
Joseph Caldwell,
Casparus Pruyn,
Thomas Barrett,
Jacob Pruyn,
John Fulsome,
Thomas D. Hun,
Jacob Cuyler,
John Tunnicliff,
James Van Rensselaer,
David Blakeney,
James Vernor,
Henry Bleecker,
John D. P. Douw,
Barent G. Staats,
David Fonda,²
John Bleecker,
Daniel I. Hewson,
Charles R. Webster.

1. Two-thirds of the states were necessary for Congress to call a constitutional convention. Three-fourths of the states were necessary to ratify amendments.

2. According to the Albany Anti-Federal Committee Circular, c. 23 April, John Maley's and David Fonda's names were added without their approval.

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