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On the SOVEREIGNTY, or Supreme Power of the United States of America, as it will stand, according to the true interest and operation of the fœderal and state constitutions, in the event of the adoption of the new act of confederation, proposed to the people by the late general convention in September, 1787.

The actual seat of the sovereign power in every country, or the body in which it is really invested, is that, which can *at all times* alter, amend or add to the constitution of the government. The following article of the proposed fœderal constitution effectually and absolutely reserves that sovereign power to the state legislatures and state conventions, chosen by the people.

“The Congress, when two thirds of both houses shall deem it necessary, shall *propose* amendments to this constitution, or, on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, *shall* call a convention for proposing amendments, which in either case shall be valid to all intents and purposes, as part of this constitution, when ratified by *the legislatures of three fourths* of the several states, or by *conventions in three fourths* thereof, as the one or the other mode of ratification may be proposed by the Congress.”

Congress, we see, may *propose* any amendments that appear necessary, but cannot *adopt* or *ratify* one. As to important business of amendments or alterations of the constitution, they will be a mere council of advice, whose proposed alterations will always be rejected, if four states of the thirteen shall disapprove them. It appears clearly, then, that Congress cannot make or alter the supreme law of the land—that is, the constitution of government,—and of course that *they will not hold the sovereign power*.

Where then will this power, paramount to all others, lie? The above article says that Congress, on the application of two thirds of the state legislatures, *shall* call a convention for proposing amendments. Here is an instance of *high powers* wisely deposited in the hands of *the state legislatures*, for they can *compel* the fœderal legislature, who we have seen are not the sovereign, to institute amendments which Congress absolutely disapprove, and which may diminish and reduce their powers. But should the state legislatures wish dangerously or unwisely to enlarge their own jurisdiction, by depriving Congress of such powers as are *safe and necessary*, there is left in the hands of the fœderal legislature, a right to require that the amendments and alterations proposed shall be considered by a convention in every state, *chosen by the people themselves*.

The powers of THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA it appears therefore will be,

1st. That they alone will chuse *all* the legislative, executive, judicial and military officers of their general and state governments, or that they will chuse those who are to appoint them.

2dly. That they *alone* will chuse all the members of the state legislatures and state conventions, to which bodies are specially reserved the right to ratify alterations and amendments of the fœderal constitution, not only *independently of Congress*, but altho' such alterations and amendments should be contrary to *the unanimous opinion* of that body. Truly then may we affirm, that the supreme or sovereign power of the United States of America, in the event of the adoption of the proposed fœderal constitution, will not be vested in Congress, but that it will remain in the people themselves.

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