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## Honestus

### Boston *Independent Chronicle*, 6 November 1788 (excerpt)

Mess’rs. ADAMS & NOURSE, Every friend to America must contemplate with the highest satisfaction, the present favourable moment, which affords these States an opportunity to work out their political salvation. If ever a people were blessed with a prospect of establishing their national happiness, the inhabitants of these States may justly claim this peculiar indulgence. The hearty union of sentiment which has prevailed throughout the whole Confederacy, during the decision of a question of the greatest importance, is a pleasing presage of those blessings so eagerly expected from the adoption of the new system of government. It is an event, but little short of miraculous, that so great a spirit of harmony, should prevail throughout the several States, on the promulgation of the Constitution;—that the Conventions, should so nearly join in sentiment in the essentials of their propositions; and the pleasure is doubly heightened, when we reflect, that the government of so extensive a country, is originally founded on the basis of PEACE and GOOD WILL towards all mankind!

Thank Heaven, this is our highly favoured state! We have every happiness to hope for, from these pleasing circumstances. In this situation, when every measure has been thus far conducted with harmony; when the northern and southern States are uniting in interest and connection; when the prospect of extending our commerce is enlivening—amidst such a multiplicity of favourable occurrences, what says the voice of prudence and concord? Does it not urge us to cement every tie of friendship?—To enlarge the bonds of amity, and by every means in our power, to strengthen that chain of union, which has hitherto held us together?

If the propositions made by the States, would have the most distant tendency to weaken the energy of our government, we might have reason to condemn them; but as they cannot by any construction whatever, destroy its efficiency—the ill-policy of not attending to them, must therefore be evident to every rational mind. On the contrary, they serve to give strength and stability to the whole system, by explaining those parts which are ambiguous, and which may occasion (unless thus explained) some future litigations by their construction, which can be of no real advantage to the body of the people, however it may help a few individuals. The objects aimed at by them are general, no State or individual is particularly benefited; but every part of the Constitution stands equally permanent in every essential, requisite to the important purposes of its establishment.

This being the case, why is this hesitancy with respect to complying with them? Why this backwardness in attending to them? Are not the objects of our *union*, when they can be obtained

on such easy terms, worthy of our attention? Is not our *commerce* with the southern States of such importance, as to urge us into such measures as will have a tendency to establish it on a lasting basis? If it is probable, that these amendments so earnestly urged by the several Conventions, will have this effect; and if at the same time, the vigor and energy of our government remain *more secure*, than in its present state—is it not the height of ill-policy, to neglect such important considerations? Do not such *over zealous* persons betray a want of federal sentiments? Are they not inimical to our real interest? Or rather do they not by such *obstinate* conduct, endanger that cordial disposition, which now so happily prevails throughout the Continent? *The preservation of our present union, is of more benefit to the commerce of these States, than the adopting of ten times the number of similar amendments could operate to the injury of the government.*

We are told that the amendments are of no consequence; but whether they are or not, the most important States in the whole Confederacy have by their resolves represented them as essential. If they are of no importance, we certainly act a most inconsistent part to reject them, when such valuable purposes may be answered by adopting them; every thing receives its value from opinion; it is the opinion of the people that they are of importance, consequently they ought to be attended to with the greatest impartiality.

Notwithstanding the union which prevails among the body of the people, yet it is our misfortune to be hampered by individuals, in the several States, who are acting altogether in the extremes:—One side is for carrying their measures, without any attention whatever to the disposition of the people; while the other seems anxious to level all distinctions, and reduce the government to a state of anarchy and confusion.—Either of these violent parties are dangerous to be trusted; as both of them, if permitted to pursue their plans, would ever keep these States in a violent agitation. But at this important period, when every thing depends on our prudence—we require men who are cool in their deliberations, and firm in their decisions; who will pay a regard to the just representations of the people—and at the same time will be resolute to suppress every measure which may tend to weaken the laws of the country. This happy medium of conduct is now requisite; the high partizan of either side ought to be avoided; by this means we should give vigor to our government, as the interest of the people would then be the sole object of our legislators. Party views and measure would have no influence in our national concerns, but every proceeding would be the result of the most candid and unbiased deliberations. . . .

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