

1                               **FEDERALIST No. 9. The Union as a**  
2                               **Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and**  
3                               **Insurrection**

4                               **For the Independent Journal. Wednesday,**  
5                               **November 21, 1787**

6       HAMILTON

7       To the People of the State of New York:

8       A FIRM Union will be of the utmost moment to the peace and liberty of the States, as a barrier  
9       against domestic faction and insurrection. It is impossible to read the history of the petty republics of  
10      Greece and Italy without feeling sensations of horror and disgust at the distractions with which they  
11      were continually agitated, and at the rapid succession of revolutions by which they were kept in a state  
12      of perpetual vibration between the extremes of tyranny and anarchy. If they exhibit occasional calms,  
13      these only serve as short-lived contrast to the furious storms that are to succeed. If now and then  
14      intervals of felicity open to view, we behold them with a mixture of regret, arising from the reflection  
15      that the pleasing scenes before us are soon to be overwhelmed by the tempestuous waves of sedition  
16      and party rage. If momentary rays of glory break forth from the gloom, while they dazzle us with a  
17      transient and fleeting brilliancy, they at the same time admonish us to lament that the vices of  
18      government should pervert the direction and tarnish the lustre of those bright talents and exalted  
19      endowments for which the favored soils that produced them have been so justly celebrated.

20      From the disorders that disfigure the annals of those republics the advocates of despotism have  
21      drawn arguments, not only against the forms of republican government, but against the very principles  
22      of civil liberty. They have decried all free government as inconsistent with the order of society, and  
23      have indulged themselves in malicious exultation over its friends and partisans. Happily for mankind,  
24      stupendous fabrics reared on the basis of liberty, which have flourished for ages, have, in a few glorious  
25      instances, refuted their gloomy sophisms. And, I trust, America will be the broad and solid foundation  
26      of other edifices, not less magnificent, which will be equally permanent monuments of their errors.

1 But it is not to be denied that the portraits they have sketched of republican government were too  
2 just copies of the originals from which they were taken. If it had been found impracticable to have  
3 devised models of a more perfect structure, the enlightened friends to liberty would have been obliged  
4 to abandon the cause of that species of government as indefensible. The science of politics, however,  
5 like most other sciences, has received great improvement. The efficacy of various principles is now well  
6 understood, which were either not known at all, or imperfectly known to the ancients. The regular  
7 distribution of power into distinct departments; the introduction of legislative balances and checks;  
8 the institution of courts composed of judges holding their offices during good behavior; the  
9 representation of the people in the legislature by deputies of their own election: these are wholly new  
10 discoveries, or have made their principal progress towards perfection in modern times. They are means,  
11 and powerful means, by which the excellences of republican government may be retained and its  
12 imperfections lessened or avoided. To this catalogue of circumstances that tend to the amelioration of  
13 popular systems of civil government, I shall venture, however novel it may appear to some, to add one  
14 more, on a principle which has been made the foundation of an objection to the new Constitution; I  
15 mean the ENLARGEMENT of the ORBIT within which such systems are to revolve, either in respect  
16 to the dimensions of a single State or to the consolidation of several smaller States into one great  
17 Confederacy. The latter is that which immediately concerns the object under consideration. It will,  
18 however, be of use to examine the principle in its application to a single State, which shall be attended  
19 to in another place.

20 The utility of a Confederacy, as well to suppress faction and to guard the internal tranquillity of  
21 States, as to increase their external force and security, is in reality not a new idea. It has been practiced  
22 upon in different countries and ages, and has received the sanction of the most approved writers on  
23 the subject of politics. The opponents of the plan proposed have, with great assiduity, cited and  
24 circulated the observations of Montesquieu on the necessity of a contracted territory for a republican  
25 government. But they seem not to have been apprised of the sentiments of that great man expressed  
26 in another part of his work, nor to have adverted to the consequences of the principle to which they  
27 subscribe with such ready acquiescence.

28 When Montesquieu recommends a small extent for republics, the standards he had in view were of  
29 dimensions far short of the limits of almost every one of these States. Neither Virginia, Massachusetts,  
30 Pennsylvania, New York, North Carolina, nor Georgia can by any means be compared with the models

1 from which he reasoned and to which the terms of his description apply. If we therefore take his ideas  
2 on this point as the criterion of truth, we shall be driven to the alternative either of taking refuge at  
3 once in the arms of monarchy, or of splitting ourselves into an infinity of little, jealous, clashing,  
4 tumultuous commonwealths, the wretched nurseries of unceasing discord, and the miserable objects  
5 of universal pity or contempt. Some of the writers who have come forward on the other side of the  
6 question seem to have been aware of the dilemma; and have even been bold enough to hint at the  
7 division of the larger States as a desirable thing. Such an infatuated policy, such a desperate expedient,  
8 might, by the multiplication of petty offices, answer the views of men who possess not qualifications  
9 to extend their influence beyond the narrow circles of personal intrigue, but it could never promote  
10 the greatness or happiness of the people of America.

11 Referring the examination of the principle itself to another place, as has been already mentioned, it  
12 will be sufficient to remark here that, in the sense of the author who has been most emphatically  
13 quoted upon the occasion, it would only dictate a reduction of the SIZE of the more considerable  
14 MEMBERS of the Union, but would not militate against their being all comprehended in one  
15 confederate government. And this is the true question, in the discussion of which we are at present  
16 interested.

17 So far are the suggestions of Montesquieu from standing in opposition to a general Union of the  
18 States, that he explicitly treats of a confederate republic as the expedient for extending the sphere of  
19 popular government, and reconciling the advantages of monarchy with those of republicanism.

20 "It is very probable," (says he(1)) "that mankind would have been obliged at length to live constantly  
21 under the government of a single person, had they not contrived a kind of constitution that has all the  
22 internal advantages of a republican, together with the external force of a monarchical government. I  
23 mean a CONFEDERATE REPUBLIC."

24 "This form of government is a convention by which several smaller STATES agree to become  
25 members of a larger ONE, which they intend to form. It is a kind of assemblage of societies that  
26 constitute a new one, capable of increasing, by means of new associations, till they arrive to such a  
27 degree of power as to be able to provide for the security of the united body."

28 "A republic of this kind, able to withstand an external force, may support itself without any internal  
29 corruptions. The form of this society prevents all manner of inconveniences."

1 "If a single member should attempt to usurp the supreme authority, he could not be supposed to  
2 have an equal authority and credit in all the confederate states. Were he to have too great influence  
3 over one, this would alarm the rest. Were he to subdue a part, that which would still remain free might  
4 oppose him with forces independent of those which he had usurped and overpower him before he  
5 could be settled in his usurpation."

6 "Should a popular insurrection happen in one of the confederate states the others are able to quell  
7 it. Should abuses creep into one part, they are reformed by those that remain sound. The state may be  
8 destroyed on one side, and not on the other; the confederacy may be dissolved, and the confederates  
9 preserve their sovereignty."

10 "As this government is composed of small republics, it enjoys the internal happiness of each; and  
11 with respect to its external situation, it is possessed, by means of the association, of all the advantages  
12 of large monarchies."

13 I have thought it proper to quote at length these interesting passages, because they contain a  
14 luminous abridgment of the principal arguments in favor of the Union, and must effectually remove  
15 the false impressions which a misapplication of other parts of the work was calculated to make. They  
16 have, at the same time, an intimate connection with the more immediate design of this paper; which  
17 is, to illustrate the tendency of the Union to repress domestic faction and insurrection.

18 A distinction, more subtle than accurate, has been raised between a CONFEDERACY and a  
19 CONSOLIDATION of the States. The essential characteristic of the first is said to be, the restriction  
20 of its authority to the members in their collective capacities, without reaching to the individuals of  
21 whom they are composed. It is contended that the national council ought to have no concern with  
22 any object of internal administration. An exact equality of suffrage between the members has also been  
23 insisted upon as a leading feature of a confederate government. These positions are, in the main,  
24 arbitrary; they are supported neither by principle nor precedent. It has indeed happened, that  
25 governments of this kind have generally operated in the manner which the distinction taken notice of,  
26 supposes to be inherent in their nature; but there have been in most of them extensive exceptions to  
27 the practice, which serve to prove, as far as example will go, that there is no absolute rule on the subject.  
28 And it will be clearly shown in the course of this investigation that as far as the principle contended  
29 for has prevailed, it has been the cause of incurable disorder and imbecility in the government.

1 The definition of a CONFEDERATE REPUBLIC seems simply to be "an assemblage of societies,"  
2 or an association of two or more states into one state. The extent, modifications, and objects of the  
3 federal authority are mere matters of discretion. So long as the separate organization of the members  
4 be not abolished; so long as it exists, by a constitutional necessity, for local purposes; though it should  
5 be in perfect subordination to the general authority of the union, it would still be, in fact and in theory,  
6 an association of states, or a confederacy. The proposed Constitution, so far from implying an abolition  
7 of the State governments, makes them constituent parts of the national sovereignty, by allowing them  
8 a direct representation in the Senate, and leaves in their possession certain exclusive and very important  
9 portions of sovereign power. This fully corresponds, in every rational import of the terms, with the  
10 idea of a federal government.

11 In the Lycian confederacy, which consisted of twenty-three CITIES or republics, the largest were  
12 entitled to THREE votes in the COMMON COUNCIL, those of the middle class to TWO, and the  
13 smallest to ONE. The COMMON COUNCIL had the appointment of all the judges and magistrates  
14 of the respective CITIES. This was certainly the most, delicate species of interference in their internal  
15 administration; for if there be any thing that seems exclusively appropriated to the local jurisdictions,  
16 it is the appointment of their own officers. Yet Montesquieu, speaking of this association, says: "Were  
17 I to give a model of an excellent Confederate Republic, it would be that of Lycia." Thus we perceive  
18 that the distinctions insisted upon were not within the contemplation of this enlightened civilian; and  
19 we shall be led to conclude, that they are the novel refinements of an erroneous theory.

20 PUBLIUS

21 1. "Spirit of Laws," vol. i., book ix., chap. i.

1                   **FEDERALIST No. 10. The Same**  
2                   **Subject Continued (The Union as a**  
3                   **Safeguard Against Domestic Faction**  
4                   **and Insurrection)**

5                   **From the Daily Advertiser. Thursday,**  
6                   **November 22, 1787.**

7           MADISON

8           To the People of the State of New York:

9           AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a well constructed Union, none deserves to be  
10 more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend  
11 of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate, as when he  
12 contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on  
13 any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it.  
14 The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the  
15 mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be  
16 the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious  
17 declamations. The valuable improvements made by the American constitutions on the popular  
18 models, both ancient and modern, cannot certainly be too much admired; but it would be an  
19 unwarrantable partiality, to contend that they have as effectually obviated the danger on this side, as  
20 was wished and expected. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous  
21 citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our  
22 governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and  
23 that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor  
24 party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may  
25 wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence, of known facts will not permit us to deny

1 that they are in some degree true. It will be found, indeed, on a candid review of our situation, that  
2 some of the distresses under which we labor have been erroneously charged on the operation of our  
3 governments; but it will be found, at the same time, that other causes will not alone account for many  
4 of our heaviest misfortunes; and, particularly, for that prevailing and increasing distrust of public  
5 engagements, and alarm for private rights, which are echoed from one end of the continent to the  
6 other. These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a  
7 factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

8 By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of  
9 the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adversed  
10 to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

11 There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other,  
12 by controlling its effects.

13 There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty  
14 which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same  
15 passions, and the same interests.

16 It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease. Liberty  
17 is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less  
18 folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be  
19 to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive  
20 agency.

21 The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man  
22 continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the  
23 connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a  
24 reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach  
25 themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not  
26 less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first  
27 object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property,  
28 the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence

1 of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into  
2 different interests and parties.

3 The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought  
4 into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for  
5 different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of  
6 speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence  
7 and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human  
8 passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and  
9 rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their  
10 common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no  
11 substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to  
12 kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common and  
13 durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold  
14 and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are  
15 creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a  
16 manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up  
17 of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments  
18 and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern  
19 legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the  
20 government.

21 No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his  
22 judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay with greater reason, a body of  
23 men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time; yet what are many of the most important  
24 acts of legislation, but so many judicial determinations, not indeed concerning the rights of single  
25 persons, but concerning the rights of large bodies of citizens? And what are the different classes of  
26 legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine? Is a law proposed concerning  
27 private debts? It is a question to which the creditors are parties on one side and the debtors on the  
28 other. Justice ought to hold the balance between them. Yet the parties are, and must be, themselves  
29 the judges; and the most numerous party, or, in other words, the most powerful faction must be  
30 expected to prevail. Shall domestic manufactures be encouraged, and in what degree, by restrictions



1 on foreign manufactures? are questions which would be differently decided by the landed and the  
2 manufacturing classes, and probably by neither with a sole regard to justice and the public good. The  
3 apportionment of taxes on the various descriptions of property is an act which seems to require the  
4 most exact impartiality; yet there is, perhaps, no legislative act in which greater opportunity and  
5 temptation are given to a predominant party to trample on the rules of justice. Every shilling with  
6 which they overburden the inferior number, is a shilling saved to their own pockets.

7 It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and  
8 render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm.  
9 Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all without taking into view indirect and  
10 remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party may find  
11 in disregarding the rights of another or the good of the whole.

12 The inference to which we are brought is, that the CAUSES of faction cannot be removed, and that  
13 relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its EFFECTS.

14 If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which  
15 enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may  
16 convulse the society; but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the  
17 Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other  
18 hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other  
19 citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the  
20 same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which  
21 our inquiries are directed. Let me add that it is the great desideratum by which this form of government  
22 can be rescued from the opprobrium under which it has so long labored, and be recommended to the  
23 esteem and adoption of mankind.

24 By what means is this object attainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the  
25 same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such  
26 coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert  
27 and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide,  
28 we well know that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They

1 are not found to be such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in  
2 proportion to the number combined together, that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.

3 From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society  
4 consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can  
5 admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case,  
6 be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government  
7 itself; and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious  
8 individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention;  
9 have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general  
10 been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths. Theoretic politicians, who have  
11 patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a  
12 perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and  
13 assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.

14 A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens  
15 a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. Let us examine the points in  
16 which it varies from pure democracy, and we shall comprehend both the nature of the cure and the  
17 efficacy which it must derive from the Union.

18 The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic are: first, the delegation of  
19 the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater  
20 number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

21 The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by  
22 passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the  
23 true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it  
24 to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen that the public  
25 voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good  
26 than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect  
27 may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue,  
28 by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people.  
29 The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of

1 proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious  
2 considerations:

3 In the first place, it is to be remarked that, however small the republic may be, the representatives  
4 must be raised to a certain number, in order to guard against the cabals of a few; and that, however  
5 large it may be, they must be limited to a certain number, in order to guard against the confusion of a  
6 multitude. Hence, the number of representatives in the two cases not being in proportion to that of  
7 the two constituents, and being proportionally greater in the small republic, it follows that, if the  
8 proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than in the small republic, the former will present  
9 a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.

10 In the next place, as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large  
11 than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practice with success  
12 the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more  
13 free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive  
14 and established characters.

15 It must be confessed that in this, as in most other cases, there is a mean, on both sides of which  
16 inconveniences will be found to lie. By enlarging too much the number of electors, you render the  
17 representatives too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests; as by  
18 reducing it too much, you render him unduly attached to these, and too little fit to comprehend and  
19 pursue great and national objects. The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect;  
20 the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State  
21 legislatures.

22 The other point of difference is, the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may  
23 be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government; and it is this  
24 circumstance principally which renders factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in  
25 the latter. The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests  
26 composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found  
27 of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller  
28 the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of  
29 oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it

1 less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other  
2 citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their  
3 own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked  
4 that, where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always  
5 checked by distrust in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.

6 Hence, it clearly appears, that the same advantage which a republic has over a democracy, in  
7 controlling the effects of faction, is enjoyed by a large over a small republic,—is enjoyed by the Union  
8 over the States composing it. Does the advantage consist in the substitution of representatives whose  
9 enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and schemes of  
10 injustice? It will not be denied that the representation of the Union will be most likely to possess these  
11 requisite endowments. Does it consist in the greater security afforded by a greater variety of parties,  
12 against the event of any one party being able to outnumber and oppress the rest? In an equal degree  
13 does the increased variety of parties comprised within the Union, increase this security. Does it, in  
14 fine, consist in the greater obstacles opposed to the concert and accomplishment of the secret wishes  
15 of an unjust and interested majority? Here, again, the extent of the Union gives it the most palpable  
16 advantage.

17 The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable  
18 to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a  
19 political faction in a part of the Confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of  
20 it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for  
21 an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project,  
22 will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same  
23 proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

24 In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the  
25 diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride  
26 we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character  
27 of Federalists.

28 PUBLIUS

29

1                                   **FEDERALIST No. 11.**

2                   **The Utility of the Union in Respect to Commercial Relations**

3                                   **and a Navy**

4                                   **For the Independent Journal.**

5                                   **Saturday, November 24, 1787**

6           HAMILTON

7           To the People of the State of New York:

8           THE importance of the Union, in a commercial light, is one of those points about which there is  
9           least room to entertain a difference of opinion, and which has, in fact, commanded the most general  
10          assent of men who have any acquaintance with the subject. This applies as well to our intercourse with  
11          foreign countries as with each other.

12          There are appearances to authorize a supposition that the adventurous spirit, which distinguishes  
13          the commercial character of America, has already excited uneasy sensations in several of the maritime  
14          powers of Europe. They seem to be apprehensive of our too great interference in that carrying trade,  
15          which is the support of their navigation and the foundation of their naval strength. Those of them  
16          which have colonies in America look forward to what this country is capable of becoming, with painful  
17          solicitude. They foresee the dangers that may threaten their American dominions from the  
18          neighborhood of States, which have all the dispositions, and would possess all the means, requisite to  
19          the creation of a powerful marine. Impressions of this kind will naturally indicate the policy of  
20          fostering divisions among us, and of depriving us, as far as possible, of an ACTIVE COMMERCE in  
21          our own bottoms. This would answer the threefold purpose of preventing our interference in their  
22          navigation, of monopolizing the profits of our trade, and of clipping the wings by which we might  
23          soar to a dangerous greatness. Did not prudence forbid the detail, it would not be difficult to trace, by  
24          facts, the workings of this policy to the cabinets of ministers.

1 If we continue united, we may counteract a policy so unfriendly to our prosperity in a variety of  
2 ways. By prohibitory regulations, extending, at the same time, throughout the States, we may oblige  
3 foreign countries to bid against each other, for the privileges of our markets. This assertion will not  
4 appear chimerical to those who are able to appreciate the importance of the markets of three millions  
5 of people—increasing in rapid progression, for the most part exclusively addicted to agriculture, and  
6 likely from local circumstances to remain so—to any manufacturing nation; and the immense  
7 difference there would be to the trade and navigation of such a nation, between a direct  
8 communication in its own ships, and an indirect conveyance of its products and returns, to and from  
9 America, in the ships of another country. Suppose, for instance, we had a government in America,  
10 capable of excluding Great Britain (with whom we have at present no treaty of commerce) from all  
11 our ports; what would be the probable operation of this step upon her politics? Would it not enable  
12 us to negotiate, with the fairest prospect of success, for commercial privileges of the most valuable and  
13 extensive kind, in the dominions of that kingdom? When these questions have been asked, upon other  
14 occasions, they have received a plausible, but not a solid or satisfactory answer. It has been said that  
15 prohibitions on our part would produce no change in the system of Britain, because she could  
16 prosecute her trade with us through the medium of the Dutch, who would be her immediate customers  
17 and paymasters for those articles which were wanted for the supply of our markets. But would not her  
18 navigation be materially injured by the loss of the important advantage of being her own carrier in  
19 that trade? Would not the principal part of its profits be intercepted by the Dutch, as a compensation  
20 for their agency and risk? Would not the mere circumstance of freight occasion a considerable  
21 deduction? Would not so circuitous an intercourse facilitate the competitions of other nations, by  
22 enhancing the price of British commodities in our markets, and by transferring to other hands the  
23 management of this interesting branch of the British commerce?

24 A mature consideration of the objects suggested by these questions will justify a belief that the real  
25 disadvantages to Britain from such a state of things, conspiring with the pre-possessions of a great part  
26 of the nation in favor of the American trade, and with the importunities of the West India islands,  
27 would produce a relaxation in her present system, and would let us into the enjoyment of privileges in  
28 the markets of those islands elsewhere, from which our trade would derive the most substantial  
29 benefits. Such a point gained from the British government, and which could not be expected without  
30 an equivalent in exemptions and immunities in our markets, would be likely to have a correspondent

1 effect on the conduct of other nations, who would not be inclined to see themselves altogether  
2 supplanted in our trade.

3 A further resource for influencing the conduct of European nations toward us, in this respect, would  
4 arise from the establishment of a federal navy. There can be no doubt that the continuance of the  
5 Union under an efficient government would put it in our power, at a period not very distant, to create  
6 a navy which, if it could not vie with those of the great maritime powers, would at least be of  
7 respectable weight if thrown into the scale of either of two contending parties. This would be more  
8 peculiarly the case in relation to operations in the West Indies. A few ships of the line, sent opportunely  
9 to the reinforcement of either side, would often be sufficient to decide the fate of a campaign, on the  
10 event of which interests of the greatest magnitude were suspended. Our position is, in this respect, a  
11 most commanding one. And if to this consideration we add that of the usefulness of supplies from this  
12 country, in the prosecution of military operations in the West Indies, it will readily be perceived that  
13 a situation so favorable would enable us to bargain with great advantage for commercial privileges. A  
14 price would be set not only upon our friendship, but upon our neutrality. By a steady adherence to  
15 the Union we may hope, ere long, to become the arbiter of Europe in America, and to be able to incline  
16 the balance of European competitions in this part of the world as our interest may dictate.

17 But in the reverse of this eligible situation, we shall discover that the rivalships of the parts would  
18 make them checks upon each other, and would frustrate all the tempting advantages which nature has  
19 kindly placed within our reach. In a state so insignificant our commerce would be a prey to the wanton  
20 intermeddlings of all nations at war with each other; who, having nothing to fear from us, would with  
21 little scruple or remorse, supply their wants by depredations on our property as often as it fell in their  
22 way. The rights of neutrality will only be respected when they are defended by an adequate power. A  
23 nation, despicable by its weakness, forfeits even the privilege of being neutral.

24 Under a vigorous national government, the natural strength and resources of the country, directed  
25 to a common interest, would baffle all the combinations of European jealousy to restrain our growth.  
26 This situation would even take away the motive to such combinations, by inducing an impracticability  
27 of success. An active commerce, an extensive navigation, and a flourishing marine would then be the  
28 offspring of moral and physical necessity. We might defy the little arts of the little politicians to control  
29 or vary the irresistible and unchangeable course of nature.

1 But in a state of disunion, these combinations might exist and might operate with success. It would  
2 be in the power of the maritime nations, availing themselves of our universal impotence, to prescribe  
3 the conditions of our political existence; and as they have a common interest in being our carriers, and  
4 still more in preventing our becoming theirs, they would in all probability combine to embarrass our  
5 navigation in such a manner as would in effect destroy it, and confine us to a PASSIVE COMMERCE.  
6 We should then be compelled to content ourselves with the first price of our commodities, and to see  
7 the profits of our trade snatched from us to enrich our enemies and persecutors. That unequalled spirit  
8 of enterprise, which signalizes the genius of the American merchants and navigators, and which is in  
9 itself an inexhaustible mine of national wealth, would be stifled and lost, and poverty and disgrace  
10 would overspread a country which, with wisdom, might make herself the admiration and envy of the  
11 world.

12 There are rights of great moment to the trade of America which are rights of the Union—I allude  
13 to the fisheries, to the navigation of the Western lakes, and to that of the Mississippi. The dissolution  
14 of the Confederacy would give room for delicate questions concerning the future existence of these  
15 rights; which the interest of more powerful partners would hardly fail to solve to our disadvantage.  
16 The disposition of Spain with regard to the Mississippi needs no comment. France and Britain are  
17 concerned with us in the fisheries, and view them as of the utmost moment to their navigation. They,  
18 of course, would hardly remain long indifferent to that decided mastery, of which experience has  
19 shown us to be possessed in this valuable branch of traffic, and by which we are able to undersell those  
20 nations in their own markets. What more natural than that they should be disposed to exclude from  
21 the lists such dangerous competitors?

22 This branch of trade ought not to be considered as a partial benefit. All the navigating States may,  
23 in different degrees, advantageously participate in it, and under circumstances of a greater extension  
24 of mercantile capital, would not be unlikely to do it. As a nursery of seamen, it now is, or when time  
25 shall have more nearly assimilated the principles of navigation in the several States, will become, a  
26 universal resource. To the establishment of a navy, it must be indispensable.

27 To this great national object, a NAVY, union will contribute in various ways. Every institution will  
28 grow and flourish in proportion to the quantity and extent of the means concentrated towards its  
29 formation and support. A navy of the United States, as it would embrace the resources of all, is an



1 object far less remote than a navy of any single State or partial confederacy, which would only embrace  
2 the resources of a single part. It happens, indeed, that different portions of confederated America  
3 possess each some peculiar advantage for this essential establishment. The more southern States furnish  
4 in greater abundance certain kinds of naval stores—tar, pitch, and turpentine. Their wood for the  
5 construction of ships is also of a more solid and lasting texture. The difference in the duration of the  
6 ships of which the navy might be composed, if chiefly constructed of Southern wood, would be of  
7 signal importance, either in the view of naval strength or of national economy. Some of the Southern  
8 and of the Middle States yield a greater plenty of iron, and of better quality. Seamen must chiefly be  
9 drawn from the Northern hive. The necessity of naval protection to external or maritime commerce  
10 does not require a particular elucidation, no more than the conduciveness of that species of commerce  
11 to the prosperity of a navy.

12 An unrestrained intercourse between the States themselves will advance the trade of each by an  
13 interchange of their respective productions, not only for the supply of reciprocal wants at home, but  
14 for exportation to foreign markets. The veins of commerce in every part will be replenished, and will  
15 acquire additional motion and vigor from a free circulation of the commodities of every part.  
16 Commercial enterprise will have much greater scope, from the diversity in the productions of different  
17 States. When the staple of one fails from a bad harvest or unproductive crop, it can call to its aid the  
18 staple of another. The variety, not less than the value, of products for exportation contributes to the  
19 activity of foreign commerce. It can be conducted upon much better terms with a large number of  
20 materials of a given value than with a small number of materials of the same value; arising from the  
21 competitions of trade and from the fluctuations of markets. Particular articles may be in great demand  
22 at certain periods, and unsalable at others; but if there be a variety of articles, it can scarcely happen  
23 that they should all be at one time in the latter predicament, and on this account the operations of the  
24 merchant would be less liable to any considerable obstruction or stagnation. The speculative trader  
25 will at once perceive the force of these observations, and will acknowledge that the aggregate balance  
26 of the commerce of the United States would bid fair to be much more favorable than that of the  
27 thirteen States without union or with partial unions.

28 It may perhaps be replied to this, that whether the States are united or disunited, there would still  
29 be an intimate intercourse between them which would answer the same ends; this intercourse would  
30 be fettered, interrupted, and narrowed by a multiplicity of causes, which in the course of these papers

1 have been amply detailed. A unity of commercial, as well as political, interests, can only result from a  
2 unity of government.

3 There are other points of view in which this subject might be placed, of a striking and animating  
4 kind. But they would lead us too far into the regions of futurity, and would involve topics not proper  
5 for a newspaper discussion. I shall briefly observe, that our situation invites and our interests prompt  
6 us to aim at an ascendant in the system of American affairs. The world may politically, as well as  
7 geographically, be divided into four parts, each having a distinct set of interests. Unhappily for the  
8 other three, Europe, by her arms and by her negotiations, by force and by fraud, has, in different  
9 degrees, extended her dominion over them all. Africa, Asia, and America, have successively felt her  
10 domination. The superiority she has long maintained has tempted her to plume herself as the Mistress  
11 of the World, and to consider the rest of mankind as created for her benefit. Men admired as profound  
12 philosophers have, in direct terms, attributed to her inhabitants a physical superiority, and have gravely  
13 asserted that all animals, and with them the human species, degenerate in America—that even dogs  
14 cease to bark after having breathed awhile in our atmosphere.(1) Facts have too long supported these  
15 arrogant pretensions of the Europeans. It belongs to us to vindicate the honor of the human race, and  
16 to teach that assuming brother, moderation. Union will enable us to do it. Disunion will will add  
17 another victim to his triumphs. Let Americans disdain to be the instruments of European greatness!  
18 Let the thirteen States, bound together in a strict and indissoluble Union, concur in erecting one great  
19 American system, superior to the control of all transatlantic force or influence, and able to dictate the  
20 terms of the connection between the old and the new world!

21 PUBLIUS "Recherches philosophiques sur les Americains."

1                   **FEDERALIST No. 12. The Utility of**  
2                   **the Union In Respect to Revenue**  
3                   **From the New York Packet. Tuesday,**  
4                   **November 27, 1787.**

5       HAMILTON

6       To the People of the State of New York:

7       THE effects of Union upon the commercial prosperity of the States have been sufficiently  
8 delineated. Its tendency to promote the interests of revenue will be the subject of our present inquiry.

9       The prosperity of commerce is now perceived and acknowledged by all enlightened statesmen to be  
10 the most useful as well as the most productive source of national wealth, and has accordingly become  
11 a primary object of their political cares. By multiplying the means of gratification, by promoting the  
12 introduction and circulation of the precious metals, those darling objects of human avarice and  
13 enterprise, it serves to vivify and invigorate the channels of industry, and to make them flow with  
14 greater activity and copiousness. The assiduous merchant, the laborious husbandman, the active  
15 mechanic, and the industrious manufacturer,—all orders of men, look forward with eager expectation  
16 and growing alacrity to this pleasing reward of their toils. The often-agitated question between  
17 agriculture and commerce has, from indubitable experience, received a decision which has silenced the  
18 rivalry that once subsisted between them, and has proved, to the satisfaction of their friends, that  
19 their interests are intimately blended and interwoven. It has been found in various countries that, in  
20 proportion as commerce has flourished, land has risen in value. And how could it have happened  
21 otherwise? Could that which procures a freer vent for the products of the earth, which furnishes new  
22 incitements to the cultivation of land, which is the most powerful instrument in increasing the  
23 quantity of money in a state—could that, in fine, which is the faithful handmaid of labor and industry,  
24 in every shape, fail to augment that article, which is the prolific parent of far the greatest part of the  
25 objects upon which they are exerted? It is astonishing that so simple a truth should ever have had an  
26 adversary; and it is one, among a multitude of proofs, how apt a spirit of ill-informed jealousy, or of

1 too great abstraction and refinement, is to lead men astray from the plainest truths of reason and  
2 conviction.

3 The ability of a country to pay taxes must always be proportioned, in a great degree, to the quantity  
4 of money in circulation, and to the celerity with which it circulates. Commerce, contributing to both  
5 these objects, must of necessity render the payment of taxes easier, and facilitate the requisite supplies  
6 to the treasury. The hereditary dominions of the Emperor of Germany contain a great extent of fertile,  
7 cultivated, and populous territory, a large proportion of which is situated in mild and luxuriant  
8 climates. In some parts of this territory are to be found the best gold and silver mines in Europe. And  
9 yet, from the want of the fostering influence of commerce, that monarch can boast but slender  
10 revenues. He has several times been compelled to owe obligations to the pecuniary succors of other  
11 nations for the preservation of his essential interests, and is unable, upon the strength of his own  
12 resources, to sustain a long or continued war.

13 But it is not in this aspect of the subject alone that Union will be seen to conduce to the purpose of  
14 revenue. There are other points of view, in which its influence will appear more immediate and  
15 decisive. It is evident from the state of the country, from the habits of the people, from the experience  
16 we have had on the point itself, that it is impracticable to raise any very considerable sums by direct  
17 taxation. Tax laws have in vain been multiplied; new methods to enforce the collection have in vain  
18 been tried; the public expectation has been uniformly disappointed, and the treasuries of the States  
19 have remained empty. The popular system of administration inherent in the nature of popular  
20 government, coinciding with the real scarcity of money incident to a languid and mutilated state of  
21 trade, has hitherto defeated every experiment for extensive collections, and has at length taught the  
22 different legislatures the folly of attempting them.

23 No person acquainted with what happens in other countries will be surprised at this circumstance.  
24 In so opulent a nation as that of Britain, where direct taxes from superior wealth must be much more  
25 tolerable, and, from the vigor of the government, much more practicable, than in America, far the  
26 greatest part of the national revenue is derived from taxes of the indirect kind, from imposts, and from  
27 excises. Duties on imported articles form a large branch of this latter description.

28 In America, it is evident that we must a long time depend for the means of revenue chiefly on such  
29 duties. In most parts of it, excises must be confined within a narrow compass. The genius of the people

1 will ill brook the inquisitive and peremptory spirit of excise laws. The pockets of the farmers, on the  
2 other hand, will reluctantly yield but scanty supplies, in the unwelcome shape of impositions on their  
3 houses and lands; and personal property is too precarious and invisible a fund to be laid hold of in any  
4 other way than by the imperceptible agency of taxes on consumption.

5 If these remarks have any foundation, that state of things which will best enable us to improve and  
6 extend so valuable a resource must be best adapted to our political welfare. And it cannot admit of a  
7 serious doubt, that this state of things must rest on the basis of a general Union. As far as this would  
8 be conducive to the interests of commerce, so far it must tend to the extension of the revenue to be  
9 drawn from that source. As far as it would contribute to rendering regulations for the collection of the  
10 duties more simple and efficacious, so far it must serve to answer the purposes of making the same rate  
11 of duties more productive, and of putting it into the power of the government to increase the rate  
12 without prejudice to trade.

13 The relative situation of these States; the number of rivers with which they are intersected, and of  
14 bays that wash their shores; the facility of communication in every direction; the affinity of language  
15 and manners; the familiar habits of intercourse;—all these are circumstances that would conspire to  
16 render an illicit trade between them a matter of little difficulty, and would insure frequent evasions of  
17 the commercial regulations of each other. The separate States or confederacies would be necessitated  
18 by mutual jealousy to avoid the temptations to that kind of trade by the lowness of their duties. The  
19 temper of our governments, for a long time to come, would not permit those rigorous precautions by  
20 which the European nations guard the avenues into their respective countries, as well by land as by  
21 water; and which, even there, are found insufficient obstacles to the adventurous stratagems of avarice.

22 In France, there is an army of patrols (as they are called) constantly employed to secure their fiscal  
23 regulations against the inroads of the dealers in contraband trade. Mr. Neckar computes the number  
24 of these patrols at upwards of twenty thousand. This shows the immense difficulty in preventing that  
25 species of traffic, where there is an inland communication, and places in a strong light the  
26 disadvantages with which the collection of duties in this country would be encumbered, if by disunion  
27 the States should be placed in a situation, with respect to each other, resembling that of France with  
28 respect to her neighbors. The arbitrary and vexatious powers with which the patrols are necessarily  
29 armed, would be intolerable in a free country.

1 If, on the contrary, there be but one government pervading all the States, there will be, as to the  
2 principal part of our commerce, but ONE SIDE to guard—the ATLANTIC COAST. Vessels arriving  
3 directly from foreign countries, laden with valuable cargoes, would rarely choose to hazard themselves  
4 to the complicated and critical perils which would attend attempts to unlade prior to their coming  
5 into port. They would have to dread both the dangers of the coast, and of detection, as well after as  
6 before their arrival at the places of their final destination. An ordinary degree of vigilance would be  
7 competent to the prevention of any material infractions upon the rights of the revenue. A few armed  
8 vessels, judiciously stationed at the entrances of our ports, might at a small expense be made useful  
9 sentinels of the laws. And the government having the same interest to provide against violations  
10 everywhere, the co-operation of its measures in each State would have a powerful tendency to render  
11 them effectual. Here also we should preserve by Union, an advantage which nature holds out to us,  
12 and which would be relinquished by separation. The United States lie at a great distance from Europe,  
13 and at a considerable distance from all other places with which they would have extensive connections  
14 of foreign trade. The passage from them to us, in a few hours, or in a single night, as between the  
15 coasts of France and Britain, and of other neighboring nations, would be impracticable. This is a  
16 prodigious security against a direct contraband with foreign countries; but a circuitous contraband to  
17 one State, through the medium of another, would be both easy and safe. The difference between a  
18 direct importation from abroad, and an indirect importation through the channel of a neighboring  
19 State, in small parcels, according to time and opportunity, with the additional facilities of inland  
20 communication, must be palpable to every man of discernment.

21 It is therefore evident, that one national government would be able, at much less expense, to extend  
22 the duties on imports, beyond comparison, further than would be practicable to the States separately,  
23 or to any partial confederacies. Hitherto, I believe, it may safely be asserted, that these duties have not  
24 upon an average exceeded in any State three per cent. In France they are estimated to be about fifteen  
25 per cent., and in Britain they exceed this proportion.(1) There seems to be nothing to hinder their  
26 being increased in this country to at least treble their present amount. The single article of ardent  
27 spirits, under federal regulation, might be made to furnish a considerable revenue. Upon a ratio to the  
28 importation into this State, the whole quantity imported into the United States may be estimated at  
29 four millions of gallons; which, at a shilling per gallon, would produce two hundred thousand pounds.  
30 That article would well bear this rate of duty; and if it should tend to diminish the consumption of it,

1 such an effect would be equally favorable to the agriculture, to the economy, to the morals, and to the  
2 health of the society. There is, perhaps, nothing so much a subject of national extravagance as these  
3 spirits.

4 What will be the consequence, if we are not able to avail ourselves of the resource in question in its  
5 full extent? A nation cannot long exist without revenues. Destitute of this essential support, it must  
6 resign its independence, and sink into the degraded condition of a province. This is an extremity to  
7 which no government will of choice accede. Revenue, therefore, must be had at all events. In this  
8 country, if the principal part be not drawn from commerce, it must fall with oppressive weight upon  
9 land. It has been already intimated that excises, in their true signification, are too little in unison with  
10 the feelings of the people, to admit of great use being made of that mode of taxation; nor, indeed, in  
11 the States where almost the sole employment is agriculture, are the objects proper for excise sufficiently  
12 numerous to permit very ample collections in that way. Personal estate (as has been before remarked),  
13 from the difficulty in tracing it, cannot be subjected to large contributions, by any other means than  
14 by taxes on consumption. In populous cities, it may be enough the subject of conjecture, to occasion  
15 the oppression of individuals, without much aggregate benefit to the State; but beyond these circles,  
16 it must, in a great measure, escape the eye and the hand of the tax-gatherer. As the necessities of the  
17 State, nevertheless, must be satisfied in some mode or other, the defect of other resources must throw  
18 the principal weight of public burdens on the possessors of land. And as, on the other hand, the wants  
19 of the government can never obtain an adequate supply, unless all the sources of revenue are open to  
20 its demands, the finances of the community, under such embarrassments, cannot be put into a  
21 situation consistent with its respectability or its security. Thus we shall not even have the consolations  
22 of a full treasury, to atone for the oppression of that valuable class of the citizens who are employed in  
23 the cultivation of the soil. But public and private distress will keep pace with each other in gloomy  
24 concert; and unite in deploring the infatuation of those counsels which led to disunion.

25 PUBLIUS

26 1. If my memory be right they amount to twenty per cent.