that I and my family should starve? Let us come at him, said a Blacksmith, Painter, Rope-Maker, Sail-Maker, Corker, and Joiner—the Federal Constitution is the only thing which can save us, and our children, from starving.—Out of the shop with the rascal, said half a dozen different tradesmen. It was in vain I applied to a Merchant for protection, he assured me that for want of a Federal Government he had sunk a fortune by importing cargoes under the State imposts, and was undersold by goods from Connecticut—and even my friend Simon Meek, the Quaker, who delights in healing quarrels, would not interfere, but coolly told me, "Friend Grumble, whilst we are in the flesh, we should be obedient to the powers which may be ordained over us." In fine, I was driven from the shop in the plight of the Israelitish ambassadors. —I ran with my complaint to our reverend Pastor, who told me that to be bound by this law of equity, was perfect freedom, and bid me beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. —The Doctor who tends my sick child, was in the same story—and the honest man from the country, who brings me my winter's cider, vowed it would have been right cute if they had kicked me out of the shop, for his town thought the new Constitution was altogether up to the notch. In a word, every man I have conversed with, has been ready to knock my brains out, if I said a word against it—Do you call these liberty times?

Mr. Union. Well, but neighbour, what are your objections to the new Constitution?

Mr. Grumble. Why, as to the matter, I can't say I have any, but then what vexes me is, that they won't let me say a word against it—it shews, neighbour, there is some trick in it.

Mr. Union. But neighbour this is indeed a country of liberty, and every man may speak his mind, especially on a subject which is presented to you, for your consideration—but if all orders and degrees of people oppose your speaking against this proposed constitution, the conclusion is, that the whole people, both see the necessity, and give their warmest approbation of it. And indeed, neighbour, it is no wonder, when we consider the horridness of our present situation—the decay of our trade and manufactures—the scarcity of money—the failure of public credit—the distraction of our publick affairs, and the distress of individuals, which have all arisen from a want of this very Federal Government—it is no wonder, I say, if men who are so deeply interested, should not be able to sit patiently, and hear revilings against the only remedy which can be applied with success, to our present grievances.

No man is intended to be deprived of a freedom of speech, but the few individuals who oppose the Federal Government, must not be surprised to find, that the Merchant and Trader, who have been ruined for the want of an efficient Federal Government to regulate trade—will resent it—that the Landholder who has been taxed so high that the produce of his farm would scarcely pay its rates—will resent it: —And out of the abundance of the heart, the long train of industrious Tradesmen, who are now spending their past earnings, or selling their tools for a subsistence—will resent it—nay, the whole body of an almost ruined people, will despise and execrate the wretch who dares blaspheme the political savour of our country.

190. Centinel II
Philadelphia Freeman's Journal, 24 October

"Centinel" II, in part a reply to James Wilson's speech of 6 October (CC:154), had a direct influence on some Pennsylvanians. For instance, Francis Murray wrote that "Centinel" II and other Antifederalist writings "greatly changed" his sentiments on the Constitution (to John Nicholson, 1 November, RCS:Pa., 207), while John Smilie of Fayette County relied heavily on "Centinel" II in his speech of 8 December in the Pennsylvania Convention (RCS:Pa., 525-26, 531n).

For its publication as a broadside and in pamphlets and for authorship, see CC:155.

To the people of Pennsylvania.

Friends, countrymen, and fellow-citizens, as long as the liberty of the press continues unviolated, and the people have the right of expressing and publishing their sentiments upon every public measure, it is next to impossible to enslave a free nation. The state of society must be very corrupt and base indeed, when the people in possession of such a monitor as the press, can be induced to exchange the heaven-born blessings of liberty for the galling chains of despotism.—Men of an aspiring and tyrannical disposition, sensible of this truth, have ever been impressed with an hatred of the press, and have considered the shackling of it, as the first step towards the accomplishment of their hateful domination, and the suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire suppression of all liberty of public discussion, necessary to the entire...
which would give it such a sanction in the public opinion, as to banish all distrust, and lead the people into an implicit adoption of it without examination.

The greatest minds are forcibly impressed by the immediate circumstances with which they are connected; the particular sphere men move in, the prevailing sentiments of those they converse with, have an insensible and irresistible influence on the wisest and best of mankind; so that when we consider the abilities, talents, ingenuity and consummate address of a number of the members of the late Convention, whose principles are despotic, can we be surprised that men of the best intentions have been misled in the difficult science of government? Is it derogating from the character of the illustrious and highly revered Washington, to suppose him fallible on a subject that must be in a great measure novel to him?—As a patriotic hero, he stands unequalled in the annals of time.

The new plan was accordingly ushered to the public with such a splendor of names, as inspired the most unlimited confidence; the people were disposed to receive upon trust, without any examination on their part, what would have proved either a blessing or a curse to them and their posterity.—What astonishing infatuation! to stake their happiness on the wisdom and integrity of any set of men! In matters of infinitely smaller concern, the dictates of prudence are not disregarded! The celebrated Montesquieu, in his Spirit of Laws, says, that “slavery is ever preceded by sleep.” And again, in his account of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire, page 97, “That it may be advanced as a general rule, that in a free State, whenever a perfect calm is visible, the spirit of liberty no longer subsists.” And Mr. Dickinson, in his Farmer’s Letters, No. XI. lays it down as a maxim, that “A perpetual jealousy respecting liberty is absolutely requisite in all free States.”

“Happy are the men, and happy the people, who grow wise by the misfortunes of others. Earnestly, my dear countrymen, do I beseech the author of all good gifts, that you may grow wise in this manner, and I beg leave to recommend to you in general, as the best method of obtaining this wisdom, diligently to study the histories of other countries. You will there find all the arts, that can possibly be practised by cunning rulers, or false patriots among yourselves, so fully delineated, that changing names, the account would serve for your own times.”

A few citizens of Philadelphia (too few, for the honour of human nature) who had the wisdom to think consideration ought to precede approbation, and the fortitude to avow that they would take time to judge for themselves on so momentous an occasion, were stigmatized as enemies to their country; as monsters, whose existence ought not to be suffered, and the destruction of them and their houses recommended, as meritorious. —The authors of the new plan, conscious that it would not stand the test of enlightened patriotism, tyrannically endeavoured to