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17. *For a Constitutional Convention*

To Edmund Pendleton

*Philadelphia May 25, 1784*

Dear Sir

Your favor of the 17th. found me at this place from which I set out the day after tomorrow. I mean to go thro' the Eastern states in hopes of deriving some knolege of them from actual inspection and enquiry which may enable me to discharge my duty to them somewhat the better. I expect to embark at Boston about the 20th. of June.

If you will recur to the Confederation you will find the Committee of the states have no powers but what shall be given them by the votes of 9 states in Congress. The innovations in our constitution which you mention are so wild that I hope they are not the object of any rational man. To make the Executive and Judiciary branches independent of the Legislative; to give them some controul over the laws by forming them into a Council of revision as in New-York; to modify the election of the Senate so as to ensure a choice of the wisest men and thus rendering that branch of legislature more useful, the making our constitution paramount the powers of the ordinary legislature so that all acts contradictory to it may be adjudged null; these are objects which to me appear rational and necessary. For these purposes I have long wished to see a convention called.—But I now leave it among you, hoping that will be done which is best.