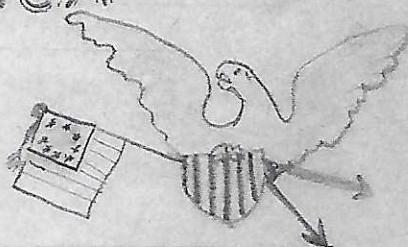
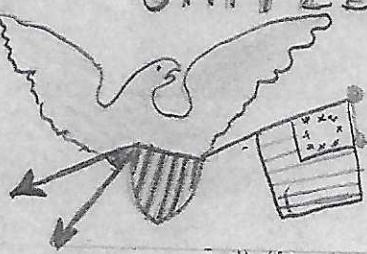


# THE UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF THE THIRTEEN

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN CONGRESS

JULY 4, 1776



When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of Nature's God entitle them, and to which the opinions of mankind require that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these, are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That, to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That, whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to Alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government effecting their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations pursueing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right it is their duty to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such is now the necessity which constitutes them to alter their former systems of Government, and to institute new Government. The history of Great Britain is a history of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct objects the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world. He has refused his assent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. He has forbidden his Governors, to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend them. He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, and in 1753 those people would have established the right of representation in the Legislature, a right long since declared due to them, and far more eligible to try than only he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, inconvenient and distant from the depository of their Public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures. He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing what may be his measures. His invasions on the rights of the people. He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the people at large; for their exercise. The State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within. He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither; and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands. He has obstructed the administration of Justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judicial Powers. He has made Judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries. He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out our substance. He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing Armies, without the Consent of our legislatures. He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power. He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution and unacknowledged; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation. For quartering large bodies of Troops among us, for protecting them, by such trials as punishment for any murder which they should have committed on the inhabitants of these States; for cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world, for employing Ministers as Agents of interest, for depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of trial by Jury; for their Spoliation or beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses; for abolishing the free system of English Laws in the neighbouring provinces, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule in the colonies; for taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our Government; for suspending our own legislatures, and declaiming themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever. He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns and destroyed the lives of our people. He is at this time transporting large Armies of Foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a Civilized nation. He has constrained our fellow Citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, and to fall themselves by their hands. He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavored to bring into the Indian territories, the merciless Indians whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, and sexes, and conditions; in every stage of Oppression, we have petitioned for redress, in the most humble terms; our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. April 1775, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of free People. Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British Brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislative to extend an unnatural alliance through us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here; we have appealed to their native Justice and magnanimity, and behaved ourselves as true common Friends, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our commercial correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which secessions or separations render them, as we have the rest of mankind, Enemies in war, Friends in Peace.

We therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the names and by Authority of the good people of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, that these United Colonies are, and ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political connections between them and the State of Great Britain, is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that thenceforth they are, and ought to be, an independent Power, contracting友好的 Alliances, and establishing Commerce, and all other acts and things which Independent States, by right do and can do, for their support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honour.

# The CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several states, and the electors in each state shall have the qualifications requested for electors of the most numerous branch of the Legislature. No person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years, and been seven years a citizen of the United States and shall not, when elected be an inhabitant of that in which he shall be chosen. Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several states which may be included within this Union according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for term of years, and including Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other persons. The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten years; so that they shall be divided among the several states in such proportions as the House of Representatives shall exceed one for every thirty thousand. But each state shall have at least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the state of New Hampshire shall be entitled to choose three; Massachusetts, eight; Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, one; Connecticut, five; New York, six; New Jersey, four; Pennsylvania, eight; Delaware, one; Maryland, six; Virginia, ten; North Carolina, five; South Carolina, five; and Georgia, three; when vacancies happen in the representation from any state, the executive authority thereof shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies. The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers, and shall have the sole power of impeachment. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each state, chosen by the Legislature thereof for six years, and each Senator shall have one vote. Immediately after the seats of the Senators of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the second year, or may be into three classes by lot, so that one third may be chosen every second year, and if vacancies happen by resignation or otherwise during the recess of the Legislature of the State, then the Executive thereof may make temporary appointments until the next meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such vacancies. No person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the age of thirty years and been nine years a citizen of the United States, and who shall not have resided in that state for which he shall be chosen, the Vice President of the United States shall be president of the Senate, but shall have no vote unless they be equally divided; the Senate shall choose their other officers, and also a President Pro tempore, in the absence of the Vice President, or when he shall preside; and no person shall be convicted without the concurrence of two thirds of the members present. Judgment of cases of impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honor, trust, or profit under the United States; but the less be liable and subject to indictment, trial, judgment, and punishment according to law. The times, places, and manner of holding elections for Senators and Representatives shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by law make or alter such regulations, except as to places of choosing Senators, the Congress shall assemble at least once every year, and such meetings shall be held on the first Monday in December, unless they shall be by law appointed a different day, each house shall be the judge of the election, returns, and qualifications of its own members, and a majority of each house may expel a member; each house shall keep a journal of its proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such parts as may, in their judgment, require secrecy; and the yeas and nays of the members of either house on any question shall, at the desire of one fifth of those present, be entered on the journal. Neither house during the session of Congress, shall, without the consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that which services, to be ascertained by law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States, they shall in all cases, except treason, felonies and breach of the peace, be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the session of their respective houses, and in going to and returning from the same, and for any speech or debate in either house they shall not be questioned in any other place. No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected be appointed to any civil office under the authority of the United States which shall have been created or the emoluments whereof shall have been increased during such time, and no person holding any office under the United States shall be a member of either house during his continuance in office, or an other bills. Every bill which shall have passed the house of Representatives and the Senate shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the President of the United States; if he approve, he will sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his objections, to that house in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objection at large in their journals, and proceed to vote on the same; if, after such a vote, it shall pass, it shall be signed by the President, and shall become a law, but if, in such case, the vote of both houses shall be equal, it shall not be returned to the house which shall have presented the same, but it shall be referred to a committee of both houses, which shall report a bill to establish a uniform law, and against the bill shall be substituted another bill, which shall have been presented to him in the same manner in which the first was presented; in which case, it shall not be a law. Every other resolution, or vote to which the concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be necessary to the passage of a bill, shall be referred to the President of the United States; and the same shall take effect, shall be approved by him, or being disagreed to by him, shall be referred to the Senate and the House of Representatives, according to the rule of adjournment, and if, after such a vote, it shall be passed by the same, and agreed to by him, it shall be signed by the President, and shall become a law. The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on the United States, but all duties, imposts and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States, to borrow money on the credit of the United States, and to coin money, regulate the value of the same, and to establish a uniform and equal system of weights and measures, to provide for the punishment of counterfeiting the securities and current coin of the United States, to establish post offices and post roads, to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive rights to their respective writings, discoveries, &c. to constitute tribunals inferior to the Supreme Court, and define and punish piracies and felonies committed on the high seas, and offenses against the law of nations; to declare war, grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water; to reward and support armies, or to appropriate money for their use; to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions; to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively the appointment of the officers, and the authority of training the militia, according to the discipline prescribed by the states respectively; to exercise exclusive legislation in all cases whatsoever over such district not exceeding twenty miles square as may be ceded by the states to the United States, and to exercise all other powers which may be necessary for the execution of the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereby, the migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a tax or duty may be imposed on such importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each person, the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of rebellion or invasion, unless in proportion to the census then, or to be taken direct to the states. No capitation or other direct tax shall be laid, or shall be levied on vessels bound to or from any state, or to be carried to any other, or to pay duties in other.