At a meeting of Delegates from ninety-seven towns of the state of Connecticut, convened at New Haven, on the 29th day of August, 1804.

WILLIAM JUDD, esq. in the chair,
HENRY W. EDWARDS, and
LEMUEL WHITMAN, Clerks.

Whereas it is the unanimous opinion of this meeting, that the people of this state are at present without a constitution of civil government—

Resolved, That it is expedient to take measures preparatory to the formation of a constitution, and that a committee be appointed to draft an Address to the people of this state on that subject, and make report thereof to this meeting.

The committee appointed in pursuance of the foregoing resolve, reported the following

ADDRESS

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT.

"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, laying its foundation on such *principles* and organizing its powers in such *form*, as to them shall seem most likely to effect its safety and happiness."

Since the declaration of independence, of which the above is a part, we have had no constitution nor any part of government, which has not been repealable by the legislature; but the sovereignty, which by that memorable act, was taken from Great Britain, did not vest in the old congress nor in the legislature. It vested in the *people* and by them has never been exercised.

Since that declaration the *people* of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, the two Carolinas and Georgia have formed constitutions. The four new states added to the thirteen, are governed under constitutions formed by the *people*—Throughout the union Rhode Island and Connecticut are the only states, which still recognize the charter of king Charles as the basis of civil government.—This shews that the formation of constitutions by the people has been, without any influence of party, regarded as essential to political safety. It has been considered indispensible that the rights of man, however unalienable, in their nature, should be guarded from alienation by positive contract, not alterable by the few, who may be in power, but by the *people* who are to be governed.

No one of the constitutions thus formed has changed the rights of persons or of things in respect to the time past, but all of them have defined and guarded the important civil and religious rights of man. They have separated powers, which if connected, might be dangerous to each other or to the public. They have limited the bounds of each department of government and have established first principles, not to be changed but by consent of the people. They have left to legislators the application of these principles, to judges the impartial construction of laws and to executive officers the power of effecting objects of government.

In a perfect state of society (were such possible) we should need no constitution, but universal experience has shewn the insecurity of trusting mere men to set bounds to their own power and to remove the land marks at pleasure. Private interest, ambition or temper may tempt the legislator to sudden and dangerous exercises of power, but a constitution is to the people a permanent shelter and defence. As our situation now is, what one legislature does may be revoked by the next, but what *the people do in their collective capacity* is done permanently for every man and cannot be revoked in haste or without the full consent of the people.

If a constitution shall declare *taxation and representation inseparable*, the legislator cannot separate them with his breath.

If a constitution shall declare all men free in the exercise of religion according to conscience, so far as it can be done without violating public order, the legislator cannot bind over one denomination to another.

If a constitution shall give permanence and independence to judges, the legislator cannot make judges annually dependant on his will.

If a constitution shall establish the qualifications of a freemen, the legislator cannot change them.

If a constitution shall separate the legislative, executive and judicial powers, the legislator cannot unite them in his own person.

It has been said that every thing has gone well in Connecticut. Supposing this were true, yet who will ensure that this shall be the case with the next generation or even for the next year? Men's zeal for popularity and for retaining their places is some guaranty for public safety, but not a permanent one, yet no other have we had since 1776, for the conformity of our laws and establishments to the will of the people. What prudent farmer among us is contented with the abundant crops of his farm, while he has no title deed on record or while his evidence of title is defective? he leaves his plough and his fields to establish his title for the benefit of himself and children.—If a vessel should happen to perform a good and safe voyage without rudder or compass, the mariners might be complimented on their success, but the owner would never send her to sea again in such condition.—On the subject of government, which involves a concern with all our lands, our labors and pursuits, prudence demands most loudly our vigilant care that nothing be left to hazard, which can be made perfectly safe.—The people of the other States did not leave all their political concerns to the vague contingence of things going well or ill; but they asserted *the power to be in themselves* and established rules, which should control all the departments. The old Congress did not declare the old confederation to be the constitution of the United States. They did not proceed to organise a government; but the sovereign people appointed delegates to a general convention, which proposed a Constitution to conventions of the people of the States.

If all things are now right, let the voice of the *people* establish them as they are. If any amendments are desirable, let the people have opportunity to make them.

Excellent as may appear the government of Connecticut to those, who have administered it and to their favorites, yet to us, who belong to the majority of the union, it has been and is an unequal government, constantly tending to the increase of aristocracies, and to the consequent humiliation of men and principles, friendly to our revolution. The government is indeed good for those, who have enjoyed all power and privileges under it, but to us it has been and is a bad government, because legislators, who are opposed to their own former professions, who are opposed to the general government and to us, have not over their conduct any control, which they cannot remove at pleasure, and have no restraint from making laws favorable to their own perpetuity in power and our perpetuity in subjection.

It is to us a bad government, because judges appointed by such legislators, and hostile to us as their makers, have the uncontroled decision of all our rights and are annually dependent on our political opponents for continuance in office.

It is to us a bad government, because men thus uncontroled have concentrated in themselves, the few, that power of the many, which all wise governments have separated.

The grounds, on which we call the government bad, are referred to the very nature of the government, to the construction of courts, and to the unavoidable operations of party and passion; hence we shall be excused a detail of the numerous wrongs, which have arrived to us under this government. The same wrongs would, arrive to the opposite party, provided the same dangerous unlimited power was to be placed in our hands. In *seasons of party a constitution is an invaluable instrument.*

The federalists claim all greatness and goodness, and refer us to these as security for our enjoyment of equal rights. We recognize no evidence of these exclusive attributes, but in the frequent repetitions of the claim, and these repetitions have been all our consolation and all our redress, when from time to time we have complained of evils, which, defying all human greatness and goodness, will be perpetually breaking forth from the corrupt source of human passions.

At the close of our revolution this state stood high in name and in honor among the states of the union. Under the management of our federal statesmen we are thrown into a minority and have lost our weight in the general scale. Contrary to their policy the president and all the officers of government have been appointed, the amendment of the Constitution has been sanctioned by 13 states, and by the people of a 14th. and nearly all the general measures carried. To this condition are we driven by men, who pointedly oppose the measure of a state constitution. Perhaps the same imperious necessity, which yielded to France a Consul and an Emperor, has impelled our rulers to hold their unlimited powers till this time, and to refuse relinquishing them to the people: but whatever impediments to forming a constitution might have existed in July, 1776, or at the close of the war in 1783, or at the establishment of our national government in 1788, or at any time since that period, no such impediments now exist.—The general government is in a train of successful operation, approving its principles and measures to the judgment of a vast majority of our people: thousands in this state are dissatisfied with our want of a Constitution: parties are not exactly balanced, but *we have no fear that a constitution will be formed on party principles*: the good sense of the people will never lead them to the establishment of principles, injurious to their own rights and liberty.—The interests of a legislature in power and those of the people may be at variance; but the interests of a convention and those of the people are the same.

We will not pretend to decide what a constitution formed by a convention and submitted to the people will or ought to be: but we take the liberty of expressing what it probably will not be. It will not be an instrument full of innovations, nor will it be a departure from what the experience of other states and of our own has proved to be useful. You will have no new experiments to try: all this business has been made intelligible in our country as the art of ship-building.

If it be a fact that the people of Connecticut are their own worst enemies; if they are ignorant and unable to discern their true interests; if amidst the blaze of light on the subject of free government, which has been all about them, they are able to discover no political safety but in reliance on men of high passions, powerful interests, and wholly uncontroled, then indeed we may as well proceed on the charter of king Charles: but in the quiet habits of our people we discern no such humility of character. We have been uniformly told by the federalists, that the people of this state are highly intelligent, firm and honest; therefore that they approve the present state of things. We wish to hear from this intelligence, firmness and honesty *directly*, and not through their self-appointed organs. Never since the settlement of our country has it been submitted to our people to decide explicitly on a form of government. The power of Charles passed directly over their heads to the men then in place, and these made laws for passing it to their successors in office. Thus no part of our independence has ever arrived among the people. We deem it high time that they should take rank among the people of other states, who having lived under free, equal governments of their own choice, have acquired no habits, hostile to the principles and operations of such a government throughout the union.

Opposed to our wishes on this subject are the interests of all the men in high office, and of most of their dependants. Opposed to us are all the argument, eloquence and influence of federalism. Opposed to us are some public attacks, many private suggestions, and all the phantoms of danger, which the cunning of men can conjure up to alarm the people. Our object will be combated by all, whose interest it is to combat a state constitution.

But among the body of the people can any one see fifteen of the seventeen states enjoying constitutions formed by the *people*, and not reflect that this fact must have resulted from an extended impression of their expediency and necessity? Can any one reflect on the constituent parts of all these constitutions, and not discern this impression in favor of separating powers, which are now united in this state?

Does any one believe that all things are now right, and is he not willing to establish them as they are, and thus to silence our complaints?

Does any one doubt the perfection of the present state of things, and is he not willing to apply a constitutional remedy?

Are any persuaded that the government is unequal in its operations, are they not willing to balance it by a constitution?

Do any discern in the leading federalists a strong reluctance to submit this subject, and do these discover in this reluctance no argument in favor of the measure? Could this reluctance exist, if there were a full persuasion that the *people* would sanction the present government in all its parts? Could men in power be unwilling to be strengthened by a constitutional force? can those who claim to have all talents and all virtue fear that they will fail of influence with an enlightened people, habituated to obey them? Could this reluctance in fact exist, if all things were now right?

Can the people see this state lost in the republican scale of the union and not seek for the cause in the aristocratic habits, engendered between the charter of king Charles and the pride of rulers, resolved not to descend to the level of the people?

Can any doubt that this is to us a bad government and are such unwilling to give a fair chance of making it equally good for all?

To gain a fair standing among the free nations of the earth, we feel that in addressing ourselves to the people, we submit to a safe and judicious tribunal the important question,

Whether we will have a state constitution?

Tedious as has been the season and long as have been the details of our wrongs, we ask no sudden redress. Our wish is that men of all classes would coolly examine this subject in all its parts and would decide under a full conviction of its importance. *By their votes will be known their decision.* If a constitution appears desirable, they will vote for men who are in favor of it. Previous to voting for men who oppose the measure, let them weigh carefully the motives of such opposition, let them decide that a free, intelligent people are unfit to form a constitution for themselves, and in this decision let them recollect that they abandon the cardinal principle of our revolution, and that they exhibit a character of Connecticut, such as it has been unwilling to wear in view of the world.—Are we in fact an intelligent people? let us, if we dare risque it, assert this publicly, by establishing the charter of king Charles, as our form of civil government.

People of Connecticut, you are careful respecting titles to your estates, you are careful in your contracts and in your last wills. Can you deliberately reject the only season, which will probably be lent you on earth for establishing a constitution, which shall give validity to the past and the future, which shall quiet all men in their rights, which shall secure you a government of sound principles and perpetuate such a government to the latest generations?

We ask men of all parties to attend punctually at proxies and to continue a contest of votes, till the great question,

Whether this state shall have a constitution?

be settled finally and forever—ingloriously, (if such must be the effect of invincible prejudice)—but *gloriously*, we trust, for we are persuaded that on our part we have truth and reason, which must sooner or later impress all ingenuous minds beyond the power of opposition.

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The foregoing address having been read,—Resolved, that the same be accepted, and that ten thousand copies thereof be printed and distributed.

Signed by order of the meeting.

WILLIAM JUDD, *Chairman.*

H. W. EDWARDS,
L. WHITMAN, } *Clerks.*

AT a meeting of the Conferees appointed by the republicans of the second district comprehending Prince George and Anne Arundel counties and the city of Annapolis, held at Queen Anne on the 6th day of September, 1804, according to previous public notice, for the purpose of designating a candidate for the representation of the said district, in the next Congress of the United States. Humphrey Belt, sen. Esq. was chosen chairman, and Zachariah Duvall, jun. secretary: when the following resolutions were agreed to.

Resolved, That in the opinion of this meeting, LEONARD COVINGTON, sen. Esq. ought to be the republican conditate.

Resolved, That every individual of the meeting will exert himself to promote the election of *Mr. Covington*, and they earnestly recommend it to their republican brethren, thoughout the district, to unite in his suport.

Humphrey Belt, sen. Chairman.

Zachariah Duvall, jun. Secretary.

To THE REPUBLICANS OF THE SECOND DISTRICT.

Fellow-Citizens,

THE necessity for unanimity among the republicans induced us to undertake the disagreeable task of designating a person, who, in our opinion, is most likely to prevail over any candidate that may be brought forward by our political opponents. 'Tis with concern and regret we hear a measure so necessary to the success of republicanism, denounced as dangerous to liberty and destroying the freedom of election, and this too by men who have heretofore been most forward in promoting committee meetings. It is true that did there not exist among us two conflicting parties, divided in their views as to every leading measure of the general and state governments, there could be no necessity, previous to an election, to collect the sense of the people as to the candidates.—We could then select at the polls from among the numerous candidates, those to whom we were personally attached, and to keep out of our public councils the ignorant and immoral, would alone excuse our zeal.

But while there does exist two such parties, we cannot but feel anxious to unite our friends.

The persons held up to our view were, Archibald Van Horn, Edward Hall and Leonard Covington, Esqrs. the first gentleman had declared in explicit terms both verbally and in writing, that he would not consider himself bound by the determination of the committee, & would oppose any one recommended by them. His nomination was unanimously rejected, and the committee recommended Mr. Covington, considering him well qualified for the trust, and the most likely person to unite the suffrages of their fellow-citizens.

If it is necessary to collect the sense of the republicans in order to concentrate their efforts against their political opponents, who on all occasions act with unanimity, what better mode can be devised than for the people to meet in the different election districts and send forward members to compose a general committee to consult among themselves, as to the characters as candidates, most likely to give satisfaction? This was done in most of the districts in both counties—If some of them were unrepresented, the fault was their own. We pretend not to dictate—we merely recommend.

In making the choice, we consider ourselves bound to respect the will of the majority of republicans in the district—as far as we have been able to ascertain, that *will* is in favor of Mr. Covington. If we are mistaken, we stand excused in our consciences, as we acted on the best information we could obtain. 'Twas not to be expected that every man would go forward and vote first for candidates, and then attend the polls on the legal day of election and vote them in as members. Elections are frequent enough, were they more so they would be an evil.

Complaints against committees come with a bad grace from Mr. Van Horn, who until the present year, was one of their warmest friends, but when he charges them with a tendency to destroy the right of suffrage and the freedom of election, we feel the charge personal. We were appointed to act at the instance of a number of respectable republicans, and in agreeing to discharge the duty, we have assented to their propriety. Yet we disclaim all intention of wishing to destroy the right of suffrage or the freedom of election, and we trust our uniform conduct as republicans, will do away any suspicions which Mr. Van Horn's charges may be calculated to excite.

There is poor encouragement indeed for the friends of the equal rights of man to persevere in their endeavours to perpetuate those rights, if in a moment their fair fame is to be blasted. We have a sufficient number of political opponents to contend with, and little expected to find in our bosom a man hardy enough to make such a charge against us. To be a republican is to be a mark to be shot at by calumny. Mr. Van Horn has himself, perhaps, felt its shafts, and ought to have been more tender of our feelings.

Mr. Van Horn complains that reports are in circulation of his apostatising from his political principles—If such reports do exist, we neither originated or gave currency to them, but if he courts the federal interest and owes his election to it, the circumstance may justify suspicions, which affection alone may be insufficient to remove. We have the authority of Heaven for saying that "no servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." Mr. Van Horn also says he will not be the means of injuring the republican cause, and that he will decline if a federal candidate comes forward. What is more likely to injure the republican cause, than an attempt to divide the republicans? and what security can we have that a federal candidate will not be brought forward on the morning of the election? We know from experience, the unanimity with which the federalists act—Indeed a federal candidate, Mr. Clement Hill, jun. is at this time in nomination.

To conclude, we disclaim all personal dislike of Mr. Van Horn or Mr. Hall, though we have recommended Mr. Covington. On the contrary, we respect them both. The members of this committee have no private views of their own to answer, but as private citizens are anxious alone to promote the public good. They are anxious above all to disappoint the federal prediction, that the republicans, if left to themselves, would soon quarrel and divide. We therefore exhort you to be united—reflect that it is impossible to gratify every one who may wish to be in congress. We shall be mortified, if the disappointment of an individual should create a division among ourselves.

By order of the committee.

H. BELT, sen. Chairman.
Z. DUVALL, jun. Sec'ry.

Valuable Land for Sale.

The executors of the last will and testament of Anthony Holmead deceased, will sell at private sale about forty acres of Land adjoining the city of Washington at the northern extremity of 10th street west. This land is generally allowed to be one of the handsomest situations near the city, having a beautiful prospect of nearly the whole of the city of Washington, Alexandria and George Town, and any person inclinable to purchase this valuable property, will be shewn the same, and know the terms by application to the subscriber near the premises.

JOHN HOLMEAD.