

Wat Tyler, A Proclamation, *Pennsylvania Herald*, 24 October 1787

WHEREAS it hath been represented unto us that many *evil disposed* men, enemies to our person and authority, have, after great deliberation, devised, and do with strong reason and persuasion recommend unto the people of these states a certain plan or frame of government, evidently calculated to subvert the antient principles of our administration, and to introduce the odious doctrines of national power, honor, and respectability: AND WHEREAS it is the interest and duty of all our true and faithful subjects and friends to oppose, counteract, and defeat this *dangerous and diabolical innovation* upon the *anarchy* of our dominion, THEREFORE we have thought fit, by and with the advice of our dearly beloved Cousins *Jack Straw, Daniel Shays, and John Franklin*; to issue this our *vagrant* proclamation, requiring and commanding all and every of our subjects and friends aforesaid, and more especially such of them as are *judges, counsellors, accomptants, constables, and public officers* of every denomination, to be zealous and vigilant in their efforts to undermine and destroy the *baneful* system which has been projected as aforesaid. And in our great anxiety for the preservation of those rights and privileges which have ever been held sacred by the freest of all commonwealths, *a mob*, we earnestly recommend to as many of our *learned* subjects as have acquired the art or mystery of writing, the *necessary* task of depreciating, traducing, and defaming: for, as the *silly* prejudice with which men regard a *virtuous* character is apt to make them value the action for the sake of the agent, it will be in vain to attempt the destruction of this *iniquitous* work, till it is *proved*, at least, that the authors were *fools and dotards*, who did not understand, or *knaves and traitors* who would not promote, the welfare of their country. Having then, neither spared *age* for its *wisdom*, or *patriotism* for its *worth*, it is our will and pleasure that our most *clamorous* subjects do proceed, in the next place, to the natural resources of our domination, and oppose to *the inglorious* dictates of truth and reason, the *inexhaustible* artillery of impudent assertion and daring falsehood. Let it be remembered that few men comprehend the science of government, and that, destitute of *judgment*, the people are only to be influenced by their *passions*. Hence arises the *expediency* of resorting to *sound* instead of *sense*; and of bewildering the imagination with visionary terrors, instead of instructing the understanding with rational disquisition, or candid interpretation. It is well known to most of our faithful subjects, that in former times a text of scripture, dexterously quoted, has inflamed the minds of mankind to the most frantic enthusiasm; and our affectionate and illustrious servant, *Lord George Gordon* has lately demonstrated, that the *stalking horse* of religion may yet be exercised with *excellent* advantage in the cause of tumult and sedition. We do therefore, above all, recommend to our *well disposed* and *industrious* adherents, the selection of such *phrases* and *sentences* as have hitherto excited popular admiration; and that, without regard to the natural correspondence of causes and effects the destruction of the rights and liberties of the nation be inferred, from the means which are employed to secure and preserve them. Thus it may be argued, that because no power is given by the projected plan to controul the freedom of the press, *therefore* the projected plan is calculated to destroy the freedom of the press: because the federal representation of the people will possess the power to declare in what civil cases the trial shall be by jury, *therefore* the trial by jury is abolished in all civil cases: because the power of raising troops for the national protection and defence is delegated to the Congress of the United States, *therefore* the people, and Congress who are a part of the people, will be butchered and

enslaved by a standing army: because the several state governments are, from time to time, and at all times to elect and appoint persons to fill the offices of the federal government, *therefore* the several state governments must be eventually annihilated—with many other similar propositions as *fairly* and as *conclusively* deduced from their respective premises.

With these instructions, and confiding in the zeal, faith, and perseverance of our liege subjects, and of all men who know how to estimate the *blessings* of anarchy and licentiousness, and who *wisely* prefer their own temporary interests, to the permanent welfare of the public, we earnestly commend you to the countenance and support of the great father of all sedition, whose triumph over harmony and peace has established an everlasting kingdom.

DONE at our CABBIN at TIOGA on the 5th day of November (being the anniversary of the *fatal* discovery of the *glorious gun powder plot*) annoque domini, 1787.

Test:

JACK CADE.

MAT. TYLER.

Cite as: The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009.

Canonic URL: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/RNCN-02-02-02-0002-0004-0010>
[accessed 05 Sep 2012]

Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume II: Pennsylvania