

Lyrics to Yankee Doodle Dandy

Father and I went down to camp,
 Along with Captain Gooding;
 And there we saw the men and boys,
 As thick as hasty pudding.

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
 Yankee doodle dandy;
 Mind the music and the step,
 And with the girls be handy.

There was Captain Washington
 Upon a slapping stallion,
 A-giving orders to his men,
 I guess there was a million.

And then the feathers on his hat,
 They looked so' tarnal fin-a,
 I wanted pockily to get
 To give to my Jemima.

And then we saw a swamping gun,
 Large as a log of maple;
 Upon a deuced little cart,
 A load for father's cattle.

And every time they shoot it off,
 It takes a horn of powder;
 It makes a noise like father's gun,
 Only a nation louder.

I went as nigh to one myself,
 As' Siah's underpinning;
 And father went as nigh agin,
 I thought the deuce was in him.

We saw a little barrel, too,
 The heads were made of leather;
 They knocked upon it with little clubs,
 And called the folks together.

And there they'd fife away like fun,
 And play on cornstalk fiddles,
 And some had ribbons red as blood,
 All bound around their middles.

The troopers, too, would gallop up
 And fire right in our faces;
 It scared me almost to death
 To see them run such races.

Uncle Sam came there to change
 Some pancakes and some onions,
 For' lasses cake to carry home
 To give his wife and young ones.

But I can't tell half I see
 They kept up such a smother;
 So I took my hat off, made a bow,
 And scampered home to mother.

Cousin Simon grew so bold,
 I thought he would have cocked it;
 It scared me so I streaked it off,
 And hung by father's pocket.

And there I saw a pumpkin shell,
 As big as mother's basin;
 And every time they touched it off,
 They scampered like the nation.

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
 Yankee doodle dandy;
 Mind the music and the step,
 And with the girls be handy

The troopers, too, would gallop up
 And fire right in our faces;
 It scared me almost to death
 To see them run such races.

Uncle Sam came there to change
 Some pancakes and some onions,
 For' lasses cake to carry home
 To give his wife and young ones.

Yankee doodle, keep it up,
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 Mind the music and the step,
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Benjamin Franklin

Testimony Against the Stamp Act, 1766

The stamp act was enacted in 1765. Parliament did not understand the colonist's reasons for opposing this act. Ben Franklin was acting as a colonial spokesperson in London at the time, and he testified before Parliament in an effort to explain the colonial position. Franklin's diplomacy helped to secure the repeal of the Stamp Act.

Q. What is your name, and place of abode?

A. Franklin, of Philadelphia

Q. Do the Americans pay any considerable taxes among themselves?

A. Certainly many, and very heavy taxes.

Q. What are the present taxes in Pennsylvania, laid by the laws of the colony?

A. There are taxes on all estates, real and personal; a poll tax; a tax on all offices, professions, trades, and business, according to their profits; an excise on all wine, rum, and other spirit; and a duty of ten pounds per head on all Negroes imported, with some other duties.

Q. For what purposes are those taxes laid?

A. For the support of the civil and military establishments of the country, and to discharge the heavy debt contracted in the last [Seven Years'] war...

Q. Are not all the people very able to pay those taxes?

A. No. The frontier counties, all along the continent, have been frequently ravaged by the enemy and greatly impoverished, are able to pay very little tax...

Q. Are not the colonies, from their circumstances, very able to pay the stamp duty?

A. In my opinion there is not gold and silver enough in the colonies to pay the stamp duty for one year.

Q. Don't you know that the money arising from the stamps was all to be laid out in America?

A. I know it is appropriated by the act to the American service; but it will be spent in the conquered colonies, where the soldiers are, not in the colonies that pay it...

Q. Do you think it right that America should be protected by this country and pay no part of the expense?

A. That is not the case. The colonies raised, clothed, and paid, during the last war, near 25,000 men, and spent many millions.

Q. Were you not reimbursed by Parliament?

A. We were only reimbursed what, in your opinion, we had advanced beyond our proportion, or beyond what might reasonably be expected from us; and it was a very small part of what we spent. Pennsylvania, in particular, disbursed about 500,000 pounds, and the reimbursements, in the whole did not exceed 60,000 pounds...





Q. Do you think the people of America would submit to pay the stamp duty, if it was moderated?

A. No, never, unless compelled by force of arms...

Q. What was the temper of America towards Great Britain before the year 1763?

A. The best is the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the Crown, and paid, in all their courts, obedience to act of Parliament...

Q. What is your opinion of a future tax, imposed on the same principle with that of the Stamp Act? How would the Americans receive it?

A. Just as they do this. They would not pay it.

Q. Have not you heard of the resolutions of this House, and of the House of Lords, asserting the right of Parliament relating to America, including a power to tax the people there?

A. Yes, I have heard of such resolutions.

Q. What will be the opinion of the Americans of those resolutions?

A. They will think them unconstitutional and unjust.

Q. Was it an opinion in America before 1763 that the Parliament had no right to lay taxes and duties there?

A. I never heard any objection to the right of laying duties to regulate commerce; but a right to lay internal taxes was never supposed to be in Parliament, as we are not represented there...

Q. Did the Americans ever dispute the controlling power of Parliament to regulate the commerce?

A. No.

Q. Can anything less than a military force carry the Stamp Act into execution?

A. I do not see how a military force can be applied to that purpose.

Q. Why may it not?

A. Suppose a military force sent into America; they will find nobody in arms; what are they then to do? They cannot force a man to take stamps who chooses to do without them. They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one.

Q. If the act is not repealed, what do you think will be the consequences?

A. A total loss of the respect and affection the people of America bear to this country, and of all the commerce that depends on that respect and affection.

Q. How can the commerce be affected?

A. You will find that, if the act is not repealed, they will take very little of your manufactures in a short time.

Q. Is it in their power to do without them?

A. I think they may very well do without them.

Q. Is it their interest not to take them?





A. The goods they take from Britain are either necessities, mere conveniences, or superfluities. The first, as cloth, etc., with a little industry they can make at home; the second they can do without till they are able to provide them among themselves; and the last, which are mere articles of fashion, purchased and consumed because the fashion in a respected country; but will now be detested and rejected. The people have already struck off, by general agreement, the use of all goods fashionable in mourning...

Q. If the Stamp Act should be repealed, would it induce the assemblies of America to acknowledge the right of Parliament to tax them, and would they erase their resolutions against the Stamp Act?

A. No, never.

Q. Is there no means of obliging them to erase those resolutions?

A. None that I know of; they will never do it, unless compelled by force of arms.

Q. Is there a power on earth that can force them to erase them?

A. No power, how great soever, can force men to change their opinions...

Q. What used to be the pride of the Americans?

A. To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain.

Q. What is now their pride?

A. To wear their old clothes over again, till they can make new ones.



John Dickinson

Excerpt *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*, 1768

John Dickinson was a wealthy lawyer in Pennsylvania, a member of the Stamp Act Congress, and both Continental Congresses. He differs from the other founding fathers because of his opposition to American independence. He wrote 12 letters under the pseudonym of “a Pennsylvania farmer”. These letters were praised as masterful arguments explaining how the Stamp act was a violation of the colonist’s rights as Englishmen.

There is a late act of Parliament, which seems to me to be...destructive to the liberty of these colonies,...that is the act for granting duties on paper, glass, etc. It appears to me to be **unconstitutional**.

The Parliament unquestionably possesses a legal authority to regulate the trade of Great Britain and all its colonies. Such an authority is essential to the relation between a mother country and its colonies and necessary for the common good of all. He who considers these provinces as states distinct from the British Empire has very slender notions of justice or of their interests. We are but parts of a whole; and therefore there must exist a power somewhere to preside, and preserve the connection in due order. This power is lodged in the Parliament, and we are as much dependent on Great Britain as a perfectly free people can be on another.

I have looked over every statute relating to these colonies, from their first settlement to this time; and I find every one of them founded on this principle till the Stamp Act administration. All before are calculated to preserve or promote a mutually beneficial intercourse between the several constituent parts of the empire. And though many of them imposed duties on trade, yet those duties were always imposed with design to restrain the commerce of one part that was injurious to another, and thus to promote the general welfare...**Never did the British Parliament, till the period abovementioned, think of imposing duties in American for the purpose of raising a revenue...This I call an innovation, and a most dangerous innovation.**

That we may be legally bound to pay any general duties on these commodities, relative to the regulation of trade, is granted. But we being obliged by her laws to take them from Great Britain, any special duties imposed on their exportation to us only with intention to raise a revenue from us only, are as much taxes upon us as those imposed by the Stamp Act...It is nothing but the edition of a former book with a new title page,...and will be attended with the very same consequences to American liberty.

Sorry I am to learn that there are some few persons, who shake their heads with solemn motion, and pretend to wonder what can be the meaning of these letters. ...I will now tell the gentlemen...The meaning of them is to convince the people of these colonies that they are at this moment exposed to the most imminent dangers, and persuade them immediately, vigorously, and unanimously to exert themselves, in the most firm, but most peaceable manner for obtaining relief. The cause of liberty is a cause of too much dignity to be sullied by turbulence and tumult. It ought to be maintained in a manner suitable to her nature... **I hope, my dear countrymen, that you will in every colony be upon your guard against those who may at any time endeavor to stir you up, under pretences of patriotism, to any measures disrespectful to our sovereign and our mother country.** Hot, rash, disorderly proceedings injure the reputation of a people as to wisdom, valour and virtue, without procuring them the least benefit...

Every government, at some time or other, falls into wrong measures. They may proceed from mistake or passion. But every such measure does not dissolve the obligation between the governors and the governed. The mistake may be corrected, the passion may pass over. **It is the duty of the governed to endeavor to rectify the mistake and **appease** the passion. They have not at first any other right than to represent their grievances and to pray for redress...**



Address of the Inhabitants of Anson County to Governor Martin, 1774

Many Americans remained loyal to Britain before, during, and after the Revolution. This letter was sent by loyalists to pledge their support to the King, and plead for his protection.

To His Excellency, Josiah Martin Esquire, Captain General, Governor, &c,
Most Excellent Governor:

Permit us, in behalf of ourselves, and many others of His Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects within the County of Anson, to take the earliest opportunity of addressing your Excellency, and **expressing our abomination of the many outrageous attempts now forming on this side of the Atlantick, against the peace and tranquility His Majesty's Dominions in North America, and to witness to your Excellency, by this our Protest, a disapprobation and abhorrence of the many lawless combinations and unwarrantable practices actually carrying on by a gross tribe of infatuated anti-Monarchists** in the several Colonies in these Dominions; the baneful consequence of whose audacious contrivance can, in fine, only tend to extirpate the fundamental principles of all Government, and illegally to shake off their obedience to, and dependence upon, the imperial Crown and Parliament of Great Britain; the infection of whose pernicious example being already extended to this particular County, of which we new bear the fullest testimony.

It is with the deepest concern (though with infinite indignation) that we see in all public places an papers disagreeable votes, speeches and resolutions, said to be entered into by our sister Colonies, in the highest contempt and derogation of the superintending power of the legislative authority of Great Britain. And we further, with sorrow, behold their wanton endeavors to vilify and arraign the honour and integrity of His Majesty's most honourable Ministry and Council, tending to sow the seed of discord and sedition, in open violation of their duty and allegiance...

...We are truly invigorated with the warmest zeal and attachment in favour of the British Parliament, Constitution and Laws, which our forefathers gloriously struggled to establish, and which are now become the noblest birthright and inheritance of all Britannia's Sons...

We are truly sensible that those invaluable blessings which we have hitherto enjoyed under His Majesty's auspicious Government, can only be secured to us by the stability of his Throne, supported and defended by the British Parliament, the only grand bulwark and guardian of our civil and religious liberties.

Duty and affection oblige us further to express our grateful acknowledgements for the inestimable blessings flowing from such a Constitution. And we do assure your Excellency that we are determined, by the assistance of Almighty God, in our respective stations, steadfastly to continue His Majesty's loyal Subjects, and to contribute all in our power for the preservation of the publick peace; so, that, **by our unanimous example, we hope to discourage the desperate endeavors of the deluded multitude**, and to see a misled people turn again from their atrocious offences to a proper exercise of their obedience and duty.

And we do furthermore assure your Excellency, that we shall endeavor to cultivate such sentiments in all those under our care, and to warm their breasts with a true zeal for His Majesty, and affection for his illustrious family. And may the Almighty God be please to direct his Councils, his Parliament, and all those in authority under him, that their endeavors may be for the advancement of piety, and the safety, honour and welfare of our Sovereign and his Kingdoms, that the malice of his enemies may be assuaged, and their evil design confounded and defeated; so that all the world may be convinced that his sacred person, his Royal family, his Parliament, and our Country, are the special objects of Divine dispensation and Providence.

[Signed by two hundred twenty-seven of the inhabitants of Anson County.]



Patrick Henry

Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death, 1775

The words “Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death” were made famous in this speech. Patrick Henry’s fiery speech is fundamental to understanding colonist’s motivation for going to war and also considered by many one of the greatest speeches of all time.

Mr. President:

It is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the song of the siren till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? **Are we disposed to be of the number of those who having eye see not, and having ears hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation?** For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst and to provide for it.

I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided; and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging of the future but by the past. And judging by the past, **I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British ministry for the last ten years, to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves and the house?** Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir: It will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception of our petition comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. **Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation?** Have we shown ourselves so unwilling to be reconciled that force must be called in to win back our love? **Let us not deceive ourselves, sir. These are the implements of war and subjugation – the last arguments to which kings resort.** I ask gentlemen, sir, what means this martial array, if its purpose be not to force us to submission? Can gentlemen assign any other possible motive for it? Has Britain any enemy in this quarter of the world, to call for all this accumulation of navies and armies? No, sir, she has none. They are meant for us; they can be meant for no other. They are sent over to bind and rivet upon us those chains which the British ministry have been so long forging. And what have we to oppose them? Shall we try argument? Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years. Have we anything new to offer upon the subject? Nothing. We have held the subject up in every light of which it is capable; but it has been all in vain. Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? Let us not, I beseech you, sir, deceive ourselves longer.

Sir, we have done everything that could be done to avert the storm which is now coming on. **We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, we have prostrated ourselves before the throne, and have implored its interposition to arrest the tyrannical hand of the ministry and Parliament.** Our petitions have been slighted; our remonstrances have produced additional violence and insult; our supplications have been disregarded; and we have been spurned with contempt from the foot of the throne. In vain, after these things, may we indulge the fond hope of peace and reconciliation. There is no longer any room for hope. **If we wish to be free,** if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending, if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained – **we must fight!** I repeat, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!





The tell us, sir, that we are weak – unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week, or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in every house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is not too late to retire from the contest. **There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged; their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable – and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come!**

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. **Gentlemen may cry, Peace, peace; but there is no peace. The war is actually begun.** The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms. Our brethren are already in the field. Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? **If life so dear, or peace sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it Almighty God – I know not what course other may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!**



Abigail Adams and John Adams Letters; Abigail Adams Letter to Mercy Otis Warren, 1776

Abigail and John Adams were apart for most of their 54 year marriage, but over the years Abigail wrote him hundreds of letters. In this correspondence Abigail Adams warns that after the Revolution women will not be content to remain second class citizens to men.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, March 31, 1776

I long to hear that you have declared an independency [sic] – and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make **I would desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors.** Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all men would be tyrants if they could. **If perticular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.**

That you Sex are Naturally Tyrannical is a Truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute, but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of Master for the more tender and endearing one of Friend. Why then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the Lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity. Men of Sense in all Ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your Sex. Regard us then as Beings placed by providence under your protection and in imitation of the Supream Being make use of that power only for our happiness.

John Adams to Abigail Adams, April 14, 1776

As to Declarations of Independency, be patient. Read our Privateering Laws, and our Commercial Laws. What signifies a Word.

As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our Struggle has loosened the bands of Government every where. That Children and Apprentices were disobedient – that schools and Colledges were grown turbulent- that Indians slighted their Guadians and Negros grew insolent to their Masters. **But your Letter was the first Intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerfull than all the rest were grown discontented.** – This is rather too coarse a Compliment but you are so saucy, I wont blot it out.

Depend upon it, **We know better than to repeal our Masculine systems.** Altho they are in full Force, you know they are little more than Theory. We dare not exert our Power in its full Latitude. We are obliged to go fair, and softly, and in Practice you know We are the subjects. We have only the Name of Masters, and rather than give up this, **which would completely subject Us to the Despotism of the Petticoat,** I hope General Washington, and all our brave Heroes would fight...





Abigail Adams to Mercy Otis Warren, Braintree April 27, 1776

He is very saucy to me in return for a List of Female Grievances which I transmitted to him. I think I will get you to join me in a petition to Congress. I thought it was very probable our wise Statesmen would erect a New Government and form a new code of Laws. **I ventured to speak a word on behalf of our Sex, who are rather hardly dealt with by the Laws of England which gives such unlimited power to the Husband to use his wife ill.**

I requested that our Legislators would consider our case and as all Men of Delicacy and Sentiment are adverse to Exercising the power they possess, yet as there is a natural propensity in Human Nature to domination, **I thought the most generous plan was to put it out of the power of the Arbitrary and tyrannick to injure us with impunity by Establishing some Laws in favour upon just and Liberal principals.**

I believe I even threatened fomenting a Rebellion in case we were not considered and assured him we would not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we had neither a voice nor representation.

In return he tells me he cannot but Laugh at my extraordinary Code of Laws. That he had heard their Struggle had loosened the bands of Government, that children and apprentices were disobedient, that Schools and Colleges had grown turbulent, that Indians slighted their Guardians, and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters. But my Letter was the first intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerful than all the rest were grown discontented. This is rather too coarse a complement, he adds, but that I am so saucy he wont blot it out.

So I have helped the Sex abundantly, but I will tell him I have only been making trial of the Disinterestedness of his Virtue, and when weigh'd in the balance have found it wanting.

It would be bad policy to grant us greater power say they since under all the disadvantages we Labour we have the ascendancy over their Hearts.

And charm by accepting, by submitting sway.

Abigail Adams to John Adams, May 7, 1776

I can not say that I think you very generous to the Ladies, for **whilst you are proclaiming peace and good will to men, Emancipating all Nations, you insist upon retaining an absolute power over Wives.** But you must remember that Arbitrary power is like most other things which are very hard, very liable to be broken – and notwithstanding all your wise Laws and Maxims we have it in our power not only to free our selves but to subdue our Masters, and without violence throw both your natural and legal authority at our feet-

*“Charm by accepting, by submitting sway
Yet have our Humour most when we obey.”*



Benjamin Banneker

Letter to Thomas Jefferson, 1791

Benjamin Banneker's grandmother was a white Englishwoman sent to America as an indentured servant. When her servitude was over she bought a small farm and 2 African slaves. She married one of those slaves, Bannaky, and had many children. Their daughter Mary bought a slave and later married him; just as her mother had done. Mary was Benjamin's mother, so unlike many Africans in the colonies, Benjamin Banneker was never a slave and learned to read and write and gained respect as a scientist.

Sir, I am fully sensible of the greatness of that freedom which I take with you on the present occasion; a liberty which Seemed to me Scarcely allowable, when I reflected on that distinguished, and dignifying station in which you Stand; and the almost general prejudice and prepossession which is so prevalent in the world against those of my complexion...

Sir I freely and Cheerfully acknowledge, that I am of the African race, and, in that colour which is natural to them of the deepest dye: and it is under a Sense of the most profound gratitude to the Supreme Ruler of the universe, that I do now confess to you, that I am not under that State of tyrannical thralldom, and inhuman captivity, to which too many of my brethren are doomed; but that **I have abundantly tasted of the fruition of those blessings which proceed from that free and unequalled liberty with which you are favoured** and which I hope you will willingly allow you have received from the immediate Hand of that Being from whom proceedeth every good and perfect gift.

Sir, Suffer me to recall to your mind that time in which the Arms and tyranny of the British Crown were exerted with powerful effort, in order to reduce you to a State of Servitude; look back I entreat you on the variety of dangers to which you were exposed, reflect on that time in which every human aid appeared unavailable, and in which even hope and fortitude wore the grateful Sense of your miraculous and providential preservation; You cannot but acknowledge, that the present freedom and tranquility which you enjoy you have mercifully received, and that it is the peculiar blessing of Heaven.

This, Sir, war a time in which you clearly saw into the injustice of a State of Slavery, and in which you have Just apprehension of the horrors of its condition, it was now Sir, that you abhorrence thereof was so excited, that you publicly held forth this true and invaluable doctrine, which is worthy to be recorded and remembered in all Succeeding ages. "We hold these truths to be Self evident, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that amongst them are life, liberty, and the persuit of happiness."...

Sir, I suppose that your knowledge of the situation of my bretheren is too extensive to need a recital here; neither shall I presume to prescribe methods by which they may be relieved, otherwise than by recommending to you, and all others, to wean yourselves from those narrow prejudices which you have imbibed with respect to them, and as Job proposed to his friends, **"Put your Souls in their Souls' stead," thus shall your hearts be enlarged with kindness and benevolence towards them,** and thus shall you need neither the direction of myself or others in what manner to proceed herein.

And now, Sir, although my Sympathy and affection for my brethren hath caused my enlargement thus far, I ardently hope that your candour and generosity will plead with you in my behalf, when I make known to you, that it was not originally my design; but that having taken up my pen in order to direct to you as a present, a copy of an Almanack which I have calculated for the Succeeding year, I was unexpectedly and unavoidably led thereto...

