

1776

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires 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, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, in such a case, dictates that慎重 transitions from one Form to another should be effected with the least possible interruption to the public Affairs, and that a firm and established Authority should be maintained in the interim.

And whereas the King has refused to assent to certain Acts of the British Parliament, which have a manifest Tendency to oppose the Rights of the Colonies, and to establish an Intolerable Burden upon them; and whereas the King has refused to receive the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy from the Colonies, and to give Assent to the Acts of the British Parliament, which have a manifest Tendency to oppose the Rights of the Colonies, and to establish an Intolerable Burden upon them; and whereas the King has refused to receive the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy from the Colonies, and to give Assent to the Acts of the British Parliament, which have a manifest Tendency to oppose the Rights of the Colonies, and to establish an Intolerable Burden upon them;

Therefore the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled, do hereby declare that these United States are, and of Right ought to be, free and independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political Connections with Great Britain, ought to be totally dissolved; and that as a Free and Independent State, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, enter into Commercials, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of Right do.

Approved 4th September 1776

John Hancock

John Adams
Samuel Adams
John Jay
James Osgood
John Dickinson
Thomas Mifflin
George Clymer
George Taylor
James Smith
Robert Morris
George Ross
Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Pickens
Gouverneur Morris
Benjamin Franklin
Thomas Jefferson
John Adams
Samuel Adams
John Jay
James Osgood
John Dickinson
Thomas Mifflin
George Clymer
George Taylor
James Smith
Robert Morris
George Ross
Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Pickens
Gouverneur Morris
Benjamin Franklin
Thomas Jefferson