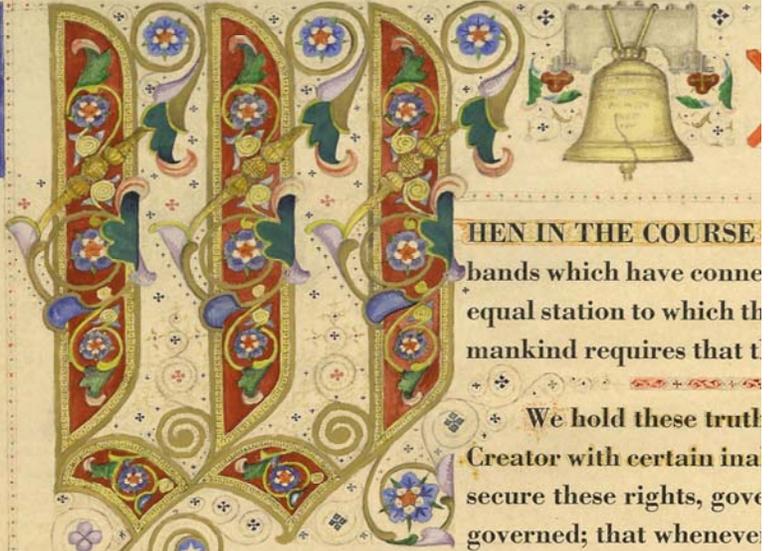


IN CONGRESS JULY 4, 1776. A DECLARATION BY THE F



WHEN IN THE COURSE of these transactions, the various bands which have connected the colonies together, have assumed an equal station to which the laws of nature and the rights of mankind requires that they should advance.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable 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 promote their safety and happiness. Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; but when a long train of abuses and usurpations, which have assumed the appearance of a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, the prudent men in every state have endeavored to redress them by peaceful means, but their reason and patience being exhausted by a series of repeated injuries and usurpations, all of which have a direct tendency to destroy the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, they have taken arms, and in a brave and manly manner they have opposed to the usurpations of the British crown, a determined and successful resistance.

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 extensive relief, which they have solemnly protested they would not suspend, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large tracts of land, which were reserved to our fathers, in order to secure the peace and harmony of the colonies, but instead thereof, he has endeavored to bring on the colonies a taxation of blood and treasure, which is in itself, and in its consequences, insupportable and grievous.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depositories of the British power, for the sole purpose of frustrating the execution of his laws, and for the purpose of rendering the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for the establishment of courts of justice, and for the purpose of rendering the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for the establishment of courts of justice.

He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing to his invasions of the rights of the colonies, the only just and reasonable resistance which they could offer to his tyrannical and oppressive measures.

He has refused, for a long time after such dissolution, to cause other houses to be chosen, whereby the legislative power has been totally suspended, and the executive power has been exercised in a despotic manner, by a single man, and the States have been exposed to all the inconveniences and calamities which that situation necessarily brings on.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose he has obstructed the migration hither, and he has raised the conditions of new appropriations of land, so as to render them almost insupportable.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for the establishment of courts of justice, and by refusing to pay the salaries of the judges, and by rendering the tenure of their offices precarious, and by rendering the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for the establishment of courts of justice.

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices, and for the continuance of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers, to harass our people, and to eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in time 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 constitutions and unacknowledged by our laws; for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us; for protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any infractions of the laws; and for cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

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For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



SE OF HUMAN EVENTS, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political
connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and
the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect for the opinions of
it they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

uths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their
inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to
overnments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the
ver any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the
itute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its
em most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that
ot be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath
to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to
long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a
spotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government and to provide
ch has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity
mal system of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history
ll having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these States.
a candid world.

ecessary for the public good.
nd pressing importance, unless suspended in their operations till his assent should be obtained; and, when so
arge districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature – a right
ncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into
sing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.
se others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at
ed to all the danger of invasion from without and convulsions within.
; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners, refusing to pass others to encourage their
f lands.

his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.
re of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries.
arms of officers, to harass our people and eat out their substance.
hout the consent of our legislatures.
erior to the civil power.
eign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation,
ny murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these States:





For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:
 For imposing taxes on us without our consent:
 For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury:
 For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses:
 For abolishing the free system of English law in a neighboring province, and substituting in its place another system entirely unconnected with the spirit of the British constitution:
 For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments:
 For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves superior to the constituted authorities:
 He has abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and withdrawing his aid from us in all our emergencies:
 He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives and property of many thousands of our people:
 He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to invade and oppress our shores:
 He has constrained our fellow-citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become soldiers in a war against their countrymen, to march to distant parts of the globe, to fight in a distant and cruel war against their brethren:
 He has excited domestic insurrections among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known mode of warfare is almost unexampled in the civilized world:
 In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people:
 Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our situation, and of the injuries we had sustained, and we have besought them to interpose their friendly offices. We have reminded them of the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which they have solemnly pledged themselves not to do. We have reminded them of the blood of our fathers, who were the first sufferers by the merciless and unrelenting spirit of British tyranny, and who by their heroic and glorious example have endeavored to inspire us with the true spirit of liberty and independence. We must therefore acquiesce in the necessity, not of subduing ourselves to British yoke, but of separating from them as free and independent states.
 We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, do, in the name and by the authority of the good people of these independent States; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; and that, as free and independent States, they have full power to do all those acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the 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 honor.

Attested, CHARLES THOMPSON, Secretary.

- NEW HAMPSHIRE
Josiah Bartlett
William Whipple
Matthew Thornton
- MASSACHUSETTS BAY
Samuel Adams
John Adams
Robert Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry
- RHODE ISLAND, ETC.
Stephen Hopkins
William Ellery
- CONNECTICUT
Roger Sherman
Samuel Huntington
William Williams
Oliver Wolcott
- NEW YORK
William Floyd
Philip Livingston
Francis Lewis
Lewis Morris

TO MY FELLOW AMERICANS, I DEDICATE WITH LOVE THIS IMMORTAL HERITAGE OF OUR FOREFATHERS. MAY THESE WORDS LIVE IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER.



ry:
ffences:

g province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an

to these colonies:

laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our government:

es invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

protection, and waging war against us.

owns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

aries, to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun, with circumstances of cruelty and

worthy the head of a civilized nation.

high seas, to bear arms against their country, to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall

deavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is

dress in the most humble terms; our petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince whose

fit to be ruler of a free people.

r. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts made by their legislatures to extend an unwarrantable

our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have

urpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the

e necessity which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war — in

erica, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our

hese colonies, solemnly publish and declare that these united colonies are, and of good right ought to be, free and

British crown, and that all political connection between them and the states of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally

ver to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which

ation, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our

Signed by order and in behalf of the Congress,



- NEW JERSEY**
Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Hopkinson
John Hart
Abraham Clark
- NORTH CAROLINA**
William Hooper
Joseph Hewes
John Penn
- GEORGIA**
Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
George Walton
- PENNSYLVANIA**
Robert Morris
Benjamin Franklin
George Clymer
George Taylor
Benjamin Rush
John Morton
James Smith
William Paca
George Ross



- DELAWARE**
Caesar Rodney
George Read
Thomas M'Kean
- MARYLAND**
Samuel Chase
James Wilson
Thomas Stone
Charles Carroll
of Carrollton
- VIRGINIA**
George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Thomas Jefferson
Benjamin Harrison
Thomas Nelson, Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton
- SOUTH CAROLINA**
Edward Rutledge
Thomas Heyward, Jr.
Thomas Lynch, Jr.
Arthur Middleton



VERAND EVER FOR NO GOOD MAN LOSES HIS FREEDOM BUT WITH HIS LIFE... ARTHUR SZYK, NEW CANAAN, CONN. JULY 4, 1950