July 6, 1775 (8)

The large strides of late taken by the legislature of Great Britain towards establishing over these colonies their absolute rule, and the hardiness of their present attempt to effect by force of arms what by law or right they could never effect, render it necessary for us also to change the ground of opposition and to close with their last appeal from reason to arms. And as it behoves those who are called to this great decision to be assured that their cause is approved before supreme reason, so is it of great avail that it's justice be made known to the world whose affections will ever take part with those encountring oppression. our forefathers, inhabitants of the island of Gr. Brit.n, long endeavored to bear up against the evils of misrule, left their native land to seek on these shores a residence for civil & religious freedom. at the expence of their blood, to the ruin of their fortunes, with the relinquishment of every thing quiet & comfortable in life, they effected settlements in the inhospitable wilds of America; they there established civil societies with various forms of constitution, but possessing all, what is inherent in all, the full & perfect powers of legislation. to continue their connection with those friends whom they had left they arranged themselves by charters of compact under one common king who thus became the link of union between the several parts of the empire. some assumptions of power by the parl. of Gr. Brit. however un-

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[illegible] assumptions of power [illegible]

acknowledged by the constitution of our [illegible] formed, we finally [illegible] the warmth of affection. proceeding thus in the fulness of harmony & confidence both parts of the empire encreased in population and in wealth with a rapidity unknown in the history of [illegible] the political institutions of America, it's various [illegible] soils & climates opened [illegible] certain resource to the unfortunate & to the enterprising of every country [illegible] and ensured to them the acquisition & [illegible] possession of property. Great Britain too acquired a lustre & a weight among the [illegible] of the earth which her internal resources could never have given her. to the communication of the wealth & the power of the every part of the empire we may surely ascribe in some measure [illegible] 148

148 [illegible] characters [illegible] sustained [illegible] at European war [illegible] event. At the close of that war, [illegible] having [illegible] 148 [illegible] foes, the took up the unfortunate idea of subduing her friends also. her parliament then for the first time asserted a right of unbounded legislation for the colonies of America; several [illegible] in the [illegible] of the 5th, the 6th & the 8th & the 7th years of the reign of his present majesty several duties were imposed for the purpose of raising a revenue on the [illegible] colonists, the powers of courts of admiralty were extended beyond their ancient limits and the inestimable right of trial by twelve peers of our vicinage was then away in cases affecting both life & property. by part of an act passed in the 12th year of the present reign an American colonist charged with the offences described in that act may be transported beyond sea for trial by the very persons against whose pretended sovereignty the offence is supposed to be committed.

and pursuing with eagerness the [illegible] thought during which they have exerted a right in the space of 10 years have [illegible] specimens of the spirit [illegible] legislation [illegible]

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