

A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

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 & 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 ~~that~~ ^{the} separation.

We hold these truths to be ^{self-evident}, that all men are created equal & independent; that ^{they are endowed by their creator with} certain inalienable rights; that among ^{these} are ~~life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness~~ ^{life, liberty, & 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 ~~shall~~ becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, & to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles & organizing it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. ^{Prudence indeed} will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. but when a long train of abuses & usurpations ^[begun at a distinguished period] & pressing invariably the same object, evinces a design to ~~reduce~~ ^{bring} them ~~under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such ~~government~~ & to provide new guards for their future security. such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; & such is now the necessity which constrains them to ^{alter} their former systems of government. the history of ^{the} present ^{King of Great Britain} is a history of ^{repeated} unremitting injuries and usurpations, ^{appears no solitary fact} among which, ^{to} contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, ^{install} ~~all of which~~ ^{have} ~~have~~ ⁱⁿ direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. to prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world ^{for the truth of which we pledge a faith} not unswayed by falsehood.~~

Nor have we been wanting in attentions to our British brethren, we have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend a jurisdiction over these our states, we have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration & settlement here, [no one of which could warrant so strange a pretension: that these were effected at the expence of our own blood & treasure, assisted by the wealth or the strength of Great Britain: that in constituting indeed our several forms of government, we had adopted one common king, thereby laying a foundation for perpetual league & amity with them: but that submission to their

created: and we appealed to their native justice & magnanimity, [as well as to the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations which were likely to interrupt our connection & correspondence.] They too have been deaf to the voice of justice & of consanguinity, [When occasions have been given them, by the regular course of their laws, of removing from their councils the disturbers of our harmony, they have by their free election re-established them in power. at this very time too they are permitting their chief magistrate to send over not only soldiers of our common blood, but Scotch & foreign mercenaries to invade & disturb our borders.] These facts

show the fact state to ~~aggravating~~ ^{aggravating} affective and manly spirit & hidden to our names: ~~we~~ ^{we} have unfeeling brethren, we must endeavor to forget our former love for them, and to hold them as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends, we might have been a free & a great people together; but a communication of grandeur & of freedom it seems is below their dignity. be it so, since they will have it: the road to ~~glory~~ ^{to glory} happiness, is open to us too, we will ~~abandon~~ ^{separate} it ~~on~~ ^{apart from them} ~~separately~~, and acquiesce in the necessity which ~~proposes~~ ^{de-} ~~our~~ ^{our} ~~separation~~ ^{separation}!

We therefore the representatives of the United States of America in General Congress assembled, do in the name & by authority of the good people of these states, reject & renounce all allegiance & subjection to the kings of Great Britain & all others who may hereafter claim by through, or under whom, as a utterly dissolve & break off all political connection which may ~~have~~ ^{have} heretofore subsisted between us & the people or parliament of Great Britain; and finally we do assert and declare these colonies to be free and independant states, and that as free & independant states they shall ~~have~~ ^{full} power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, & to do all other acts and things which independant states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, & our sacred honour.

+ 8th Franklin

abolishing our most ^{valuable} ~~important~~ laws
for taking away our charters & altering fundamentally the forms of our governments,
for suspending our own legislatures & declaring themselves invested with power to
legislate for us in all cases whatsoever:
he has abdicated government here, ^{by declaring us out of his protection & saying we are against it} withdrawing his governors, & declaring us out
of his allegiance & protection;

he has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns & destroyed the
lives of our people:

he is at this time transporting large armies of ^{Seditious and other} foreign mercenaries to complete
the works of death, desolation & tyranny, already begun with circumstances
scarcely parallel in the most barbarous ages

of cruelty & perfidy, unworthy the head of a civilized nation:
he has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian
savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of
all ages, sexes, & conditions [of existence].

He has incited treasonable insurrections of our fellow-citizens, with the
allurements of forfeiture & confiscation of our property,
he has waged ^{to be a} cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sa-
cred rights of life & liberty in the persons of a distant people who never of-
fended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemi-
sphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This
piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the
Christian king of Great Britain. determined to keep open a market
where MEN should be bought & sold he has prostituted his negative
for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this
detestable commerce: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact
of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms
among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them,
by ~~exciting~~ ^{urging} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~people~~ ^{people} upon whom he also obtruded them: thus copying
off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes
which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.]

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 injuries. a prince
whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit
to be the ruler of a people ^{free} [who mean to be free]. future ages will scarce believe
that the ^{hardness} of one man, adventured within the short compass of twelve years
to lay a foundation for broad & undisguised, for tyranny
only, ~~over a people~~ ^{over a people} fostered & fixed in principle
of liberty & freedom.]

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