

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 <sup>one</sup> people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to ~~assume~~ <sup>assume</sup> among the powers of the earth the <sup>separate and equal</sup> ~~station~~ <sup>station</sup> 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~~ <sup>the</sup> separation.

We hold these truths to be <sup>self-evident</sup>, that all men are created equal, & independent, that <sup>they are endowed by their creator with</sup> ~~from that equal creation~~ <sup>rights, that</sup> ~~they derive~~ <sup>these</sup> ~~rights~~ <sup>rights</sup> are ~~life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness~~ <sup>life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness</sup>; that to secure these <sup>rights</sup>, 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 & organising its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety & happiness. Providence indeed will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light & transient causes: and accordingly all experience hath shown 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, &] pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to ~~reduce~~ <sup>reduce</sup> them ~~to absolute despotism~~ <sup>to absolute despotism</sup>, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such ~~government~~ <sup>government</sup> & 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 ~~expunge~~ <sup>alter</sup> their former systems of government. the history of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> present ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> a history of ~~unremitting~~ <sup>repeated</sup> injuries and usurpations, [among which, ~~appears no solitary fact~~ <sup>appears no solitary fact</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> contradict the uniform tenor of the rest, ~~all of which~~ <sup>in all</sup> ~~have~~ <sup>have</sup> 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 unswerving by falsehood.]

7. Franklin's handwriting  
8. Adams's handwriting

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 & pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has <sup>utterly</sup> neglected to attend to them.

he has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people unless those people would relinquish the right of representation <sup>in the legislature</sup>, a right inestimable to them & formidable to tyrants only: <sup>he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncer-</sup> <sup>tain, and distant, for the sole purpose of fat-</sup> <sup>tering with measures.</sup>

he has refused for a long <sup>time after such solicitations</sup> to cause others to be elected, whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise, the state remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without & convulsions within:

he has endeavored to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws for naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither; & raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands:

he has suspended the administration of justice totally to cease in some of these states <sup>or states</sup> refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers:

he has made <sup>the</sup> judges dependant on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and amount of their salaries: + Mr. Franklin

he has erected a multitude of new offices [by a self-assumed power] & sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people & eat out their substance:

he has kept among us in times of peace standing armies <sup>without the consent of our legislature</sup> [ships of war]

he has affected to render the military independent of & 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; giving his assent to their <sup>acts of</sup> pretended <sup>acts of</sup> ~~acts of~~ <sup>legislation</sup>

legislation, for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

for protecting them by a mock-trial from punishment for any murders <sup>which</sup> 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 <sup>in many cases</sup> of the benefits of trial by jury;

for transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences:

for abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighboring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and substituting in its stead a cruel and oppressive one, to render that province an example & fit instrument for introducing the same into other parts of the continent.

+ Dr. Franklin

+ abolishing our most <sup>valuable</sup> 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, [<sup>by declaring us out of his protection & warring against us.</sup> 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 <sup>Scotch and other</sup> foreign mercenaries to complete  
the works of <sup>destruction & tyranny</sup> desolation & to carry <sup>on</sup> with <sup>unremitting</sup> cruel

of enmity & perfidy, unworthy the head of a civilized nation:  
x he has <sup>excited domestic insurrections amongst us</sup> and has  
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]

x he has <sup>excited domestic insurrections amongst us</sup> and has  
he has waged <sup>to become the executioners of their friends & brethren</sup> 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  
determining to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold:  
execrable 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 <sup>condemning</sup> ~~condemning~~ <sup>condemning</sup> the people upon whom he also abused them: thus paying  
off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes

which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.]

+ Dr. Franklin

in every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble  
terms; our repeated petitions have been answered <sup>only</sup> 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 <sup>free</sup> [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 so broad & unguarded, for tyranny  
only, ~~over a people~~ <sup>over a people</sup> fostered & fixed in principles  
of liberty & freedom.]

