

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE: ABBREVIATED TEXT

In Congress, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another...

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...

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

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 offences

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

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...

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled...

National Archives. (n.d.). Declaration of Independence: A transcription. <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>