

1917

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

1776

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 and 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 the separation.

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, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, in such a case, dictates that慎重 should be exercised; and that no step should be undertaken which is fraught with the danger of exposing our Posterity to the calamities of a longer and more cruel bondage.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them to absolute Tyranny, it is their duty, when such attempts have gone on for some time, to throw off such Government, 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 effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, in such a case, dictates that慎重 should be exercised; and that no step should be undertaken which is fraught with the danger of exposing our Posterity to the calamities of a longer and more cruel bondage.

And on the 4th day of July, 1776, by the unanimous declaration of the thirteen united States of America, —

That the United States of America, are, of right, free and independent States; — that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; — and that all political connection between them and Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; —

That the United States of America, do hereby declare their independence; —

That they are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States; — that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown; — and that all political connection between them and Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; —

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