IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

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 disband 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 they have a Right, Returns to the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God; resolves that these United Colonies are, and stand henceforth on, a Firm and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown; and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally disolved, and that as FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by Order and on Behalf of the Congress,

JOHN HANCOCK, President.

ATTEST,

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

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