

# United States Declaration of Independence

## 美國獨立宣言

1775 年 4 月 19 日，美國獨立戰爭（1775-1783）正式開打。隔年 6 月，亞當斯（John Adams）\*、富蘭克林（Benjamin Franklin）、傑佛遜（Thomas Jefferson）\*\*、李文斯頓（Robert R. Livingston）和謝爾曼（Roger Sherman），五人共議著寫獨立宣言，宣言由傑佛遜起草，後由富蘭克林和亞當斯加以修訂。

同年 7 月 4 日，來自北美洲十三個英屬殖民地的議會代表，在費城所舉行的第二次大陸會議上，批准通過《美國獨立宣言》，宣告獨立，這一天後來也成為美國的國慶日。

同年 8 月 2 日，完成《獨立宣言》的簽署，共有來自十三州的 56 位代表者簽署。獨立戰爭結束後，英美於 1783 年簽署《巴黎條約》（Treaty of Paris），英國遂承認美國獨立。《獨立宣言》指出了民主、自由和人權的基本哲學，全文最精髓的地方就是：

We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable; that all men are created equal and independent; that from that equal creation they derive right inherent and inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, and liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

我們認為，以下這個真理是不言而喻的，那就是：人人生而平等。造物主賜予人不可剝奪的權利，那就是：生存、自由和追求幸福的權利。

\* 後成為美國第一任副總統，繼之成為美國第二任總統，也是第一位入住白宮的總統。

\*\* 後成為美國第二任副總統，繼之成為美國第三任總統。





**Speaker** 北美洲十三個英屬殖民地的議會代表  
(the unanimous Declaration of the thirteen  
United States of America)

**Time** 1776 年 7 月 4 日

**Place** 費城，第二次大陸會議  
(Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia)

▣ 約翰·甘迺迪誦讀 ▣ 擷錄

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, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and 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 and usurpations<sup>1</sup>, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces<sup>2</sup> a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism<sup>3</sup>, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. →

1. usurpation [ˌjuːsəˈrɪˈpeɪʃən] (n.) wrongfully seizing and holding by force 奪取

2. evince [ɪˈvɪns] (v.) to make obvious or show clearly 顯示出

3. despotism [ˈdespəˌtɪzəm] (n.) a form of government in which the ruler is an absolute dictator 專制統治

L-R: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston, and Roger Sherman



在人類發展的過程中，當一個民族要脫離和另一個民族的政治從屬關係、並遵循自然法則與上帝旨意所授予，而成為一個獨立且平等的國家，躋身世界列國之林時，出於對人類輿論的尊重，應該將其不得不獨立出來的原因，公告於世。

我們認為，以下這個真理是不言而喻的，那就是：人人生而平等。造物主賜予人不可剝奪的權利，那就是：生存、自由和追求幸福的權利。

——正是為了確保這些權利，人們才建立了政府，而政府的合法權利，是經由人民所同意授予的，

——任何一種型態的政府，一旦違悖了這些目標，人民就有權利去改變或廢除它，並建立新的政府。新政府賴以奠基的原則，以及其組織權力的型態，都應該要最有利於人民的安全與幸福。

確實，出於慎重，對於建立已久的政府，不宜因為輕微或一時的原因，就妄加變更。況且根據所有的經驗法則來看，人類更傾向於忍受，只要尚能忍受，人們就寧可忍受，也不願去廢除已經習慣了的政府。

然而，當濫用職權、巧取豪奪的情況層出不窮，顯示出政府所追求的目標是要對人民行高壓統治，那麼去推翻這樣的一個政府、並為日後的安危建立一個新的保障，就是人民的權利與責任——而這也就是殖民地人民以前逆來順受、現在卻不得不改變原有的政府制度的原因了。

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress<sup>4</sup> 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.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren<sup>5</sup>. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction<sup>6</sup> over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured<sup>7</sup> them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow<sup>8</sup> these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence.

They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity<sup>9</sup>. We must, therefore, acquiesce<sup>10</sup> in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude<sup>11</sup> of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies 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 the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy<sup>12</sup> 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. ■

我們每一次在遭受壓迫時，都用了最謙卑的言語請求改善，然而每一次請求所得到的回應，都是一次又一次的傷害。一個君主，當他的每一個行為都屬於暴君的行為時，那他就不再適合擔任自由人民的統治者。

我們不是沒有顧及我們英國的弟兄。我們一再提醒他們，他們的立法機關企圖對我們進行以不合理的管制。我們也向他們說明過人民在這裡移民與定居的情況。我們曾經請求他們大發慈悲，看在我們是同文同種的份上，不要再掠奪我們，以免影響到彼此的關係和往來。

然而，他們對於這些正義和血緣的呼喊，仍舊充耳不聞。因此，我們不得不宣布和他們脫離關係，將他們視為一般國家，也就是說：與我們為敵的，就是敵人，與我們友好的，就是朋友。

所以我們這些美利堅合眾國的代表們，我們前來參加這次的大陸會議，以各殖民地善良人民的名義、經過他們的授權，向世界最崇高的正義呼籲，說明我們嚴正的意向，並且鄭重地發表和宣布：我們這些聯合起來的殖民地，現在是、也理當是自由獨立的國家；我們取消一切對英國王室效忠的義務，從此之後，我們和大不列顛國家之間的一切政治連繫全面斷絕，而且理當斷絕；身為一個自由獨立的國家，我們有完全的權力可以自行宣戰、締和、結盟、通商，我們可以行使一個獨立國家有權行使的一切行動和事務。

為了擁護此一宣言，我們懷著蒙受上帝庇佑的堅定信心，以我們的性命、財產和神聖的名譽，互相宣誓。

4. redress [rɪˈdres] (n.) act of correcting an error or a fault or an evil 矯正
5. brethren ['breðrən] (n.) (plural form of brother) the lay members of a male religious order (brother 的複數形) 弟兄；道友
6. jurisdiction [ˌdʒʊərɪsˈdɪkʃən] (n.) the territory within which power can be exercised 權限
7. conjure ['kɒndʒər] (v.) to ask for or request earnestly 召喚
8. disavow [ˌdɪsəˈvaʊ] (n.) refuse to acknowledge 拒絕；推翻
9. consanguinity [ˌkɒːnsæŋˈɡwɪnɪti] (n.) when people are members of the same family 血親關係；同族
10. acquiesce [ˌækwiˈes] (v.) to accept or agree to something, often unwillingly 默認
11. rectitude ['rekɪtuːd] (n.) behavior that is honest and morally correct 正直
12. levy ['levi] (v.) to declare war on somebody 發動（戰爭）