

June 12, 1775.

As the great God of the World, by his infinite and powerful Providence, not only directs the course of nature with unerring wisdom and rectitude, but frequently influences the minds of men to serve the wise and gracious purposes of his providential government; and it being at all times our indispensable duty devoutly to acknowledge his superintending Providence, especially in times of impending danger and public calamity, to reverence and adore his immutable justice, as well as to implore his merciful interposition for our deliverance:

This Congress therefore, considering the present critical, alarming, and calamitous state of these Colonies, do earnestly recommend, that THURSDAY, the 20th day of JULY next, be observed by the inhabitants of all the English Colonies on this Continent, as a day of public Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer, that we may with united hearts and voices unfeignedly confess and deplore our many sins, and offer up our joint supplications to the all-wise, omnipotent, and merciful Disposer of all events, humbly beseeching him to forgive our iniquities, to remove our present calamities, to avert those desolating judgments with which we are threatened, and to bless our rightful Sovereign King GEORGE the Third, and inspire him with wisdom to discern and pursue the true interest of all his subjects, that a speedy end may be put to the civil discord between Great-Britain and the American Colonies, without further effusion of blood, and that the British nation may be induced to regard the things that belong to her peace, before they are hid from her eyes; that these Colonies may be ever under the care and protection of a kind Providence, and be prospered in all their interests; that the Divine Blessing may descend and rest upon all our civil rulers, and upon the representatives of the people in their several assemblies and conventions, that they may be directed to wise and effectual measures for preserving the union, and securing the just rights and privileges of the Colonies; that virtue and true religion may revive and flourish throughout our land; and that America may soon behold a gracious interposition of Heaven for the redress of her many grievances, the restoration of her invaded rights, a reconciliation with the Parent State, on terms constitutional and honourable to both; and that her civil and religious privileges may be secured to the latest posterity: And it is recommended to Christians of all denominations to assemble for public worship, and to abstain from servile labour and recreations on said day.

By order of the Congress,

JOHN HANCOCK, President.

A true copy, CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

To the oppressed INHABITANTS of CANADA.

Friends and Countrymen,

ALARMED by the designs of an arbitrary Ministry to extinguish the rights and liberties of all America, a sense of common danger conspired with the dictates of humanity in urging us to call your attention, by our late address, to this very important object.

Since the conclusion of the late war, we have been happy in considering you as fellow-sufferers with us. As we were both entitled by the bounty of an indulgent Creator to freedom, and being both devoted by the cruel edicts of a despotic administration to common ruin, we perceived the fate of the Protestant and Catholic Colonies to be strongly linked together, and therefore invited you to join with us in resolving to be free, in rejecting with disdain the fetters of slavery, however artfully polished.

We most sincerely condole with you on the arrival of that day, in the course of which the Sun could not shine on a single freeman in all your extensive dominion. Be assured that your unmerited degradation has engaged the most unfeigned pity of your Sister Colonies; and should our selves you will not, by tamely bearing the yoke, suffer that pity to be disappointed.

Whichever interest we consider, the men of right followed by the people, that oppressors are out through the most common interests for the admission of despotism,—when the pledged faith of government ceases to give security to loyal and dutiful subjects,—and when the insidious stratagems and manoeuvres of peace become more terrible than the most sanguine operations of war,—it is high time for them to assert those rights, and with honest indignation oppose the torrent of oppression rushing in upon them.

By the introduction of your present form of government, or rather form of tyranny, you and your wives and your children are made slaves. You have nothing that you can call your own, and all the fruits of your labour and industry may be taken from you, whenever an avaricious Governor and a rapacious Council may incline to demand them. You are liable, by their edicts, to be transported into foreign countries, to fight battles in which you have no interest, and to spill your blood in conflicts, from which neither honour or emolument can be derived; nay, the enjoyment of your very religion, on the present system, depends on a legislature, in which you have no share, and over which you have no controul, and your Priests are exposed to expulsion, banishment and ruin, whenever their wealth and possessions furnish sufficient temptation. They cannot be sure that a virtuous Prince will always fill the throne; and should a wicked or a careless King concur with a wicked Ministry in extracting the treasure and strength of your country, it is impossible to conceive to what variety and to what extremes of wretchedness you may, under the present establishment, be reduced.

We are informed you have already been called upon to waste your lives in a contest with us; should you, by a compliance in this instance, assist in your new establishment, and a war break out with France, your wealth and your sons may be sent to perish in expeditions against their islands in the West Indies.

It cannot be supposed that these considerations will have no weight with you, or that you are so lost to all sense of honour. We can never believe that the present race of Canadians are so degenerated as to possess neither the spirit, the gallantry or the courage of their ancestors. You certainly will not permit the infamy and disgrace of such pusillanimity to rest on your own heads, and the consequences of it on your children for ever.

We for our parts are determined to live free, or not at all, and are resolved that posterity shall never reproach us with having brought slaves into the world.

Permit us again to repeat that we are your friends, not your enemies; and be not imposed upon by those who may endeavour to create animosities. The taking the fort and military stores at Ticonderoga and Crown-Point, and the armed vessels on the lake, was dictated by the great law of self-preservation; they were intended to annoy us, and to cut off that friendly intercourse and communication which has hitherto subsisted between you and us: We hope it has given you no uneasiness, and you may rely on our assurances, that these Colonies will pursue no measures whatever, but such as friendship and a regard for our mutual safety and interest may suggest.

As our concern for your welfare entitles us to your friendship, we presume you will not by doing us injury, reduce us to the disagreeable necessity of treating you as enemies.

We yet entertain hopes of your uniting with us in the defence of our common liberty, and there is yet reason to believe, that should we join in imploring the attention of our Sovereign to the unmerited and unparalleled oppressions of his American subjects, he will at length be undeceived, and forbid a licentious Ministry any longer to riot in the ruins of the rights of Mankind.

A true copy from the Minutes.

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.