

## **Reading – July 5, 2009**

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 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 a new Government, having its foundation on such principles...

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## **Sermon – July 5, 2009**

**Title: Self-Evident Truths**

### **SOURCES THAT ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR THE SERMON**

- I. **Declaration of Independence:** 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 separation.
  
- II. **The soil in which all Social Action must be rooted:**  
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 a new Government, having its foundation on such principles...

## TEXT OF SERMON

### I. Introduction: Brief history of Independence Day.

Independence Day, or the Fourth of July, the most important national holiday in the United States. It commemorates the formal adoption of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The declaration, written by a committee headed by Thomas Jefferson, is an eloquent statement of the American colonies' intention to become an independent nation. It broke the formal ties between the colonies and Britain after the American Revolution had begun. The Independence Day celebration is a reminder of the ideals on which the nation was founded.

### II. Early Independence Day Celebrations.

The first celebration took place in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776, the Fourth of July holiday has been accepted as the official anniversary of U.S. independence. It was not declared a legal holiday until 1941, however. Today it is celebrated in all states and territories of the United States.

### III. Independence Day Celebrations Today.

The Fourth of July is celebrated publicly with parades and marching bands, patriotic speeches, and displays of fireworks. Many communities have concerts that conclude with "The Stars and Stripes Forever." Many Americans observe the Independence Day holiday by having picnics, barbecues, or other outings with friends and family.

### IV. The Declaration of Independence.

The excerpts you heard read earlier are the foundation of what I wish to share with you today:

- A. What we do in the way of social action, and our struggle for justice and equality have their roots and foundation in what we celebrate this weekend...
- B. The language of this document as is the language of many ancient writings is primitive, and archaistic in their nature. However, we cannot let their archaicism cause us to miss the fact that we to, in our day and time, are included in what is being said...

## Summary & Conclusion:

“The moral arch of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice.” - Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Joe Volk

Executive Secretary of Friends Committee on National Legislation, A Quaker lobby in the public interest. Wrote to President Elect Obama:

Your election is already a turning point in our nation's history. As a people, we in the United States have not reached justice, but November 4th suggested that we are headed in the right direction. Our Quaker lobby in the public interest stands in a nearly 400-year-old faith-based movement that has worked for this moment through worship, protest, community organizing, and movement building. Martin Luther King Jr. remarked, "the moral arch of the universe is long, but it bends toward justice." Our nation may now be on an accelerated pathway from slavery and racism and toward equality and dignity for all.