

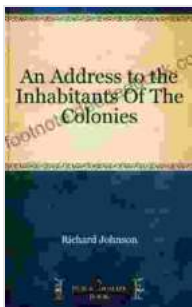
# An Address to the Inhabitants of the Colonies

**A Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms**

**By the Continental Congress**

**July 6, 1775**

Fellow countrymen:



## Address to the Inhabitants Of The Colonies, An

by Charles J. Sykes

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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We, your representatives in the Continental Congress, assembled in Philadelphia, have been constrained by the urgency of our affairs, and the alarming situation of our bleeding country, to address you on the important subject of our present conflicts.

Permit us, then, fellow countrymen, to call your attention to the origin and progress of those grievances which have terminated in these fatal hostilities. We do not wish to inflame your passions, but rather to awaken your reason, and direct your judgment.

The first settlers of these colonies were a band of virtuous and pious men, who, flying from the tyranny and persecution of their native land, sought on these shores a refuge for their wives, their children, and their religion. They found the new world a wilderness, inhabited by savage tribes, who, however, claimed the soil as their own, and maintained their rights with a courage and ferocity that would have discouraged a less determined spirit.

But our fathers, animated by the love of liberty, and trusting in the protection of Heaven, resolved to plant a colony in this western world, and to establish here a government of laws. They purchased the soil from the natives, who had a right to sell it, and, having cleared the forests, and built their habitations, they looked forward with confidence to the enjoyment of peace and prosperity.

But their hopes were soon blasted by the avarice and ambition of the British government. The colonies had scarcely begun to flourish, when they were subjected to oppressive taxes, imposed without their consent, and enforced by a military power.

Our remonstrances against these arbitrary measures were treated with contempt. Our petitions were unanswered, and our complaints were disregarded. We were told that we were subjects of Great Britain, and that we must obey her laws, however unjust and oppressive they might be.

We were resolved, however, not to submit to such tyranny. We appealed to the justice of our cause, and to the God of battles for our defence. We have taken up arms in support of our liberties, and we are determined to maintain them, or perish in the attempt.

We have not sought this war. We have been driven into it by the arbitrary and oppressive measures of the British government. We have no desire to separate from Great Britain, but we will not be slaves. We will be free.

We have already enumerated some of the grievances which have driven us to take up arms. We will now state others, which are equally oppressive and intolerable.

- The British government has quartered a large body of troops among us, without our consent, and in defiance of our laws.
- The British government has imposed upon us a swarm of placemen and pensioners, who are a burden to the country, and a disgrace to the service.
- The British government has plundered our commerce, and destroyed our trade.
- The British government has excited the savage Indians to make war upon us, and has hired them to murder our wives and children.

These are some of the grievances which have driven us to take up arms. We have not enumerated them all. We have only mentioned those which are the most oppressive and intolerable.

We have not taken up arms rashly or without deliberation. We have long and patiently endured the wrongs and insults which have been heaped upon us. We have petitioned, we have remonstrated, we have supplicated, but all to no purpose. The British government has been deaf to our entreaties, and has determined to reduce us to slavery.

We have therefore taken up arms in self-defence. We have no other alternative left. We must either submit to the tyranny of Great Britain, or we must fight for our liberties.

We are not afraid of the issue. We trust in the justice of our cause, and in the protection of Heaven. We have the means of maintaining our independence, and we are determined to use them.

We have a numerous and well-disciplined army. We have a powerful navy. We have the sympathy and support of the civilized world. And, above all, we have the blessing of God.

We have therefore no doubt of the ultimate success of our cause. We are confident that we shall be able to maintain our independence, and to establish a free and independent government in this western world.

We call upon you, therefore, fellow countrymen, to join us in this glorious struggle. We call upon you to take up arms in defence of your liberties. We call upon you to be firm and united. We call upon you to sacrifice your lives, your fortunes, and your sacred honor in the cause of your country.

We do not ask you to fight for glory or for conquest. We ask you to fight for your homes, your families, and your liberties. We ask you to fight for the cause of justice, and for the rights of mankind.

We know that the contest will be arduous and bloody. We know that we shall have to encounter the power of Great Britain, and the treachery of her savage allies. But we are not afraid. We are determined to be free.

We trust in the justice of our cause, and in the protection of Heaven. We have the means of maintaining our independence, and we are determined to use them.

We call upon you, therefore, fellow countrymen, to join us in this glorious struggle. We call upon you to take up arms in defence of your liberties. We call upon you to be firm and united. We call upon you to sacrifice your lives, your fortunes, and your sacred honor in the cause of your country.

We do not doubt that we shall be victorious. We shall be able to maintain our independence, and to establish a free and independent government in this western world.

We shall be able to leave to our posterity a legacy of freedom, which they will cherish and enjoy for ages to come.

We call upon you, therefore, fellow countrymen, to join us in this glorious struggle. We call upon you to take up arms in defence of your liberties. We call upon you to be firm and united. We call upon you to sacrifice your lives, your fortunes, and your sacred honor in the cause of your country.

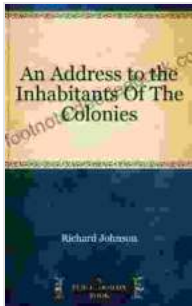
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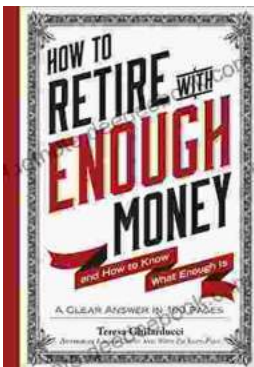


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