

Freedom 24/7

The VFW celebrates the 247th birthday of America

Jun 30, 2023

WASHINGTON — We tried being civil. Petition after petition, the American colonies appealed to King George for fair governance of his subjects across the Atlantic to no avail. Instead, he answered them with more injustices, more taxes and more tyranny. It was high time we broke up with the monarchy, and on July 4, 1776, with one of the most famous “Dear John” letters ever written, the thirteen colonies aired their grievances and unanimously declared our independence.

“... 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 ...”

History has shown that the Declaration of Independence didn’t go over well with the King of Great Britain, and it would take another seven long years before he realized he couldn’t win the fight and let go. The original patriots got their first “W” in the win column for freedom.

The American War for Independence cost this country more than 6,800 lives who died in battle, and for the next nearly two and half centuries, hundreds of thousands of U.S. service members would give up their lives in combat for others to have the chance to be free.

The last line of President Abraham Lincoln’s speech at the dedication ceremony of the Gettysburg National Cemetery established just months following the end of the famous battle nearby offers a challenge to every American citizen that resonates even today.

“It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

On this 247th Independence Day, the 1.5 million members of the VFW and its Auxiliary asks all Americans to take time during your celebration to give thanks for those brave individuals

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who sacrificed everything so we can enjoy our freedom 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Happy birthday, America. VFW... salute!