



A Declaration for Our Times

By Christopher Pyle

When in the course of human events the government becomes destructive of the ends for which it was established, it is the Right of the People to alter it and demand restoration of those Constitutional Principles that have so long assured their Liberty, Safety, and Happiness.

Therefore, on the anniversary of our Independence, we offer this new declaration for our times.

The history of this president is one of **arbitrary usurpations of power**, the effect of which is to establish tyranny through false promises of greater security.

He has created a multitude of new programs and sent swarms of petty officers to spy on Americans in a misguided effort to combat foreign terrorism. He has invested these agents with sweeping new powers to monitor our conversations and ransack our personal papers and effects without judicial supervision or any reason to believe – as the Constitution requires – that a crime has been committed.

He has further claimed the power to disregard legislation that Congress has passed.

He has suspended the laws and treaties against torture, authorized the kidnapping of mere suspects, and transported hundreds of prisoners beyond seas so that no independent judiciary could question the legality of their mistreatment.

He and his supporters in Congress have granted amnesty to the officials who unleashed torture and humiliation upon helpless prisoners, to the disgrace of our nation.

He has denied these prisoners access to attorneys, family, and friends, and has claimed the right to try them before military tribunals specifically designed to disregard the most basic principles of law.

He has imprisoned thousands of lawful immigrants for months without charges, under brutal conditions, until his agents, rather than independent courts, decided that they posed no threat.

He has wrapped his usurpations of power and his deprivations of liberty in thick cloaks of secrecy, thereby showing contempt for the rule of law and the proper functions of Congress, the courts, and the press.

At every stage of these oppressions we have sought redress, but our petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.

We, therefore, resolve to resist these usurpations by all lawful means at our disposal. To this end, we insist that the powers of our national government be shared by all branches of government and not concentrated in one alone. And we call upon Congress, the courts, and the press to reassert their constitutional functions vigorously and restore the promise that is America.

To these ends, we mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.

Sign this declaration and have your name appear in *The New York Times* on or near Independence Day 2008. Deadline is June 26. Visit www.constitutioncampaign.org to sign it and make a tax-deductible contribution (suggested minimum of \$25) to offset the cost of the ad. This declaration is sponsored by the Bill of Rights Defense Committee's People's Campaign for the Constitution. Contact BORDC at www.bordc.org or (413)582-0110.