

# Coffee, The Enlightenment & America



A tangent . . . .

The 1700s saw the birth of global trade. Dutch traders discovered a black liquid (*kavah*) drunk in the Ottoman Empire and export it to Indonesia – particularly the island of Java. “Coffee” production then spread to the Caribbean, and exports to Europe increased dramatically. Coffee houses appeared across Europe, becoming gathering places for men to drink, read and talk.

- ❖ Economic expansion, the emergence of a new consumer society, and the stabilization of the European state system all generated optimism about the future. A loosely knit group of writers emerged during this time – gathering in various venues across the continent – who believed that human beings could apply a critical, reasoning spirit to every problem they encountered in the world. The name for this time – the 1700s – became “The Enlightenment.”
- ❖ Writers of the Enlightenment called themselves *philosophes* – dedicated public intellectuals trying to solve real problems in the world.
- ❖ Writers such as Adam Smith explored such topics as economics. Smith wrote *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* in 1776. In his book Smith endorsed a laissez-faire approach to the economy. A government’s role was to only provide security.
- ❖ Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote about the relationship between the individual and society. It was Rousseau who wrote “Man is born free, and everywhere is in chains.” Rousseau wrote a revolutionary work, *The Social Contract*, in 1762 which stated:

**There is but one law which, from its nature, needs unanimous consent. This is the social compact; for civil association is the most voluntary of all acts. Every man being born free and his own master, no one, under any pretext whatsoever, can make any man subject without his consent. <turn over>**



How about government?

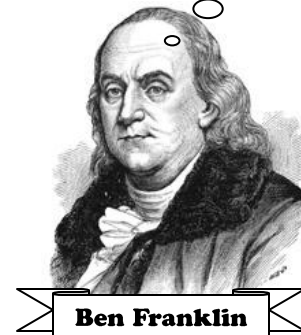
All right gentlemen, let's have a topic.

I need a donut

**To decide that the son is born a slave is to  
decide that he is not born a man.**



**. . . What could all of this mean?**



**Excerpts from the preamble of the 1776 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 the 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,[71] 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 new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

A large, elegant cursive signature in gold ink that reads "John Hancock".