

By Jan Schultz, The Imperial Republican News Editor

As you drive down Broadway this Thursday, July 4, witness the streets lined with our beautiful U.S. flags and take in all the activities of a summer holiday, remember how we got here.

It was 237 years ago that delegates to the Continental Congress were faced with a major decision—a vote on a formal statement from the 13 American Colonies on their intentions for independence. Can you imagine the fear many of them experienced, realizing their livelihoods and likely their lives were on the line with this declaration?

It's difficult to imagine, but these are some true heroes.

Few colonists then desired to have complete independence from Great Britain, even as the Revolutionary War was underway.

Those who did, like Thomas Jefferson who wrote most of the Declaration, and John Adams were considered radicals.

We need more heroes and radicals like Jefferson and Adams today, people who won't take their independence for granted, because if we do, it will slowly slip away.

When you consider some of the major events in the U.S. in recent years—a health care law that forces us to buy a product and, if not, taxes us; intrusion into our personal lives and phone records; singling out conservative groups asking for tax-exempt status with more stringent reviews; and a continued silence from our government on what really happened in Benghazi—we all need to be taking note.

We need to get involved in our government, from the top down. It means reading, attending meetings and staying informed.

While the majority of colonists in 1776 finally came around to support the fight for freedom after Great Britain threatened to crush the rebels with its great Army, let's hope it doesn't come to that here.

But in order for that not to happen, we all must have a part in guarding the freedoms we so cherish.

America is different than the rest of the world. We have to make sure it stays that way by being involved in guarding our independence.

Happy Fourth of July!