

*Did you know participatory democracy is actually 800 years old?*



Figure 31.

On June 11, 1776 while the question of independence was being debated, the visiting Iroquois chiefs were formally invited into the meeting hall of the Continental Congress. There a speech was delivered, in which they were addressed as "Brothers" and told of the delegates' wish that the "friendship" between them would "continue as long as the sun shall shine" and the "waters run." The speech also expressed the hope that the new Americans and the Iroquois act "as one people, and have but one heart." [18] After this speech, an Onondaga chief requested permission to give Hancock an Indian name. The Congress graciously consented, and so the president was renamed "Karanduaawn, or the Great Tree." With the Iroquois chiefs inside the halls of Congress on the eve of American Independence, the impact of Iroquois ideas on the founders is unmistakable. History is indebted to Charles Thomson, an adopted Delaware, whose knowledge of and respect for American Indians is reflected in the attention that he gave to this ceremony in the records of the Continental Congress. [19] Artwork by John Kahionhes Fadden.

from Exemplar of Liberty, Native America and the Evolution of Democracy, Chp. 8, "A New Chapter, Images of native America in the writings of Franklin, Jefferson, and Paine"