



The Declaration of Independence

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Three Things

- A. Statement of Philosophy**
- B. List of Grievances against the king**
- C. A Declaration of War**

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another,

When one nation (13 colonies) must break away from another nation (England)

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,

and become a country with the same powers that all other countries on earth have because God gives us that right.

a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

It is only fair that we tell the world why we are forced to separate from England.

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, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness

It is obvious that:

- *all men are created equal*
- *have certain rights that can't be taken away*
- *and those rights are the right to life, freedom and property (pursuit of happiness)*

**That to secure these rights,
governments are instituted among
men, deriving their just powers
from the consent of the governed.**

*The purpose of a government is to protect
our rights*

Government gets its power from its citizens

That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it,

When a government does not protect our freedom and rights the way we have the right to overthrow the government.

**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**

*and after we overthrow the government we
have a right to start a new government that will
protect our freedom, our safety and our
happiness.*

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes;

Good judgment says that governments that have been around for a long time should only be changed if there is a good reason.

and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed

In fact we know from experience that once the citizens get used to living under an evil government they will continue to suffer rather than try to change a government.

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism,

*But after a long list of abuses by the government (the king)
and attempts by the government to usurp or take away powers of the citizens
and put in place a despotic dictatorship ...*

**it is their right, it is their duty, to
throw off such government, and to
provide new guards for their future
security**

*and if the government no longer protects our
freedoms the people have the right and duty to
get rid of their current government and start a
new one that will protect their freedoms.*

Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government.

Our colonies have suffered patiently under the King of England so now it is time to change our government. In fact we have a duty to change .

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states.

The King of England has a history of abusing us and usurping (taking away) our powers. He has done this because he wants to become a dictator over our states.

**To prove this, let facts be submitted
to a candid world**

*To prove what we are claiming about the King
of England, let us present facts to the rest of
the world.*

Part B

List of Grievances

List of complaints

**HE has refused his Assent to Laws,
the most wholesome and necessary
for the public Good.**

*He (King of England) has refused to agree to
laws that we need to protect our citizens.*

HE has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them

He (King of England) will not allow the Governors to pass laws that we need unless we have the kings permission.

When good laws are needed he has ignored US.

HE has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

He (King of England) has refused to allow new territories to become part of the colonies unless the people agree to obey the king.

HE has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures

He made or law makers meet in places that are hard or impossible to get to, where they are not able to get to their records, just to make them tired so they will obey him.

HE has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

He has often forced our law makers to go home because they stood up to the king and would not allow him to trample the rights of the people.

HE has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of the Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and the Convulsions within.

After he forced our law makers to go home he has refused to allow them to meet again leaving the colonies open to invasion and revolution.

HE has endeavored to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has prevented new people from coming to the colonies, kept them from becoming citizens and kept the colonies from expanding their territories

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HE has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

He has prevented us from establishing a system of judicial courts

HE has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries

He has forced our judges to obey him because he controls their pay and how long they will serve as judges.

HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has created many unnecessary government positions (offices) and sent his friends from England to fill the offices and oppress our citizens.

HE has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the consent of our Legislatures

He has sent large armies to occupy our territory without our permission, even though we are a peace..

HE has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

He has made the military forces superior to the civilian population and government.

HE has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

He has joined with others to make us obey people and laws not recognized by our constitutions by creating phony laws.

FOR quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us

He has sent troops into our homes and forced us to provide them with food and rooms to live in.

**FOR protecting them, by a mock Trial,
from Punishment for any Murders
which they should commit on the
Inhabitants of these States:**

*When British troops have committed crimes in
our colonies he has set-up phony trials so
they could not be punished*

FOR cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

*He has cut off our trade with the rest of the
world*

FOR imposing Taxes on us without our Consent

He has taxed us without our permission.

FOR depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

He has not allowed our citizens to have a jury trial after being charged with a crime.

FOR transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences

He has sent some of our citizens to England to be tried where he is sure they will be convicted.

FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rules into these Colonies

He has abolished free government in Canada and tried to expand that system into the American colonies.

**FOR taking away our Charters,
abolishing our most valuable Laws,
and altering fundamentally the Forms
of our Governments:**

*He has tried to keep us from being colonies,
abolished our laws and changed our form of
government.*

**FOR suspending our own
Legislatures, and declaring
themselves invested with Power to
legislate for us in all Cases
whatsoever**

*He has prevented our law making bodies from
making laws and declared that only he has the
power to make our laws..*

**HE has abdicated Government here,
by declaring us out of his Protection
and waging War against us.**

*He has declared that he will no longer protect
us from danger even though we are British
subjects.*

**HE has plundered our Seas,
ravaged our Coasts, burnt our
Towns, and destroyed the Lives of
our People**

He has made war on us.

HE is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation

He is being uncivilized by sending foreign German armies to make war on us.

**HE has constrained our fellow
Citizens taken Captive on the high
Seas to bear Arms against their
Country, to become the Executioners
of their Friends and Brethren, or to
fall themselves by their Hands.**

*He has captured our citizens at sea and forced
them to become part of the British army or
navy and fight against their fellow citizens.*

**HE has excited domestic
Insurrections amongst us, and has
endeavoured to bring on the
Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the
merciless Indian Savages, whose
known Rule of Warfare, is an
undistinguished Destruction, of all
Ages, Sexes and Conditions**

*He has tried to make revolts in the colonies
and encouraged the Indians to attack helpless
farmers. The Indians are cruel and do not
recognize any rules of warfare.*

IN every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People

We have petitioned the king over and over to stop oppressing us but he has ignored our requests. He is unfit to be our ruler any longer.

NOR have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here.

We have even appealed to the British Parliament and our friends in England to remind them of our problems in the colonies but they too have ignored us.

We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity.

We have tried to explain to our English friends that we have much in common and should be friends but they have also ignored us

We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends

Since our British friends and Parliament have ignored us we have no choice but to look upon them as enemies when we are at war and friends when we are at peace.

A Declaration of War

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**WE, therefore, the Representatives
of the UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS,
Assembled, appealing to the
Supreme Judge of the World for the
Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in
the Name, and by Authority of the
good People of these Colonies,**

*We, therefore, the representatives of the 13
colonies meeting in Philadelphia appeal to
God that our cause is right.*

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**solemnly Publish and Declare, That
these United Colonies are, and of
Right ought to be,**

- **FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES**

*We declare that our colonies are, and have a
right to be FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES*

- **that they are absolved from all
Allegiance to the British Crown**

*and we no longer have to obey the King of
England*

- **and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;**

and all connections between England and our colonies is dissolved and ended

**and that as FREE AND
INDEPENDENT STATES,**

- **they have full Power to levy War,**
*we have the power to declare war on other
countries*
- **conclude Peace,**
*we have the power to make peace treaties
with other countries*

- **contract Alliances,**

we have the power to make other countries our allies and friends

- **establish Commerce,**

we have the power to trade and do business with other countries

- **and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do.**

we have the power to do anything that other free countries have a right to do.

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor

And for the support of this Declaration we

- rely on the protection of God,*
- and pledge to each other*
- our lives,*
- all of our money,*
- and our honor.*

***Thank You
For Your
Attention***

Frank Schneemann