

The Declaration of Independence

In Congress, July 4, 1776
The unanimous Declaration of thirteen united states of
America

Original Version

[Preamble (Introduction)]

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.

[A New Theory of Government]

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.

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...

Modern Translation

There are times when one group of people needs to be free from the government of another group. It is only right at such a time that they should tell the world why this had to be.

We believe that some things are always true. Everyone was made to be equal to everyone else. God has given all people some rights that cannot be taken away. Some of these rights are the rights to life, liberty (freedom), and the chance to look for happiness.

People make governments to protect their natural rights. It is people who give governments their power.

A bad government is one that destroys those rights. People have the right to change or end a bad government. They have the right to set up a new government...

Description: The 13 American colonies felt they had been hurt badly by King George III of Britain. The colonists believed that the King's rule had shown that he wanted complete power over the colonies. To show the world that this was true, they wrote a list of what King George III had done.

Included here are **five** of the original **26** reasons for separation:

Original Version

1

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

2

He has affected to render the Military Independent of and superior to the Civil power.

3

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:

4

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world.
For imposing Taxes on us without our consent.

5

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

Modern Translation

Some legislatures (colonists lawmaking groups) have not agreed with him. He (King) breaks up these lawmaking bodies and sends the members home.

He has tried to make his army free of our government's control. He has tried to make the army more powerful than the government it is supposed to keep safe.

The king has worked with Parliament to force a government on us. Together, they have allowed its laws to be used when we have not approved of the government.

They (King and Parliament) have cut off our trade with other parts of the world. They force taxes on us that we did not say were right.

They have kept our legislatures (colonists lawmaking groups) from meeting. They say they (King and Parliament) have the powers to make all our laws.