

Translation into Modern English of the Declaration of Independence

As Interpreted by cleangov
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When it becomes necessary for a people to separate themselves from a government, and to declare themselves to be a free nation, with the same powers as other nations, good manners require that an explanation be given, showing why this separation is required.

It is self-evident, meaning it does not need to be proved, that all men and women are created with equal rights under the law, that among those rights are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness. (Not the guarantee of obtaining Happiness.)

The purpose of Government is to safeguard these rights, and a lot more rights besides just these. Government obtains from the consent of the citizens the power to act as a Referee and to provide Justice and some measure of Security.

If any form of Government should be found to be working against the purpose above, then it is the Right of the People to correct the Government or even to abolish it and replace it with a new Government which seems to the people most likely to provide for their Safety and that Pursuit of Happiness.

It is anticipated that no major changes should be made to the government for minor and temporary problems. People are usually willing to go along with minor imperfections and evils, as long as they are not too extreme.

But when the individual people who are part of a government take a long series of actions which are obviously designed to reduce Individual Responsibility, Freedom, and Rights, then the citizens have every right, indeed, a duty, to lawfully remove such individuals from their positions of Power within the government, and to replace them with people who are more likely to operate sanely, for the benefit of the citizens as a whole.

If it becomes apparent that structural changes in the Government are needed to Safeguard Individual Responsibilities and Freedom and Rights, then the citizens have a duty to see to it that such changes are made, and to then keep an eye on things to see if the changes actually fixed the problem. If not, then the citizens must try again.

We have just such a situation existing now, which requires us to make basic changes in how we are to be governed.

For some time the King of England has been taking actions against us which are harmful and unfair and which reduce our freedom. Some examples follow:

He has refused to give his approval to good laws we have proposed.

He has forbidden his various Governors of the states to pass urgently needed laws without the approval of the King, but when we submit laws to him for his approval, he doesn't respond to them at all, so nothing happens.

He has refused to approve the opening up of large new Frontier spaces, unless the people of those new lands agree to give up any rights to Representation in the Legislature, which is tyranny.

He has ordered local legislative bodies to meet in places far away from their normal places of assembly, and distant from where the Public

Records are stored, for the sole purpose of making things difficult, to force the representatives into compliance with the King's wishes.

When Local Legislatures opposed the King's assaults on the rights of the people, he has dissolved those Legislatures.

After dissolving local Legislatures, he has refused to allow other Representatives to be elected, which causes the whole local population to attempt to do the Legislative function of government individually, which does not readily provide for defense against outside invasions or internal disorder.

He has actively discouraged the immigration of peoples to these lands by obstructing existing laws which provide for Naturalization of Foreigners, by refusing to pass other laws which would encourage new people to come here, and making it more difficult for local States to appropriate new Lands for settlement.

He has made the Administration of Justice more difficult by refusing to approve Laws which establish the powers of Judges.

He has made Judges dependent on the King alone for the length of their employment and for their salaries, instead of making them independent and able to make decisions based only on the Law and their own conscience.

He has created a large number of new offices and sent forth swarms of Officers to harass our people and appropriate their property.

In times of peace he has kept Standing Armies in our midst, without any consent from our Legislatures.

He has made the Military independent of and superior to Civil Authority.

He has made a distant Parliament superior to our locally-elected Legislatures, without our consent.

He has caused large numbers of armed soldiers to be forcibly housed in our citizens' homes.

He has protected the same soldiers from prosecution for murders committed upon our citizens.

He has cut off our trade with all parts of the world.

He has imposed new taxes on us without our consent.

He has deprived us of the right of trial by jury in many cases.

He has forced some of our citizens to be brought before courts in England on false charges, far from their home state.

He has established an arbitrary government in Quebec and arbitrarily expanded Quebec's borders into our states without any consent of our citizens.

He has arbitrarily cancelled 100-year old Royal Charters (which originally authorized the formation of various of these colonies) and cancelled our laws and altered our forms of local government.

He has suspended our Legislatures and declared himself able to create all laws, without our consent.

He has abandoned any claim to be a proper government of these states, by refusing to defend us from aggression, which is one of the basic responsibilities of any government, and by his openly waging war against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people. (no translation necessary)

He is at this moment transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to commit acts of terrorism upon our citizens, worse than almost all of History, totally unworthy of the Head of a civilized nation.

He has kidnapped Americans at sea and forced them into service in his Majesty's armed forces, where they must then fire upon their countrymen, or perhaps die at the hands of their countrymen.

He has created internal conflicts within the states and has provoked Indian Tribes to fight against us.

All during the above assaults on our liberties, we have petitioned the King and his agents for a righting of wrongs, but our repeated petitions have been answered only by additional acts of aggression against us. A Head of State who by these actions reveals himself to be a Tyrant is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

We have communicated to the King and his Parliament regarding our common heritage, and the circumstances of our emigration and settling here, and have protested attempts by the King and by Parliament to establish an unwanted jurisdiction over us. Our repeated entreaties have fallen on deaf ears. We therefore have no choice but to recognize that there must of necessity be a Separation between our peoples. We regard the peoples of Britain as we regard the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

(The last paragraph is verbatim, below.)

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 the Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly

publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right 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.

(End, but see below)

(If you see any similarities to the conditions described above and conditions at the time you read this, well, that is a sign that there is work for us. We need not be “at loose ends,” unemployed.)

56 people signed the Declaration of Independence. Please see the book by Denise Kiernan and Joseph D'Agnesse, *Signing Their Lives Away, The Fame and Misfortune of the Men who Signed the Declaration of Independence*. (Soon to appear on fastbookx.com, I am told, in summary form.)

In the introduction to their book they stated:

“In 1776, fifty-six men risked their lives to defy the British and sign their names to the Declaration of Independence, but most Americans can't name more than a handful.

“There's John Hancock, of course. And most people will correctly identify Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams. But then the guessing begins: George Washington? Paul Revere? Thomas Paine?

“The Declaration of Independence is America's birth certificate, our most celebrated document, and a model for later declarations crafted by struggling peoples the world over. Its signers were men who drew upon the best within themselves in the face of horrifyingly difficult circumstances.

“They also lived remarkably interesting lives. True, most of them were privileged members of the elite upper classes, but quite a few were just the opposite. And all these men were impacted by death, suffering, and adversity. Many were orphaned, even more lost children and wives for no other reason that, in those days, the flu was deadly. So was asthma. So was a bad bout of diarrhea. Yet all these men carried on.

“Over the years, we've read newspaper articles and junk e-mails seeking to quantify and magnify the sufferings of the signers. Every July, their miseries are dusted off and trotted out along with barbecues and flags. It's a shame that this is the only time of year we think about these men.

But it's even more disheartening when you know that most of the stories are just plain false.

“In the end, it doesn't matter that none of the signers were killed for affixing their name to the Declaration of Independence or that none died in battle. What does matter is that they came together one sweltering summer under distressing circumstances and, despite huge differences in opinion, backgrounds, and values, decided to band together and form a new nation. Doing so was, without a doubt, an enormous, life-threatening risk, and if the colonies had not been triumphant—and honestly, it's astounding that they were—these men would have surely been, as they used to say back in the day, fitted with a “halter.”

“As the Declaration of Independence so eloquently states in its last line, they risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

“We think they are worth knowing.”

And so do we.

I encourage you to get the above book and read more, or get some of the many fine books which go into much more detail about some of these remarkable men.

Sincerely,

cleangov