

# DECLARATION OF

# *Independence*

THOMAS JEFFERSON

*THE PEOPLE*  
insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common  
and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Consti-  
tution.



# Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson

**Published:** 1776

**Categorie(s):** Non-Fiction, Social science, Political science

**Source:**

<http://www.foundingfathers.info/documents/decindep.ht>

## **About Jefferson:**

Thomas Jefferson (April 13, 1743 – July 4, 1826) was the third President of the United States (1801–1809), the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (1776), and one of the most influential Founding Fathers for his promotion of the ideals of republicanism in the United States. Major events during his presidency include the Louisiana Purchase (1803) and the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804–1806). As a political philosopher, Jefferson was a man of the Enlightenment and knew many intellectual leaders in Britain and France. He idealized the independent yeoman farmer as exemplar of republican virtues, distrusted cities and

financiers, and favored states' rights and a strictly limited federal government. Jefferson supported the separation of church and state and was the author of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1779, 1786). He was the eponym of Jeffersonian democracy and the co-founder and leader of the Democratic-Republican Party, which dominated American politics for a quarter-century. Jefferson served as the wartime Governor of Virginia (1779–1781), first United States Secretary of State (1789–1793) and second Vice President (1797–1801). A polymath, Jefferson achieved distinction as, among other things, a horticulturist, statesman, architect, archaeologist, paleontologist,

author, inventor and founder of the University of Virginia. When President John F. Kennedy welcomed forty-nine Nobel Prize winners to the White House in 1962 he said, "I think this is the most extraordinary collection of talent and of human knowledge that has ever been gathered together at the White House — with the possible exception of when Thomas Jefferson dined alone." Source: Wikipedia

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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.

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

a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. 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. 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. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the

most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

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 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 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 has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on 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 annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining, in the mean time, exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without and convulsions within.

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 migration hither, and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

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 erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the military

independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

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:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states;

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of

the benefits of trial by jury;

For transporting us beyond seas, to be tried for pretended offenses;

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 rule into these colonies;

For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments;

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

whatsoever.

He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burned our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete 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 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 excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored 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.

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.

Nor have we been wanting in our 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 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 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.

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 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.

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## Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

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### *Beyond Good and Evil*

Beyond Good and Evil (German: *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*), subtitled "Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future" (*Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft*), is a book by the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, first published in 1886.

It takes up and expands on the ideas of his previous work, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, but approached from a more critical, polemical direction.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche attacks past philosophers for their alleged lack of critical sense and their blind acceptance of Christian premises in their consideration of morality. The work moves into the realm "beyond good and evil" in the sense of leaving

behind the traditional morality which Nietzsche subjects to a destructive critique in favour of what he regards as an affirmative approach that fearlessly confronts the perspectival nature of knowledge and the perilous condition of the modern individual.

## **Hendrik Antoon Lorentz**

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Whether it is true or not that not more than twelve persons in all the world are able to understand Einstein's Theory, it is nevertheless a fact that there is a constant demand for information about this much-debated topic of relativity. The books published on the subject are so technical that only a person trained in pure physics and higher mathematics is able to fully understand them. In order to make a popular explanation of this far-reaching theory available, the present book is published.

## **Charles Darwin**

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## *On the Origin of Species, 6th Edition*

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, in which he writes of his theories of evolution by natural selection, is one of the most important works of scientific study ever published.

## **Publius**

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### *The Federalist Papers*

The Federalist Papers are a series of 85 articles advocating the ratification of the United States Constitution. Seventy-seven of the essays were published serially in *The Independent Journal* and *The New York Packet* between October 1787 and August 1788. A compilation of these and eight others, called *The Federalist*, was published in 1788 by J. and A. McLean.

The Federalist Papers serve as a primary source for interpretation of the Constitution, as they outline the philosophy and motivation of the proposed system of government. The authors of the Federalist Papers wanted to both influence the vote in favor of

ratification and shape future interpretations of the Constitution. According to historian Richard B. Morris, they are an "incomparable exposition of the Constitution, a classic in political science unsurpassed in both breadth and depth by the product of any later American writer."

## Sun Tzu

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### *The Art of War*

The Art of War is a Chinese military treatise that was written during the 6th century BC by Sun Tzu. Composed of 13 chapters, each of which is devoted to one aspect of warfare, it has long been praised as the definitive work on military strategies and tactics of its time.

The Art of War is one of the oldest books on military strategy in the world. It is the first and one of the most successful works on strategy and has had a huge influence on Eastern and Western military thinking, business tactics, and beyond. Sun Tzu was the first to recognize the importance of positioning in strategy and that position is affected both by objective conditions in

the physical environment and the subjective opinions of competitive actors in that environment. He taught that strategy was not planning in the sense of working through a to-do list, but rather that it requires quick and appropriate responses to changing conditions. Planning works in a controlled environment, but in a competitive environment,

## **Henry David Thoreau**

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### *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*

Thoreau wrote his famous essay, *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, as a protest against an unjust but popular war and the immoral but popular institution of slave-owning.

## **James Madison**

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### *The United States Constitution*

The Constitution of the United States of America is the supreme law of the United States. It is the foundation and source of the legal authority underlying the

existence of the United States of America and the Federal Government of the United States. It provides the framework for the organization of the United States Government. The document defines the three main branches of the government: The legislative branch with a bicameral Congress, an executive branch led by the President, and a judicial branch headed by the Supreme Court. Besides providing for the organization of these branches, the Constitution outlines obligations of each office, as well as provides what powers each branch may exercise. It also reserves numerous rights for the individual states, thereby establishing the United States' federal system of government. It is the shortest and oldest written constitution of any major sovereign state.

The United States Constitution was adopted on September 17, 1787, by the Constitutional Convention (or Constitutional Congress[citation needed]) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and later ratified by conventions in each U.S. state in the name of "The People"; it has since been amended twenty-seven times, the first ten amendments being known as the Bill of Rights. The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual

Union was actually the first constitution of the United States of America. The U.S. Constitution replaced the Articles of Confederation as the governing document for the United States after being ratified by nine states. The Constitution has a central place in United States law and political culture. The handwritten, or "engrossed", original document penned by Jacob Shallus is on display at the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C.

## **Adam Smith**

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### *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*

Adam Smith's masterpiece, first published in 1776, is the foundation of modern economic thought and remains the single most important account of the rise of, and the principles behind, modern capitalism. Written in clear and incisive prose, *The Wealth of Nations* articulates the concepts indispensable to an understanding of contemporary society.

## **Karl Marx**

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### *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

Manifesto of the Communist Party (German: Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei), often referred to as The Communist Manifesto, was first published on February 21, 1848, and is one of the world's most influential political manuscripts. Commissioned by the Communist League and written by communist theorists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, it laid out the League's purposes and program. The Manifesto suggested a course of action for a proletarian (working class) revolution to overthrow the bourgeois social order and to eventually bring about a classless and stateless society, and the abolition of private property.

## **Thomas Paine**

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### *Common Sense*

Enormously popular and widely read pamphlet, first published in January of 1776, clearly and persuasively argues for American separation from Great Britain and

paves the way for the Declaration of Independence. This highly influential landmark document attacks the monarchy, cites the evils of government and combines idealism with practical economic concerns.



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