



*The  
Declaration  
of  
Independence*

# Three Things

**A. Statement of Philosophy**

**B. List of Grievances**

**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,**

**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 to 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**

# Part B

## List of Grievances

**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, uncomfotable, 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 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.**

**HE has endeavoured 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 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 harrass 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 Offences**

**FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring 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**



**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, burnt our Towns, and  
destroyed the Lives of our People**

**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 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  
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**

**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  
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**

**A  
Declaration  
of War**

**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,**

**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**