

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

WRITTEN BY: Thomas Jefferson

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(Theory of Government) Opening of Dec of Ina

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...

WHY

What is the PURPOSE of the Declaration of Independence?

- 1) To announce to the world that colonies are independent
- 2) To explain + justify why colonies want to be independent

What are the 3 parts of the Declaration of Independence?

- 1) Theory of (Intro) Government
- 2) List of Grievances against King George (Body)
- 3) Formal declaration of Independence (Conclusion)

KEY IDEAS ABOUT GOVERNMENT contained in the Declaration of Independence? John Locke ♥

- 1) People have natural rights → "Life, Liberty, + pursuit of happiness"
- 2) "Consent of the governed" → govts receive power from the people
- 3) "Right of people to alter or abolish govt." if they fail to protect rights

Contradiction in the Declaration of Independence?

"All men are created equal"
↓
slavery + women

- ① Why did Jefferson write the Dec. of Ind?
- ② Did the Dec create a new American govt.?
- ③ What part of the Declaration includes Jefferson's evidence
- ④ From what Enlightenment philosopher did Jefferson borrow key ideas?
- ⑤ Under the principle of "consent of the governed" where does govt get its power from?