

The Declaration of Independence Written In Simple Terms:

All 13 colonies, now states, are forming a new country called "The United States of America." All 13 states agree with the words below.

Sometimes one group of people decide to split off from another group, and to become an independent country, as the laws of Nature and of God say that they can. But when this happens, if they want other people to respect them, they should explain why they are splitting off.

We think these things are obviously true:

That all men are created equal

That all men have some rights given to them by God

That among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

So whenever any government is getting in the way of these rights, people have the right to change it or get rid of it, and to make a new government, in whatever way seems most likely to make them safe and happy. People should not change their government without a good reason, so people usually suffer as long as they can under the government they have, rather than change it. But when there have been a lot of problems for a long time, it is their right and their duty to throw off that government, and to set up a better government.

We here in America have suffered for a very long time, and now we should change our government. The king of England has done many bad things to us - here is a list:

He won't let us pass laws we need for everybody's good.

Even when we do pass laws, he won't sign them so they can go into effect.

He tried to force men to give up their right to make laws.

He calls men together to make laws in the most inconvenient times and places, so that they won't be able to go discuss the new laws.

He won't let new settlers come to America, and he won't let the settlers take over new land from the Native Americans.

He won't let us choose our own judges, and instead he chooses them all himself, so they're all on his side.

He sends lots of new government officials that we don't want, and he makes us pay for them.

He sends lots of English soldiers here when there isn't even a war, and makes us let them live in our own houses.

He tells us these soldiers can do whatever they want and don't have to obey the law.

He won't let us buy and sell things from wherever we want. We can only buy things from England.

He makes us pay all kinds of taxes without asking us about it.

He won't let us have a jury for our trials, only a judge.

He sends people accused of crimes far away to England for their trials.

He tries to get people to revolt and tries to get the "Indian Savages" to attack us.

When we ask him to stop, he just keeps on doing more bad things. We have tried to talk to the other people who live in England. We asked them to stop these crimes against us, but they have acted as though they were deaf. So we have to separate from England, and they will be our enemies during the war, though we hope they'll be our friends when there is peace.

So we think that God will see that we are doing the right thing when we declare that the United States are now completely independent of the King of England. We have no more political connection to England at all. And as independent states, we say that each state has the right to make war, to make peace, to make alliances with other countries, trade with other countries, and do everything else that countries do. And we promise that we will fight for our independence with the help of God - we promise by our lives, our property, and our sacred honor.