

## PATRIOT DOCUMENT 1: Resolutions of the Stamp Act, 1765

Whereas the just rights of his majesty's subjects of this province, derived from the British constitution as well as the royal charter, have been lately drawn into question: In order to ascertain the same, this house do unanimously come to the following resolves.

I. Resolved—That there are certain essential rights of the British constitution of government, which are founded in the nature of God and law, and are the common rights of mankind; therefore,

II. Resolved—That the inhabitants of this province are inalienably entitled to those essential rights in common with all men: and that no law in society can, consistent with the law of God and nature, divest them of those rights.

III. Resolved—That no man can justly take the property of another without his consent; and that upon the original principle the right of representation in the same body, which exercises the power of making laws for levying taxes, which is one of the main pillars of the British constitution, is evidently founded.

IV. Resolved—That this inherent right, together with all other essential rights, liberties, privileges, and immunities of the people of Great Britain, have been fully confirmed by them by the Magna Carta, and by former and later acts of Parliament.

V. Resolved—That his majesty's subjects in America are, in reason and common sense, entitled to the same extent of liberty with his majesty's subjects in Britain.

VI. Resolved—That by the declaration of the royal charter of this province, the inhabitants are entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural subjects of Great Britain, to all intents, purposes, and constructions, whatever.

VII. Resolved—That the inhabitants of this province appear to be entitled to all the rights aforementioned, by an act of parliament, 13<sup>th</sup> of George II.

VIII. Resolved—That those rights do belong to the inhabitants of this province, upon principles of common justice; their ancestors having settled this country at their sole expense, and their posterity having approved themselves most loyal and faithful subjects of Great Britain.

IX. Resolved—That every individual in the colonies is as advantageous to Great Britain, as if he were in Great Britain, and held to pay his full proportion of taxes there; and as the inhabitants of this province pay their full proportion of taxes for the support of his majesty's government here, it is unreasonable for them to be called upon to pay any part of the charges of the government there.

X. Resolved—That the inhabitants of this province are not, and never have been, represented in the parliament of Great Britain; and that such a representation there as the subjects in Britain do actually and rightfully enjoy, is impracticable for the subjects of America; and further, that in the

opinion of this house, the several subordinate powers of legislation in American were constituted upon the apprehensions of this impracticability.

XI. Resolved—That the only methods whereby the constitutional rights of the subjects of this province can be secure, consistent with a subordination to the supreme power of Great Britain, is by the continued exercise of such powers of government as are granted in the royal charter, and firm adherence to the privileges of the same.

XII. Resolved—As a just conclusion from some of the foregoing resolves, that all acts made by any power whatever other than the general assembly of this province, imposing taxes on the inhabitants, are infringements of our inherent and unalienable rights, as men and British subjects, and render void the most valuable declarations of our charter.

XIII. Resolved—That the extension of the powers of the court of admiralty within this province is a most violent infraction of the right of trials by juries—a right which this house, upon the principles of their British ancestors, hold most dear and sacred; it being the only security of the lives, liberties, and properties of his majesty's subjects here.

XIV. Resolved—That this house owes the strictest allegiance to his most sacred majesty King George the Third; that they have the greatest veneration for the parliament; and that they will, after the example of all their predecessors, from the settlement of the country, exert themselves to their utmost in supporting his majesty's authority in the province, in promoting the true happiness of his subjects, and in enlarging the extent of his dominion.

Ordered, that all the foregoing resolves be kept in the records of this house, that a just sense of liberty and the firm sentiments of loyalty, may be transmitted to posterity.

## PATRIOT DOCUMENT 2: Letter reprinted by the Printers of the Pennsylvania Gazette, May 15, 1766

In matters of general concern to the People, and especially where burdens are to be laid upon them, it is of use to consider, as well what they will be apt to think and say, as what they ought to think. I shall, therefore, briefly mention what of either kind occurs to me on this occasion.

First they will say, and perhaps with justice, that the body of the People of the Colonies are as loyal and as firmly attached to the present Constitution, and reigning family, as any subjects of the King's Dominions.

That there is no reason to doubt the readiness and willingness of the Representatives they may choose, to grant from time to time such supplies for the defense of the Country, as shall be judged necessary, so far as their abilities allow.

That the People of the Colonies, who are to feel the immediate mischiefs of invasion and conquest by an enemy, in the loss of their estates, lives and liberties, are likely to be better judges of the quantity of forces necessary to be raised and maintained, forts to be built and supported, and of their own abilities to bear the expense, than the Parliament of England, at so great a distance.

That Governors often come to the Colonies merely to make fortunes, with which they intend to return to Britain, are not always men of the best abilities or integrity, have many of them no estates here, nor any natural connections with us, that should make them heartily concerned with our welfare, and might possibly be fond of raising and keeping up more forces than necessary, from the profits according to themselves, and to make provisions for their friends and dependents.

That the Councillors in most of the Colonies being appointed by the Crown, on the recommendation of the Governors, are often of small estates frequently dependant on the Governors for offices and therefore too much under influence.

That there is therefore great reason to be jealous of a power in such Governors and Councils, to raise such sums as they shall judge necessary, by draft on the Lords of the Treasury, to be afterwards laid on the Colonies by Act of Parliament, and paid by the People here, since they might abuse it, by their projecting useless expenditures, harassing the People, and taking them from their labour to execute such projects, merely to create offices and employments, and gratify their dependents, and divide profits.

That the Parliament of England is at a great distance, subject to be misinformed and misled by such Governors and Councils, whose united interests might probably secure them against the effect of any complaint from hence.

That it is supposed to be an undoubted right of Englishmen not to be taxed but by their own consent, given through their Representatives.

That the Colonists have no Representatives in Parliament.

That to propose taxing them by Parliament, and refuse them the liberty of choosing a representative Council to meet in the Colonies and consider and judge the necessity of any general tax, and the quantum, shows a suspicion of their loyalty to the Crown, or of their regard for their country, or of their common sense and understanding, which they have not deserved.

That compelling the Colonists to pay money without their consent, would be rather like raising contributions in an enemy's country, than taxing of Englishmen for their own public benefit.

That it would be treating them like conquered people, and not as true British subjects.

## PATRIOT DOCUMENT 3: Declaration of Independence, 1776

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

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 shewn, 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 invasion from without, and 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 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 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 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, 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 & 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.

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.