The Road to the American Revolution: 1763 - 1776

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The Big Idea

Starting in 1763, the American colonists, having enjoyed a long period of *salutary neglect*, resisted British attempts to impose tighter imperial controls and higher taxes after the French and Indian War.

After twelve years of increased tensions between the colonies and the mother country, the military engagement at Lexington and Concord in 1775 ignited the American Revolution.

North America after the Treaty of Paris (1763)

Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, started an uprising against the British at Detroit. This action inspired other Indians to attack British posts / settlements in the West. More than 2,000 settlers killed or captured. It took nearly two years to reclaim all lands lost to the Native Americans.

1763 proved to be a critical year in American Colonial history

- The end of the French and Indian War forced Britain to re-examine its colonial policies

- New political & economic restrictions emerged as England attempted to gain more profits from its colonies.
  - ***Salutary Neglect replaced by Parliamentary Control!***

- Many American colonists resented these new policies - which ultimately led to the American Revolution

The Tax Issue: Paying off England's Debt

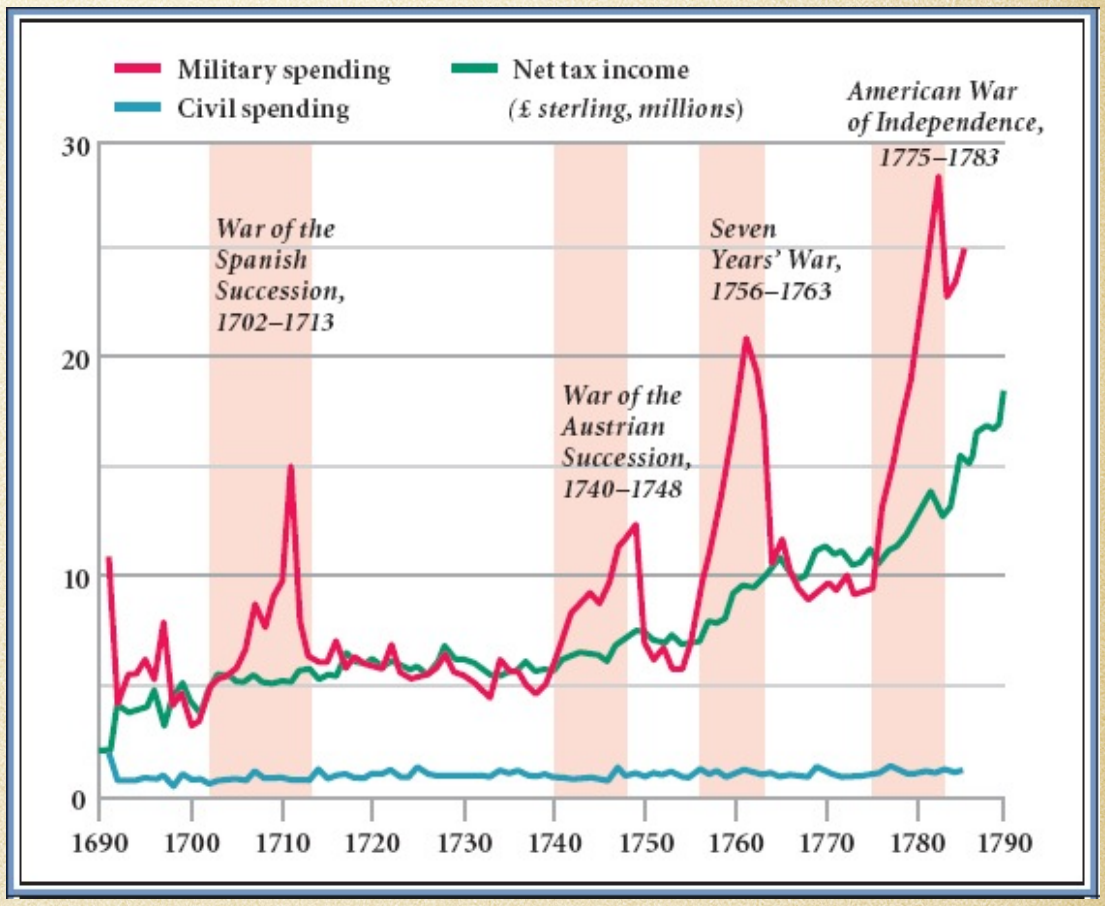
- Prime Minister George Grenville assessed England's debt after the French and Indian War and concluded that Americans needed to contribute to maintain the army
  - Sugar Act (1764)
  - Currency Act (1764)
  - Quartering Act (1765)
  - Stamp Act (1765)

The Tax Issue: Paying off England's Debt

Colonist felt that internal taxes should not be imposed by Britain, but rather by colonial assemblies

No taxation w/o representation

Colonists had no representation in British Parliament - their rights as British citizens were being denied



Grenville's response: colonies had ***virtual representation*** in Parliament -- All British subjects were represented, even those who did not vote for members in Parliament.

The Sugar Act

The Sugar Act of 1764 placed a tax on imported sugar:

- Sugar was an expensive luxury, so colonial protest was limited to the gentry, merchants, & colonial assemblies

Currency Act (1764):

- Restricted colonial printing of paper money
- Wanted the colonists to pay back debts (and pay taxes) with gold or silver

Quartering Act (1765):

- Colonies were required to provide food and housing (quarters) for British troops
- Colonists resented paying for troops who were in the colonies to enforce British laws

The Stamp Act: Most Important Law of this Period!

<u>Stamp Act</u> - <u>tax on paper</u>

- The stamp "proved" that the tax had been paid

- Colonial protest changed from a gentry movement to a mass protest by common citizens

New Hampshire

Stamp Master in Effigy

Protest against the Stamp Act led to:

- **Mob Riots**: Tax collectors resigned which made the stamp tax impossible to collect

- **Boycotting British Goods**: "*Save your money and you can save your country*"

- The boycott **mobilized women** who were in charge of the home and dictated what families bought

Due to the effective protests,

England revoked the Stamp Act in 1766

What did this teach the colonists?

Protest led to Results

British pass laws —> more protests!

Declaratory Act of 1766

Reaffirmed Parliament's sovereignty over the American colonies "in all cases whatsoever"

The Townshend Acts

Enacted by Parliament in 1767 - a series of *indirect taxes* that the colonists were not supposed to notice

Taxed imported paper, lead, glass, and tea

Ordered NY Royal Governor to veto all laws by the colonial assembly until the Quartering Act was obeyed

Act of Parliament. 535

An Act of Parliament,

Paſſed in the Seventh Year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lord *GEORGE* the Third.

CAP. XLVI.

An Act for granting certain Duties in the *Britiſh* Colonies and Plantations in *America*; for allowing a Drawback of the Duties of Cuſtoms upon the Exportation, from this Kingdom, of Coffee and Cocoa Nuts of the Produce of the ſaid Colonies or Plantations; for diſcontinuing the Drawbacks payable on China Earthen Ware exported to *America*; and for more effectually preventing the clandeſtine Running of Goods in the ſaid Colonies and Plantations.

WHEREAS it is expedient that a Revenue ſhould be raiſed, in Your Majeſty's Dominions in *America*, for making a more certain and adequate Proviſion for defraying the Charge of the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, and the Support of Civil Government, in ſuch Provinces where it ſhall be found neceſſary; and towards further defraying the Expences of defending, protecting, and ſecuring, the ſaid Dominions; We, Your Majeſty's moſt dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Commons of *Great Britain*, in Parliament aſſembled, have therefore reſolved to give and grant unto Your Majeſty the ſeveral Rates and Duties hereinafter mentioned; and do moſt humbly beſeech Your Ma-

Preamble.

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http://www.masshist.org/database/images/revenueact_535_ref.jpg

Response to the Townshend Acts

The *Sons of Liberty* organize another boycott of British goods

Women become more active in opposing British policies - *Daughters of Liberty*

Massachusetts Assembly circulates a letter arguing that the Townshend Acts violated the natural rights of colonists

- British government considers this letter to be an **act of treason!** and dissolves the Massachusetts Assembly.
- British troops sent to Boston to put down riots that erupted after the Massachusetts Assembly was shut down.

Collecting Evidence -

The Testimony of Captain Preston

Text supports video - !

Text contradicts video - X

The Bloody Massacre, by Paul Revere

Boston Massacre Trial

The Captain and six officers were found not guilty.

Two soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter.

Those men received a token punishment; they had an "M" branded on their thumbs. They were then released to their units.

British Response to the Boston Massacre

British reduce tension by repealing the Townshend Acts - except for a tax on tea

Most Americans back-off their protest

Sons of Liberty continue to develop *committees of correspondence* to build up a communications network among the Patriots

Boston Tea Party

In **1773,** Parliament passed the **Tea Act** in order to help the British East India Company by making its tea cheaper to colonial buyers than smuggled Dutch tea

Americans interpreted this as a subtle ploy to get them to buy the taxed British tea

December 1773, protestors led by Sons of Liberty dumped shipment of tea into Boston harbor

Boston Tea Party - British Response

Britain passes the *Coercive Acts* (Intolerable Acts)

- Port of Boston closed until Tea was paid for
- British officials charged of crimes would be tried in Britain - not in the colonies
- More British troops sent to Boston

The other colonies rally to support Massachusetts!

The First Continental Congress will meet in Philadelphia in September 1774

Allegiances Forming

Loyalists (Tories): loyal to King. Believe that British laws should be upheld. Government officials, merchants, landowners.

15 - 20% of white population

Patriots (Whigs): Supported independence. Believe that the British were tyrants. Urban workers, lawyers, many farmers.

40 - 45% of white population

Neutral: Did not have strong feelings for either side. Would support whomever won

The Shot Heard Around the World

April 19, 1775 a gunfight took place in Lexington, Ma. between 700 British troops and approximately 70 Minuteman

British troops marched on to Concord, but were under fire the entire march back to Boston. **First open exchange of hostilities in the war.**

Early War Efforts

Second Continental Congress met in May (1775):

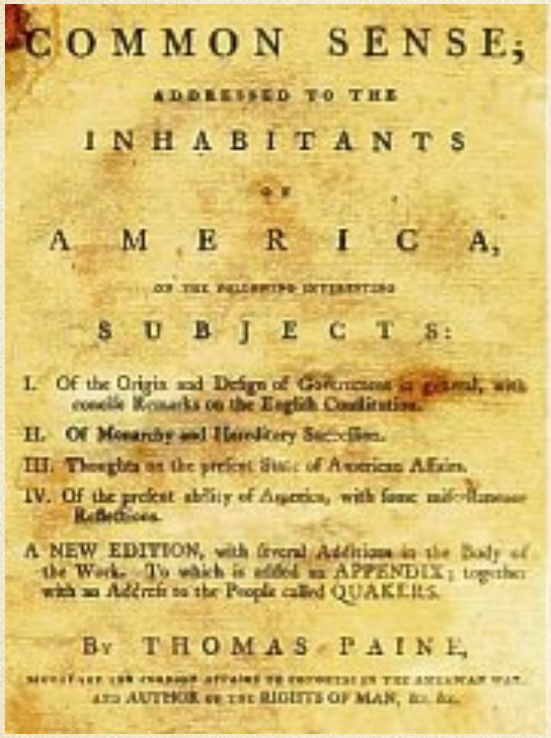
Appointed George Washington to lead a "Continental Army"

Began purchasing war supplies

August 1775 - King George issued a *Proclamation for Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition*. To the king, the colonists were already in "open rebellion" against the British

By December 1775, the British and American colonists were fighting an "informal revolutionary war," but . . .Colonial leaders had not yet declared independence

Thomas Paine - Common Sense


COMMON SENSE;

ADDRESSED TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF

AMERICA,

ON THE FOLLOWING INTERESTING

SUBJECTS:

I. Of the Origin and Design of Government in general, with concise Remarks on the English Constitution.

II. Of Monarchy and Hereditary Succession.

III. Thoughts on the present State of American Affairs.

IV. Of the present ability of America, with some miscellaneous Reflections.

A NEW EDITION, with several Additions in the Body of the Work. To which is added an APPENDIX; together with an Address to the People called QUAKERS.

By THOMAS PAINE,

AUTHOR OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN, &c. &c.

Published in January 1776. Pamphlet called for the Americans to declare independence from Britain

Every thing that is right or natural pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries, "Tis Time To Part. Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof that the authority of the one over the other was never the design of Heaven. . . .

The Final Steps

June 7, 1776 -- Lee Resolution

Richard Henry Lee "resolves" that the colonies are "free and independent states"

June 11, 1776 -- "Committee of Five" Appointed

Purpose: write a statement presenting the colonies case for independence

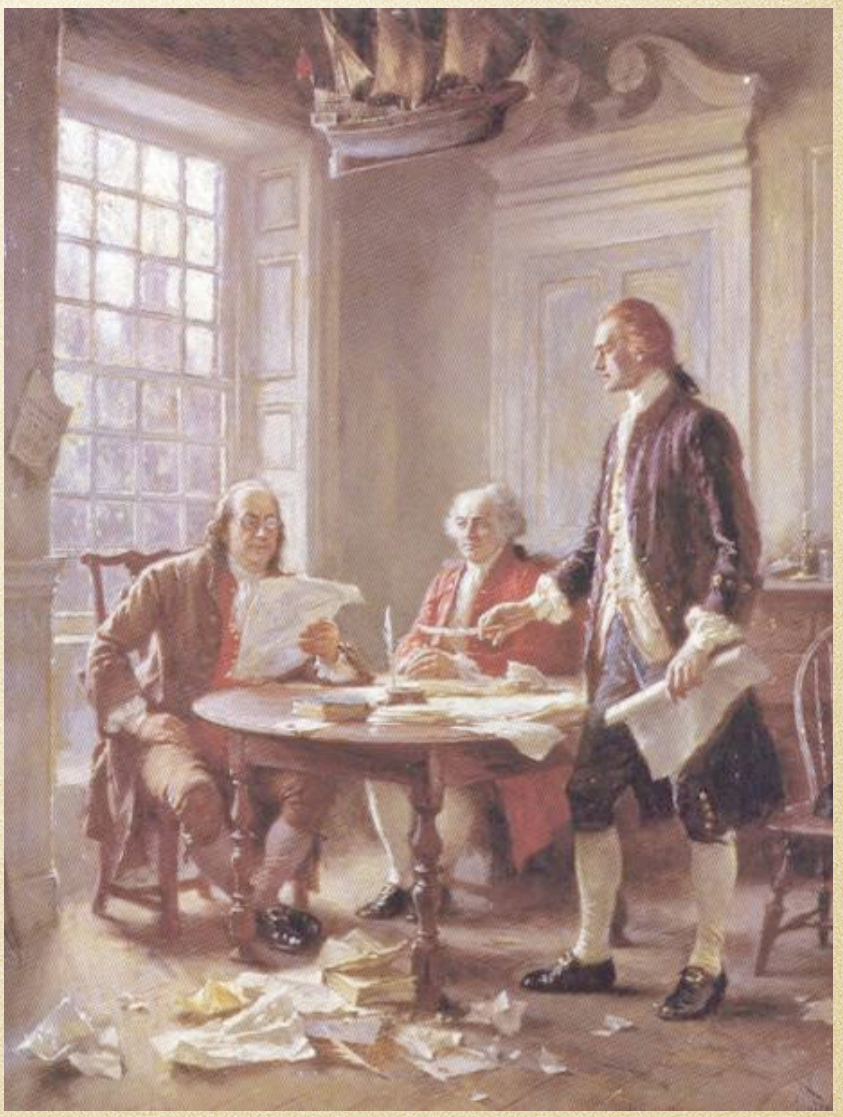
Drafting the Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft

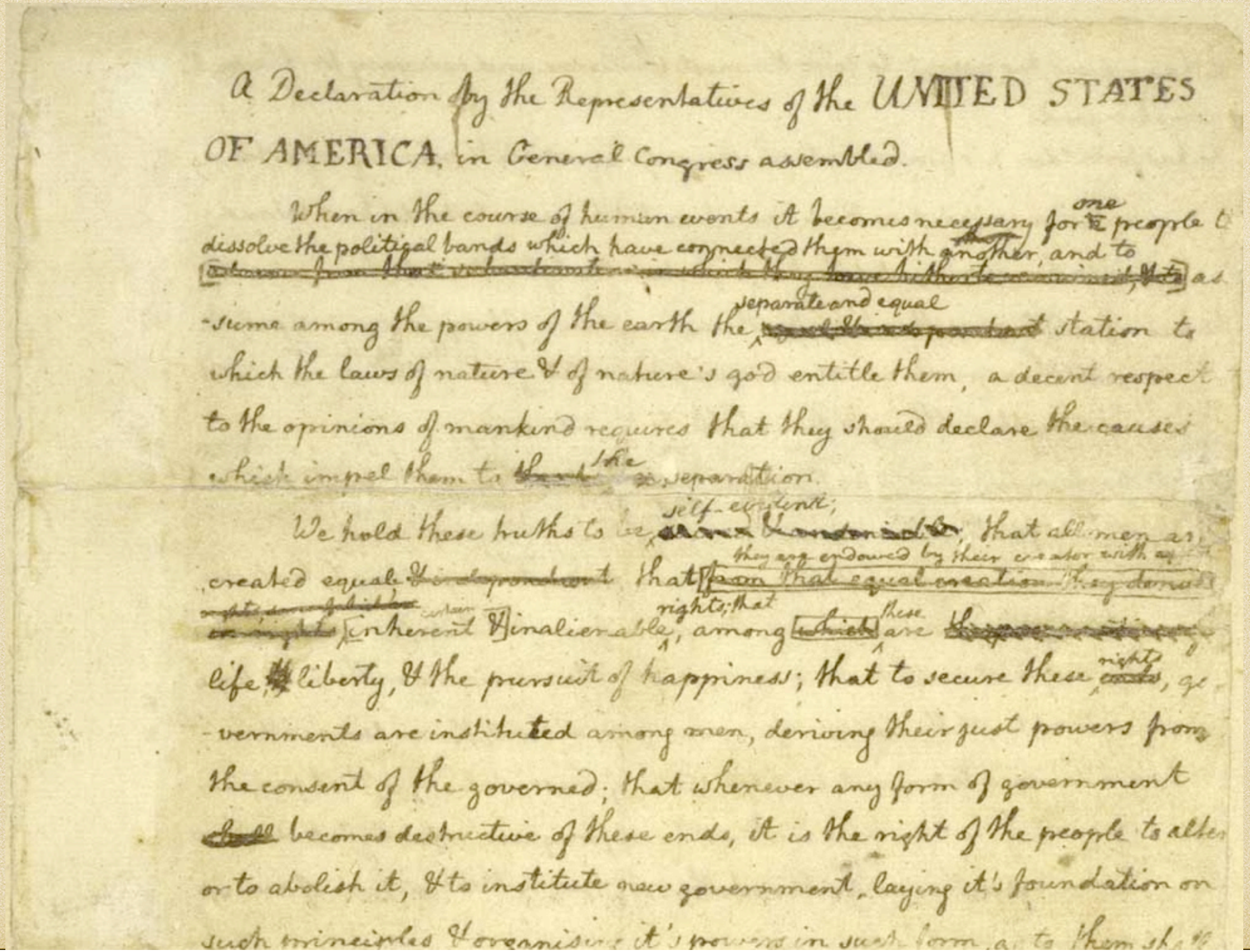
John Adams & Benjamin Franklin made changes to it

June 11 - July 1, 1776

Roger Sherman & Robert Livington were the other members of the committee



Declaration of Independence -- with Revisions



A Declaration by the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled.

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 ~~[illegible]~~ as-sume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature & 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 & independent that from that equal creation they derive ~~[illegible]~~ rights inherent & inalienable, among which these are life, liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, go-vernments 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, & to institute new government, laying it's foundation on such principles & organising it's powers in such form, as to them shall

Quick Write –

Please answer the following questions on 1/2 sheet of paper

- Explain why the American colonies decided to declare themselves independent from Great Britain

- In your opinion, were the American colonies right / justified in their decision to declare independence? Explain why / why not.

The Declaration of Independence

I. Preamble (Introduction)

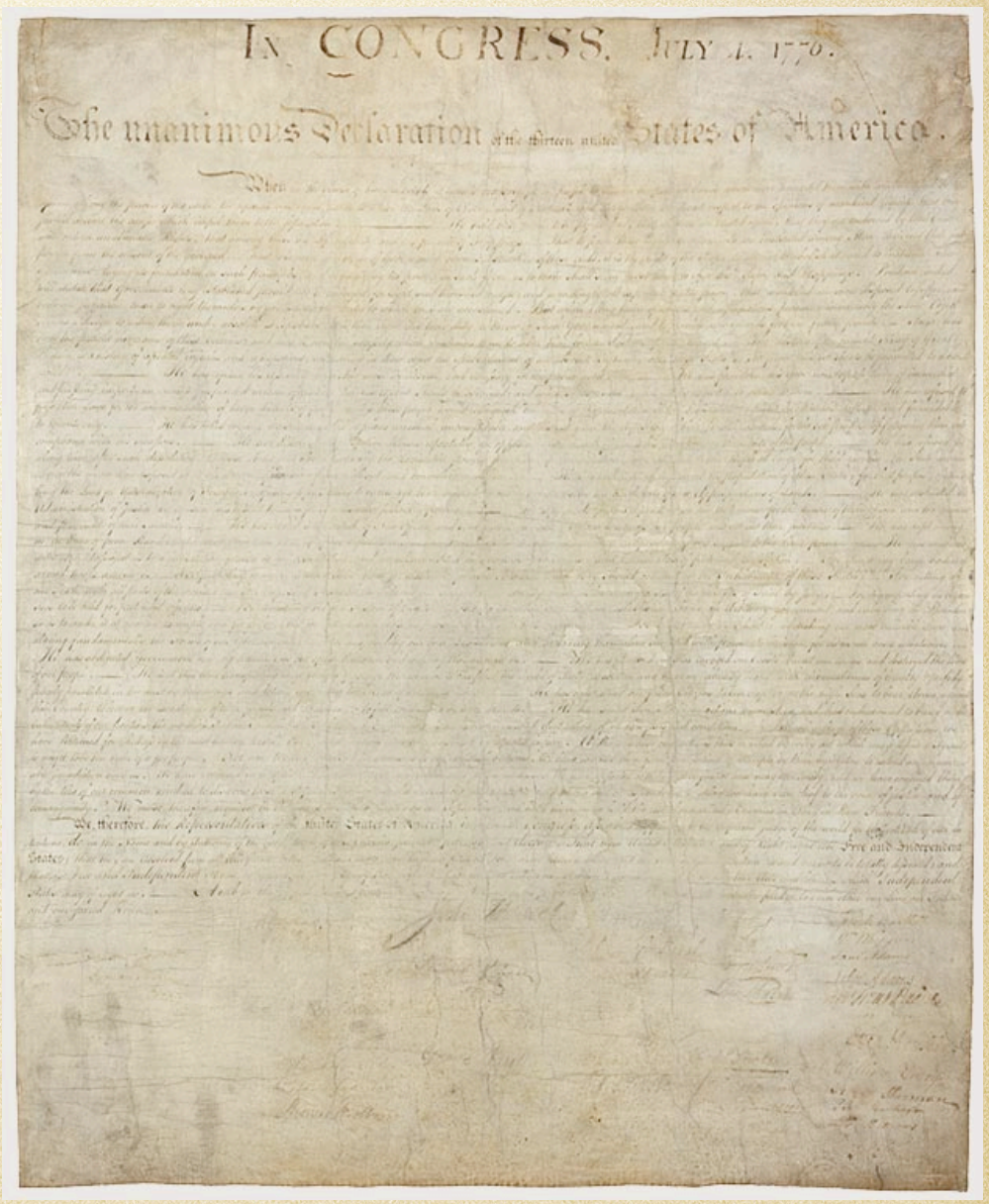
II. Statement of "Rights"

"all men are created equal"

"life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"

power to govern based on consent of the governed

III. Wrongs of British

IV. Efforts to Avoid Separation

V. Colonies Declare Independence