



# P E R S P E C T I V E S

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## **We Hold These Truths to Be Self-Evident**

### *A call to “duty”*

With the 4th of July Holiday just past, it is more important than ever to reflect on the Nation's founding “energy,” what the Germans would call our *Zeitgeist*.

Famously observed, America is not a nation that arose due to geographic isolation of a singular genealogical population as the British Isles or Japan. Nor did it arise as a theocracy from one religion like modern-day Iran or Israel. On the contrary, apart from the Native Americans, who have yet to be integrated into the mainstream of American life after two centuries of genocide, no one was born from a single, race, creed, or genetic inheritance. Apart from those native Americans, we all are descendants of emigrants. What attracted emigrants, and still does today, is the awareness that America is more than a physical place, but *an idea* they longed to embrace. As we bathe in the afterglow of BBQ parties and celebratory fireworks, it is critical to stop and take stock of what that “idea” is and how it all began.

It all started with the Declaration of Independence from the British Crown on July 4, 1776. The first words in the Declaration stated that it represented the unanimous view of the 13 colonies after observing the “course of human events” that compelled the call for independence. Then the Declaration began with declaring a complete break from the British Crown, until then the “mother country.” What followed were some of the most powerful words ever recorded in human history:

***“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all [wo]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 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 affect their Safety and Happiness.”***

Amazing! What a powerful concept. The Declarants viewed as “self-evident” all those rights we say we hold and concerning which they were able to achieve unanimous agreement—something we could not achieve today on any major policy issue. In fact, it is unlikely the Declaration of Independence itself could be agreed upon today if it was proposed for a plebiscite.

To salvage our “noble experiment” in self-government precariously perched on a razor's edge, we best look at the next powerful words in the Declaration speaking directly to our times:

***“Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; ... 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 [emphasis supplied].***

WE, the 65-75 percent of all citizens who agree on most of the major issues of the day, have suffered similar “usurpations” and have continued to see these outrageous developments leaving us ruled by a minority actively seeking to undermine our very government.

What are the comparable “usurpations”?

The Republican Senate has held Supreme Court nominations in abeyance for 10 months to “pack” the court with “conservative” jurists. However, they are not “conservative,” and we must stop referring to them as such. They are radical. They refuse to be bound by normal judicial principles like **stare decisis**. They present a challenge to our Nation as dangerous as any other rogue group of secessionists.

The Republican party has become a cult best referred to as the party of Trumpism, seeing its “God-given” goal to deny equal votes to citizens of color; utilize their minority position to frustrate the ability for the majority to conduct its routine business by resorting to a “filibuster rule” (a rule created to frustrate free voting by former slaves); seek to establish *their version* of Christianity (not mine); compel a breakdown of the separation of Church and State by fostering Christian prayer at high school football games; protect a clearly guilty President from two separate Impeachments and overtly support his plans to foment an insurrection against our very government while assisting him in frustrating the honest counting of votes; for perpetually opposing immigration reform of any kind (one of the charges leveled against the King in the original Declaration); chosen to have “sold out” the country to fossil fuel companies as a threat to our very survival; and, been anxious to put their private interests and their “party” over the Nation’s interests.

Clearly, not all Republicans are “bad.” While someone can readily disagree with **Liz Cheney** or **Adam Kinzinger** on policy issues, it cannot be disputed they are acting as patriots in their attempt to stop the *next* insurrection from succeeding. Equally clear, not all Democrats are good. Most aren’t even that capable, but as a party there is no comparison. They do believe in our Constitutional democracy and are doing their best to preserve it. Republicans are not.

It’s long past time for traditional Republicans to start their own party to once again embrace conservative principles and leave the Trump mob, no matter what political advantage they perceive losing. They need to embrace our democratic institutions and join with Democrats and Independents to: 1) overthrow Minority Rule; 2) begin restoring the country to the “shining city on the hill”; 3) drop every gerrymandering and vote suppressing tactic in every state favoring any political party over another; 4) restore a woman’s right to control her own body; 5) reduce the powerful lobbying interests from running the country for their prospective advantage like Big Pharma and Big Oil; 6) embrace diversity and expand lawful immigration as healthy for society; 7) provide an immediate path to citizenship for all DACA “children”; 8) reduce the epidemic of gun violence; 9) embrace meaningful judicial reform; and, 10) restore the EPA’s authority to fight climate change.

That’s the “duty” the Declaration requires of all politicians, and every citizen, at this gravest moment of historical crisis.

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