

Jeffersons declaration essay sample

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The continental Congress had appointed a 5-member committee which included Thomas Jefferson to draft the Declaration of Independence. The others included Franklin Benjamin, John Adams, Robert Livingstone and Roger Shaman. The two primary sources that Jefferson borrowed from in drafting the Declaration were; his own draft of the preamble to the Virginia Constitution and George Mason's draft of Virginia's Declaration of Rights. When the draft was presented to the Continental Congress, 86 changes were made in effect shortening the overall length by more than a fourth. However, there were 3 changes made to the draft that are considered of fundamental effects. They include; first Congress saw the need to change the language used. Congress believed that a peaceable, clear and definite language needed to be used. Some wording previously used was rephrased. This includes examples such as history of unremitting injuries was replaced with repeated injuries. The words that directly attacked the King were deleted.

Secondly, the paragraph dealing with the abolition of slavery was deleted by the continental Congress. This was in reaction to the objections by the delegate from South Carolina, Edward Rutledge, who threatened that the state would fight for King George against her sister colonies. He asserted that he had the support for slavery in North Carolina and Georgia. In addition, he had the support from certain northern merchants reluctant to condemn a shipping trade largely in their own bloodstained hands. Fearful of postponing the American Revolution, opponents of slavery, who were in the clear majority, made a compromise.

Lastly, the final paragraph of the draft was also deleted. It stated that

America rejected and indeed renounced all allegiance to the kings of Great Britain and all others who followed them. This was edited to reflect their affirmation of being a free and independent state from Britain. All the changes are seen as being fundamental in ensuring that America's independence would be enduring and honest.

Work Cited

Teaching American History. org. Rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence. 10 January 2014. 17 January 2014. .