

Thomas paine, father of the american revolution

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



When we look at the struggle for American Independence, most of us think of the war that the original patriots fought and won against the British. We look at some of the most historical figures in American history such as George Washington along with John Adams and credit them with independence of our nation. What many of us oversee is the man who inspired our weary, undermanned, unmotivated and ill equipped nation; Thomas Paine. Paine was a man who was not even born in the American Colonies.

He was born in Norfolk, England and immigrated to the British colonies amidst the revolution in 1774. Amongst his stay in the American Colonies, Thomas Paine quickly realized the desperate situation the colonies were in. Using his skills as a political activist/author, he created a book called "Common Sense" which lit the fire in the hearts of many of the colonial Patriots; it gave them the inspiration they needed to wage a war that would forever change the course of history. His influence was so desirable and effective that "without the pen of Thomas, the sword of Washington would have been raised in vain" (John Adams, The Sharpened Quill).

Originally titled, "The Plain Truth" he was urged to retitile it to "Common Sense" because it provided American Patriots exactly what they needed to have them open up their eyes to what was in front of them. Paine's arguments of how it was the right time to claim independence definitely puts him up for the running as the father of the American Revolution. Being from England, Paine was more than suspected to the ways of the Monarchy. He understood the necessity of a government within a population of people.

His sense of brilliancy comes from his logical view of a government. He tries his best to come up with a way that invoked the colonists into a way of

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thinking that would both negate the government in a bad sense, but would also shine light upon the idea of a leading group of people. With this, he speculated the argument that “ Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government” (Paine, Common Sense, 4).

One of the reasons Thomas was successful in being a political activist, he had obviously appealed to those who had a sour taste of a tyrannical government, and he also took it into his own hands to redefine what a government was and its role to its people. England’s constitutional monarchy gave Thomas a decent sense of what not to do in terms of leadership. During his time in America, he saw that a majority of the Patriots were already displeased with the current system and he also saw that they were susceptible to return to the old ways because of the low morale to take things into their own hands.

One of the things Paine wanted to do was sway the American people out of the idea that a king is necessary. He goes along doing this by formulating an argument that “ In the early ages of the world, according to the scripture chronology, there were no kings; the consequence of which was there were no wars; it is the pride of kings which throw mankind into confusion” (Paine, 9). His argument against the crown then made sense to people because they then knew that having a king would lead to all sorts of complications with history repeating itself.

Thomas did not see the point in exalting one man and making him better than others. He validated his points by using the ultimate weapon in political

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history: religion. Using evidence of the “ scriptures” he articulates a dictation using, “ As the exalting one man so greatly above the rest cannot be justified on the equal rights of nature, so neither can it be defended on the authority of scripture; for the will of the Almighty, as declared by Gideon and the prophet Samuel, expressly disapproves of government by kings” (Paine, 11).

There are many instances that Paine brings religion to his argument, but I feel like this is where he excelled at it the most due to his hatred toward a government that is a monarchy or any type of government that exalts one man and exempts him from the rights of an individual. As far as being politically motivated, he also formulated a list from a military aspect that gave the Americans a rough number on what they would need to protect their seas and borders. He also made it clear that the American colonies were not going to win a war in numbers, but in unity.

The colonies themselves were small enough to unite a single front and take on the British. No war would come without money you say? Paine suggested that to gain help from foreign powers, we would incur a ton of debt to help fund professional armies. What was his solution? The west had unclaimed land that we could use to pay off this debt. Giving the United States a Foreign presence, this would boom trade and inevitably open the country to expansions that they would never see before.

Of course he knew that with the opening of new trade routes we would need to protect them. “ No country on the globe is so happily situated, so internally capable of raising a fleet as America. Tar, timber, iron, and cordage are her natural produce. We need go abroad for nothing” (Paine,

20). Paine formulates how much money it would cost the British to focus a war with America, drawing troops from other theatres of war in the world.

Showing the revengeful Americans that they would inflict a huge blow to British pride as well as create a hole in their wallets, enticed them to band together and get building. They didn't need to rely on any foreign help to amass their own navy. He also foretold of a peace with the British because the British needed the Americans for their raw resources and valuable materials. He created an ideology that "the mercantile and reasonable part in England, will be still with us; because, peace with trade, is preferable to war without it" (Paine, 23).

In conclusion, Thomas Paine will always be one of the original American Hero. For being someone not of "American" descent, he came from the homeland of the British Isles and incited a revolution that brought forth one of the most powerful nations in the world. With a sense of honor and dignity, Paine did the unimaginable; started a revolution amongst people who should not have won. He gave them the "common sense" that was needed in order to be successful. "On these grounds I rest the matter.

Instead of gazing at each other with suspicious or doubtful curiosity, let each of us, hold out to his neighbor the hearty hand of friendship, and unite in drawing a line, which, like an act of oblivion, shall bury in forgetfulness every former dissention. Let the names of Whig and Tory be extinct; and let none other be heard among us, than those of a good citizen, an open and resolute friend, and a virtuous supporter of the rights of mankind and of the free and independent States of America" (Paine, Conclusion).