

# American declaration of independence a product of the european enlightenment

Law



The United States Declaration of Independence adopted in 1776 by the congress was a product of the European enlightenment as it drew its philosophical basis from European era of reason. This declaration focusing on individual rights and as well as the right to revolt, borrows deeply the European philosophers' recommendations having studied in details institutions of governance and incorporation of scientific knowledge to aid mankind. England being one of the most enlightened countries by then, was the colonizer of America thereby influencing the political leaders' focus in America at that time (Jefferson et al, 21-23).

Therefore, American revolution protest against the England authority provided the blue print in the reorganization for democratic society that was later to be emulated by many in the world. Donald et al (51-52) argues that, the foundations of the enlightenment were laid back in 17th and 16th centuries as European expanded its territories to Asia, Africa, America colonization as well as the advancement of the scientific revolution.

Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson formed the main anchors in the establishment of the the Great revolution in America and establishment of the declaration by drafting the initial draft and leading the later amendments. Declaration preparation Liam (331) points out that, as Jefferson prepared the declaration strongly envied great personalities in Europe that gave him the inspiration. Francis Bacon who was referred by Jefferson as the modern science father or English enlightenment godfather, advocated for applied sciences at the expense of basic science and technology.

Jefferson was even more inspired by Bacon's stand on the need to advance knowledge for the sake of the people. He believed that greater things were possible with conventional knowledge through the basic realm of ethics, science and politics. According to Annenberg Foundation Trust (91), Sir Isaac Newton theories of mechanics and the consequent discovery of the gravity laws through the mathematics principles molded Jefferson's believe in divinity and its resultant harmony.

As adopted in the American Declaration, Christianity and scientific deism strongly held that in total, that nature was as a result of supreme divine work but subjected to the universal laws with the divine power being fully absent (Jefferson et al, 23). John Locke who lived from 1632-1704 influenced the larger Europe and later the establishment of the American Declaration of Independence with might. Jefferson was a strong advocate for the Locke's ideas that emphasized for reasoning in all the decisions made when governing people.

Jefferson also adopted in the declaration, the idea of nature and limits during governance in order to realize various objectives (Gearon, 52-53). As strongly advocated for in the declaration, Jefferson from Locke, enshrined the concept of innate knowledge and morality. As it comes out in the declaration, individuals beliefs and morality must be respected since they are unique and at all times, the governing institutions must protect them. In addition, the declaration calls for justice which Locke emphasized must be used to reduce the societal injustices.

In his letter of Human understanding he insisted on knowledge and establishment of facts for scientific and Human understanding. Basement <https://assignbuster.com/american-declaration-of-independence-a-product-of-the-european-enlightenment/>

of human rights. At the onset of eighteenth century, French and British thinkers laid the ground work for observing and adopting human rights in the society. They believed that human rights must be entrenched deeply in the political governance structures of any society. Europe having undergone the great war in the mid 17th century which was sparked by religion, political and economic strife had understood importance and significance of democracy towards development.

King George's letter of May 1775 requesting him to address the grievances of the people went unanswered resulting to the assumption of responsibilities by the congress to govern the US. Governance and English colonies. America having been discovered back in 1492, the inhabitants understood that they needed the freedom just like the European countries were enjoying. As indicated earlier, Thomas Jefferson as he wrote the declaration, established the need to have free people in order to achieve development in the country. It insisted on the need for technological advancement for the full human potentials to be appreciated (Jefferson et al, 23).

Under the oppression therefore it was impossible to trend the same path as the people like Isaac Newton and Locke had moved through. Government support for the people which Britain was advocating, totally lacked provoking revolts in order to achieve the expected results. Like in Europe the declaration insisted that, governments are instituted by men who directly derive their power with the consent of the governed. Therefore, whenever the administration by the people turns out to be destructive, the governed has the right to disband it at will.

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Jefferson insisted that it is better ignorance than error and insisted that truth must form the basis of their liberation. England as it held the 13 united states did not fully allow them to access freedom of governance and even after the declaration it sought the help of Germans to fight back. As independent as England country was, the declaration sought to ensure happiness to the people of America (Gearon, 52-53). The king of Britain being ruthless, ruled through usurpations and injuries, inflicted tyranny over all the states that drew the anger from the people prompting their quest for freedom.

As the European philosophers had discovered, there was need to go an extra mile in order for their freedom to be achieved. Major discoveries were not established without struggle as Isaac Newton indicates in his scientific discoveries. Religion spread. Europe acted as the conduit through which religion was transferred to majority of other countries and states in the world. Britain hosting Independent and Presbyterian church established the nobility of the divine power which formed the basis of drafting the declaration.

Strong revolutionaries and philosophers underscored the essence divinity that was evident in the later application of the statues contained in the declaration by the leaders. Freedom for all the people without discrimination either of their color or race indicated the quest for human sovereignty at all times (Liam, 331). To increase the harmony and improved cohesion, Jefferson strongly believed that there always was supreme powers that even though not actively or directly involved stood to reward the good deeds at all times.

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Differentiation was specially derived and the great divide experienced during the prior years in Britain and Germany was avoided. It was used to bring sanity and harmony among the people who had been long oppressed therefore ensuring a smooth transition. Later during the Americans liberation, religion and divinity was anchored in the people's attitudes as they ensured that their quests did not result to blood shed at any moment. Martin Luther king junior called for peaceful demonstration where they could articulate their ideas without causing any harm or suffering to the people (Jefferson et al, 23).

Modernization in America Due to great oppression by the colonial masters in all the states, modernization was impossible with all the economical and political structures being controlled by the King of Britain. Strong institutions of governance in the whole of Europe especially in England, Germany and France were envied by those who drafted the declaration having schooled in the European countries (Annenberg Foundation Trust, 89). Great inspiration was derived from the strong industrial revolution and economic sustenance in their countries.

Due to these muscles in their own countries the political might which made England manage to fight from far and assume such powers, was highly envied (Paul, 279-280). Conclusion. Declaration of American independence is a clear indication of the European enlightenment influence into the American development of their governing institutions. From the writers of the declaration, to the whole USA, the early philosophers and scientific discoverers propelled the quest for freedom in America (Paul, 110).

Besides, the declaration was written during the time when oppression from the Britain King had reached it's peak and slave trade effects were most rampant. Setting of the European countries that helped them establish strong structures in their governance anchorage was highly emulated making America to later win the fight with Britain. Finally, religion as spread by the colonialists formed the basis for determination that the task they embarking on was noble thereby assisting them to remain together in the quest fro freedom. References Annenberg Foundation Trust. Understanding Democracy: A Hip Pocket Guide.

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