

# UNANIMOUS DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE,

BY THE  
DELEGATES OF THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS,  
IN GENERAL CONVENTION,  
AT THE TOWN OF WASHINGTON,

ON THE SECOND DAY OF MARCH, 1836.

When a government has ceased to protect the lives, liberty, and property of the people, from whose allegiance it claims to derive its authority, and for the advancement of whose happiness it was established; and so far from being a guarantee for their inalienable and inalienable rights, becomes an instrument in the hands of evil rulers for their oppression. When the Federal Republican Constitution of their country, which they have sworn to support, no longer has a substantial existence, and the whole nature of their government has been fatally changed, without their consent, from a limited Executive Republic, composed of Sovereign States, to a consolidated Central Military Despotism, in which every interest is disregarded but that of the army and the priesthood, both the natural enemies of civil liberty, the voracious devourers of power, and the loyal instruments of tyranny. When, long after the spirit of the constitution has departed, and it is no longer in any sense a power, that even the vestiges of freedom is removed, and the Spirit Masters of the constitution discontinued, and so far from their political and constitutional being respected, the agents who bear them are through their disposition, and necessary means, sent forth to force a new government upon them at the point of the bayonet.

When, in consequence of such acts of intolerance and oppression, on the part of the government, thereby provoked, and civil society is dissolved into foreign and alien; in such cases, the first law of nature, the right of self preservation, the inherent and inalienable right of the people to appeal to first principles, and make their political life into their own hands in extreme cases, exists; it is a right towards themselves and a sacred obligation to their posterity to abolish such government, and create another in its stead, calculated to secure them from impending dangers, and to secure their welfare and happiness.

Nations, as well as individuals, are answerable for their acts to the public opinion of

the world. A statement of a part of our grievances is therefore submitted to the impartial world, in justification of the important but unavoidable step now taken, of severing our political connection with the Mexican people, and assuming an independent attitude among the nations of the earth.

The Mexican Government, by its colonization laws, invited and induced the Anglo American population of Texas to colonize its wilderness under the pledged faith of a written constitution, that they should continue to enjoy that constitutional liberty and republican government in which they had been born and in the land of their birth, the United States of America.

In this expectation they have been cruelly disappointed, inasmuch as the Mexican nation has neglected in the late changes made in the government by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, who having converted the constitution of his country, now offers, as the price of submission, either to abandon the houses acquired by us through our own exertions, to the most unprincipled of all tyrants, the combined despots of the army and the priesthood.

It has sacrificed our welfare to the state of Coahuila, by which our interests have been completely depressed through a partial and partial course of legislation, carried on in a far distant seat of government, by a hostile majority in an unknown tongue, and this too, notwithstanding we have petitioned to the highest terms for the establishment of a separate state government, and have, in accordance with the provisions of the national constitution, presented to the general congress, a republican constitution, which was, without a just cause, contemptuously rejected.

It has consigned us in a dangerous, for a long time, of our citizens, for no other cause, large numbers of our citizens to the oppression of war constitution and the overthrow of a state government.

It has failed and refused to secure, on a

firm basis, the right of trial by jury, that palladium of civil liberty and only safe guarantee for the life, liberty, and property of the citizen.

It has failed to establish any public system of education, although possessed of almost boundless resources, (the public domain,) and although it is an axiom in political science, that unless a people are educated and enlightened, it is idle to expect the continuance of civil liberty, or the capacity for self government.

It has suffered the most unconstitutional, unqualified, and arbitrary, this trampling upon the most sacred rights of the citizen, and rendering the military superior to the civil power.

It has dissolved, by force of arms, the once compact of Coahuila and Texas, and obliged our representatives to fly for their lives from the seat of government, thus depriving us of the fundamental political right of representation.

It has demanded the surrender of a number of our citizens, and ordered military searches to seize and carry them into the interior for trial, in contempt of the civil authorities, and in defiance of the laws and the constitution.

It has made pointed attacks upon our commerce by encouraging foreign dependencies, and undertaking them to seize our vessels and convert the property of our citizens to the distant goals for confiscation.

It denies us the right of worshipping the Almighty according to the dictates of our own consciences, by the support of a National Religion, calculated to promote the temporal interest of its human functionaries, rather than the glory of the true and living God.

It has demanded us to deliver up our arms, which are essential to our defence—the rightful property of freemen—and formidable only to tyrannical governments.

It has invaded our territory both by sea and by land, with the intent to lay waste our

territory and drive us from our houses; and has now a large mercenary army advancing to enter on against us a war of extermination.

It has, through its emissaries, incited the restless savage, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, to massacre the inhabitants of our defenceless frontiers.

It has been, during the whole term of our connection with it, the contemptible agent and victim of excessive military restrictions, and both continually exhibited every characteristic of a weak, corrupt, and tyrannical government.

These, and other grievances, were patiently borne by the people of Texas, until they reached that point at which forbearance ceased to be a virtue. We then took up arms in defence of the National Constitution. We appealed to our Mexican brethren for assistance; our appeal has been made in vain; though many have offered us sympathetic response, has yet been heard from the interior. We are therefore forced to the melancholy conclusion, that the Mexican people have acquiesced in the destruction of their liberty, and the substitution thereof of a military government; that they are unfit to be free, and incapable of self government.

The necessity of self preservation, therefore, now demands our eternal political separation.

We, therefore, the delegates with plenary powers of the people of Texas, do solemnly declare, and appeal to a candid world for the witnesses of our condition, do hereby make and declare, that our political connection with the Mexican nation has forever ceased, and that the people of Texas, do now constitute a FREE, SOVEREIGN, and INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC, and are fully invested with all the rights and attributes which properly belong to independent nations; and, conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we fearlessly and confidently commit the issue to the auspices of the merciful Father of the destitute of soldiers.

RICHARD ELIAS, President.

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