

The 2016
Declaration of
Independence

Free We the People

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Free we the people.

“It’s free,” a patron says at the café where I’m typing right now.

Look, I understand that many feel that we the people, certainly many of the people in the United States, are free.

Yet, some think that we, many of the people, have lost the influence over the government. They feel as if the government rules the people rather than represents the people.

While I really don’t want to write this book, there is a part of me that feels some responsibility to do it.

Cathy and I have been writing about HOPE FOR ALL, which is Happiness Of Pursuit, Equality FOR A Liberated Life for quite some time. We’ve been explaining that we, the people of this country and the people of the world, need to do a better job of balancing these four rights or needs, again, the needs for life, liberty, happiness and equality.

If I’m going to write this book to urge a balance I can either look at the current news and comment on it, or I can try to simply write about the concept. (I say I because I often write the drafts of our books, based on much discussion and wisdom from Cathy and then she comes back and edits, and rewrites, particularly the really difficult sections.)

If I comment on the existing news, it’s going to look as if I’m biased against one party, since much of what is being revealed about our country, through the Wikileaks and through the leaks of the Democrats’ emails, serves as the basis for suggesting that we are no longer a country of, by and for the people, we are no longer free, the people. So it is time to free the people.

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Dedication

To Matthew, Tyler, and Christopher

Introduction

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I will start out saying that I like some of the policy prescriptions of the Democrats and some of the policy prescriptions of the Republicans.

My goal is to advance not policies in this book, but principles.

The principles in the Constitution do not sufficiently address a country with a Federal Reserve and they do not sufficiently address a country with a mainstream media.

Never before, before the Wikileaks and the other leaks of emails, have we the people had a window into the backroom machinations of the ruling class.

What is so objectionable and concerning is not the illegalities, so much as the lack of laws that prevent a complete and utter imbalance wherein the people's power, and their role and influence has been so minimized.

Where there are illegalities, and there are insufficient mechanisms for remedying those illegalities, certainly that too is a concern.

Where do we begin? How do we begin?

First, we begin by explaining that we, this book, is about solutions – not punishments.

This book is about fundamentally improving the structure(s) of our country. This means creating some new laws, but it also means bringing forth, and advancing some essential principles. We've already referred to the

INTRODUCTION

importance of values, or rights, such as those inalienable rights to life, liberty, happiness and equality. Throughout, we are going to refer to behaviors, or principles, which can help us to move to a structure(s) whereby we have more of those.

Sadly, I must begin this book with a reiteration of the Declaration, and then follow it with a list of grievances.

It's the list of grievances that I find it unfortunate to have to provide.

Let's begin with a reiteration and consideration of the Declaration's most famous statement.

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CHAPTER ONE

We Hold these Truths

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all 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 to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --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 effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. 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.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.”¹

Let’s look at this in detail.

We hold these truths. Let’s stop there. There is a lot of talk and consideration of the importance of truth. Two people speaking of truth that come immediately to mind are one, a

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liberal, Democrat Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks and two, Donald Trump, not a traditional conservative, and one that does not fit the mold of many in the Republican party, but nonetheless, one that does represent many Republican ideals, not the least of which is a preference for some trickle-down economic policies.

Each of these individuals is a representative of ideologies on the two opposite ends of the political ideological spectrum, one which we might say represents – rather than party preferences — establishment and the other anti-establishment ideals.²

Said differently, Howard Schultz represents a Democrat, but moreover an establishment view and Trump, to some extent, represents an anti-establishment view and preference, at least in some regards, as it stands today, October 14, 2016 4:54 PM.

I write in the café and sometimes a song or a comment will coincide with what I'm writing about and so I like to timestamp what I'm writing to validate the timing of things.

Now, Howard Schultz might not be the representative of the Democrat ideals or party or the establishment that you would select.

And, I'm not going to limit this book to his view, I simply start out by mentioning him because he has repeatedly articulated or emphasized the importance of truth and authenticity. Donald Trump, running for president at the time of this writing, also has emphasized the importance of truth in his many speeches.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

We can, of course, question their ideas of what truth, or any one's idea of truth, for that matter, is when those truths are tied to very subjective ideas about policies.

When, on the other hand, what we are looking at is something universal like the value on life, we should agree. We should agree that the value of life is a truth. That is, it is for the government to value life.

That is, we can say, unambiguously that a society should value life.

We can jump down in the above Declaration paragraph...

“That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it...”

The song plays overhead, “She gives me love, love, love, crazy love.”³

We are not asking for government to love us, we the people, when we ask that it be not destructive to the ends of life.

The song continues:

“Yes it makes me righteous, yes it makes me whole”
Yes it makes me mellow down in to my soul”⁴

That is the role of love... to some degree....

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What we are saying here is that, yes, love might make us righteous, it might make us whole and it might mellow one's soul.

This, we are not asking for. Love, we are not asking from our government. We are asking that it does not become destructive of life itself.

Is our government there yet?

Was the government there when Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration?

I have added the list of grievances to an Appendix to this book.

There are two that jump out:

- 1) For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

Now, I should say that Jefferson did not provide a detailed list of examples. He simply listed the grievances. Here too, we do not need to provide examples of this. What we need to do is simply note that whether the people, we the people, believe this to be the case is a subject of some debate. Not everybody will feel that this is the case, some will. There were some who at the time of the Declaration were not opposed to the British rule.

“A British museum,” a café patron says, after I type that sentence. “It’s American,” the other café patron says.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

It's unusual for someone to refer to Britain, so I take note of that. Perhaps, it's a sign that we ought to be looking at this issue.

The next one of the grievances that I'd note, which relates to life is:

- 2) He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

The "he" there is the King.

Clearly, such was threatening to their lives.

Here, what I would ask is whether people today feel that the Government is sufficiently protecting its population from harms.

One incident that comes to mind is the way water was tainted with lead in Flint, Michigan.

Again, I'd say here, it is for the people to decide: is the Government protecting lives sufficiently? Is it waging war against the people. It is certainly engaging in wars. And those wars have led to deaths. Can we not say that 9/11 was a strike on the homeland which government did not prevent.

The government has not *declared* us out of its protection.

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But we could say:

The rulers have abdicated government, by *acting* in ways that leave us out of its protection.

How many people are dying because of government abdicating its role of protector? Well, there was the loss of life during 9/11. And there have been the loss of life from the frequent mass shootings and high murder rates in some areas.

Again, it is a question for the masses, whether government has abdicated its role of protector of the lives of citizens.

Clearly, this is one that would involve some debate. And many would say that by and large lives are protected.

On the other hand, what about when one considers the high cancer rate—does it have something to do with the foods we eat? Does government have some role in protecting people from harmful products?

Again, this is an issue about which there would likely be much debate and likely many, perhaps, most would say that government has not abdicated its role in this regard.

But they might say it's much worse than it should be.

Certainly, the Black Lives Matter movement is a movement which says that government has abdicated its role.

And to some degree, the police forces can say that government has fallen short.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

Let's not belabor this one. It's certainly food for thought.

Perhaps, we should add one more important point: On this one issue, it might not be that government as it stands ought to be abolished, but rather it is in some serious need for reform, or in the words of the Declaration framers, alteration.

As for whether government is waging war on us. On this point, we might say, again, that those in the Black Lives Matter movement might say that this is the case.

We've numbered the list of grievances included in the Declaration. These two are listed number 15 and 23 on the 1776 list.

15 – For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

23 – [The King] has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

We might add, with respect to that number 15 that many have noted that there is a different standard of justice for some. Bryan Stevenson makes the case in his book *Just Mercy* about the disparate treatment — one of many that make the case.

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Here, we're saying that one and two (or A and B) of our current situation read fairly as follows:

(A) For protecting them (the ruling class), from punishment from many Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States

(B) (The rulers) have abdicated Government here, by acting in ways that leave many out of Government's Protection

As for the rest of that sentence: "and waging War against us," we need to consider this more fully.

Has the government waged war on us?

On the face of it, we can say no.

Yet, upon a little reflection, we can say yes.

This will take a little explanation, not for those who already see it and can relate to it, but for the rulers who may not know that we, some of the people, see it.

I'll explain.

The idea of waging war on a people need not be solely limited to the idea of shooting them. It includes the idea of controlling them and their lives.

Many a country has taken over another country and let those conquered live under their rules.

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS

When more than 45 million people live below the poverty line (or 14.5%)⁵, we can say that this large percentage of the population is being essentially deprived of their life's essentials. Life and life's essentials go hand in hand.

46 million depend upon food banks.⁶

This too can be regarded as a governmental system that effectively underserves its population with respect to life. It is the economic system along with the governmental system which yields this result.

In that sense, we can say that some might say that government and its relationship with business, allowing business aggregations that make it very difficult for individuals to survive on their own by participating in the markets is waging a war of sorts on the people. Thus, we can modify our number two, or letter B:

(B) (The rulers) have abdicated Government here, by acting in ways that leave many out of Government's Protection and waging a War of sorts against us.

We can develop this point to expand what we are saying in regard to the War against us. Perhaps, in so doing we will be able to modify that to say waging a War against us.

This is not the goal—I have no desire to see government as waging a War against us or many millions of us. My goal is simply to accurately discern what is the current state.

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Now, to why we might say that it is worse than a War of sorts, we have to consider the other rights, such as those to liberty, the pursuit of happiness and equality.

It might just be that in the violation of one or more of these that it is more accurate to say that the government is waging a War against us.

CHAPTER TWO

The Pursuit of Happiness

CREATING HARMONY

CONCLUSION

NOTES

DECLARATION AND CREATING HARMONY

¹ Declaration of Independence, 1776.

² See e.g., The Anti-Establishment Front-Runner, by Rich Lowry October 21, 2015 available at

<http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/10/the-anti-establishment-front-runner-213280>. See also, Donald Trump may launch anti-establishment television network after US election say analysts, by Nick Allen, Washington, October 17, 2016, 6:33 PM available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/17/trump-tv-could-be-planned-for-after-us-election/>.

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³ Crazy Love, Van Morrison.

⁴ Id.

⁵ The United States Census Bureau, September 16, 2014, Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2013, Release Number: CB14-169 available at

<http://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2014/cb14-169.html>

⁶ See Feeding America, Hunger in America 2014 study, available at <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/news-and-updates/press-room/press-releases/more-than-46-million-people-turn-to-feeding-america.html?referrer=https://www.google.com/>.