

# July 4, 1776 and 2023—America Then and Now



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***“The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves... .The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore to conquer, or die.”***

These are the now immortal words of General George Washington in his Order of July 2, 1776, issued following the vote on that date by the Continental Congress to adopt the “Lee Resolution” of Virginia to separate from England.

Two days later, on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence, authored primarily by Thomas Jefferson, was adopted by the Continental Congress. By that act, the United States of America became the first government in the history of the world to be established by “the consent of the governed.” America is now, after its birth on July 4, 1776, 247 years ago, the longest lasting free republic in the world.

The American founders generation went to war against the abuses of the English Empire, then the most powerful military force in the world, in order to create their freedom—and ours. Indeed, we Americans of this generation are among those “untold millions” whose future freedom was dependent on the willingness of the founders’ generation to serve and sacrifice

their lives in the War of Independence, as General Washington wrote in his July 2, 1776 Order.

Serve and sacrifice they did. Ultimately, 25,000 American patriots—out of a total population of only 2.5-million in all thirteen colonies— would give their lives for freedom. They were citizen soldiers, patriots, who left their farms, jobs, homes, and families, and went to war for freedom. Almost all brought their own guns from home.

These citizen soldiers, with no formal military training, rose up to fight for freedom against the greatest military power in the world at the time, the English Empire. English King George III had the best trained, best armed, best equipped, best experienced army and navy in the world. King George III and the English elitists of that era scoffed at the idea England could be defeated by what they ridiculed as a “ragtag” American army, that was untrained, barely equipped, with no experience, with no cavalry, and with no war experienced navy, while England ruled the waves of the world.

The American patriots suffered one disastrous military defeat after another in the months following the July 4th Declaration of Independence. The conditions in which they fought were horrendous. They lacked food, shoes, clothes, supplies, medicines, ammunition, medical care.

Only a third of the population supported the war; another third was neutral; and the final third—“Tories”— was actively in support of England, desiring to remain “subjects” of King George III rather than free “citizens” of America.

Yet, the American patriots fought on. The first really significant American victory after the Declaration of Independence came on the day after Christmas, December 26, 1776, the now famous crossing of the Delaware River in a freezing winter storm led by Gen. George Washington to win the Battle of Trenton.

That victory brought hope and inspiration that the war for freedom could be won. It would take until 1783 for the revolutionary war to be ultimately won with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. It was the longest war in our American history until Vietnam.

Freedom was achieved by the American patriots despite all odds. The indispensable American in this victory for liberty was General George Washington, who would not give up. He was universally admired, respected, by the troops, who were inspired by him. He placed himself in danger with the troops countless times in the heat of battle, mounted and visible to the troops and the enemy. When at war's end many credited Gen. Washington with being the cause of the victory, he demurred, saying victory came only by the intercession of "Providence" or "the hand of God."

Gen. George Washington later was unanimously elected to preside over the Constitutional Convention, which created in 1787 the Constitution under which we live now as free Americans.

George Washington would be unanimously elected as the First President of the United States of America. He was unanimously elected to a second four year term. After his second term, George Washington was offered a third term, or to be "President for life," or even "King." George Washington refused it all, saying to serve more than two terms as President would be improper. Instead, he relinquished all power and authority, and went home to his farm, content to be a private American citizen.

In walking away from all power and authority, George Washington shocked not only the country, but the world. Even England's King George III, whom Washington had defeated, said that George Washington was "the most distinguished of any man living...the greatest character of the age." Napoleon, who had no doubt of his own eminence, said: "This great man fought

against tyranny; he established the liberty of his country....George Washington is the greatest man of his era."

Similarly, at home, George Washington would be universally recognized as "The Father Of Our Country." Revolutionary War hero Harry "Light Horse Harry" Lee (father of Robert E. Lee), summed up the feelings of the nation for George Washington: ***"First in war. First in Peace. First in the hearts of his countrymen."***

On this July 4th 2023, 247th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence and the birth day of our United States of America, we Americans ought to remember, honor, emulate and give thanks to the patriots of July 4th 1776 – from Gen. George Washington, the Father of Our Country, to the least ranked unknown soldier of the Revolutionary Army, whose service and sacrifice created our freedom.

Indeed, on this Independence Day, July 4, 2023, we Americans must search our souls and answer the question: Are we Americans willing to fight, to sacrifice, and to give our lives if necessary, in defense of American freedom now, as the Americans of the Founding Fathers generation did then, on July 4, 1776?

May God bless and keep each and all of them, and may our nation never cease to honor and emulate them in defense of freedom.

**FOR GOD AND COUNTRY FOREVER; SURRENDER TO TYRANNY–NEVER!**

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