



REVOLUTIONARY DOCUMENTS



MAGNA CARTA

WHEN? June 15, 1215

WHERE? England

WHY (What event prior?) Too much taxation, No trial by jury, Freedoms being taken away

SUMMARY: The Magna Carta was the first written document presented to King John of England by his subjects intended to restrict his power and protect their rights. Historians consider it a major milestone in the history of constitutional law. The king imposed taxes on the Barons and the English people to pay to Pope Innocent III as “sorry” for retaliating against the Pope's choice for archbishop of Canterbury and to fund expeditions to attempt to regain lost territories. They did not agree with the ruthless way that the king ruled. In an attempt to bring the king under control, they drew up a list of their demands known as the Articles of the Barons in January of 1215. The Barons then began to fight the king with physical force, capturing London in May and forcing the king to agree to the meeting at Runnymede in June. Once the Magna Carta was signed, the Barons renewed the Oath of Fealty to the king. Copies of the Magna Carta were distributed to bishops, sheriffs and other nobles in England



ENGLISH BILL OF RIGHTS

WHEN? December 1689

WHERE? England

WHAT EVENT ? The end of the
Glorious Revolution

SUMMARY: The 1689 English Bill of Rights was a British Law, passed by the Parliament of Great Britain in 1689 that declared the rights and liberties of the people and settling the succession in William III and Mary II following the Glorious Revolution of 1688 when James II was deposed. Note: The date of the English Bill of Rights is referred to as either dated as March 1689 or as February 13, 1688 in Old Style dating.

- A frequently summoned Parliament and free elections
- Members should have freedom of speech in Parliament
- No armies should be raised in peacetime
- No taxes could be levied, without the authority of parliament
- Laws should not be dispensed with, or suspended, without the consent of parliament
- No excessive fines should imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted



US BILL OF RIGHTS

WHEN? December 15, 1791

WHERE? North America (US)

WHAT EVENT? calls from several states for greater constitutional protection for individual liberties

1. Freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition.
2. Right to keep and bear arms in order to maintain a well regulated militia.
3. No quartering of soldiers.
4. Freedom from unreasonable searches and seizures.
5. Right to due process of law, freedom from self-incrimination, double jeopardy.
6. Rights of accused persons, e.g., right to a speedy and public trial
7. Right of trial by jury in civil cases.
8. Freedom from excessive bail, cruel and unusual punishments.
9. Other rights of the people.
10. Powers reserved to the states.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

WHEN? July 4,
1776

WHERE? North
America

WHAT EVENT?
Taxation without
representation
(Stamp Act, Sugar
Act)

“Summary”: 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 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 abolish it....”**

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS OF MAN

WHEN? August 26,
1789

WHERE? France

WHAT EVENT?
American Revolution,
Thomas Jefferson's
assistance

Summary: The French people, thought that the forgetting of the natural rights of man are the sole causes of the miseries of the world, and said these sacred and inalienable rights, in order that all the citizens should have these rights under all governments, may never allow themselves to be oppressed.

1. Government is instituted in order to guarantee to man the enjoyment of his natural rights.
2. These rights are equality, liberty, security, and property.
3. All men are equal by nature and before the law.
4. Law is the free and solemn expression of the general will
5. All citizens are equally eligible to public employments.
6. Liberty is the power that belongs to man to do whatever is not injurious to the rights of others
7. The right to express one's thoughts and opinions by means of the press or in any other manner
8. Security consists in the protection afforded by society to each of its members for the preservation of his person, his rights, and his property.
9. The law ought to protect public and personal liberty against the oppression of those who govern.